

A Lesson from Lincoln

During the administration of Abraham Lincoln, a delegation from a western state called upon him with a written protest against a certain appointment.

In particular, the paper had a list of specific objections against Senator Baker, a longtime and beloved friend of the president. The objections were definite reflections on Baker's character – allegations Lincoln knew to be untrue.

Holding the paper in his hand, Lincoln asked with calm dignity: "This is my paper which you have given me?"

When they assured him that it was, he asked further: "To do with as I please?"

"Certainly, Mr. President," replied the spokesman.

Lincoln leaned over to the fireplace, laid the paper on the hot coal, turned to the group and said: "Good day, gentlemen."

What do we learn from this account in the life of Lincoln? Perhaps four lessons:

1. As leaders, we should be open to listening to the concerns that people may have.
2. We must be alert to distinguish gossip from truth.
3. Those who bring complaints to our attention deserve an answer – sooner than later.
4. Friendship is an honorable and much-desired relationship.

Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love (Romans 12:10 NKJV)

– Beecher Hunter