

Backsliders & The Rule Of Law

Church is not a numbers game: as if a large number is good and a small number is bad. The metric that matters to God and Jesus is Holiness. How “Holy” is His body? You can have a church of 12000 backslidden, lukewarm, spiritual dead believers, and it will mean nothing to God. Yet, you can have 12 fully committed and on fire believers that live in spiritual purity before God, and this would mean everything to Him. This is the type of fellowship God can use. This is also the type of fellowship we are mandated by God to create and sustain. Good thing for us, He has given us detailed direction on how to accomplish this goal.

Our Duty As Followers Of God and Jesus

(Ezekiel 33:7-9) “So you, son of man: I have set you a watchman to the house of Israel. Therefore hear the word from my mouth, **and give them warnings from me.** When I tell the wicked, ‘O wicked man, you will surely die,’ **and you don’t speak to warn the wicked from his way;** that wicked man will die in his iniquity, **but I will require his blood at your hand.** Nevertheless, if you warn the wicked of his way to turn from it, and he doesn’t turn from his way; he will die in his iniquity, but you have delivered your soul.”

(2 Chronicles 19:9-10) “He commanded them, saying, “You shall do this in the fear of Yahweh, faithfully, and with a perfect heart. Whenever any controversy comes to you from your brothers who dwell in their cities, between blood and blood, between law and commandment, statutes and ordinances, **you must warn them, that they not be guilty towards Yahweh, and so wrath come on you and on your brothers. Do this, and you will not be guilty.”**

(2 Timothy 4:1-4) “I command you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at his appearing and his Kingdom: **preach** the word; be urgent in season and out of season; **reprove, rebuke, and exhort**, with all patience and teaching. **For the time will come when they will not listen to the sound doctrine,** but, having itching ears, will heap up for themselves teachers after their own lusts; and **will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn away to fables.”**

The Duty Of Leadership In The Body

❖ Guide For The Parishioners

(1 Thessalonians 5:12-14) “But we beg you, brothers, to know those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to respect and honor them in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves. We exhort you, brothers, admonish the disorderly, encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be patient toward all.”

(Hebrews 13:7) “Remember your leaders, men who spoke to you the word of God, and considering the results of their conduct, imitate their faith.”

(Hebrews 13:17) “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they watch on behalf of your souls, as those who will give account, that they may do this with joy, and not with groaning, for that would be unprofitable for you.”

❖ Guide For The Leaders

(2 Timothy 2:23-26) “But refuse foolish and ignorant questionings, knowing that they generate strife. (24) The Lord’s servant must not quarrel, but be gentle towards all, able to teach, patient, (25) in **gentleness correcting those who oppose him**: perhaps God may give them repentance leading to a full knowledge of the truth, (26) and they may recover themselves out of the devil’s snare, having been taken captive by him to his will.”

❖ The Bible Our Guide: Our Tool

(2 Timothy 3:16-17) “Every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable for **teaching**, for **reproof**, for **correction**, and for **instruction in righteousness**, that each person who belongs to God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

The Rule Of Law

Step-By-Step Guide

1) Try to Save Them.

(James 5:19-20) “Brothers, if any among you wanders from the truth and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.”

(Galatians 6:1-2) “Brothers, even if a man is caught in some fault, you who are spiritual must restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to yourself so that you also aren’t tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”

2) Go Privately First.

(Matthew 18:15) “If your brother sins against you, go, show him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained back your brother.”

3) If This Doesn't Work, Bring A Church Member.

(Matthew 18:16) “But if he doesn't listen, take one or two more with you, that at the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.”

4) Then Bring Them In Front Of The Church.

(Matthew 18:17-18) “If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the assembly. If he refuses to hear the assembly also, let him be to you as a Gentile or a tax collector. Most certainly I tell you, **whatever things you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever things you release on earth will have been released in heaven.**” *Please note that this is concerning judgment within the Body.

