

“Speaking from the Heart”

Lesson 11: Caring enough to correct Dalraida Church of Christ, Summer 2025

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☞ “My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you strays from the truth and someone turns him back, let him know that the one who has turned a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and cover a multitude of sins”
(James 5:19-20). (Matthew 12:36-37; John 7:24)

You have seen the situation...an umpire makes a call at home plate and the manager of the penalized team storms onto the field. The manager charges the umpire and soon they are angrily talking with cap bills touching. The English word “confront” literally means “forehead to forehead.” We have a “head-to-head confrontation.” In the 1580s it communicated the sense of “to face in defiance or hostility or to stand in direct opposition to another.” The sense of, “to bring face to face” (with another, the evidence, etc.) is from 1620s.

Confrontation is an interesting human behavioral study. Some are non-confrontational and will do anything to avoid fact-to-face situations. Others are always ready to pull-the-trigger. ☞ Somewhere in the middle is the one who speaks from the heart, caring enough to correct and reconcile to God’s Way.

The normal reaction ALL share when confronted is negative. Wherever you are on the spectrum of confrontation reactions, it is always a negative. Why? Four possible reasons:

- No one enjoys having ☞ weaknesses and shortcomings placed in the spotlight. This wounds our ego and it hurts!
- The process of confrontation is ☞ often insensitive. Ruled by pride and ignited by feelings that one’s pride was wronged, overlooked, minimized, etc.
- Confrontation is ☞ fueled by not having the facts of the situation correct. Feelings of injustice and unfairness erupt. The simmering hurt finally “boils over”; the pressure cooker explodes!

Psalm 39:1-3, ☞ “I said, “I will keep watch over my ways so that I do not sin with my tongue; I will keep watch over my mouth as with a muzzle... I was mute and silent, I refused to say even something good, and my pain was stirred up. My heart was hot within me, while I was musing the fire burned; Then I spoke with my tongue!”

- ☞ It is ME—I are not open to the possibility that I can be wrong and I am the one in need of correction! (Or it can be MY family or friends)

The Lord’s Church is a “Body” and Inspiration often uses this metaphor to teach truth:

- ☞ Romans 12:5, “(S)o we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually parts of one another.”
- Proverbs 25:19, “Like a bad tooth and an unsteady foot is confidence in a treacherous person in time of trouble.”
- 1 Corinthians 12:26, “And if one part of the body suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if a part is honored, all the parts rejoice with it.”

The Body Life in the Church is a ☞ shared life! It is a community that offers blessings and joy. It is a community rejoicing together, weeping together, and striving to get to heaven together. It is a “close-knit” (Colossians 2:2) community. We are not isolated from one another. We are not insulated and unfeeling toward one another. A man said, “I dropped a concrete block on my toe, and my whole body stayed up all night to keep my aching toe company!”

- Members are responsible for one another (Galatians 6:1-4; James 5:19-20). ☞ There is accountability—if one sees another in danger, it is inhumane to ignore that situation.
- We are not to be “garbage collectors” or “sin detectors” searching out specks of imperfections and weaknesses in other members so we evade our own “logs.”
- Christians are “not to keep record” (1 Corinthians 13:5-6).

BUT Christians must be sensitive and concerned about their fellow members. Accountability is critical for the health of the congregational Body. 🕊 Two critical texts frame the communication for correction:

- "Am I my brother's keeper?" (Genesis 4:9)
- "(S)o there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same care (concern) for one another (1 Corinthians 12:25).

Some Will Reject Admonition

The Bible stresses admonishing as a critical aspect of communication. However, some will not accept admonition. 🕊 Proverbs 15:12, "A scoffer does not like to be reproved; he will not go to the wise." (ESV). The phrase "the one who will not be corrected" describes a person refusing to accept feedback, discipline, or guidance. 🕊 This attitude stems from pride or a hardened heart.

