

What Do You Do When You Disagree With Everyone in Your Life—including God?

“Can we agree to disagree?”

How many times have you heard that? How many times have you said it yourself? It’s a pretty popular saying, especially in the political and socially diverse environment in which we find ourselves today, but it’s a sad thing when all you have in common with another person is the fact that you disagree. Amos 3:3 says, “Can two walk together, except they are agreed?” (NKJV). That’s kind of the million-dollar question—a question for which I had a resounding answer: *Nope*.

Growing up in the church, I had more than enough to disagree with. I’m not talking about theology, worship style, legalism or anything related to your admission into the pearly gates. My disagreements were far more simple and personal. As the son of the preacher, my disagreements were with unrealistic expectations placed upon me by those who thought they knew me by virtue of my name. My jumping-off point was with how “good church folk” treated my family (in particular my father) and the abuse we suffered at the hands of such people.

At the ripe old age of 23, I was mad at God, through with church, and living a life that in no way reflected my upbringing as a preacher’s kid. As a result of my poor decisions and the root of bitterness that had me firmly entangled, my relationships were strained, my marriage was a mess, and I was trying to deal with the pain, regret and humiliation of life by hiding inside a bottle. I was working my way up the corporate ladder in my secular job, but beyond that, everything else was crashing around me.

Yet in spite of the disagreements, fights, feuds and other

assorted turmoil I had put my dad through, I still had to admit that he was my best friend. While I had done my best to push him away, my father, the son of an alcoholic-father-turned-church-deacon, knew what it was to be cast aside, knew the power and price of redemption, and knew that the best way to win over the object of your disagreement is with love.

Now, the problem with any disagreement is that the vast majority of the time, someone is in the right and someone is in the wrong. It pretty much went without saying that based on my lifestyle, I was wrong—although my dad would also be quick to admit he was not without fault. Still, I hung on to my bitterness and anger like a lifeline and refused to give an inch. I refused, that is, until I found myself on the bathroom floor—a total wreck—crying out and yelling at God. After consuming an inordinate amount of alcohol and a screaming match with my wife, I had collapsed on the floor of our bathroom late one night. Totally freaked out, she knew of nothing else to do than to call my father. I challenged her to do so, thinking he wouldn't come. Ashamed and confused, I had no use for myself anymore. I figured he didn't either.

In the middle of one of the darkest nights of my life, there was a knock at my door. It was my dad.

My initial reaction to seeing him was a hate-filled rant that quickly devolved into the cry of the prodigal. Once the angst-filled rebel gave way to the worn-down prodigal, the next couple of hours were filled with cries of remorse, tears of forgiveness, and promise—the promise of healed relationships and renewed commitment to my family, my heavenly Father and the calling He had placed on my life.

Someone smarter than me once said that the problem with running from God is that usually you end up running into Him. Living a life of disagreement with the godly people God has placed in our lives and being forever at odds with our gifts and calling will only lead to ruin and an up-close-and-

personal view of the bathroom floor.

Is there happiness in disagreement? Sure. Even the Bible alludes to that in passages like Hebrews 11:25: “He [Moses] chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin” (NIV).

However, the momentary happiness that a self-serving life brings pales in comparison to the life lived in agreement with the call of God. Pleasures lose their luster. Riches lose their value. Prestige lasts until the next shiny new employee comes along. The only life that has any lasting, eternal value is the one lived for Christ.

Now, years later, I’ve left the parties with my friends for the peace and contentment of my family. I’ve given up the life of egotistical and selfish disagreement for agreement and harmony with my fathers (earthly and heavenly). I traded in the confinement of self-imposed loneliness and unworthiness for the wide-open spaces of promise and hope that only a life in agreement with God’s call can bring.

And I wouldn’t trade it for the world.

Ronnie Phillips Jr. is the senior associate pastor of Abba’s House, where he leads all of Abba’s House’s evangelism and outreach efforts in the community and abroad. He also travels as an evangelist for groups such as Student Life and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. His book can be purchased [here](#).