

Lesson 97 - How do we deal with sin in others?

1. What is the goal in dealing with sins in others? **James 5:19-20** [Hint: It is what they are saved from.]

EGW: Whatever the character of the offense, this does not change the plan that God has made for the settlement of misunderstandings and personal injuries. Speaking alone and in the spirit of Christ to the one who is in fault, will often remove the difficulty. Go to the erring one, with a heart filled with Christ's love and sympathy, and seek to adjust the matter. Reason with him calmly and quietly. Let no angry words escape your lips. Speak in a way that will appeal to his better judgment. Remember the words, "He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." [James 5:20.] {GW 499.2}

2. In trying to save them, what must we be careful of? **Galatians 6:1**

EGW: In the spirit of meekness, "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted," (Galatians 6:1), go to the erring one, and "tell him his fault between thee and him alone." Do not put him to shame by exposing his fault to others, nor bring dishonor upon Christ by making public the sin or error of one who bears His name. Often the truth must be plainly spoken to the erring; he must be led to see his error, that he may reform. But you are not to judge or to condemn. Make no attempt at self-justification. Let all your effort be for his recovery. In treating the wounds of the soul, there is need of the most delicate touch, the finest sensibility. Only the love that flows from the Suffering One of Calvary can avail here. With pitying tenderness, let brother deal with brother, knowing that if you succeed, you will "save a soul from death," and "hide a multitude of sins." James 5:20. {DA 440.3}

He bids us, in dealing with the tempted and the erring, consider "thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Galatians 6:1. With a sense of our own infirmities, we shall have compassion for the infirmities of others. {MH 166.1}

3. On a personal basis, if someone offends you, what ought to be done? **Matthew 18:15**

EGW: "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matthew 18:15). This is the way in which misunderstandings are to be settled. Speaking alone, and in the spirit of Christ to the one who is in fault, will often remove the difficulty. Show Christlike love for your brother by seeking to adjust the difficulty "between thee and him alone." Talk quietly together. Let no angry words escape your lips. Present the subject in a way that will appeal to his best judgment. And if he will hear you, you have

gained him as a friend. {UL 106.2}

4. But if that person will not hear, what is the next step? **Beginning of Matthew 18:16**

EGW: "But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." Take with you those who are spiritually minded, and talk with the one in error in regard to the wrong. He may yield to the united appeals of his brethren. As he sees their agreement in the matter, his mind may be enlightened. {GW 500.2}

5. What purpose does having another person or so present? **End of Matthew 18:16**

EGW: (no additional comment)

6. But if that meeting fails, what is the next step? **Beginning of Matthew 18:17**

EGW: "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church." Verse 17. Let the church take action in regard to its members. {7T 262.3}

7. And if that person still persists to rebel, what is the final step? **End of Matthew 18:17, 1 Corinthians 5:13**

EGW: Shall a few persons in a board meeting take upon themselves the responsibility of disfellowshipping the erring one? "If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church." Verse 17. {CCh 257.3}

8. When put out, who are we handing them over to in hopes that they stop seeking after fleshly choices and start on the path to making spiritual decisions? **1 Corinthians 5:5**

EGW: (no comment)

9. How are public sins to be addressed? **Beginning of 1 Timothy 5:20**

EGW: Because this message is not agreeable to their inclination or welcome to those who must be warned, ministers are solemnly charged to be faithful in its declaration. They will meet wrongs that seem to defy correction. They will be made aware of sins that seem to be covered that will need to be exposed. The prophet says: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinance of their God." "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom: Preach the word, be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." The minister is not to indulge in the relation of anecdotes, but he is to preach the Word. "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality." "Be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." {PH118 6.1}

10. What purpose does public rebuking serve? **End of 1 Timothy 5:20**

EGW: (no additional comment)

11. All of this may require a judgment call, however with many voices shouting, "Don't judge me", what does Jesus encourage us to look at instead, which is a type of judging? **Matthew 7:16, 20**

EGW: Christ warned His disciples: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." Here is a test, and all can apply it if they will. Those who really desire to know the truth will find sufficient evidence for belief. {5T 671.4}

12. Besides, who shall we be judging eventually? **1 Corinthians 6:3**

EGW: Satan also and evil angels are judged by Christ and his people. Says Paul, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" [Revelation 20:4, 6; 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3.] And Jude declares that "the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains-under darkness unto the Judgment of the great day." [Jude 6.] {GC88 661.1}

