

Words Fitly Spoken

This is another lesson from the parenting class Brian Johnson, the ETSPM staff, Steve Higginbotham and I taught in the auditorium during the spring quarter. One point which is clear from these parenting sessions is there are some principles about parent-child relationships that are also applicable to brothers and sisters in Christ.

Communication is vital between parents and children. It is also important between brothers and sisters in Christ. Proverbs 25:11 reads, *A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in setting of silver.* A word fitly spoken doesn't mean the word(s) has to be brilliant, original, or even eloquent. A few words can have a lasting affect if they are timely spoken even if what is said is not eloquent and even grammatically correct. Many times it is when and by whom words are spoken that have the most meaning to us.

Sometimes we think we know our brothers and sisters at Karns have been members for several years but we really don't know them. Also, we have several new families and individuals who have recently become members of the Karns congregation. Saying hello or good morning in the foyer week after week does not necessarily build binding relationships. It takes time and effort to get to know everyone in the congregation. When we (the elders) visit in homes, I've observed there are times when mostly listening is the best way to communicate.

What is it we want to communicate to our brothers and sisters in Christ? Most people need people and they need to feel a part of the church family. The Bible (and sociologists) says that during our interaction, we need to convey a philia love which is warm and joyful. We need to communicate, a "I'm delighted to be with you" kind of feeling. This is what Romans 12:10 says, *Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another.*

All of us need to make a point to talk with those in the congregation we don't know very well, and by doing so, get to know each other better. The admonition seems so simple but it is not easy to accomplish on a congregational basis. The verse which says what I want to be said about the Karns congregation is found in (II Thessalonians 1:3). *We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, as it is fitting, because your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of everyone of you abounds toward each other.*

For the elders,
Don Denton