
Words of Truth

Inspecting Fruit Without Being A Busybody

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In our study last week we looked at being balanced fruit inspectors without being guilty of evil surmising (Matthew 7:15-20 and I Timothy 6:3-5). In that study we briefly examined fruit inspection with the subject matters of repentance and forgiveness (Matthew 18:15-35, Luke 17:3-4, etc.). Most of the time there is depth to consider on many subject matters. It is upon us to learn the Scriptures and carefully grow in the proper applications of them (Hebrews 5:12-14 and II Peter 3:15-18).

Our subject matter in this study is one that could be difficult to balance for some individuals. It might even be hard to understand for some. The very idea that you can get into someone's business too much is foreign to some folks. Hopefully, we will consider enough in this short study to provoke you to greater thought.

Before we approach this, think about something? Aside from trying to aid your brethren in being faithful (Hebrews 3:13, Hebrews 10:24-25, and James 5:19-20) or with some need he or she may have (Romans 12:9-16 and I John 3:14-18), why are you in their business at all? Shouldn't you be very busy in keeping your affairs in order (Lamentations 3:40, I Corinthians 11:23-32, II Corinthians 13:5, and Galatians 6:3-4)? How much of it is your business at all anyway?

We have to understand that the Scriptures teach that some things are to be kept private. For example, if a brother or sister sins against another and it can be resolved privately it ought to stay private (Matthew 18:15). Another example is that you can practice an individual authorized liberty, that might offend some, as long as you keep that to yourself (Romans 14:13-22). With those two points, we should understand that some things should never come to the light. They are none of anyone else's business. Let's therefore take that point and now examine what it is to be a busybody.

A Busybody In Other Men's Matters

Several inspired texts speak to the matter of busybodies. Notice: *"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that*

with quietness they work, and eat their own bread... But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. For some are already turned aside after Satan... If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters" (II Thessalonians 3:10-12, I Timothy 5:11-15, and I Peter 4:14-15).

In brief, here are some of the lessons you can learn from what you just read. You should see that being a busybody is a matter of walking disorderly. Such individuals are to be withdrawn from (II Thessalonians 3:6 and II Thessalonians 3:14-15). We saw that to avoid being a busybody you should be busy in your own affairs (I Thessalonians 4:11). Younger widows were to get married and have children so that they were busy with their own households (Proverbs 31:10-31 and Titus 2:3-5). Then, we learned that we are instructed not to be busybodies in the matters of others lest we suffer for such (I Peter 3:15-17). With all of that, we should see that being a busybody in the affairs of others is sinful. So, where is the balance?

Be About Your Own Affairs With Balance

We have already studied that you have to be aware of your brethren and their needs. You also have to be aware, if you're spiritually minded enough to do so, if your brother or sister has erred (Galatians 6:1-2). That doesn't mean you have to be a private detective and look into everything each other says and does. As we learned last week, many right and wrong works will go unnoticed into the Judgment Day (I Timothy 5:24-25). Look to the fruit of each other, but don't dig up the roots of the tree. See what can be seen and don't concern yourself with what cannot.

In this balance, understand that in examination you are not an elder who has a charge further than being a fruit inspector (Hebrews 13:7, Hebrews 13:17, and I Peter 5:1-3). In living your life before others, realize that you don't have to be as open as someone such as myself [an evangelist] (I Timothy 4:12-16 and Titus 2:7-8).

Conclusion

Don't mind your own business so much that you neglect the saints. Don't meddle so much in the affairs of others that you are in their figurative underwear. Don't be a busybody. If you can't see the balance, don't act beyond what you know is right (Romans 14:23).