This attitude is 🕊 associated with bringing negative consequences into one's life. From a general biblical search, this attitude is highlighted with these points:

- A deliberate rejection of correction.
The Bible, particularly the book of Proverbs, emphasizes the importance of accepting correction. This correction brings wisdom and understanding. Proverbs 12:1, "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid." Ignoring correction brings self-destruction and folly.
- Tragic consequences arise.
Proverbs warn us that 🕊 poverty and shame come to those who ignore discipline. Honor and respect are gained by those who accept it. Proverbs 15:10 warns, "Discipline is harsh for him who leaves the path; he who hates correction will die," suggesting that rejecting correction can lead to spiritual death.
- 🕊 Spiritual stagnation develops. The New Testament teaches that correction is crucial for spiritual growth. Ignoring correction leads to stagnation or regression in our spiritual lives. Hebrews 12:5-6 mentions how God disciplines those He loves. This discipline reminds Christians that divine correction is an expression of His love and a necessary part of their spiritual journey.
- 🕊 Evidence of love's absence. This is evident in the parent-child relationship. Proverbs 13:24, "He who withholds his rod hates his son, but he who loves him disciplines him diligently." Genuine love "disciplines diligently"!

There are tragic implications when one is not concerned enough to correct:

- 🕊 Inability to learn and grow: one refusing correction struggles to learn from mistakes and improve, potentially becoming stagnant in personal development.
- 🕊 Difficulties in relationships: inability to accept correction hinders healthy relationships, leading to shallow interactions and unresolved conflicts.
- 🕊 Weak character: refusing correction indicates a weak and insubordinate character rejecting authority.
- 🕊 Potential for even more serious consequences: in critical situations, such as bomb disposal or driver education, refusing correction can have fatal consequences.

In summary, 🕊 the individual who "will not be corrected" demonstrates a resistance to learning and growth, leading to detrimental outcomes in their spiritual life, relationships, and overall development.

The Biblical Command to "admonish."

🕊 "Admonish" is the English translation of the Greek word **Σωφρονίζω** (sôphronizô). It is used to translate a word meaning, "to restore one to his senses; to moderate, control, curb, discipline; to hold one to his duty; to admonish, to exhort earnestly." It can be translated as "to warn, advise, instruct, or counsel."

The term communicates the action of 🕊 “setting the mind aright”—redirecting or encouraging a person away from an error and toward the correct attitude and action.

The biblical action of “admonition” is 🕊 moving or transforming someone to be “balanced” with God’s Will because of following the Lord’s will more correctly. An illustration of this is in Titus 2:4 where Inspiration states it is vital for older women to be actively counseling younger women (mothers) in the will of God, and the younger women’s attitude of submissively accepting the counsel of the older women. But the 🕊 biblical responsibility to “admonish” belongs to every member of the congregation!

Elders, apostles and church leaders (“recognize those who diligently labor among you and are in leadership over you in the Lord, and give you instruction” 1 Thessalonians 5:12).

Preachers and teachers (“We proclaim Him, admonishing every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, so that we may present every person complete in Christ” Colossians 1:28).

Parents (“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction (admonition) of the Lord” Ephesians 6:4).

The entire Church (“Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God” Colossians 3:16).

Confrontation is required within the local Church. 🕊 Christians must care enough about the members of their spiritual Body that they will correct with admonition. How does God expect members of the Church Body to admonish? How can I make sure I am speaking from the heart and caring enough to confront those who are walking disorderly?

Understand and Step Up When Required

Admonishing is required when someone fails to follow God’s Truth as taught in the Bible.

🕊 “Now we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother or sister who leads a disorderly life and not one in accordance with the tradition which you received from us” (2 Thessalonians 3:6).

- “Disorderly” refers to insubordination; conduct that refuses proper order, shirks responsibility, and disrupts the harmony of the body of Christ.
- The word is rendered 🕊 “unruly” in 1 Thessalonians 5:14, and is possibly suggested by the military metaphor above. It means properly “out of rank; out of step.”
- “Disorderly” describes soldiers who break rank, desert their posts, or other unfit conduct, and therefore cannot perform their duty as soldiers, especially in battle. It aptly denotes those 🕊 neglecting proper duty of their office or station.

