

Admonish One Another

08-16-20

Romans 15:14 *Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.*

What is admonishment? To admonish means to warn or reprimand someone firmly, to disapprove in a gentle way. In another sense it refers to advising or urging someone earnestly of their duties and obligations. It is also meant to warn someone of things to be avoided.

Scriptures speak often of the obligation to admonish. We are to admonish one another (Romans 15:14), something that we do each time we sing to one another (Colossians 3:16). The overseers must admonish the body (1 Thessalonians 5:12), and we all need to admonish those who are unfaithful (2 Thessalonians 3:15). In Titus 2:4 Scriptures states that older women are to admonish the younger women.

While it is not always something we want, we all need to be admonished in order to remain spiritually fit. This is a two way street. We also need to admonish one another, giving them our perspectives when they fit.

Admonition does not always work. This can be because someone does not receive it in the right way, or it is not given in the right way. When it is given without gentleness (the bully), without purpose (the fault finder), without sincerity (the boaster), or without purity (the hypocrite). When it is received without humility (the proud), and without the genuine love of brethren and the Lord (rebellious), it does not work.

So how does one properly give (or receive) admonition? We can look back at Romans 15:14 and see two characteristics that make one able to admonish: being full of goodness and being full of wisdom.

Being full of goodness means in part having good intentions. Perhaps it is clearer to say to be motivated by genuine love. When admonishment is given or received in love, it is more likely to provoke the necessary changes. Hebrews 12 speaks of the chastisement of God; there we are told that God's chastisement works because of His love for us, and it is received because of our love for Him. Being full of goodness also means being of good behavior. Consider that we are told that admonishment can only come with gentleness (Galatians 6:1) and humility (2 Timothy 2:25).

The second characteristic of proper admonition is being full of knowledge. It means we understand the divine purpose in admonition, which is restoration (2 Timothy 2:26, James 5:20) and encouraging the proper walk. Yet the spiritual is not all we must understand. We also need to have an understanding of the situation and a genuine knowledge of each other.

Now we need to test ourselves. Are you admonishable? Are you willing to hear criticism and are you prepared to change if necessary? Are you willing and able to share judgment? The point is this: the successful disciple is willing and able to receive admonition.

Proverbs 9:8 *Do not correct a scoffer, lest he hate you; Rebuke a wise man, and he will love you.*