13. What else shall we be judging? **1 Corinthians 6:2**

EGW: (no comment)

14. What type of person is entrusted with judging? **1 Corinthians 2:15, John 8:15, Romans 8:4 [Answer is in 1 Corinthians 2:15 but contrast is provided with the other verses.]**

EGW: The experiment of the world's wisdom had been fully tested at the advent of Christ, and the boasted human wisdom had proved wanting. Men knew not the true wisdom that comes from the Source of all good. The world's wisdom was weighed in the balances, and found wanting. You are giving the students under your guardianship ideas that are not correct. If they had received far less of them, they would have been better fitted for the prosecution of their work. You do not properly consider the instruction and the method of our Lord Jesus Christ, yet He was the only perfect Educator in our world. "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ." {FE 361.1}

15. What type of judging, though difficult, is to be conducted? **End of John 7:24, Proverbs 31:9**

EGW: To this insinuation Christ gave no heed. He went on to show that His work of healing at Bethesda was in harmony with the Sabbath law, and that it was justified by the interpretation which

the Jews themselves put upon the law. He said, "Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; . . . and ye on the Sabbath day circumcise a man." According to the law, every child must be circumcised on the eighth day. Should the appointed time fall upon the Sabbath, the rite must then be performed. How much more must it be in harmony with the spirit of the law to make a man "every whit whole on the Sabbath day." And He warned them to "judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." {DA 456.4}

16. What is not to be judged? **Beginning of John 7:24**

EGW: (no additional comment)

17. How does the Lord see justice and judgment that is conducted properly? **Proverbs 21:3**

EGW: It is not possible to give to Christ more service than is His due. If you have, as had the Pharisees, a self-complacent spirit, if you wrap about you the garments of self-righteousness, and leave sinners in darkness and transgression, you give evidence that you are not converted; and those whom you deem publicans and sinners will go into the kingdom of heaven before you. Those who would object to eating with publicans and sinners should closely criticise their own course of action. They have important lessons to learn. What saith the Scriptures?--"To do justice and judgment is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice." "For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt-offerings." {ST, June 23, 1898 par. 10}

18. What should we not have towards someone when judging as it could influence the decision based upon their class? **Proverbs 24:23; James 2:3, 9**

EGW: All who are living in daily communion with Christ, will place his estimate upon men. They will reverence the good and pure, although these are poor in this world's goods. James says, "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; and ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him? But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by

the which ye are called? If ye fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, ye do well: but if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convicted of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." {RH, October 6, 1891 par. 8}

19. Who will resist being judged and we ought not listen to their words, even when they try to quote the Bible to prevent the judgment as they do so incorrectly and out of context? **Proverbs 28:5**

EGW: (no comment)

20. How many attempts ought to be made towards a heretic showing that there is a limit to dealing with blatant sins in others? **Titus 3:10-11**

EGW: (no comment)

21. What ought we to do one to another to make sure none harden their ways in sin? **Hebrews 3:13, 1 Timothy 4:13, Acts 14:22**

EGW: I saw that we are now in the shaking time. Satan is working with all his power to wrest souls from the hand of Christ and cause them to trample underfoot the Son of God. An angel slowly and emphatically repeated these words: "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" Character is being developed. Angels of God are weighing moral worth. God is testing and proving His people. These words were presented to me by the angel: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end." God is displeased that any of His people who have known the power of His grace should talk their doubts, and by thus doing make themselves a channel for Satan to transmit his suggestions to other minds. A seed of unbelief and evil sown is not readily rooted up. Satan nourishes it every hour, and it flourishes and becomes strong. A good seed sown needs to be nourished, watered, and tenderly cared for; because every poisonous influence is thrown about it to hinder its growth and cause it to die. {1T 429.1}

22. When we do that, what will accompany the action of exhorting? **2 Timothy 4:2**

EGW: There is a work to be wrought in the heart of each one, that you may not sow tares. When the lips of the watchman are touched with a live coal from off the altar by the Lord of hosts, the trumpet will give a certain sound, very different from the sound we have hitherto heard. God has a living testimony for the world. This tame, lifeless sermonizing is not after God's order. I appeal to you, men in responsible positions, do not seek to meet the world's standard, to catch the world's ideas. Do not speak smooth things, prophesying deceit. The Comforter, the Holy Spirit of God, whom "the Father shall send in my name," said Christ, shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." The ministers of the Lord are to "reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine." {1888 442.2}