

Cannibalistic Christians: The Rapidly Growing Trend That Has to Stop

Recently I have witnessed a growing trend of Christians who are attacking and criticizing other Christians. Their verbal attacks are cannibalistic. I'm sure these kinds of things happened long before social media ever existed, but now it seems to be getting worse.

A well-known ministry said one thing that is shared and reshared around pages where their followers start petty squabbles. The next week, it will be another victim. It becomes hot gossip, and people from all walks of life are weighing in on the latest story. Sadly it's like playing telephone, these things get blown way out of proportion. The ministries get attacked. The unbelievers are reminded as to why they don't want to go into churches, and the Christians participating think they have become some kind of church vigilante.

The news media is even beginning to pick up these stories. This is ridiculous. I have come to expect this kind of behavior from the unbeliever but from the church? Really?

Medically, when one body part attacks another body part the whole body becomes out of order and can't function. This disunity, the attacks and the brutality of the situation are causing the church to become fragmented.

I have a few things I think we all need to keep in mind:

- Are the words that flow from your mouth, or out of your keyboard going to cause unity within the body of Christ or division? Think about what you say before you say it. Think about what you post before you post it. God makes

a lot of statements in the Word about unity. Unity commands a blessing from God. Psalm 133 Does your life need God's blessing on it? People who are constantly causing strife and division do not please God. In fact, in Romans 16:1,7 God clearly tells people to avoid those causing strife. As Thumper once said in *Bambi*, "If you can't say somethin' nice, don't say nothin' at all."

- Matthew 7:5 Is very clear on the point that we need to remove the log out of our own eyes so that we can remove the speck from our brother's. It's easy to point the finger at someone else and what you feel they have done wrong, but are you looking that closely in the mirror at the things you need to work on? There is a popular phrase that when you point one finger at someone there are three fingers pointing back at you. Jesus did not come to this earth to be brutally murdered so a select few could sit on their high and lofty judgmental seats and point fingers at everyone around them. Jesus was moved with compassion for His people because He loved them. Signs, wonders and miracles flow when people are moved with compassion. Judgmental attitudes dry up the spiritual atmosphere in a person's life.
- Did you know that in order to go fishing for different kinds of fish, sometimes you need different kinds of bait? It's okay if you don't agree with everything one church teaches. As long as the foundation is biblical and not skewed, you must stop looking at someone else's flair as though there is something wrong with it. Different isn't wrong. Someone else is going to need that in their life. Different bait will catch different fish. You are on the same team. Stop fighting, people. If God had wanted us all to be like everyone else, he would have made us all carbon copy robots. He didn't. The Bible refers to the church as a body. Some church groups may focus more on the heart of an issue. Some may focus on the brain. However, they need each other to function.

- The Bible gives us fantastic wisdom on dealing with people you disagree with. This can be found in Matthew 18 15-17. If you have a problem with someone in the church, you are to go to them on your own so the two of you can talk it out. If that doesn't work, you are to bring a couple of witnesses, and if that still doesn't work, you bring them before the church, but you get the point. How many people practice this today? Instead, they get on social media and blast the individual. If you have a problem with them, go to them. Perhaps you only have half the story. However, people don't want to listen to this. They want to hide behind their posts and stir the drama. Do not speak until you know both sides of a story.
- "A soft answer turns away wrath" (Prov. 15:1a). You don't have to pick a fight with everyone you disagree with. You have the choice to stop the gossip. You have the choice to comment or not. There have been times I have responded to issues and there have been times I have chosen to let it go. Be wise with your words.

In all the drama we see these days, we must remember that God says, "'Vengeance is Mine. I will repay,' says the Lord" (Rom. 12:19b). It is not our job as believers to sit in our padded pews and point out all the faults of others. We need to honor men and women of God who are doing God's work. Let God deal with those people if they are off. If you haven't spent time praying about a situation, you shouldn't spend time posting about it. You need to run so fast towards what God has for you that it doesn't matter what others are doing around you. You don't have time to deeply question their motive.

Most people criticize what they can't control or what, deep down, makes them jealous. Your goal needs to be to do what God has put you on this earth to do. Stop looking to your right or to your left to see what everyone else is doing. You run your race and keep your eyes on Him.

We will all have to stand before God one day and give an account for how we lived our lives. So instead of nitpicking at others, and cannibalizing the ones in the pews and in the ministry next to you, we need to just keep running our own races. Let's start working as a team. {eoa}

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