

A TIME TO WITHDRAW FELLOWSHIP

The Unpleasant Consequences of Persistent Rebellion

II Thessalonians 3:14-15

Introduction:

1. The Bible openly deals with unpleasant contingencies.
2. We must be sure to grant or withhold fellowship only as God instructs.
3. While the subject of church discipline is much broader than withdrawing fellowship, the unpleasant consequences of persistent rebellion must be addressed.
4. Wisdom, as always, must be employed.

The Bible Presents Us with Some Very Interesting Contrasts Regarding Withholding Fellowship

1. II Timothy 2:24-26 and II John 9-10.
2. Galatians 1:8-9 and Acts 18:24-28.
3. Matthew 9:10-13 and I Corinthians 5:11-13.

Different Kinds of Problems Received Different Kinds of Teaching

1. A brother who refuses to make things right with a brother (Matt. 18:15-17).
2. A person who causes divisions (Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:9-10).
3. A Christian who commits a gross public sin, and persists (I Cor. 5:1-8).
4. A Christian who continues behavior that is against God's standards of righteousness (I Cor. 5:11-13).
5. A Christian who will not assume God given mandates III Thess. 3:6, 14)
6. A leader who continues in sin (I Tim. 5:19-20).
7. A person of the world who behaves in an openly perverse manner (Eph. 5:11-12).
8. People of the world in general (I Cor. 5:9-10).

Differing Circumstances Account for Differences in Instructions

1. A person's intentions.
2. The severity of the problem.
3. How a person deals with a problem.
4. The amount of time a person has been a Christian, at times, ignorance is a factor (Heb. 5:11-14).
5. A person's attitude.
6. Whether one deceives or is deceived (Matt. 18:6-7).

Conclusion

1. We should look to preserve fellowship whenever we have biblical grounds (Eph. 4:1-3).
2. Patience is in order whenever possible (II Tim. 2:24-26).
3. Those who persistently refuse all reasonable efforts made to secure repentance must face the biblical consequences for their actions (II Thess. 3:6, 14).

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