

## ***Glory to the Reader or the Writer?***

The fruit fly has long been the mainstay of biomedical research. An article in the April 3, 2000 Newsweek lauds the scientific breakthrough of reading "almost all of the chemical letters -- 165 million of them -- that make up its DNA." It is called "an impressive technical feat in its own right."

My marvel at the technological accomplishments of man falls far short of my awe for the One who took nothing and made all that man is discovering. The science of man is simply reading what God has written. And we are still in the primary reader stage at that -- humans have almost 20 times more DNA than fruit flies!

*"I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well" (Psa. 139:14).*

**- by David Diestelkamp**

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## ***Proper and Improper Controversy***

We should all recognize that a certain bit of controversy is inevitable if there is to be growth and if the church is to be kept pure. Faithful servants of the Lord are to go out into an unbelieving world and earnestly contend for the faith. Reproving and rebuking are in order when error in practice or in doctrine appear. Christ and the apostles fought a good fight. They were worthy controversialists. They abhorred sin and opposed it, and so should we.

The church at Jerusalem was not destroyed when there was "much disputing" over the necessity of the Gentiles keeping the Jewish ordinances (Acts 15:7). Brethren then studied and taught calmly and avoided bitterness, so the serious question was resolved and unity that pleased the apostles and the whole church prevailed (Acts 15:22). Brethren, we should be able to differ without anger and malice as we study topics about which there are differences in understanding.

Avoiding foolish and unlearned questions would do much to avoid the envy and strife and the useless and improper controversy. This requires skill in discernment to separate truth from the error, and there should be special concern for the humble babe in Christ who does not understand.

It is a very significant danger signal when brethren begin to object to all study of subjects about which there is controversy. Truth can be tried in the fire of debate, but error thrives under the wet blanket of "no controversy allowed." Heresy is brought in "privily" (2 Peter 2:1). Let some vigilant elder or preacher cry aloud when some perverse doctrine or practice is slipping into the family. Let us pray that we may come to learn by studying topics which are not understood by all rather than developing factions with closed minds and bitterness. There will, of course, always be different levels of understanding between the babes in Christ and the well taught giants among us. The "great plainness of speech" is used to help (2 Cor. 3:12). Please do not object to that which is necessary to the spiritual well being of the church.

**- by Irven Lee**

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## ***The Scriptures and Gossip***

The gossipers oft' begin their tales of woe with well-worn phrases, such as, "**They say.**" or "**Have you heard?**" or apologetically, "**I hate to tell you this, but...**" And thus, the tale unfolds. One might think that the Bible is silent on this subject, as gossip is so widespread. Yet, the very opposite is true. Here are a few of the many passages.

*"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord. Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him" (Lev 19:16-17).*

*"He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool" (Prov. 10:18).  
"A fool's mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul. The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly" (Prov. 18:7-8)*

*"It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling" (Prov. 20:3).  
"He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that*

*flattereth with his lips” (Prov. 20:19). “Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth” (Proverbs 26:20).*

Concerning the listener, we are reminded that *“a wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue” (Proverbs 17:4).*

Tattlers and gossipers are meddlers in other men’s affairs. God will judge. Our blessed Lord taught, *“A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment” (Matt 12:35-36).*

Let us carefully and prayerfully guard our speech!

**- by Louis Sharp**

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## **Let’s Talk About ‘ME’!**

An old joke tells of a fella who had a blind date with a young lady. He spent the whole evening talking about himself. Finally, near the end of the date, he said: “I’ve talked about myself enough. Now you talk about me.” Ouch! That’s the first and last date for that guy!

Unfortunately, that joke is played out too literally in these days. Seems folks have lost the skill of common and courteous conversation. So often people spend most of their time talking about themselves, their families, their activities and interests, etc. Have you noticed how seldom certain individuals ask about you, your work, or your family?

This self-centeredness has been encouraged and promoted on the pages of social media. Facebook and similar sites are overrun with people talking about themselves; posting flattering pictures of themselves; telling about their own achievements and those of their children and relatives. There is a new narcissism that exceeds anything ever seen before.

God’s Word warns that a person is “not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think” (Romans 12:3). We are urged to “consider one another” (Hebrews 10:24), and to do things that will “edify one another” (1 Thessalonians 5:11). We should “look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others” (Philippians 2:4). Paul’s example was of one who was “not looking for praise from men, not from you or anyone else” (1 Thessalonians 2:6).

Personal pride and selfish arrogance have no place in the heart of a Christian. Let’s be careful not to follow the current trend of ‘self-ism’. Think!

**- by Greg Gwin**