

THE TAKE HOME

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Prayer of St. Francis

Lord make me an instrument of your peace

Where there is hatred let me sow love
Where there is injury, pardon
Where there is doubt, faith
Where there is despair, hope
Where there is darkness, light
And where there is sadness, joy.

O divine master grant
that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console
to be understood as to understand
to be loved as to love
For it is in giving that we receive
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned
And it's in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Our goal is not to fix each other or try to change someone's mind. Our focus is to listen well, learn and be open to how God might speak through this conversation.

James 1:19

“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry...”

- 1.What is the importance of the labels of “brother and sister” in this passage? What do they say about our relationships within the church? ... with people outside the church?
- 2.What does it mean to be “quick to listen and slow to speak?” How can we put this into practice?
- 3.What does it mean to be “slow to become angry?” How can we put this into practice?
- 4.What is one thing that would change about your relationships if you lived by the guidance of this Scripture?

Words of Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

(Numbers 6:24-26)

We Believe

- We believe every person is of sacred worth.
- We believe God breathed into each person the breath of life.
- We are made in God’s image.
- Jesus taught us the one another plan: Love one another, encourage one another..
- The Bible tells us what love looks like... love is patient and kind, doesn’t envy or boast, isn’t proud or self seeking or rude, keeps no record of wrongs.
- We know what love is because we see the depth of that love for us in Jesus on the cross.
- We know what our role is, because we see how Jesus served... with towel and basin, ready to do the dirty work of footwashing.
- We know the nature of God’s kingdom because of Jesus’ sermon on the mount. Blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart, blessed are the peacemakers.

Debate

vs.

Dialogue

The goal is to “win” the argument by affirming one’s own views and discrediting other views.	The goal is to understand different perspectives and learn about other views.
People listen to others to find flaws in their arguments.	People listen to others to understand how their experiences shape their beliefs.
People critique the experiences of others as distorted and invalid.	People accept the experiences of others as real and valid.
People appear to be determined not to change their own views on the issue.	People appear to be somewhat open to expanding their understanding of the issue.
People speak based on assumptions made about others’ positions and motivations.	People speak primarily from their own understanding and experience.
People oppose each other and attempt to prove each other wrong.	People work together toward common understanding.
Strong emotions like anger are often used to intimidate the other side.	Strong emotions like anger and sadness are appropriate when they convey the intensity of an experience or belief.

* Taken from *The Little Book of Dialogue for Difficult Subjects*