

An Exercise To Discern Both Good and Evil (Hebrews 5:14)

Is That A Charge?

Scenario:

A brother in the congregation has met a female and has gotten to know her over the past year. He has fallen in love with her and from his report, she with him. What stands out most of all is that this woman loves him more for his faithfulness to God than anything else. She does not live here in El Paso. She lives in Mississippi. She wants to move to El Paso to first, obey the Lord. She is assembling with a supposed “church of Christ”, but has through studies found them to be in error. Secondly, she wants to marry our brother in Christ who has faithfully been a member of this congregation for the past 10+ years. Some of us have been in contact with her. She is excited about serving God and marrying our brother in Christ. It is now Tuesday night. We are openly discussing this situation in a class setting. The question has arisen about who will have her live with them when she moves here until she marries our brother in Christ. During this discussion, a family in a pew is talking amongst themselves. After some talking back and forth in “their pew”, the man of the family leans forward and begins to talk.

Statement That Arises From Our Scenario:

The man says this: “If she moves here it just seems to me like she’s going to be set up for failure. Wouldn’t it be better if she moved to Pennsylvania and married one of the young men there (*note: this being said by someone who knows of no one in Pennsylvania, has never been there at all, etc.*)? There is more money to be made in Pennsylvania, better jobs, better communities. Wouldn’t that be better for her?”

A Later Statement Is Made:

“Once I have gotten to know this brother who is going to marry this lady, I can say I would NEVER allow a daughter of mine to marry him.”

For Discussion:

What do you see in those statements?

- As we addressed in our earlier study on this subject (https://www.wordsoftruth.net/discerngoodfromevil/whythisstudy_2019.html) and other studies in the past (i.e. <https://www.wordsoftruth.net/dontreadintothingsbyeager102010.html>), we have to be cautious here. The statements above are greatly disturbing for those of a spiritual mind. Yet, again, be cautious. In the scenario above, background information on this family is not given. We have recently faced a very similar situation here in El Paso where knowing the family made some things very easy to see (cf. **Titus 1:16**). This is a scenario though without all of that history noted. Having recently went through a

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similar situation, don't be jaded (<https://www.wordsoftruth.net/wotvol14/wotbulletin12222013.html>).

- In our scenario we have a person who is looking to put God first (**Matthew 6:33**, **Matthew 16:24-27**, and **II Corinthians 5:14-15**). Even in marriage, she is looking to find a faithful man (**I Peter 3:7**). Aside from waiting to see her fruit (**Matthew 7:20**), there is nothing to be said of this situation wherein there is a spiritual concern. A congregation should be willing to aid a seeking soul such as this (**Acts 2:41-47** and **Acts 4:32-37**). It is actually refreshing to see someone count the cost and desire to forsake all for the right reasons (**Luke 14:25-33**).
- In our scenario there was a discussion taking place in private amongst just one family, though it is in the midst of everyone assembled. Why not make the statements, in a public forum, for all to hear without a discussion amongst themselves first? From the statements following their little meeting, that is part of the concern (**Matthew 16:5-12**, **Mark 9:33-37**, **Mark 10:17-31**, **Luke 22:14-30**, **John 16:16-24**, and **Jude 1:17-19**).
- Questions are sometimes really a statement about what a person(s) believes (**Luke 20:27-40**).
- Asking if someone is being set up for failure by coming to join themselves to this congregation is an implied indictment on the faithfulness of this congregation. If it is not intended as such, a clarification would need to be made immediately. To the knowledgeable mind, all or any one of the following could reasonably be the understood implied indictments from what this man stated:
 - * The congregation is in some error and unworthy of fellowship because of such (**Psalms 26:4-5**, **II Corinthians 6:14-18**, and **Ephesians 5:6-11**). A brother unworthy for marriage is certainly one of those matters.
 - * The congregation is not capable of helping a person grow and/or is not properly supportive as the congregation should be (**Romans 15:14**, **Ephesians 4:16**, **Hebrews 10:24-25**, and **I Thessalonians 5:11-14**).
 - * The congregation has some KNOWN problem(s) within that aren't being addressed (**I Corinthians 5:1-13** and **Revelation 2:14-16**).
 - * It may be this man and his family do not think enough is taught to help this young lady. If that's a concern, that would be a problem for the congregation (**Psalms 40:9-10**, **Acts 20:20**, **Acts 20:26-27**, **Colossians 1:28**, **Titus 2:1-15**, etc.).
 - * If it is believed the evangelist is not teaching aright why hasn't this man and his family taken action before now (**Proverbs 14:7** and **I Timothy 6:3-5**)?
 - * If it is perceived the congregation is dead, one would think someone should not move here (**Revelation 3:1**; cf. **James 2:14-26**).
 - * Or some other imagined problem that makes the congregation detrimental to one's growth and salvation. In any form, question or statement, it is an indictment. A series of blanket statements leave the faithful wondering what is so wrong with this congregation and our brother that somewhere else is better for this lady to be.
 - * Remember, this person has never been to the place he suggested as an alternative. Therefore, his implication is that even a place he is personally

