



New Living

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Welcome!

We are glad to have you with us today and want you to feel comfortable as we enter into worship.

Audio CD's of our sermons are free upon your request. Please browse our free CD selection in the foyer.

Please come back and be with us anytime you have the opportunity!

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How Would You Respond?

Timothy and Titus were instructed by Paul to rebuke sin when necessary. *Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and teaching.* (2 Timothy 4:2.) *Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you.* (Titus 2:15) A compromising attitude toward sin in one's life will result in his being displeasing to God. How is your heart when it comes to receiving a spiritual rebuke?

We must properly evaluate the rebuke. In the majority of cases, the one who is doing the reprimand doesn't look upon his task with great anticipation or excitement! The person is motivated by his concern and love for the soul of the one who has erred in some way. When rebuked, *examine yourself as to whether you are in the faith. Prove yourself.* (2 Corinthians 13:5a) The Christian - if he is truly interested in serving the Lord - will take the advice and examine his life. Everyone should take an evaluation of where they stand before God regularly. If wrong is found - correct it, ask for forgiveness, and get on with your life.

We must also examine the rebuke in light of the Scriptures. In Acts 17:11 the Bereans *searched the Scriptures daily to*

find out whether these things were so. (Acts 17:11) Is the rebuke backed up by Scripture? If so, the Holy Spirit through the Scriptures is the one who rebuked you! One may either respond by repenting of the error or rejecting the word of God!

Some deem a spiritual rebuke as an injustice and refuse to admit error.

Here is where discipline breaks down in many cases. Pride and emotion are allowed to be carried away and the one being rebuked takes it personally. Perhaps one's tradition is challenged in some way. Mankind has a habit of wanting to hide sin from those around him. Some want their peers to believe they commit no sin, have no problems, and lust after nothing. Pride indeed is one of the greatest downfalls of mankind. Paul warned the Roman brethren *not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith,* Romans 12:3. Pride gets in the way of honestly evaluating one's life. Pride is what keeps men from admitting error - not only to other men - but God as well. The Christian should keep Proverbs 27:5 in mind: open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed.

A true revelation of the intentions of the heart is seen when a person is rebuked for a sin and refuses to admit it.

This person has no true desire to be pleasing to God. The only way one may be pleasing to God is to confess of his error and ask for forgiveness. (1 John 1:8-10) Proverbs 13:1 says *a wise son heeds his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.*

Some become angry and retaliate upon being rebuked. Evidence is clear of this being one of the biggest breakdowns in church discipline. Upon the rebuke being issued a list of charges are leveled upon the *rebuker* by the *rebukee*. The charges leveled by the erring brother/sister may go back years. Vicious and hurtful things are often said in haste. Some brethren have even gone as far as to physically attack the one who leveled the rebuke.

Such attitudes are ungodly and unbecoming of a Christian. These attitudes parallel the Galatians who reacted negatively toward Paul as he corrected them. Paul asked, *Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?* Satan tempts the one being rebuked to harden his heart from the truth and turn away from God. In the short run this may seem as the easiest thing to do to avoid potential embarrassment by having to admit sin. To harden one's heart against the truth is to place the soul in danger. Paul wrote: *...with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth that they might be saved... they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12)

One may also be humbled and grateful for the rebuke. Proverbs 9:8 says: *rebuke a wise man and he will love you.* The Christian must realize that the one who comes to him comes to him in love and respect for his soul. Such will help build the bond between brethren and peace and warmth will permeate the congregation.

Upon receiving the rebuke, the Christian must confess and forsake the error. Again, the Christian has two options: live his life so that he may be pleasing to God or live in open rebellion against God. He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy. (Proverbs 28:13) We cannot hide our sins from God. Ultimately, we will give an account to Him for how we act in our lives. If you are the recipient of a spiritual rebuke, examine it according to the Scriptures. If it has merit, correct the wrong, ask God for forgiveness, and continue to serve God!

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Need to refill your evangelism toolkit?

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40 Days of Prayer

Day 36

**Please pray that everything said and done during
the Fall Conference will be to God's glory.**