

Bermudian Church of the Brethren

WEDNESDAY'S WORD – a midweek thought from Pastor Larry M. Dentler
to share a word of inspiration ... encouragement ... challenge ... a smile ... in the middle of your week
January 2 in the year of our Lord 2019 - #771

With Jesus

My grandson Jaxsen just turned 1 a few days before Christmas. We're into the Cheerios days now! He loves his Cheerios and he doesn't just pick up one at a time and savor their oaty goodness. No, he picks them up by the fist-full and jams them into his mouth. So good! Our pup, Bella, stands dutifully by Jax's highchair because when he is eating Cheerios there is a lot of fallout, and Bella takes care of those! Last night Jax was pounding away the Cheerios fist-full by fist-full. When he was done there remained one lone Cheerio stuck right between his eyes. He didn't realize it was there. But anyone who saw him knew that he had been **"with"** Cheerios!

There is a verse in Acts that has always intrigued me. It is in Acts 4. It is after the death, resurrection & ascension back to Heaven of our Lord Jesus. It is after Pentecost and the infilling of the Holy Spirit given to the Apostles. Peter & John have been arrested for preaching about Jesus. The Jewish authorities are baffled because they were so sure that once they had done away with Jesus His influence would be over. Now before them stand Peter & John, these two "unschooled" Galilean (*wrong side of the tracks*) fishermen. They were causing such a fuss with their dynamic, life changing, bold, unafraid preaching about Jesus. Many were turning to faith in Christ because of them. But how?

"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus." Acts 4:13 NIV

Hmmm? Do the folks around you ... in your family ... your neighbors ... your co-workers ... those in the places you shop & do business ... do these folks take note that even though you are an "ordinary" person ... that you have been **with** Jesus?

And how do we build that kind of witness? Here are some New Year's suggestions for working at your **"with Jesus"** witness.

➤ **Spend time each day in Scripture.** Even if it's just one verse a day that you focus on, it will make a difference in your life as you immerse yourself in His Word. ***"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly...."*** Colossians 3:16 NIV

➤ **Be careful how you respond in times of disagreements.** Differences of opinion happen. That's life. And in our culture today politics divides us and divides us harshly. There is division in churches & denominations. In families brokenness happens. But how we react is so important! There is no better place to shine for Jesus than in the midst of disagreement! ***"Do not resist an evil person Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."*** Matthew 5:39, 44 NIV Watch your words. Watch your social media posts. Watch your temper. You really can express disagreement without being mean, violent or hateful.

➤ Learn to stand on Biblical truth in a culture, even a church culture, that in so many areas has abandoned Biblical truth & values. Learn to take a stand without being hateful, loud or obnoxious. “**...speaking the truth in love...**” Ephesians 4:15 NIV

➤ Let love be what stands out most when others think of you. Be quick to respond to the needs of others ... even those you are at odds with. Be sensitive to when others hurt. Be quick to forgive. Be able to move past the hurts others inflict on you. Wear Christ's love as a garment! “**...put on love....**” Colossians 3:14 NIV

Dear Sisters & Brothers my prayer for you in 2019 ... my prayer for me ... my prayer for us ... is that when others see us, interact with us, work with us, do business with us, even disagree with us, that they will take note ... it will stand out like the Cheerio between Jax's eyes ... that we are just ordinary people who have been **with** Jesus!

Blessings dear friends in Christ for a blessed 2019! Pastor Larry <><