
Words of Truth

Receive Him Not Into Your House

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Our last article dealt with the fact that kindness and gentleness does not mean we are to compromise the truth or be “softies”. In that article we talked about how Christians are to be kind people (Ephesians 4:32). In fact, we are to be the people whom would help our neighbor if he or she were in true need (Luke 10:25-37). As Christians, we would be the first to invite someone into our houses for a place to stay or for a meal if such were needed (I Peter 4:9).

As we read through the New Testament we find that Christians would open their homes for one another (Acts 2:46, Acts 10:32, Acts 16:15, Acts 16:34, Acts 16:40, Acts 21:8, etc.). When the disciples of our Lord went for the first time to preach to the Jews, they depended on being received into houses for lodging and food (Matthew 10:9-15). A studied conclusion of the New Testament proves that we need to be a people who will open our houses to others (Hebrews 13:1-2).

Even our worldly society has some form of this understanding of hospitality. Think of how many welcome mats you see at the front doors of houses. People, even of the world, often open their homes for others. Even when out trying to reach the lost, we find some hospitable people (until we pull out our Bibles).

With biblical and cultural teachings of being a hospitable people, we’re going to be presented with times wherein we shouldn’t have someone in our houses. For some, this is a difficult line to draw. Some do not want to appear as being “mean” by not opening the door and being hospitable. As we proceed through this article we are going to have to weigh whether or not stopping some at the door is “mean” or is it Scriptural? We also have to weigh whether or not we’d risk our salvation just to allow someone into our houses. Emotionally, some want to have an “open door” mentality. Scripturally, we’re going to see that there are those whom we should not receive into our houses.

Who Should We Shut The Door Upon?

Notice how clear the Scriptures are on this point: *“Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds”* (II John 9-11).

As we study this verse for absolute clarity, let’s ask some questions. First, who is included in the term “whosoever”? Does this mean the Lord actually would expect you to include your family members as those whom you’d not receive into your house? Yes, the Lord expects family division as

part of your Christian life. That DOES include your grown children and even your parents (Matthew 10:34-37; cf. Matthew 12:46-50). The only person you cannot scripturally close your door on is your spouse if they are willing to remain with you (I Corinthians 7:10-14). If more people would Scripturally withdraw from everyone who errs (I Corinthians 5:1-13, II Thessalonians 3:6, and I Timothy 6:3-5), more people would be restored (Numbers 12:1-15). Contrary to the will of God, many have the “open door” policy that even allows the erring to enter in. Why would anyone repent of their sins if they don’t have to suffer any consequences for those sins? Remember, “shutting the door” (so to speak) on the erring is intended to bring shame (II Thessalonians 3:14). The term “whosoever” includes everyone (cf. Matthew 10:32-33, Matthew 23:12, Luke 17:33, Galatians 5:4, James 2:10, James 4:4, and I John 4:15)!

Secondly, what does it mean to transgress and abide not in the doctrine of Christ? Transgression is the violation of the law of the Lord and is also known as sin (I John 3:4). So, if someone sins, do not have he or she into your house. We know that the exception to this would be the sinner who repents (Luke 17:3-4). Abiding in the doctrine of Christ is about obeying the words of Christ and following His example (I John 2:3-6). To have a relationship with God and the brethren, one must be obedient to the truth (I John 1:1-7).

Thirdly, when someone comes to us they must bring the doctrine of Christ. For those who think that II John 9-11 only applies to those who verbally express false doctrine, the point in verse ten answers that misunderstanding. Our doors need to be open to those who bring the truth with them (Psalms 119:63, Psalms 119:115, II Corinthians 6:14-18, and Ephesians 5:11). We know that there are just few exceptions that we’ve not covered here. That would include times wherein we’d have those whom we’d be teaching in our homes (Acts 28:30-31). Remember, we cannot always escape whom we are around when we have to be out and about (I Corinthians 5:9-10). However, we can and MUST control those whom we open our doors to.

Finally, verses ten and eleven conclude that if we extend “God speed” [greeting] to these who do not abide in the doctrine of Christ nor bring it with them, we are partakers in their evil deeds. God expects us NOT to partake in the sins of others (I Timothy 5:22). When Achan brought in the accursed thing amongst the children of Israel, everyone was held accountable for it (Joshua 7:1-26). Being a partaker in the evil deeds of another is just like you have done that deed yourself. Brethren, let’s not open the door and allow in those who will cause us to be corrupt through our fellowship with them. Hell is not worth it!

Conclusion

God’s word says: *“An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked”* (Proverbs 29:27). If you believe God’s word is truth and you find it easy having the unjust in your home, what does that say about you? Sometimes we have to remove emotions and we have to remove what we want. If we keep our emotions and desires in front of us we’ll have to set the Lord behind us. Sadly, this is what many do when they open their homes to those whom they shouldn’t. If you’re doing this, you’re telling those whom you let in that they are welcome, in their state of sin, in the only place on earth that you can control who you keep company with. Who and what are you opening your home to (I John 3:8)?