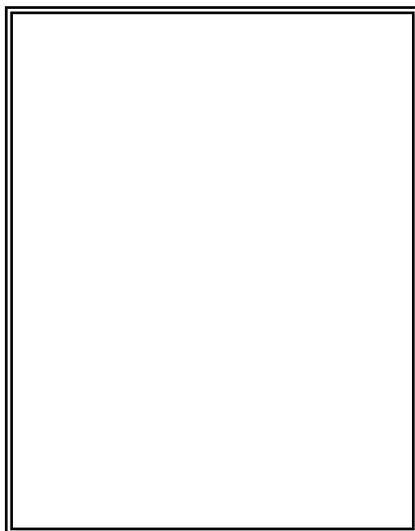




Week 2 - Civility

James 3:2 [NLT]

² Indeed, we all make many mistakes. For if we could control our tongues, we would be perfect and could also control ourselves in every other way.



CIVILITY:

- [from Latin word: *civilis*] - "relating to public life, befitting a citizen"
- formal politeness and courtesy in behavior or speech.
- synonyms: courtesy, politeness, good manners, chivalry, gallantry, graciousness, consideration, respect, gentility

When our primary goal is **WINNING**,
we're already **LOSING**.

James 3:3-6 [NLT]

³ We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. ⁴ And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. ⁵ In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches.

But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. ⁶ And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.

Disagreement doesn't equal OPPOSITION.

James 3:7-12 [NLT]

⁷ People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, ⁸ but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. ¹⁰ And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right! ¹¹ Does a spring of water bubble out with both fresh water and bitter water? ¹² Does a fig tree produce olives, or a grapevine produce figs? No, and you can't draw fresh water from a salty spring.

So...What?

:: Civility is a CHOICE.

:: Civility recognizes VALUE.

James 1:19-20 [NLT]

¹⁹ Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. ²⁰ Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

Galatians 5:22-23 [NIV]

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control.

So...How?

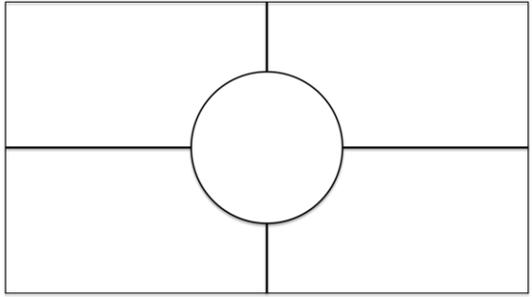
:: Separate the PERSON from the PROBLEM.

:: Seek to UNDERSTAND more than to be UNDERSTOOD.

1 Peter 3:8-9 [NIV]

⁸ Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. ⁹ Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.

Notes:



"So let us begin anew -- remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate. Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us."

John F. Kennedy



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How to start a relationship with God:

- 1) Admitting that you, like everyone, wandered & need to come home.
- 2) Asking God to forgive your sins.
- 3) Saying YES to God by trusting Jesus as Savior & Lord.

You can do that right now by simply talking to God in a prayer like this:

Dear Lord Jesus, I know I am a sinner, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe You died for my sins and rose from the dead. Today, I receive you as my Savior; and I put my faith in you as my LORD. Help me to look to you and follow you all the days of my life. In Your name, Amen.

For Further Reflection:

:: Share any notable experiences you've had this past week with kindness or a lack of kindness.

:: Who was involved? What happened?

:: If you could have a "do over," what would you do the same/differently?

:: Based on the definition of civility, recall a time you experienced a lack of civility.

:: What did you do? How did you or the other person respond?

:: How did it all turn out? Why?

:: Read/Review James 3:1-12.

:: What do you find most helpful or challenging in this passage?

:: Where have you excelled or struggled in this area?

:: What role does the Holy Spirit play in this issue? [ref. Galatians 5:22-23]

:: Pastor Shawn said, "Disagreement doesn't equal opposition."

:: What are some practical implications of that reality?

:: Where have you successfully/unsuccessfully recognized that truth?

:: Where do you most naturally function in the Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument? Why? How is that working out?

:: Which area do you need to invite Holy Spirit to change in you to become more like Jesus? Ask someone you trust to pray for you & encourage you as you do.

Unless otherwise noted, today's Scripture is from the New Living Translation [NLT].

Shawn Cossin (@shawncossin) – September 14 & 15, 2019

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