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unaware of would be better than here. WOW (**Proverbs 18:1-2** and **Isaiah 65:5**)!

- Then there is the indictment, by implication, on the brother that this woman is coming here to marry. Why hasn't this been addressed with him (**Matthew 18:15-17** and **Luke 17:3-4**)? Why is some other brother, whom you don't even know, a better option?
- How have this man and his family worshipped with those whom he obviously has such unresolved problems with (**Matthew 5:22-24**)?
- Why would someone want to turn someone away from a sound congregation? What motive is there? This possibly displays the spirit of Diotrephes and that needs addressed (**III John 1:9-11**). See: https://www.wordsoftruth.net/Sermon_WhyWasDiotrephesWrong2018.pdf
- All of these implied charges are PUBLIC. The implications cannot be ignored. Charges like this MUST be addressed (**II Corinthians 10:1-13:10**).
- Why were material things such as job, and worldly communities brought up at all? Doesn't that tell us something about the person implying whatever charges there are (**Ecclesiastes 5:10-17**, **Luke 12:15-34**, **Colossians 3:1-4**, and **I John 2:15-17**)?
- Supposing this man thinks he is faithful, there is another question. Why, if the man who spoke up is faithful, would he turn this lost soul over to anywhere else other than where he is and where he can be helpful (**Luke 11:52**)?
- This man is taking away an opportunity for himself to do many of the Lord's works with a seeking individual as a servant of Christ (**Galatians 5:13**). What greater work could one do than help a soul be saved (**James 5:19-20**)? If she ends up needing financial help or a place to live, isn't that an opportunity to do the work of the Lord in helping her if he can rather than pass them off on some other congregation he doesn't even know (**Matthew 25:31-46**, **Romans 12:10-16**, **James 2:14-26**, and **I John 3:14-18**)?
- Finally, the "later statement" verifies what the earlier statements implied. This man thinks this brother is unworthy of this woman. He is indicting his brother as a sinner. Based on what? Why now out of no where? Again, as stated above, why hasn't this been addressed before (**Luke 17:3-4**)? Now, that matter needs addressed. The congregation has to deal with it as it has been a charge made public (in principle; **Matthew 18:17**).
- Why hasn't this individual stepped up to fill the gaps he believes are within this congregation (**Ezekiel 22:30-31**)? If he is so strong to see what no one else can see, why isn't he showing himself strong enough to help (**Romans 15:1-3**)? If things are lacking, shouldn't he have tried to help (**I Corinthians 16:16-18**)?
- His carnal mind has also been revealed. He is more concerned about material things more than the saving of a soul (**Matthew 19:16-30** and **I Timothy 6:1-12**).
- Though more could be said, let me conclude with this... What has been revealed is that this brother and his family have been practicing the error of unity in diversity (**Amos 3:3**, **I Corinthians 1:10**, and **II John 1:9-11**). They have clearly sat among saints they have unresolved issues with. They appear fake.
- In this situation, the congregation MUST act immediately. It may be that serious actions will have to occur (**Romans 16:17-18**, **Galatians 2:1-5**, **Galatians 5:12**,

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Ephesians 5:11, and **II Timothy 3:1-5**). If left unaddressed, the congregation is serving under division which is sinful (**I Corinthians 1:10**).