

Settling Wrongs the Biblical Way

Galatians 2:11-18

It is always advantageous to read the Scripture portion before considering the thoughts that I would like to share with you. In that your comments encourage us, we do urge you to send us a note, which will also be helpful.

In the section under consideration, Peter has revealed a double standard before the Gentile believers. This double standard was creating serious problems in the church that has just come out of the cradle. The problem is exposed in 2:12, 13, which shows Peter's weakness that needed to be confronted, and since this was a public matter, it required public correction as stipulated in I Timothy 5:20 "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear." Such action requires courage, which Paul undertook, "I said unto Peter before them all." Many were involved and the health of the church was at stake... Sadly, because it is a hurtful necessity, many a church problem has been swept under the rug. As it is painful; the lack of courage to deal with issues will prove to be more painful in the end. What Paul said in II Corinthians 12: 15 are so very applicable "And I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." There is a phrase in Romans 14: 22 that is very striking, "Happy is he that condemneth not himself in the things which he alloweth." When matters are not approached, lack of courage is evident in churches. This places a lot of responsibility on pastors and church leaders. Some, who require correction, frequently find refuge in another church, which church may assume that they are having great growth if not revival. Too many churches have ultimately awakened to the fact that those diluted souls have brought their problems with them and have tainted another congregation (Heb. 12:15). It may be well to suggest a few portions of God's word that give direction in church complications, I Cor. 5:11-13; Prov. 11: 13, 14; 13:18,32; 15:5 A most necessary attitude required in such action is so clearly presented in Gal. 6:1,2.

It is to Peter's credit that he showed no resentment and continued on to have a most profound ministry, which does not include having been a pope. He accepted the rebuke and it stayed the church from drifting into chaos. Peter needed to be accosted

publicly; this may be the time to suggest that we read Matt. 5:23-25; 18:15-17 when it comes to private matters.

May we know the Holy Spirit's ministry in the church to guide in all matters pertaining to a healthy church through biblical ministry to one another II Tim. 4:2; Heb. 3:12,13. What is my Christian duty when someone wants to "share someone's fault with me? Consider Prov. 16:27; 18:13. It is incumbent upon me to approach such a one on biblical terms as instructed in Matt.18: 15-17. Always consider what Paul has taught us in Gal. 6:1, 2.

All the above may seem as though we have just passed through the emergency room of the hospital and had a serious cancer removed. May we conclude that it has been no less important for church healing and its healthy growth.

Your comments will be appreciated on this most crucial subject.
jandrddv@nbnet.nb.ca