

Having The Last Word

Ponder: When should I let the other person have the last word?

Scripture: “It is honorable for a man to stop striving, since any fool can start a quarrel” (Prov. 20:3, NKJV).

Do you ever feel like you’re right, you know you’re right, and you can’t be satisfied unless you have the last word in the dispute? Maybe you’re thinking to yourself, “If I let the other person have the last word, it will be like admitting I’m wrong!” Or maybe you’re thinking, “He (or she) started it, but I’m sure as the world gonna end it!” That sort of thing can happen in the workplace, it can happen on the ball field, it can happen at church, and it can happen in a marriage, among other places.

I expect that King Solomon had more than his share of arguments with brothers and sisters as he was growing up, with his far-too-many wives when he was older, and with advisors and other people with whom he had to deal as king. Now some of those he could settle with his royal authority, but not all of them! “I’m the king and this is how we’ll do it” doesn’t work in every case.

In his God-given wisdom, Solomon wrote that it is honorable for a man to stop striving. There is no shame in letting the other person have the last word! Even if you’re right and you know you’re right, when you’ve made your case and the other person refuses to see it, drop it! Endless wrangling not only accomplishes nothing, but it is counterproductive. After all, as Solomon wrote, any fool can start a quarrel. What does that say, then, about the person who just keeps fanning the flames of the dispute? Wouldn’t that be equally foolish, if not more so?

As long as we’re in the flesh, arguments are bound to arise. Stand up for what is right; defend it vigorously! But don’t let the situation deteriorate into pointless bickering. Do the honorable thing – stop striving.

Hymn: “Humble Yourself In The Sight Of The Lord”

Prayer: Father, give us the wisdom and humility to see when it is time to stop striving. Help us to be like Jesus. We pray it in His name, Amen.