(1 Timothy 5:20-21) “Those who sin, **reprove in the sight of all**, that the rest also may be in fear. I command you in the sight of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the chosen angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality.”

5) IF They Still Refuse To Repent Of Their Error And Sin.

(2 Thessalonians 3:13-15) “But you, brothers, don't be weary in doing what is right. **If any man doesn't obey our word in this letter, note that man, that you have no company with him, to the end that he may be ashamed.** Don't count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”

(2 Timothy 3:1-5) “But know this, that in the last days, grievous times will come. For men will be lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, not lovers of good, traitors, headstrong, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God; holding a form of godliness, but having denied its power. **Turn away from these, also.**”

➤ Concerning The Effect On The Body Of Christ

(Matthew 5:29-30) “If your right eye causes you to stumble, pluck it out and throw it away from you. **For it is more profitable for you that one of your members should perish, than for your whole body to be cast into Hell.** If your right hand causes you to stumble, cut it off, and throw it away from you. For it is more profitable for you that one of your members should perish, than for your whole body to be cast into Hell.”

Why Is This?

(1 Corinthians 12:25-27) “That there should be no division in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. When one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. Or when one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.”

(1 Corinthians 1:10) “Now I beg you, brothers, through the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and **that there be no divisions among you**, but that you be perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment.”

The “One Accord” Paradigm

(Acts 1:14) “All these with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer and supplication, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.”

(Acts 2:1) “Now when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all with one accord in one place.”

(Acts 2:46-47) “Day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, (47) praising God, and having favor with all the people. The Lord added to the assembly day by day those who were being saved.”

(Philippians 2:1-4) “If therefore there is any exhortation in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any tender mercies and compassion, (2) make my joy full, by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind; (3) doing nothing through rivalry or through conceit, but in humility, each counting others better than himself; (4) each of you not just looking to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others.”

Case Study On Unity

(Acts 4:23-31) “Being let go, they came to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and the elders had said to them. (24) When they heard it, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, “O Lord, you are God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them; (25) who by the mouth of your servant, David, said, ‘Why do the nations rage, and the peoples plot a vain thing? (26) The kings of the earth take a stand, and the rulers take council together, against the Lord, and against his Christ.’ (27) “For truly, in this city against your holy servant, Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together (28) to do whatever your hand and your council foreordained to happen. (29) Now, Lord, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, (30) while you stretch out your hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of your holy Servant Jesus.” (31) When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were gathered together. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.”

THE EFFECT

(Acts 5:12) “By the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people. They were all with one accord in Solomon’s porch.”

So You Must Then Deliver Them Over

(Jude 1:19-23) “These are they who cause divisions, and are sensual, not having the Spirit. But you, beloved, keep building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourselves in God’s love, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. **On some have compassion, making a distinction, and some save, snatching them out of the fire with fear, hating even the clothing stained by the flesh.**”

(1 John 2:18-20) “Little children, these are the end times, and as you heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have arisen. By this we know that it is the final hour. (19) **They went out from us, but they didn’t belong to us; for if they had belonged to us, they would have continued with us. But they left, that they might be revealed that none of them belong to us.** (20) You have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.”

(1 Corinthians 5:1-13) “It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles, that one has his father’s wife. You are arrogant, and didn’t mourn instead, **that he who had done this deed might be removed from among you.** For I most certainly, as being absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as though I were present, judged **him who has done this thing.** In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, you being gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, are to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your boasting is not good. **Don’t you know that a little yeast leavens the whole lump? Purge out the old yeast, that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened.** For indeed Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed in our place. Therefore let’s keep the feast, not with old yeast, neither with the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote to you in my letter to have no company with sexual sinners; yet not at all meaning with the sexual sinners of this world, or with the covetous and extortionists, or with idolaters; for then you would have to leave the world. **But as it is, I wrote to you not to associate with anyone who is called a brother who is a sexual sinner, or covetous, or an idolater, or a slanderer, or a drunkard, or an extortionist. Don’t even eat with such a person.** For what do I have to do with also judging those who are outside? **Don’t you judge those who are within? But those who are outside, God judges. “Put away the wicked man from among yourselves.”**”

Distinguishing Between The Real & Fake

Real believers bear the fruit of being connected to the vine.

