

At a conference recently a friend of mine was explaining to me how frequently he sticks his foot in his mouth. In private conversations he criticizes people thinking no one else is listening and then discovers the very person he's talking about is standing right there. I smiled. *Amusingly* We started toward the door of the next room and passed by a strange-looking man handing out programs. We took ours, walked into the room, and my friend said to me, "Now that guy is bona fide crazy." Well, you guessed it. He turned around and discovered that the man passing out programs had followed in right behind us. When people find out some things we say, we find out some charity we lack. *He wasn't crazy - surprised*

The disciples today stick their ~~shoe~~ *shoe* in their mouth as they walk up the road behind Jesus. Arriving at their destination, Jesus asked, "Well, what were you arguing about on the way?" They did not want to answer that question--arguing about who was the greatest. No one is great who argues about being great; in fact no one is great who argues over what is small.

The question Jesus asked, "What are you arguing about?" is still an embarrassing question to hear. A business might have to answer, "How to get employees to work more with less reward." A church might have to answer, "Whether the role of women is important." A family might have to answer, "Creamy or chunky style peanut butter." Think for a minute about your past week. What were you arguing about? ~~To keep our foot out of our mouth we could listen more carefully to what we say.~~ *Does that question find you with your foot in your mouth*

Why is it that we argue? James says in his epistle that people argue when they don't get what they want. And they don't get what they want when they ask for the wrong things, or ask in the wrong way. We argue sometimes because we're selfish; sometimes because we care; sometimes because we know a lot about a topic. But always because something isn't going our way.

Jesus tried to show the disciples what was important: life and death, service that's childlike. But their argument kept them from learning. If we find out why we feel strongly enough to argue, we've taken one step further on the road to charity.