

Reflecting on 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15 January 3, 2021

Introduction: In this brief passage, Paul instructs the church how to address brothers and sisters who fall into sin. This sobering text outlines the responsibility of believers to those who walk in disobedience:

1. Keep doing right (13)
2. Take note of the sinning brother or sister (14)
3. Disassociate from the person who has chosen a lifestyle of sin (14)
4. Don't consider the sinning brother or sister an enemy (15)
5. Keep admonishing the Christian caught in sin like a brother (15)

In the end, the Big Idea we emphasized was that *you have a responsibility when your brother/sister falls into sin.*

Up for Discussion:

1. How does the Big Idea of today's message sit with you? Do you agree that you have a responsibility when a fellow church member falls into sin? What have you done with this responsibility in the past?

2. Below are several factors that could cause a believer to grow weary in doing good. Pick 2-3 options that are most wearying for you, and discuss them with your group.

- Other believers around you are not joining/helping you in the good you are doing
- You get really busy and the “good” that God has you doing gets edged out
- The “good” that God has called you to do is hard
- The “good” you are doing seems to go unnoticed and unappreciated
- There is someone else in the church who is better at the “good” you are trying to do
- You made a mistake while doing the “good” or experienced a setback
- You don’t feel qualified to do the “good” God seems to be opening for you to do
- You have a past that makes you feel unworthy to serve God

3. Discuss the importance of being a church member in the context of challenging, exhorting, and (hopefully) winning back an erring brother or sister. Can these corporate responsibilities (remember, all the commands are plural!) be accomplished without church membership or something like it?

4. This list of responsibilities mentioned in the previous question assumes a certain connectedness between members of the body of Christ.

Consider the following rhetorical questions:

- How would one know if a brother or sister falls into sin if there isn't a spiritually-based relationship present?

- Also, how would a person continue to admonish a brother or sister after he has been disassociated from the church without that same relationship?

Question continued from previous page.

Discuss this question within your group: How should we foster deeper, spiritually-based relationships within the body of Christ?

5. Have you been part of a church that had to exercise church discipline? What are your reflections on that experience? How did the church do in following the principles outlined in 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15?