

Weary in Well-Doing

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We have a real problem concerning members who grow **Weary in Well-Doing** and/or decide the Truth is just too narrow and drop out. It is very difficult for those who continue to faithfully serve the Lord to know what to do concerning them. If we visit them, especially more than once, to try to encourage them and to inquire if there is a problem that others can help with, they sometimes become very hostile and insulting. I am convinced that this is because they do not want to be reminded that they are guilty of unfaithfulness to God. This causes them to assume a defensive stance, blaming others for their misbehavior, just like little children. They may point to some member of the church who offended them or who is a worse sinner than themselves, to excuse their misconduct.

Not all whose love has grown cold respond with such immaturity when they are visited, but it is ridiculous that any who claim to be God's children would. Those who despise the efforts of their brethren to encourage them and save their souls only heap greater condemnation on their own heads. Most of these would probably kick a dog if it was so ungrateful as to bite their hand while being fed.

What if these people are not visited? You may have guessed, if you have not learned by experience, that some will be offended if they are **not** visited. This all reminds me of the old grouch on his way home from work who said, "If the old woman doesn't have supper ready when I get home, I'm gonna yell at her, and if she has it ready, I ain't gonna eat it." You just can't please some people.

Whether men like or dislike it, there is one course of action for those who strive to serve Christ. We must obey God's Word.

Brethren, even if a man be overtaken in any trespass, ye who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; looking to thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the Law of Christ (Gal. 6:1-2).

This is the loving thing to do, and it must be and will continue to be done by those who love the souls of their backslidden brethren. Of course, there comes a time when we must give up on those who are determined apostates (Mat. 7:6; 18:15-17; 2

The. 3:16; etc.). There are few sights sadder to see than brethren who were once happy and faithfully engaged in the Master's service, now living in negligence and rebellion—their souls in worse condition than before they obeyed Christ.

For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse with them than the first. For it were better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy commandment delivered unto them. It has happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog turning to his own vomit again, and the sow that had washed to wallowing in the mire (2 Pet. 2:20–22).

To my brethren who have drifted away, I urge you to come back. And when brethren come to encourage your return, please think long about what you are doing before you mistreat them.

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