

ELDERS & DEACONS SOLUTION to strife, offense, discord, complaining, etc.

1. HOW DO WE HANDLE RELATIONAL OFFENSES? (irritations, annoyances, nuisances, aggravation, etc)

Pro 17:9 He who covers and forgives an offense seeks love and keeps friends.

1st Peter 4:8 above all things, sincerely love each other, for love covers and disregards the offenses of others.

James 1:19 My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen and slow to take offense.

Ephesians 4:2-3 Make allowances because you love one another and strive earnestly to keep the harmony by living at peace. (put up with one another in love)

Eph 4:26 do not go to bed angry.

I Corinthians 13:5 Love is not touchy or resentful. Love is not easily offended.

I Corinthians 13:7 Love believes the best in every person.

Galatians 6:2 bear one another's faults...

Matt 11:6 blessed is he who takes no offense.

Rom 12:16 Adjust yourself to live in harmony. Do everything possible on your part to live at peace.

II Corinthians 13:11 be agreeable and live in peace with one another, and the God of peace will be with you.

Matt 18:35 My heavenly Father will deal with every one of you if you do not forgive from your heart all offenses.

Pro 19:11 it is the glory of a man to overlook an offense.

Col 3:13 bear with one another's faults and be quick to forgive an offense just as Christ forgave you.

Ecclesiastes 10:4 ...for gentleness and calmness prevent or put a stop to great offenses.

***IT IS A SIN TO BE OFFENDED.**

***WE HANDLE OFFENSES BY FORGIVING.**

2. WHAT HAPPENS IF WE DON'T FORGIVE AN OFFENSE?

Hebrews 12:15 do not allow a root of resentment (animosity, bitterness, or hatred) to cause trouble and all become contaminated by its poison.

Matt 6:15 if you do not forgive others of their willful sins, letting them go, and giving up resentment, your Father will not forgive your sins.

Pro 17:9 He who covers and forgives an offense seeks love and keeps friends.

***IF WE DON'T FORGIVE, WE LOSE FRIENDS AND CONTAMINATE OTHERS.**

***IF WE DON'T FORGIVE, THEN GOD WILL NOT FORGIVE US.**

3. HOW DO WE HANDLE RELATIONAL SINS? (Biblical sins that go against God, His Word, and YOU- the one on the other side of the sin)

Matt 18:15 If a fellow believer wrongs you (sins against you), go to him and tell him what was wrong. If he listens, you have won a friend.

V16 If he will not listen to you, take two or more witnesses, as the scripture says. **V17** and if he will not listen to them, then tell the whole thing to the church. Finally, if he will not listen to the church, treat him as though he were a pagan or a tax collector.

Matt 18:21 Peter asked, Lord, how many times will my brother sin against me and I forgive him and let it go? Up to seven times?" **V22** Jesus answered him, "I say to you, not up to seven times, but seventy times seven."

Luke 17:3 if your brother sins **against you**, tell him...If he sins against you seven times in one day and repents each time, forgive him and consider the offense annulled.

I Peter 4:8 Love covers a multitude of sins.

***WE HANDLE RELATIONAL SINS BY-**

1. Going to that person 1 on 1 with the GOAL of winning the brother back.
2. forgiving the sin just like an offense.
3. If the person continues to sin against you and you continue to forgive, you are allowed to treat them like a pagan. How do we treat pagans? With love, mercy, and kindness- in hopes that they continue to attend church, but we don't trust them to serve in church.

4. WHAT DO I DO WHEN SOMEONE COMES TO ME WHEN THEY ARE OFFENDED BY SOMEONE ELSE?

***TAKE THEM TO THAT PERSON IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT TALK ABOUT IT... You are not their counselor.**

There are only 3 reasons someone will come to you with an offense against someone else-

- A. They think you will listen to their un-forgiveness, slander, gossip- which helps them feel justified for being offended.
- B. They think you will end up agreeing with them verbally, which also allows them to stay bitter.
- C. They think you are an extremely wise counselor who will escort them to the person with whom they are offended so that they can deal with it and let it go, or forgive immediately and let it go.

