

Withdrawing One's Self Is Much More Than A Formality

I. Introduction: This lesson will not cover all possible scenarios. EX. Some are held to higher standards than others (**Luke 12:41-48**, **Romans 14:1-3** [cf. **I Timothy 4:1-3**], etc.). There would also be challenges such as if withdrawing from a spouse or business partner. For, in both of the aforementioned, the relationship must change but it how would present different Scriptural challenges differs.

A. We are going to talk about sin in two ways in this lesson.

1. Sin as in transgression of God's law (**I John 3:4**).
2. Sin as in an offense against a fellow saint (**I Corinthians 8:1-13**).

B. Of course, the first action to be taken in the event of a brother or sister erring from the faith is for an attempt at restoration (**James 5:19-20**).

1. That is, if you are in the right position to do so (**Matthew 7:1-5** and **Galatians 6:1-2**).
2. Additionally, as with all we do, are we being moved by love for the Lord and our brother or sister (**I Corinthians 16:14** and **I Peter 4:8**).

II. Body: If A Brother Or Sister Errs From The Faith And Will Not Repent...

A. Withdrawing is not just a formality, it is an actual spacial separation from a person (**I Timothy 6:3-5**).

1. The Greek word "ἀφίστημι" (Strong's # 868) is used in **Acts 5:38** and was translated as "Refrain."
2. The word is also translated "departed" (**Acts 12:10**, **Acts 15:38**, and **Acts 19:9**).
3. It is the same word that is used to show those who "depart" from the faith (**I Timothy 4:1** and **Hebrews 3:12**) and for saints who "depart" from iniquity (**II Timothy 2:19**).
4. This even applies to having social interactions (**I Corinthians 5:9-13**).

B. For illustration purposes, consider a command given concerning working to provide for one's self (**I Thessalonians 4:11**).

1. There were those who chose not to obey that instruction. What were the saints to do with that person (**II Thessalonians 3:6-13**)?
2. This was not a formality, but a full on spacial separation from such persons (**II Thessalonians 3:14**).
3. If incidental interaction occurred, admonish that one (**II Thessalonians 3:15**) in clear terms (**II Corinthians 3:12** and **Revelation 3:19**).
4. Think about the difference if such a person is divisive, contentious, etc. (**Romans 16:17-18** and **Titus 3:9-11**).
5. Think about the error that occurs if we have such individuals in our midst or even in bringing such a person into our homes showing them hospitality (**Ephesians 5:6-11** and **II John 1:6-11**).

C. If a brother or sister sins against you personally there are other things to consider. The course of action you can take that also is much more than a formality (**Matthew 18:15-20**).

1. What about mercy **if** he or she is willing to repent (**Luke 17:1-4**)?

2. What if you are unwilling to show mercy (**Matthew 18:21-35** and **James 2:13**)?

D. How clear would our message be if we tell some fallen saint that they are apostate, but then treat them as though they are okay (**Jeremiah 23:14** and **Ezekiel 13:22**)? What shame would they feel if you make them feel good?

1. How hypocritical are we if we try to practice a dual fellowship with evil and God (**I Corinthians 10:20-21**)?

2. Compromising is not showing love, it is showing hypocrisy (**Romans 12:9**).

3. Understand that there is not a family exception to this. Sometimes one must choose a relationship with the Lord over physical family (**Matthew 10:34-39** and **Luke 14:25-33**)!

III. Conclusion: Withdrawing is not a letter, an announcement, or anything formal. Withdrawing is turning away from an person (**II Timothy 3:1-5**).