Dear Center for Creative Ministry,

This eLetter provides you with the latest version of Contemporary Comments.

In the right side bar you can also secure the Sharing Scripture facilitator guides:

**Sharing Scripture - Third Quarter: July 6 - September 28, 2013.**
Title: "Revival and Reformation" These excellent discussion sheets are designed to enhance your Sabbath School class or small group. Suitable for photocopying, Sharing Scripture contain thought questions and exercises that transform ordinary study times into dynamic learning adventures.

**Sharing Scripture - Fourth Quarter: October 5 - December 28, 2013.** Title: "The Sanctuary" These excellent discussion sheets are designed to enhance your Sabbath School class or small group. Suitable for photocopying, Sharing Scripture contain thought questions and exercises that transform ordinary study times into dynamic learning adventures.

Grace to you!

Center for Creative Ministry
2 Timothy 4:11; Philemon 1-25; 2 Corinthians 10:12-15; Romans 5:8-11; Matthew 18:15-17.

This story takes dissension in the church to a whole new level!

Beverly and Terri, members of the same church in Memphis, had been at odds with each other for years. Because neither worked to resolve the conflict it only grew worse—until it became monster-size. According to various witnesses, a verbal confrontation started at Wednesday’s Bible class that turned into a brawl at Sunday’s church service.1

Words were once again exchanged, but then family members and other parishioners got involved. There are different stories of “who hit who first” but what followed was umbrella hitting, scratching, hair pulling, and one woman being thrown to the ground. Police were called to break up the fight, and paramedics treated everything from scratches to a bloodshot and swollen eye!

According to the Mayo Clinic, there can be negative effects from holding a grudge:

- You might repeatedly bring anger and bitterness into every relationship
- Your life might become so wrapped up in the wrong that you can’t enjoy the present
- You might become depressed or anxious
- You might feel that your life lacks meaning or purpose
- You might feel that you’re at odds with your spiritual beliefs
- You might lose valuable and enriching connectedness with others

In contrast, the Clinic states that there can be great benefits to forgiving:

- You can have healthier relationships
- You can have greater spiritual and psychological well-being
- You can have less anxiety, stress, and hostility
- You can have lower blood pressure
- You can have fewer symptoms of depression
- You can have lower risk of alcohol and substance abuse 2

According to this report, whether we choose to hold a grudge, or to forgive, can either hurt us or help us—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. But the Bible offers an even better incentive for forgiving, and it’s found in Jesus’ last conversation with the disciples.
They are all in the Upper Room, eating one last meal together. Jesus will soon be taken prisoner and crucified. With only a few hours left, their Lord has some final instructions to give these who will continue the work of spreading the gospel. Jesus gives them a command—a dying wish, you might say:

" 'A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another' " (John 13:35).

Jesus's command to the disciples is our command, too. And it's a simple command: "love one another." Why love? Because this is how the world will know that we are Jesus' disciples. "By this"—by love.

As modern-day disciples, our greatest evangelistic tool isn't a lofty church building, a cleverly titled public series, or a worldwide radio or TV program. It's love.

Then we will have harmony within the church and the world will look at us and say, "I want to be a part of that love."

~ nc

1. Memphis Action 5 News
2. Mayo Clinic
(Scripture taken from the New International Version)

About Us

Since 1988, the Center for Creative Ministry has been serving local church leaders and individuals around the world. Formerly known as the publishers of ABBA Newsletter and the Baby Boomer Ministries Resource Center, we have now broadened our generational/ministry focus to include our children. The Center for Creative Ministry took on its new name on June 1, 1996.

The Center for Creative Ministry, formerly Baby Boomer Ministries, is a privately funded and managed para-church ministry fully recognized by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America. We are dedicated to supporting the local church in outreach and nurture ministries by providing resources, information, training, and consulting.

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