

Redemptive Discipline For Children and Adults

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently.
-Galatians 6:1

Question #1: Who should take the initiative in restoring a fallen brother?

Answer: those who are spiritual are to love that person back into a right relationship with God and the church.

Question #2: How should one go?

Answer: “With a spirit of gentleness.”

If a person has a broken bone, he does not want it pushed into place with a crowbar.

Thoughts from the Desire of Ages:

Angels of glory joy in ministering to His little ones. Trembling souls, who have many objectionable traits of character, are their special charge....And in this ministry Christ’s true followers will co-operate. –p. 440

If one of these little ones shall be overcome, and commit a wrong against you, then it is your work to seek his restoration. –p. 440

In the spirit of meekness, “consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1), go to the erring one, and tell him his fault between thee and him alone...Do not put him to shame by exposing his faults to others ...Often the truth must be plainly spoken to the erring; he must be led to see his error, that he may reform...Let all your effort be for his recovery...With pitying tenderness, let brother deal with brother, knowing that if you succeed, you will “save a soul from death,” and “hide a multitude of sins.” James 5:20 –DA p. 440

While we seek to correct the errors of a brother, the Spirit of Christ will lead us to shield him, as far as possible, from the criticism of even his own brethren, and how much more from the censure of the unbelieving world. We ourselves are erring, and need Christ’s pity and forgiveness, and just as we wish Him to deal with us, He bids us deal with one another.
–p. 441

You are acting as the ambassadors of heaven, and the issues of your work are for eternity.
–p. 442

Spirit of Prophecy Quotations:

In dealing with erring church-members, God's people are carefully to follow the instruction given by the Savior in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew. [SEE MATT. 18: 15-18.] {GW 498.1}

Human beings are Christ's property, purchased by Him at an infinite price, bound to Him by the love that He and His Father have manifested for them. How careful, then, we should be in our dealing with one another! Men have no right to surmise evil in regard to their fellow-men. Church-members have no right to follow their own impulses and inclinations in dealing with fellow-members who have erred. They should not even express their prejudices regarding the erring; for thus they place in other minds the leaven of evil. Reports unfavorable to a brother or sister in the church are communicated from one to another of the church-members. Mistakes are made and injustice is done because of an unwillingness on the part of some one to follow the directions given by the Lord Jesus. {GW 498.2}

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee," Christ declared, "go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Do not tell others of the wrong. One person is told, then another, and still another; and continually the report grows, and the evil increases, till the whole church is made to suffer. Settle the matter "between thee and him alone." This is God's plan. {GW 498.3}

"Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor hath put thee to shame. Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself; and discover not a secret to another." [PROV. 25:8, 9.] Do not suffer sin upon your brother; but do not expose him, and thus increase the difficulty, making the reproof seem like a revenge. Correct him in the way outlined in the word of God. {GW 498.4}

Do not suffer resentment to ripen into malice. Do not allow the wound to fester and break out in poisoned words, which taint the minds of those who hear. Do not allow bitter thoughts to continue to fill your mind and his. Go to your brother and in humility and sincerity talk with him about the matter. {GW 499.1}

Whatever the character of the offense, this does not change the plan that God has made for the settlement of misunderstandings and personal injuries. Speaking alone and in the spirit of Christ to the one who is in fault, will often remove the difficulty. Go to the erring one, with a heart filled with Christ's love and sympathy, and seek to adjust the matter. Reason with him calmly and quietly. Let no angry words escape your lips. Speak in a way that will appeal to his better judgment. Remember the words, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." [JAMES 5:20.] {GW 499.2}

Take to your brother the remedy that will cure the disease of disaffection. Do your part to help him. For the sake of the peace and unity of the church, feel it a privilege as well as a duty to do this. If he will hear you, you have gained him as a friend. {GW 499.3}

All heaven is interested in the interview between the one who has been injured and the one who is in error. As the erring one accepts the reproof offered in the love of Christ, and acknowledges his wrong, asking forgiveness from God and from his brother, the sunshine of heaven fills his heart. The controversy is ended; friendship and confidence are restored. The

oil of love removes the soreness caused by the wrong; the Spirit of God binds heart to heart; and there is music in heaven over the union brought about. {GW 499.4}

As those thus united in Christian fellowship offer prayer to God, and pledge themselves to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God, great blessing comes to them. If they have wronged others, they continue the work of repentance, confession, and restitution, fully set to do good to one another. This is the fulfilling of the law of Christ. {GW 500.1}

The sin of one man discomfited the entire army of Israel. A wrong course pursued by one toward his brother will turn the light of God from His people until the wrong is searched out and the cause of the oppressed is vindicated. God requires His people to be tender in their feelings and discriminations, while their hearts should be enlarged, their feelings should be broad and deep, not narrow, selfish, and penurious. Noble sympathy, largeness of soul, and disinterested benevolence are needed. Then can the church triumph in God. But just as long as the church suffers selfishness to dry up kindly sympathy and tender, thoughtful love and interest for their brethren, every virtue will be corroded. Isaiah's fast should be studied and close self-examination made with a spirit to discern whether there is in them the principles which God's people are required to possess in order that they may receive the rich blessings promised. {3T 519.1}

Note: There are two ways to remove sin: 1) terminate the sinner, or, 2) restore the sinner back into a right relationship with God. The key factor in which approach should be used is usually the attitude of the sinner. The difference between the sins of David, Jonah, Peter, and Paul & the sin of Judas was in their attitude. God longs to forgive and restore and not to terminate. After all, these are His children and He deals with them with a father's heart.

The very essence of the gospel is restoration, and the Savior would have His servants bid the sick, the hopeless, and the afflicted take hold upon His strength. God's servants are the channels of His grace ... (GW 213)

How wonderful is the plan of redemption in its simplicity and fullness. It not only provides for the full pardon of the sinner but also for the restoration of the transgressor, making a way whereby he may be accepted as a son of God. **Through obedience he may be the possessor of love and peace and joy.** His faith may unite him in his weakness to Christ, the source of divine strength, and through the merits of Christ **he may find the approval of God**, because Christ has satisfied the demands of the law, and He imputes His righteousness to the penitent, believing soul. . . . {TMK 96.3}

Bible Example:

Then they came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road? But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who would be the greatest. And He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "if anyone desires to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."
(Mark 9: 33-35)

Note: place this in the study of God's purpose for one's life.

Industry in a God-appointed duty is an important part of true religion. Men should seize circumstances as God's instruments with which to **work His will**. Prompt and decisive action at the right time will gain glorious triumphs, while delay and neglect result in failure and dishonor to God. If the leaders in the cause of truth show no zeal, if they are indifferent and purposeless, the church will be careless, indolent, and pleasure-loving; but if they are filled with a holy purpose to serve God and Him alone, the people will be united, hopeful, and eager. {PK 676.1}

Note: place this in the study on self-glorification.

If we are Christians we will not seek to be praised or exalted of men, and we will not be drawn away from the work by bribes or any flattering inducement. Christians will not be driven from their post of duty by fear or by reproach, by accusation, hatred, or persecution. {TDG 316.3}