

Count Him Not As An Enemy

Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15. "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

Paul writing to the church told them to discipline those who confessed Jesus, but erred in some way. One method to be used was to separate from the erring brother. This would show he, and everyone else, that the church didn't tolerate sinful acts among it's members. If the fault was ignored, then the lost would think that sin was allowed and that the church was no better than the worldly person.

Today discipline is needed as we are still people living in a body of flesh. Anyone of us can, and do, err. It might be some minor thing, or something major. Either way we need to correct what ever is wrong. Take another look at what Paul wrote to the

church. He didn't say judge the person as useless, or as beyond hope of redemption. He counseled to break fellowship if the person refused to submit to the word of God. This is a serious situation that must be handled according to God's word, not by man's likes and dislikes.

Galatians 6:1-2. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ." The object is not to condemn, or to destroy the erring one, but to restore that person to a right relationship to Jesus. Those who are to help a fallen one are told to be careful, lest they feel superior and judge the person. Job's "friends" judged him as an unrepentant sinner, ever as they sought to help him. God rebuked them and had Job to pray for them lest God deal with them after their folly. **Job 42:8.**

We know what sin is for we all have committed sins in our life. As we have received mercy we should want others to find forgiveness too. How can any of us feel that we are better than someone

else when we are in the flesh like everyone else? Even so, sin is to be dealt with in the church. If we are trying to obey the Lord we will be glad to be shown our error so that we can live closer to the Lord. A true Christian wants to be doing what is right in the eyes of God. The one who wants to do his own will and will not heed God's commands is a hypocrite, rebelling against God.

While God will judge such a person's soul, yes, that is his right, not ours, we should warn such a person. We should not treat him as if his sin is acceptable, but to show him by the scriptures why it is wrong. If in a position of leadership he should be removed from his office. This does not matter if he is a friend, family member, song leader, deacon, elder, or even the preacher, it must be done.

Situations like this are painful and we hate to see them, but they do happen. We must do our duty to the Lord in a loving way, not in a self-righteous judgmental attitude. Problems arise in all churches, but not all churches handle them in the right way. God's word gives us guidance - let us follow it.

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PRIMARYLY, THE CHORISTERS ARE LISTED AS SONS AND DESCENDANTS OF ASAPH, HEMAN, AND JEDUTHUN, CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CONDUCTING THE MUSIC AND SINGING DURING THE SERVICES HELD IN THE TEMPLE. HARPS, PSALTERIES, AND CYMBALS WERE THE INSTRUMENTS USED TO ACCOMPANY THE SINGERS AND, ALONG WITH HYMNS OF PRAISE, PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING, AND PLEAS FOR DIVINE HELP AND FORGIVENESS, IT WAS EXPECTED THAT THE CHORISTERS WOULD ALSO PROPHECY IN SONG WHENEVER SUCH A NEED WAS DEEMED NECESSARY!

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