



"And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also." 1 John 4: 21

Sunday – September 20, 2026

Heart to Heart...

The Greek word is "*eris*". It is translated '*variance*' or '*strife*' depending on which version you use. It is used in Galatians 5:20 as a deed of the flesh. Another Greek word is "*echthra*". It is translated '*enmity*' also used in Galatians 5:20. These two fleshly deeds work off of one other and are destructive to your soul. Enmity is a state and attitude of mind toward another person. It is what the Jews had in their mind toward the Gentiles. They hated one another and had no dealings with each other. (Jesus didn't have that mind-set in John 4 toward the Samaritan woman.) Strife (*eris*) is the outcome and action of that state of mind. There are six usages of strife (*eris*) in the New Testament and four times it involves the life of the church and someone dividing it. It is strife that causes people to divide into sects. It is "*echthra*" and "*eris*" that splits the church!

Enmity and strife are so closely related. Here's how the flesh works in this area. The heart becomes filled with bitterness because of jealousy or just not agreeing with others. Enmity has an underlying hostile sentiment that never was resolved in their heart. It has been brewing in the heart (sometime for years) and it eventually grows into a bitter and resentful attitude. Bottom line, they have an unforgiving heart and never took care of it in years gone by. Enmity blinds their minds (that what sin does) to seeing their own sinfulness. Jesus spoke that the one who walks in darkness does not know where he goes (John 12:35). A person with enmity feels justified when they act toward another in an unloving, unforgiving manner. The only thing left is strife that pours out of that heart and mind set. Strife then divides brethren and promotes fleshliness. It's no big deal to some because we see this kind of thing happen in the world almost daily. No wonder Paul warned the Galatian congregations (and us) to be careful and watch over their hearts in these matters of the flesh because if this is our practice, we won't inherit the kingdom. That's the teaching of an apostle of Jesus Christ!

“There are six things which the Lord hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lie and the one who spreads strife among brothers.” (Proverbs 6:16-19) The Lord despises sin but there are certain things His holy nature absolutely abhors. If you notice, the seventh in the list that is an abomination is the *“one who spreads strife among brothers.”* Do we realize God has a deep abhorrence toward those who cause strife? Solomon knew it!

“Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” (Ephesians 4:3) Where do you think the Spirit of God will lead us? Would He lead us into or away from enmity and strife? Would the Lord lead us into unity and preserving it? The Spirit of the Lord only promotes and works for peace among His people, the church. We need to be a people who humbly submit to the Lord, allowing Him to have complete say and direction. We need to humble ourselves under God’s mighty hand because He is the Father, Jesus is the head of the church and we stay connected by listening and moving away from things that the Lord abhors.

“Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.” (Roman 13:14) By putting on the Lord Jesus Christ, what will happen in our lives? To God be the glory. Think about it!!!

Brent