So, when a member is “out of step,” “deserted rank,” “acting unfit”—it is required for other members to bring into accountability.

The Circumstances Requiring Admonition

This point is addressed by Inspiration in 🕊 Galatians 6:1-2. “Brothers and sisters, even if a person is caught in any wrongdoing, you who are spiritual are to restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you are not tempted as well. Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks that he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But each one must examine his own work, and then he will have reason for boasting, but to himself alone, and not to another. For each one will bear his own load.”

First, 🕊 admonition is right when a Christian needs our aid because they have been “caught in a sin.” Their weakness led to them falling into Satan’s trap and they were “caught.” An element of “surprise” is communicated. They had no intention on falling for the bait but it surprised them.

Second, 🕊️ admonition has as its primary concern the restoration of the sinner. No gossip. No character assassination. You may not "understand" the temptation, you probably will not get your "whys" answered. But the objective is to provoke "godly sorrow" that works repentance.

Third, 🕊️ admonition is verbalized by a spiritual person. This spiritual person is described in Romans 15:14, 🕊️ "full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another." They have removed the "plank" from their own eyes (Matthew 7:3-5). They are "complete in knowledge" which makes their spirit like the Publican and not the Pharisee (Luke 18:9-14). "Knowledge" provides the biblical perspective while "goodness" protects the vulnerable sinner and the confronting person.

Fourth, 🕊️ admonition is correct when its goal is to "restore the member gently." Restoration calls for the erring to return to the essential dynamic of discipleship. The critical spirit required is highlighted by the word "gentleness." This is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:23) and mark one as "Christ-like" (2 Corinthians 10:1). The Christian speaks from the heart and cares enough to confront and his role is to restore not ravage; to put things right, not to punish! ("I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children" (1 Corinthians 4:14). Sadly, some will NOT respond to "gentleness" in correction—they choose pride!

The Devilish Cunning of Admonition

Satan convincingly distorts the Christian's intentions. 🕊️ Some "intend" to follow the principles of Galatians 6:1-5 BUT Satan deceives them and causes the trauma of Matthew 7:1 to occur. Consequently, 🕊️ the repentance and restoration are non-existent. Let us 🕊️ beware of this danger as we speak from our heart confrontational communication!

🕊️ Matthew 7:1 is one of the Lord's most abused statements. "Well, you are obviously NOT caring and loving when you 'judge' like that!" "When you say that, aren't you judging?" These often expect you to remain silent in the face of false doctrine, immorality, or any action contrary to God's Word! They seek to excuse and justify the ungodly by making you feel guilty for standing for the truth! (John 7:24)

A literal rendering of this text is absurd—it will forbid any judgment! All courts of law would be anathema. All rendering of justice would be sinful to pursue. The same absurdity applies to those who advocate pacifism from abusing Matthew 5:39, "Resist not evil" or "do not show opposition against evil."

The Lord's words command us to make discerning judgments! (John 7:24). 🕊️ "It is the Lord's warning to the faultfinder...this judge has an eye for failure and weakness, reads the worst motives into others' actions and goes about his work with little mercy. He tends to be long on confrontation but short on servanthood." (Durham, 144).

Measured 🕊️ coldly by the judgmental eye of Matthew 7:1, King David does poorly. At best he made a 60% score on the Ten Commandments! Left to the mercy of the proud judgment of Matthew 7:1...

- His influence would have been dismissed.
- His psalms would have been discredited.

🕊️ But God looked into David's imperfect heart and loved what He saw "a man after His own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14; 16:7). He became the forerunner of the Messiah and he is the best-loved devotional voice through the centuries.

🕊️ How tragic it is to observe some who will be confrontational and very blunt in their words, but fail to care enough to communicate restoration and forgiveness AS God has done for them!

