
Words of Truth

“I Don’t Want To Talk About It”

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As Christians we find ourselves genuinely concerned about the wellbeing of others (Philippians 2:4). This is especially true concerning our brethren (Romans 12:10). We are taught of God to love our neighbor as ourselves (James 2:8). We are taught of God to be unselfish (Acts 20:35 and Romans 15:1-3). Therefore, we often find ourselves noticing when someone may appear to be having a hard time. We then often inquire about how that individual is doing. In this process, sometimes we will have a person tell us that what they are going through is none of our business.

What should you do in such a case? What if someone tells you that they really do not want to talk about it? Should you press them? Should you keep pressing them until they surrender to your desire to know what is going on with them? What if that person begins to tell you something and then stops right before they say something he or she does not want to say? Should you press them to keep on talking?

Often our good intentions are not always the best thing for others to have to deal with. What we are going to study in this article is that there are times wherein we should not press people to tell us something. There are times when, though we want to help a fellow saint bear his or her burden (Galatians 6:2), that such is not our place. We are going to consider a few Scriptural considerations on this subject matter. I am sure I will not cover them all either. That is not my goal. My goal is to let us realize that sometimes it is right for a person NOT to talk about their problems. Sometimes it is wrong for us to press them to do so. We are going to start off by considering the fact that some people have to bear their own burdens at times.

Sometimes A Person Has To Go It Alone

Notice these Scriptures: *“For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden... Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed”* (Galatians 6:3-5 and James 1:21-25).

What we all have to realize is that the commands above mean we cannot always help people overcome their spiritual difficulties. Sometimes, they have to overcome those things themselves. We step in their way if they try to tell us that and we press them to allow us to be

involved in something they must do themselves. That principle is not the lone principle though. Sometimes pressing someone to talk about a matter is pressing them to speak wherein maybe it is best for them not to.

Sometimes It Is Best To Shut Up

Doesn't God tell us that we should be slow to speak (James 1:19)? Doesn't God tell us to consider our words before we talk (Proverbs 17:27-28)? Doesn't God tell us to guard our mouths (Proverbs 13:3 and Proverbs 21:23)? Doesn't God tell us not to be rash with our mouths and to let our words be few (Ecclesiastes 5:1-2)? Isn't it unwise to talk too much (Proverbs 10:19)? Won't we be accountable to God for every word that we speak (Matthew 12:36-37)?

All of those points we just considered should tell us that we have to be extremely cautious about what we speak. Now, if you and I understand that, why would we press someone else to talk when they do not want to? What if that person is just being careful so that he or she does not say something wrong? Since it is right in the sight of God not to talk too much, we should not encourage someone to speak when they are not wanting to do so. That leads us to another thought. Sometimes a person will not want to talk because they are being cautious in what they say. However, there is another possibility for them not desiring to talk as well. Maybe that person does have something wrong going on, but they do not need your help to deal with it.

Sometimes Sins Do Not Need Someone Else's Involvement To Overcome

As Christians we should have ceased from committing sin (Romans 6:1-2, I Corinthians 15:34, II Corinthians 7:1, II Timothy 2:19, James 1:13-16, I Peter 4:1-2, and I John 3:8-10). However, it is possible for a Christian to err and need to correct such (Acts 8:13-24). Sometimes we need the help of our brethren in overcoming those sins (Galatians 6:1, James 5:16, and James 5:19-20). However, sometimes we can fix those matters without the aid of our brethren (I John 1:9-2:1).

Sin is not always seen and known amongst men (I Timothy 5:24-25). God on the other hand knows everything (Psalms 44:21). God knows those "secret sins" (Psalms 90:8) that may be concealed from the knowledge of men. We have to fix every sin with our Maker (Proverbs 28:13). However, such is not necessary with men. If we know that, why would we press a brother or sister in Christ to tell us what is going on with them when he or she may be able to fix that matter between he or she and God alone?

Conclusion

If a brother or sister in Christ is going through something that he or she does not want to talk about, we should respect his or her wishes. There may be good reasoning behind his or her desire to deal with something on their own. There are many other reasons, that we haven't addressed, that may also be behind his or her desire to deal with something without your involvement. Why would you want to press that person, who is going through something, and add to the burden he or she is already facing? Maybe these are times wherein we should be there as a source of comfort rather than an additional burden (I Thessalonians 5:11).