

Judgment, Repentance, Restoration

- I. Consider what Scripture says about someone who justly is punitively separated from the church of Jesus Christ.
- A. He is delivered "...unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh..." (**1CO 5:5**).
 - B. His brethren must withdraw from him. **2TH 3:6**.
 - C. He is *put away* from the church as a *wicked person*. **1CO 5:13**.
 - D. He is cut off from the Lord's Table. **1CO 5:11**.
 - E. His brethren must not company with him that he may be ashamed. **2TH 3:14**.
 - F. He loses his inheritance in God's kingdom. **EPH 5:3-6**.
 - G. He is a marked man. **ROM 16:17; 2TH 3:14**.
 - H. He is accounted a heathen man and a publican. **MAT 18:17**.
 - I. His fellowship with saints and God is cut off; he has quenched the Spirit. He is essentially in "King Saul mode" with corrupt, unheard prayers. **1SAM 16:14; 28:15**.
 - J. He is not greatly unlike Esau, who sold his inheritance to satisfy a momentary need of the flesh. **HEB 12:15-16**.
 - K. Eternally speaking, on Judgment Day, the Lord will "...cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (**MAT 24:51**).
 - L. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (**HEB 10:31**).
- II. The spiritually-minded man will note these things and bring his flesh into subjection. **1CO 9:27**.
- A. The spiritually-minded man judges Christ's kingdom the highest value. **MAT 13:44-46**.
 - B. The spiritually-minded man would rather be a doorkeeper in God's house than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. **PSA 84:10**.
 - C. The spiritually-minded man will feel shame that he has been severed from the company of God's saints. **2TH 3:14**.
 - D. The spiritually-minded man who has sinned will justify God and beg for restoration to His presence. **PSA 51:3-13**.
- III. It was said of God, "...yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him" (**2SAM 14:14**).
- A. The manslayer could return to his city after the death of the high priest. **JOS 20:6**.
 - B. The leper who was put *without the camp* (**LEV 13:46**) could be restored after sacrifice and proof of cleanness. **LEV 13-14**.
 - C. The N.T. saint who is put away from the church for sin may also be restored after sacrifice and proof of cleanness.
 - 1. His sacrifice is a broken, contrite spirit. **PSA 51:17 c/w 2CO 2:6-7**.
 - a. contrite: Crushed or broken in spirit by a sense of sin, and so brought to complete penitence.
 - b. Such was the condition of the man at Corinth who had been put out of the church for fornication.
 - 2. His *proof of cleanness* was the period of "humbled time" which Paul deemed to be *sufficient punishment*.
 - 3. The church should confirm its love toward, and restore *such* a man. **2CO 2:8 c/w GAL 6:1**.
- IV. Some have used the account of the restoration of the prodigal son (**LUK 15:11-32**) as a model for

N.T. church discipline, repentance and restoration to fellowship.

- A. Although this account is a beautiful example of mercy, a loving father receiving a repenting son, it is not a rule of N.T. church duty towards a repenting disciplined member.
- B. When a church member withdraws to satisfy his flesh, the church does not send him off with a fine inheritance as did the father of the prodigal.
 - 1. The church turns sinners over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. **1CO 5:5.**
 - 2. The sinner **LOSES** his inheritance; he doesn't take it with him.
1CO 6:9-11; GAL 5:21; EPH 5:5.
- C. The father of the prodigal simply complied with his son's foolish request; there is nothing said about *rebuking* him or *publicly noting* his error.
 - 1. In the church, sinners who forsake fellowship are to be rebuked before all.
1TI 5:20.
 - 2. Such sinners are to be *marked* (**ROM 16:17; PHIL 3:17-18**) and *noted*. **2TH 3:14.**
- D. The father of the prodigal ran to embrace him when he was still far off before he had even heard his confession of sin and then promptly restored him.
 - 1. But the church is instructed to first be convinced of the humility and repentance of a brother who has been turned out of its company.
 - 2. The church is also to impose a probation upon a humbled, penitent returner.
- E. The four gospels detail those things which Jesus taught his apostles while He walked on this earth. There was much more that the Holy Spirit would teach them after Christ's return to glory. **JOH 14:26; 16:13.**
 - 1. The apostles have a *more sure word of prophecy* (**2PE 1:19**) and have the final say in church conduct and creed. **1JO 4:6.**
 - 2. Paul is to be especially regarded.
ROM 16:17; 1CO 4:16-17; GAL 1:8-9; PHIL 3:17-18; 4:9; 2PE 3:15-16.
 - 3. Church ordinances are to be kept *as Paul delivered them*. **1CO 11:1-2.**
 - 4. Ergo, Paul's example, wisdom, directives and rules give us the best understanding of church government concerning the judgment or restoration of brethren.
 - 5. The Holy Spirit has left us a sound pattern to follow in Paul's letters to Corinth.
 - a. In **1CO 5**, Paul instructed the church to exclude a fornicating brother.
 - b. In **2CO**, it is evident that Corinth had taken Paul's words to heart promptly and had cleared themselves of God's judgment by executing judgment on the fornicator. **2CO 7:6-12.**
 - c. Also in **2CO**, Paul gave instruction concerning the restoration of that brother who had been broken with godly contrition and sorrow over what he had done.

V. An excluded brother may only be restored if he is genuinely penitent, for it is on the terms of repentance that God and heaven receives sinners. **ISA 55:7; LUK 15:7.**

- A. penitent: That repents, with serious purpose to amend the sin or wrongdoing; repentant, contrite.
- B. contrite: Crushed or broken in spirit by a sense of sin, and so brought to complete penitence.
- C. These terms fit with the description of the brother at Corinth whom Paul ordered to be restored. **2CO 2:6-11.**
 - 1. He was on the verge of being "...swallowed up with overmuch sorrow" (v. 7).
 - 2. This is critical, since "...godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of..." (**2CO 7:10**).