

Admonish the Disobedient Brother

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 – Discussion Group Leader Handout

It may be helpful to ask for a male volunteer. Have the group imagine that MAN is the sluggardly brother under church discipline. Try to bring this discussion down to earth, not theoretical. Take the questions seriously but remind everyone it is just pretend, and thank him publicly afterward.

Here is the scenario: MAN had a decent job and worked hard. However, he got fired, probably because his liberal boss had held a grudge since MAN recently became a Christian. The church has felt bad for him, and different families have lent a hand during his time of need. However, this has gone on a while now, and MAN hasn't applied to any jobs lately. Several men have confronted him a few times, but he still isn't putting forth any effort. The elders met to discuss. Just this past Sunday, they announced MAN's name and read these verses to the church. Now he is no longer welcome to attend worship, and you're trying to do your part in all of this.

Bible Passage

¹³But as for you, brothers, do not lose heart in doing good. ¹⁴And if anyone does not obey our word in this letter, take special note of that person to not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame. ¹⁵And yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”

Discussion Questions

- I. The Presupposition: Diligence (v. 13)
 - a. If you set a good example, in what ways might that convict MAN?
 - b. How can family members show their appreciation for a man's provision?
- II. The Condition: Disobedience (v. 14a)
 - a. What factors affect whether MAN's sin is “worthy” of church discipline?
 - b. How should you handle deliberate sin in your own life? (even if it's just once)
- III. The Action: Disassociation (v. 14b)
 - a. Imagine your family was one of the ones helping MAN out. How might you explain to him why you cannot do that anymore? What could you say?
 - b. Imagine you and MAN were both involved in several ministries at Anchor. How might this church discipline affect his involvement and your communication?
 - c. Imagine you and MAN were friends. You'd talk after church, text during the week, call each other if something was going on. How should your relationship change?
 - d. Imagine after everything has changed that MAN reaches out to you again. He is discouraged and really just wants a friend. How would you respond?

- e. Why is disassociation important? If you don't hold the line, how might your behavior be damaging to MAN? How about to you or others in the church?

IV. The Intention: Disapproval (v. 14c)

- a. Why is shame often such a powerful instrument of change?
- b. In relationships, subtle warning signs often come before open conflict. What kind of subtle clues might indicate your relationship with someone needs attention?
- c. If you feel ashamed of your behavior, how should you handle that?

V. The Orientation: Dissuasion (v. 15)

- a. What are some bad, "enemy" thoughts you should not have toward MAN?
- b. What are some good, brotherly things to think or do about MAN?
- c. Who should admonish MAN? When, and how? Who should initiate?
- d. Should you talk with other people about MAN? Why or why not? If so, how?

Prayer Requests

- Pray that God would help us all to do good eagerly
- Pray that the Spirit would compel us to confess and repent of willful sin
- Pray for divine wisdom to handle the nuances of disassociation
- Pray that the disobedient man would be ashamed of himself and get back to work
- Pray that men would admonish this man with love, wisdom, and knowledge