



Berean Christian Fellowship

DEVOTIONAL 90.0

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Correct, Rebuke, Exhort, Admonish!

“Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:2).

We are told many times in Scripture to not judge one another. At the same time, we are told to rebuke, correct, exhort, and admonish one another. Is there a difference?

Yes, actually. God is our judge, and He alone has the authority to determine right from wrong, good from evil—what’s more, He has delivered His judgments to us in His Word. When we judge others, we are taking God’s place and determining if something is good or bad based on our feelings, experiences, opinions, first impressions, consciences, etc. This comes from ourselves: “Kate, I don’t approve—it just isn’t right for you to _____.”

But concerning admonishment, Paul tells us that *“all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work”* (2 Timothy 3:16-17), and he instructed us to *“let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God”* (Colossians 3:16), and he says that an Elder *“must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it”* (Titus 1:9).

Do you see the difference? Biblical admonishment comes from the breathed-out Scriptures, the Word of God dwelling richly in us. It does not come from us, but directly from the Word of God. An example would be: “Yes, Frank, but Jesus said _____, and Paul said that

no one who _____ will inherit God’s Kingdom.” When we admonish Biblically, we are not putting ourselves in God’s place, passing judgment on someone from our own feelings, thoughts, choices, backgrounds, consciences, etc. Instead, we are pointing to the authority of God’s judgments in Scripture, because God in His Word has told us what He considers sin.

Now, there can still be some disagreements in how we interpret Scriptures when we admonish or are admonished. This is where we need to seek Scriptural context, the Holy Spirit’s guidance, and the wisdom of our Elders, but the point of admonishment is not to divide by our judgments, but to encourage and restore our Brothers and Sisters to a correct relationship with God by drawing them continually back to the judgments of God in His Word. Jesus told us to *“pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him”* (Luke 17:3): before you rebuke our Brother, seek the conviction of the Spirit and Word regarding your own sin.

Now Paul *“did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears”* (Acts 20:31b), because he wanted Believers to stand firm in the judgments of God’s Word when false teachers would speak *“twisted things”* (Acts 20:29-31). This is why he continually declared the Word: *“the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Declare these things; exhort and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you”* (Titus 2:11-15). May we too declare God’s Word. Amen.

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