The Pattern for Admonition

What are the characteristics of correction (admonition) that God expects His People to use in their communication? Inspiration led Paul to offer the basic traits that your confrontational communication, with others, should demonstrate:

🕊️ **Admonition THAT IS EVER READY...** "Be ready in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2). This reveals a degree of preparation and diligent study showing...

- You have given attention to reading and doctrine. You must not rely upon "what you did growing up; what you always heard; what your parents said." You must position your beliefs upon the Scriptures! ("Until I come, give your attention to the public reading, to exhortation, and teaching...Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to the teaching...for as you do this you will save both yourself and those who hear you" 1 Timothy 4:13-16).
- One has been diligent in their learning. ("Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a worker who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness...continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them" 2 Timothy 2:15-16; 3:14).
- Be ready to speak up and correct. "In season" means when the opportunity occurs." "Out of season" refers to times that are inconvenient, or when there might be hindrances and embarrassments.

🔑 Admonition THAT CONVINCES...

The term "convince," (2 Timothy 4:2) is translated as "reprove" (KJV, NASB); "correct" (NIV). The Christian speaks so that those in error are "convinced of the truth of religion, and of their need to adhere to it." This is what Paul did in the synagogues (Acts 17:2-3; 19:8). This is what Aquilla and Priscilla did in private conversation (Acts 18:26). Some will not be "pricked" by God's Truth and will not repent and turn from error to God's Truth! (Acts 17:32)

🔑 Admonition THAT REBUKES...

"Rebuke" (2 Timothy 4:2) translates the concept "to admonish or charge sharply; to chide for sin; some privately, others more publicly, according to the nature and circumstances of the offense; some more gently, others more roughly, as is needful." Paul thus charged Titus (Titus 2:15).

🔑 Admonition THAT EXHORTS...

"Exhort" (2 Timothy 4:2) translates the action of the Christian "encouraging and strengthening by consolation." Christians "are in some cases to be 'Boanergeses', sons of thunder, but in other cases they should be 'Barnabases,' sons of consolation; and comfort distressed minds, by preaching the doctrines of peace, pardon, righteousness and salvation by Jesus Christ" (Gill).

🔑 Admonition THAT IS LONGSUFFERING...

"With all longsuffering" (2 Timothy 4:2) translates action the Christian must display "patience, forbearance, longsuffering." This action is to be shown toward both the faint-hearted and hardhearted (1 Thessalonians 5:14; 2 Timothy 2:24-25). But there are limits and when they continually refuse then let them go!

🔑 Admonition THAT IS DOCTRINAL...

"And teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2) is translated as "doctrine" (KJV), "instruction" (NASB). This refers to teaching or instruction that is in harmony with the Scriptures.

🔑 The Pattern of Admonition is Destroyed

Two traits of admonition displeasing God and resulting in damnation instead of salvation...

Admonition encouraging UNSOUND DOCTRINE...

The time will come when some will not endure "sound doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:3). This interesting phrase literally means "healthful doctrine." It is the biblical teaching of doctrine that makes the soul healthy and leads to salvation. There are those who "teach" and who "believe" and who "practice" religion BUT it is not "healthy"!

- People give heed to deceiving spirits (1 Timothy 4:1-2).
- People are lovers of self and pleasure (2 Timothy 3:1-2).
- People want to hear "according to their own desires" (2 Timothy 4:3).

- People justify verbally or accept silently, sinful behavior and doctrinal compromises, rather than rebuking.
- People guilty of accepting things "contrary to sound doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:10).
- People not telling others that they believe and accept things are "unhealthy" to their soul (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

🔑 Admonition TO ENTERTAIN...

A tragic reality...in today's "preacher searches" the number one priority is that such must be a "good communicator." Unfortunately, this phrase is NOT speaking of one who knows and presents God's Truth and is ready at all times, seeking to persuade and rebuke with all longsuffering instructing others in the doctrine of the Lord. In today's "preacher search" they want an "entertaining speaker." Does he make us "feel good"? Does he make us "laugh"? Is he not too "harsh" in convictions? Is he too "doctrinally focused" and "exclusive"? Or the ambiguous "Is he a good communicator?"

