

STAY OUT OF STRIFE 8-25-11

Ro 13:13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. {honestly: or, decently}

Strife - it is a contest for advantage and superiority. It is a self-seeking ambition that is more concerned about itself and the fulfillment of its own wants, desires, and pleasures than it is in meeting the same needs in others. It is so self-consumed that it is blinded to the desires or ambitions of other people. (Commentary on Romans 13:13) Not in contentions and furious altercations, which must be the consequence of such practices as are mentioned above. Can any man suppose that this address is to the Christians at Rome? That they are charged with practices almost peculiar to the heathens? “. . . not in strife and envying--varied forms of that venomous feeling between man and man which **reverses the law of love.** What is the law of love? John 13:34-35, “A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

We must understand that Christians need to learn how to grow in love, it's not automatic with the new birth. Paul admonished the Christian churches in Corinth, Galatia, Philippi, Ephesus, Crete, and Jerusalem as well as Rome to not get into strife. James also addressed the church at Jerusalem about strife. (Read scriptures)

As we grow in love, will we ever come to the point where we will never enter into strife again? No but we certainly can decrease strife in our lives.

What happens when we get into strife? Pride sets in. In our minds we have a number of thoughts justifying why we are right and we don't want to change our position. However, when we settle down and listen to our spirit-man, no matter how right we think we are, we can over-rule our thoughts and ask the one we are in strife with for forgiveness. 1John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” True repentance! Then what happens? It is like a weight is lifted. There is peace again in ones soul.

What happens next? We must watch out for condemnation. Romans 8:1, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” The thoughts come as to why did we allow ourselves to get over into strife? The devil will come along and really expound upon this sin and not only want us to remain in condemnation but have us become so depressed that we want to give up on the Word of God and stop growing spiritually.