(John 15:1-9) “I am the true vine, and my Father is the farmer. (2) Every branch in me that doesn’t bear fruit, he takes away. Every branch that bears fruit, he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. (3) You are already pruned clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. (4) Remain in me, and I in you. As the branch can’t bear fruit by itself, unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me. (5) I am the vine. You are the branches. He who remains in me, and I in him, the same bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. (6) If a man doesn’t remain in me, he is thrown out as a branch, and is withered; and they gather them, throw them into the fire, and they are burned. (7) If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, you will ask whatever you desire, and it will be done for you. (8) “In this is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; and so you will be my disciples. (9) Even as the Father has loved me, I also have loved you. Remain in my love.

(Matthew 7:15-20) “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. (16) By their fruits you will know them. Do you gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? (17) Even so, every good tree produces good fruit; but the corrupt tree produces evil fruit. (18) A good tree can’t produce evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. (19) Every tree that doesn’t grow good fruit is cut down, and thrown into the fire. (20) Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

The Fruit of Obedience

Jesus Tells Us What Fruit To Look For

(John 14:23-24) “Jesus answered him, “**If a man loves me, he will keep my word.** My Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our home with him. (24) **He who doesn’t love me doesn’t keep my words.** The word which you hear isn’t mine, but the Father’s who sent me.”

(John 15:10) “**If you keep my commandments, you will remain in my love;** even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and remain in his love.” (Remain Connected)

(1 John 5:1-3) “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ has been born of God. Whoever loves the Father also loves the child who is born of him. (2) By this we know that **we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments.** (3) **For this is loving God, that we keep his commandments.** His commandments are not grievous.”

God's Ultimate Goal

He Will Return For A Pure & Holy Church.

(Matthew 5:8) “Blessed are the **pure in heart**, for they shall see God.”

(2 Corinthians 11:1-2) “I wish that you would bear with me in a little foolishness, but indeed you do bear with me. (2) For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy. For I married you to one husband, **that I might present you as a pure virgin to Christ.**”

(Colossians 1:25-29) “Of which I was made a servant, according to the stewardship of God which was given me toward you, to fulfill the word of God, the mystery which has been hidden for ages and generations. But now it has been revealed to his saints, to whom God was pleased to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory; whom we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, **that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;** for which I also labor, striving according to his working, which works in me mightily.”

(1 Timothy 5:21-22) “I command you in the sight of God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the chosen angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. (22) Lay hands hastily on no one, neither be a participant in other people’s sins. **Keep yourself pure.**”

(2 Timothy 2:22) “Flee from youthful lusts; but **pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**”

Closing

(2 Corinthians 6:14-18) “**Don’t be unequally yoked with unbelievers**, for what fellowship have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? (15) What agreement has Christ with Belial? Or what portion has a believer with an unbeliever? (16) What agreement has a temple of God with idols? For you are a temple of the living God. Even as God said, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they will be my people.” (17) Therefore “‘Come out from among them, and be separate,’ says the Lord. ‘Touch no unclean thing. I will receive you. (18) I will be to you a Father. You will be to me sons and daughters,’ says the Lord Almighty.”

Recap: We have learned that we are responsible before God to try and alert believers of sin in their lives, helping them through gentleness to find the path of repentance. We also talked about how to escalate issues if they are not quickly resolved. We have covered that God wants unity in the body; this unity releases power from God, and that sin breaks down this unity and creates division. So much so, that we are to separate ourselves from people who live in rebellion and will not repent. Jesus clearly teaches that obedience is the fruit of being connected to Him. Lastly, we have discussed that God wants a Pure and Holy Church- therefore; we must obey these guidelines to reach the goal given to us. If we don’t do this, we will be held responsible by God for their sin.