People have "itching ears" (2 Timothy 4:3). "Loving to have their ears scratched and tickled with smooth things pleasing and agreeable to carnal minds" (Gill). NOTE: This reaction is presented by a different response in Acts 7:57, "But they shouted with loud voices, and covered their ears..." People want their ears tickled with the language and accent of the person instead of the Truth. These are quick to abandon the good and faithful preacher for the "fun" speaker. These "heap for themselves teachers" (2 Timothy 4:3). People will find the teachers that please them. The sad result of such preaching (2 Timothy 4:2-4), people "turn their ears away from the truth."

- 🔑 The truth of God does not interest them
- 🔑 They have no time to hear what the truth has to say
- 🔑 They "turn aside to fables." These believe nonsense as long as it is entertaining. G. K. Chesterton: "He who does not believe in God will believe in anything."

🔑 Guarding Our Freedom in Christ

Christ invites us to find blessings in freedom and rest (Matthew 11:28-30). This frees us from the burdens of legalistic religion, judgmentalism based on personal feelings and guilt from sin that we have committed.

We live in a 🔑 harsh, demanding and judgmental world. God designed His Church to be a sanctuary, a refuge, populated by men and women living in the rich climate of God's mercy (Ephesians 2:4-8).

The environment in God's merciful 🔑 Church is polluted when we allow and accept doctrines, life-style expectations, modes of worship, or methods of ministry that are NOT supported by the Holy Scriptures. Those attempting to change what God has commanded must be confronted so they will have the option to choose to do differently and go to Heaven.

🔑 Transformed by the Master

Each Christian is "becoming." This process is our transformation from the "old" into the "new" (Colossians 3:9-10), "you stripped off the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self, which is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created it." Subtle changes occur resulting in a significant 🔑 visible change. One of the most visible, and critical, changes is compassion in your communication as you speak to correct others!

🔑 Your concern is focused NOT upon personal offenses, selfish views, prideful positions but upon compassion and concern that others will study, accept and be transformed by the message of Christ!

This compassion results from our conversion—we have decided to turn away from certain habits, practices and identities and turn toward godliness. And this is a very visible transformation. Ephesians 2:10, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."

In the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome stand massive statues of the Apostles. Each is on a high pedestal. Master sculptors depicted them as muscular, handsome and almost godlike. In real life these probably looked much like you and me. What made them great was their willingness to be shaped, corrected and transformed by their Master.

- Erratic, emotional Peter became a “rock” of stability.
- John, one of the “sons of thunder” marked by quick temper, became the “Apostle of love.”
- Thomas no longer was the “Doubter” but an unmovable Believer.

Each had their moments of weakness. But each realized their weakness and grew stronger. When admonitions came to them, they listened, repented and grew! Are you any different? Will you admit you need admonishing?

☞ We have no right to bind human standards, personal opinions, personal viewpoints upon others. ☞ This is true even if we have been taught these things from childhood! Some grew up with such strict rules of modesty they hold to positions that mock the biblical standards. Some are brought up with opinionated biblical teachings that they cannot “reason out” the true biblical teachings.

Those educated and trained incorrectly think they can admonish and coerce others to march in goosestep with their strictness. ☞ They will not see the inconsistency of their positions with the Scripture. I personally know one who demanded that the elders of the congregation be stationed at the entrance doors of the Church building, with measuring tape in hand, and measure the women’s dresses to make sure they were only one-inch above the kneecap!

Christians are expected to ☞ speak from their heart words of compassion correcting another’s unscriptural choices. This communication must be ☞ governed by one being “full of goodness” and “complete in knowledge.” This communication results because of love and acceptance of those needing admonition. ☞ How can you say you “love” another when you do not admonish them to follow the biblical doctrine with the compassion demanded by God?

☞ Let us pray that when we are admonished by those who speak to us from goodness and knowledge, that we will be correctable and will continue being “transformed”!