*****IF SOMEONE COMES TO YOU MORE THAN ONCE, SOMETHING IS WRONG!**

5. HOW DO WE HANDLE A SIN IN SOMEONE'S ELSE'S LIFE THAT ISN'T AGAINST US?

I Thess 4:11 make it your ambition to live quietly and mind your own business...

I Peter 4:15 let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or a busybody (meddling in the affairs of others).

Proverbs 11:13 No one who gossips can be trusted, but someone with integrity is trustworthy.

Proverbs 10:19 The more you talk, the more likely you are to sin. He who keeps his mouth shut does wisely.

Matthew 7:12 Do for others what you want them to do for you. Treat others the way you want to be treated

Romans 2:1 Every time you criticize someone, you condemn yourself

Matthew 12:36 on Judgment Day, men will have to give account for every word they have spoken. Words are powerful; take them seriously. Words can save you. Words can condemn you.

James 1:26 if anyone does not bridle his tongue, this person's religious service is worthless.

I Timothy 5:19 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.

6. WHAT SINS ARE WE ALLOWED TO REBUKE OR CORRECT IN FELLOW CHRISTIANS?

4A. If they are the authority figure: parent, elder, ecclesiastical authority, employer, landlord, policemen, teacher, coach, etc.

4B. If someone gives you permission or asks: their friend, counselor, spouse, etc.

4C, 4D, 4E- are not only NT areas that any believer can correct, but they hold a consequence of ex-communication if they don't change.

4C. Continual open sexual immorality without repentance

4D. Speaking or preaching heresy without repentance.

4E. Continual strife, discord, gossip, slander- without repentance.

7. WHY DOES GOD WANT US TO CORRECT AND POSSIBLY EX-COMMUNICATE SOMEONE WHO CAUSES CONTINUAL STRIFE?

*If these 3 sins are not corrected, they will destroy the entire church. The last hope for true repentance is when an entire church family refuses to fellowship with a fellow Christian who is causing strife, preaching heresy, or advertising their sexually immoral life.

James 3:16 where there is strife and contention there is confusion and every kind of evil.
Pro 17:14 the beginning of strife is like water coming from a small crack in a dam; therefore stop strife before it breaks out.

Proverbs 20:3 It is an honor for a man to cease from strife and avoid a fight.

Matthew 12:25 a house with internal strife is continually brought to destruction

I Corinthians 5:6-7 & 11-13 About the condition of your church...a little leaven can spread through the whole batch of dough. Remove the old leaven... Do not associate with any Christian who is a slanderer (has a foul tongue) Do not even sit down to eat with such a person. Drive out that wicked one from among you. **Expel him from your church.**

Proverbs 6:16-19 There are six things the Lord **hates**...a lying tongue...a false witness... discord among the **brethren**...

Proverbs 22:10 **Kick out** the troublemakers and things will quiet down.

Rom 16:17-18 Now I urge you, my friends, watch out for those who cause divisions... I warn you to turn aside from them, **avoid them.**

Titus 3:11 Give at least two warnings to those who cause divisions, then **reject him from your fellowship and have nothing more to do with him**

Pro 11:13 No one who gossips can be trusted, but someone with integrity is trustworthy.

Pro 20:19 **stay away** from people who gossip.

I Peter 4:15 let none of you suffer as a murderer, or a thief, or an evil-doer, or a busybody (meddling in the affairs of others).

8. HOW DO WE GAIN BACK OUR FRIEND AND OUR CHURCH FAMILY MEMBER WHO LEFT DUE TO UN-FORGIVENESS OR OFFENSE?

*Our goal is to lead them to repent (change the way you think), so that when they return, this will never happen again.

*We should ALWAYS welcome ANY brother or sister who repents, with open arms!!!

