

Bedford Bulletin

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*"God
made
us alive..."*

*Together
with Christ*
Ephesians 2:5

What to Do with the Wayward Member?

It seems that sometimes when a member starts down the wrong path the body of Christ has a tendency to turn and look the other way when the exact opposite is true. Every member should be making every effort to salvage the soul that is sinning by talking, writing, and exhortations to repent and begin practicing the Lord's will as it pertains to the matter at hand. Seeking to save a brother or sister who has taken a wrong turn spiritually is the greatest work the church does both individually and collectively. Why? Because the value of every soul! "...*what will a man give in exchange for his soul?*" (Mt. 16:26). Why? Because the alternative: "...*these will go away into everlasting punishment*" (Matt. 25:46). Why? Because "*to go to hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched— 44 where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched*", is not an option we want for someone whom we love (Mark 9:43-44).

Jesus came for this purpose. Read it! "*the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost*", (Lk. 19:10), "*He will save His people from their sins*" (Matt. 1:21), "...*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners...*" (1 Tim. 1:15). God came down here for this purpose, shouldn't His children have the same purpose? When a member is hurting or falling, it is our God-ordained duty to be busily engaged in seeking to restore, and we should get to doing it.

We need to break out of our "safe zone"! Apply every scriptural and God-glorifying truth and fulfill our duty to save any wayward soul, diligently work to prevent these precious souls from falling from the grace they received. This is of the utmost importance.

Every child of God knows the devil is actively “*seeking whom he may devour*” (1 Pet. 5:8b), and we also know if the Devil can, he’ll latch on to weaker brethren, and it’s our duty to intervene whenever possible.

We are admonished to “*Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all*” (1 Thess. 5:14), to take great care lest we cause a weak brother to perish (1 Cor. 8:11-13); and to “*consider one another in order to stir up love and good works*” (Heb. 10:24). Thus, we are to faithfully and continually admonish and encourage weaker brethren to the saving of their souls.

How? The scriptures command us, “*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted*” (Gal. 6: 1). When one is caught up in a fault every effort should be made to restore such a one. The danger of being overtaken in a fault, of falling from grace and of refusing brotherly admonition to repent, is real; the duty to do the proper thing about it when it occurs is emphatically commanded and easily understood as necessary. James exhorts, “*Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save [a]a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins*” (James 5:19-20). What a great work is done when we can by the power of God restore “*a sinner from the error of his way*”, saving “*a soul from death*”. Every effort therefore should be made to restore because if it can’t be done the only thing left to do is to publicly discipline and withdraw from those who can’t be brought to repentance any other way (1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3:6-15). Being overtaken in a fault, of falling from grace and of refusing brotherly admonition to repent, is real and horrifying. The duty to do the proper thing about it when it occurs is hard but emphatically commanded.



TODAY WE CHOOSE TO REJOICE

1 John 3:16

“By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.”

Don’t be guilty of human reasoning. Some have been known to say, “Withdrawing fellowship will tear up the church and do more harm than good.” It didn’t tear up the church at Corinth (2 Cor. 2:6-11; 7:6-16). Did God make the mistake of commanding something which would tear up the church doing more harm than good? Who can honestly believe it? If withdrawing from one is even on the table, the trouble is already in the church. The goal is to help the individual and protect the body, not to

Knowing & Doing God's Will

Proverbs 11:14

do harm. Painful, yes, necessary yes, for the truth is the church will be torn up or even ruined if we don't keep God's commandments.

Some say, "It may harden them so they will never return." It is strange that God didn't think this way. Shouldn't we talk about and emphasize what the Bible says the desired effect is for withdrawing, instead of what men think it may or may not do. Some say, "None of us is without sin, therefore we cannot mark others; for the Bible says, 'Let him that is without sin cast the first stone.'" Christians can and do sin, but they cannot live in and practice sin, on the contrary, they repent of and confess their sins. The Bible does not call the righteous "sinner" (1 Jn. 1:7-9; 3:3-10; Eph. 2:1). Furthermore, we are to "*have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them*" (Eph. 5:11; See also 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). These unscriptural objections and flimsy excuses are but tools of Satan used to deny the plain word of God and the duty of saints to keep the church pure.

No good reason. It may be neglected because our faith is weak, and our spiritual barometer is falling. It may be because of **fear** of what the guilty party will do when disciplined; **fear** of hurting someone's feelings; **fear** of tearing up the church and driving people away; or **fear** of suffering some kind of persecution; **fear** of getting involved. My brethren remember, "*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love*" (1 John 4:18).

Don't wink at sin because of pressure from unbelieving and unruly members who will not follow the lead of Godfearing members. Don't turn your eyes away from the wisdom that is from above which is, "*...first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy*" (James 3:17). Remember the words of Jesus, "*29 If your right eye causes you to [a]sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to [b]sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell*" (Matt. 5:29-30). Jesus said, "*And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell*" (Matt. 10:28). Paul wrote, "*3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness*

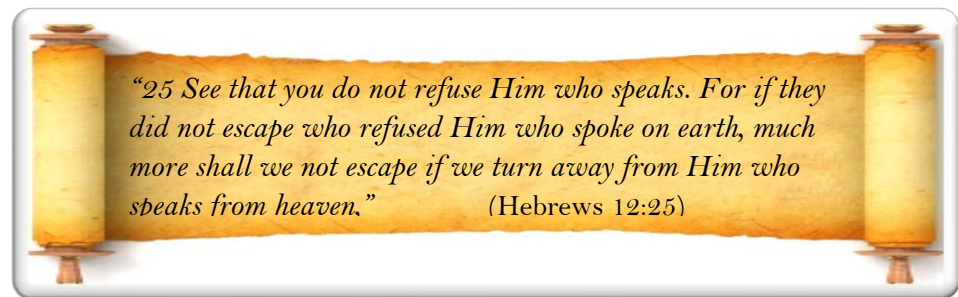
of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others” (Phil. 2:3-4).

If we wish to please God teaching on discipline must be obeyed. To keep the church pure and restore those overtaken in sin we must obey the commandments. It is totally inconsistent to insist God’s plan for entrance into fellowship, then discard His commands of exclusion from fellowship; both are divinely ordered; both are to be respected and obeyed.

How many will drift away from Christ until we care enough to first seek to save, and then dare to discipline? God Only Knows.

Love

Dave Scarpino



Our faithful Creator is worthy to be praised in this assembly. All praise to Him who reigns above in majesty supreme! He gave His Son to die, for all mankind, that He might redeem all. Our blessed Redeemer suffered and died for our sins and is now risen and sitting at the right hand of God as Head of the church. Let us offer the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, knowing that He is the author of eternal salvation to all those who obey Him. (Hebrews 5:8-9) ***“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory!”*** (Isaiah 6:3)

Times of Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Study	9:00 AM
Sunday Morning Worship	9:50 AM
Sunday Evening Worship	6:00 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:30 PM

What Must I Do to Be Saved?

1. Hear the gospel -----John 6:45; Romans 10:17
2. Believe the gospel -----John 8:24; Hebrews 11:6
3. Repent of sins -----Luke 13:3; Acts 17:30
4. Confess Christ -----Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:10
5. Be baptized -----Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38
6. Remain faithful unto and until death -----Revelation 2:10; Matthew 10:22