

**July 15, 2020   Pastor's Ponderings:   *What do you say when...?***

Children's Time today was a great example of how confusing the English language can be. Three words that sound exactly alike can be spelled in three different ways: *So, sew, sow*. (This was a lead-up to the Parable of the Sower, Matthew 13:1-9.) And you have to be careful of the word 'sow,' because all by itself, it could mean a 'person who plants' or it could mean...wait for it... 'a grown female swine.' Then there's the person who sews...they are called a 'sewer,' and that does not refer to the underground pipes that carry toilet water away from our houses!

Yes, language can be amusing, but it can also be confusing. I am hearing all kinds of things these last few months that make my head spin. For example, I hear people say, "Here in America, we all come from immigrants. We are a nation of immigrants." Really? Are you sure? Maybe all white people have immigrants in their families, but native people are here in America, too. And they were here long before Europeans came. Native people aren't immigrants.

And black people...don't a lot of them come from families of freed slaves who were brought here against their will in horrible circumstances? They certainly don't claim to 'come from immigrants.' They are here as the descendants of an immoral economic system—slavery. Way different from being an immigrant.

A wise man said once, "Words create worlds." The words: 'Here in America, we all come from immigrants' creates a world-view that ignores at least two large groups of God-created/blessed people. Maybe not intentionally. But that's what happens, and that 'ignoring the other' can and does create serious conflicts, distrust, and misunderstandings.

Maybe a more accurate thing to say is: "Here in America, we are all created equal in the sight of God, and I am asking God to help me to faithfully love my neighbors the way God loves me." Just like Jesus taught us to. Try saying that, and see what kind of world gets created! God's peace to all.

*Pastor Geri*