Luke 15:17 Then he came to his senses and said, I will get up and go to my father and say, I have sinned against God and you...

Galatians 6:1 if any friend has been overtaken in sin, you who are spiritual should set him right and gently restore him.

Matthew 3:8 Bring forth fruit that is consistent with repentance [let your lives prove your change of heart].

II Corinthians 7:9-11 Yet I am glad now, not because you were pained, but because you were pained into repentance [and so turned back to God]; for you felt a grief such as God meant you to feel, so that in nothing you might suffer loss through us or harm for what we did.

Matthew 7:12 Do for others what you want them to do for you. Treat others the way you want to be treated.

Proverbs 19:19 A hot-tempered man must pay the penalty. If you rescue him, you will have to do it again.

Matt 5:7 blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.

*If you were taken away in a sin that was destroying the church that you loved, how would you want people to treat you? One of the most merciful things someone can do- is to show you the area in which your sin is destroying your life and those around you.

*True repentance is shown toward the people whom they infected with their sin. (ask forgiveness to the ones they talked ABOUT and talked TO)

9. WHAT IF THEY DON'T WANT TO REPENT OR CHANGE OR BE RESTORED?

Proverbs 18:2 a fool finds no pleasure in understanding, but they delight in airing their own opinions.

Proverbs 1:7 fools despise wisdom and discipline.

Proverbs 12:15 a fool will not listen to wise counsel

Proverbs 10:18 a fool speaks slander and talks too much, but a wise man will be quiet.

Proverbs 12:23 the heart of a fool speaks foolish things

Proverbs 18:13 spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish.

Isaiah 32:6 the fool has a heart of iniquity and practices ungodliness.

Proverbs 18:2 fool's words get them into constant quarrels; they are asking for a beating. The mouth of the fool is his ruin.

Proverbs 26:11 as a dog returns to his vomit, so a fool repeats his foolishness.

Proverbs 29:9 a wise person will ignore a fool or else there will be ranting with no satisfaction.

Proverbs 26:4 do not respond to a fool or you will be just like him.

Proverbs 26:7 a proverb in the mouth of a fool is as useless as a paralyzed leg.
Proverbs 10:23 doing wrong is fun for a fool.
Proverbs 15:21 a fool will advertise his foolishness but a wise man will walk uprightly.
Proverbs 14:9 fools mock at making amends for sin.
Psalms 14:1 only fools say in their hearts, "There is no God." (and it shows by how they treat the local church).
Proverbs 29:11 fools vent their anger, but the wise hold it back.
Matthew 7:6 Do not throw your pearls to pigs; If you do, they will trample on them and turn and tear you into pieces.
Proverbs 17:10 A rebuke impresses a man of discernment more than a hundred lashes on a fool.

*If someone doesn't want to recognize one of the 3 NT open rebuke sins, then there is nothing you can do but let them go and pray for them.

DEBRIEF

Q- When someone comes to me with a complaint (offense or sin) about someone else, what should I do?

A- You should immediately stop them from spreading slander or gossip and tell them to GO to THAT person and deal with it one on one.

Q- What if they are coming to me for "advice" or "counsel" on an offense or hurt caused by someone else?

A- You should immediately stop them from spreading slander or gossip and tell them to GO to THAT person and deal with it one on one.

Q- What if they said that they already tried going to that person?

A- Then offer to go with them in order to bring resolution, peace, and restoration.

Q- What if they don't want to go to the person whom they are offended or hurt by?

A- Then kindly ask them to let the offense go, forgive, and drop it.

Q- What do I do when someone comes to me and tells me they are offended by something I have done?

A- You remind them that they have to forgive you. It's up to you whether or not you change in that area. Personally, I marginalize the people in my life who always get offended.

Q- What do I do when someone comes to me and shows me that I have sinned against them?

A- REPENT QUICKLY. The quicker you repent, the quicker the conversation can be over. The more you make excuses and justify your behavior, the deeper the conversation will go and the more pain will come.