

A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul West - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/

This is a compiling of wisdom by Paul West from a (https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?mode=viewtopic&topic_id=30552&forum=36&start=10&viewmode=flat&order=1) thread on critiquing ministries a while back. There is great wisdom here that has blessed my heart. I have just re-read it today to refresh these principles in my heart.

A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul West

I can only share with you what I believe is the heart of God and the mind of Christ. I myself spent years as a watchdog and a sword-wielding sentry for the church and thought it my duty to ruthlessly expose all error, heresy, blasphemy, word of faith, charismania, antinomianism, et cetera in a broad, public way. Any person or ministry who didn't fit the pattern I found to be scripturally and theologically correct was sent directly to the firing squad without appeal.

However, I found myself increasingly bitter and judgmental throughout it all. I found that the more people I condemned to the proverbial heretic's stake, the more would then appear, and it became easier and easier each time to pronounce judgment on the next batch.

As I embarked upon my self-imposed heretic-rebuking fest, I found my own walk with Christ and devotion begin to wane. I noticed that I stopped hearing the still, quiet voice of God speak into my life. I was going so full-charge into battle with warning and rebuking that I couldn't hear the voice of my own Captain when He began to warn and rebuke me. One day, however, I heard a clear trumpet call that I've never forgotten:

"Leave them alone"

I heard that every tree my Father didn't plant would one day be uprooted; and that the blind following the blind would both fall into the same ditch. These were the words of the Captain, and I decided to follow Him in this instruction. I saw that while on earth, my Captain mentioned no names, never went on a tirade or a diversion against one particular person. He spoke instead against general hypocrisy, the hypocrisy of the scribes and pharisees, and to beware of their leaven. He didn't mention the individual religious leaders in detail with specifics of their character or ministry that caused them to be damned. Even if you notice with Judas Iscariot, Christ never mentioned his name as the betrayer of the Son of Man publicly.

I chose to obey what I read and follow what I noticed as a pattern in Christ's ministry. It seemed He never had time to write any letters to the Sannhedrin or to the Herodians or scribes and lawyers -- He was too busy ministering to the sick and mute and blind and maimed and preaching the Kingdom to the poor to write a letter to those who were bent on scattering instead of gathering. In fact, when brought before them, He never even opened His mouth to either justify His ministry or rebuke theirs.

So I too stopped publicly rebuking others, and writing letters of criticism to ministries I had no business meddling with. When I spoke to other believers about these things, all God told me was to warn others not to follow them, and "not to do as they do", and I have found time and time again this to be totally sufficient. If we are careful to walk before God with a clear conscience and in a spirit of humility and meekness, the Holy Spirit will lend power and authority to our admonitions and warnings which will automatically vindicate the truth...and confirm that which is false without us so much as lifting a finger or launching into a vitriolic tirade.

I hope you pray about what I've written here. It will save you from a lot of headaches and embarrassment and further your growth into hearing the finer whisperings of God's voice to your spirit.

(Cont)

Wisdom is everything - wisdom and discernment. The hardest thing with all this is just keeping silent. People will doubtless think you are a coward, or indifferent. Can you imagine the scene of Christ before Herod and all his decorated men of war, them ridiculing, provoking and spewing forth all sorts of wicked, ugly blasphemies at Him? The false witnessing? Th

roughout it all, He never once opened His mouth to criticize or defend. He never answered any of the false charges, never spoke a word against Gamaliel and his elite school of Rabbis and how wrong they were.

He kept his mouth shut and everyone, including the Procurator of Judea, marveled. I tell you, people will also marvel if you will desist in joining in with all the popular heresy hunting and preacher critiquing going on these days. Modern Christianity is full of criticism: one group criticizing another, arguing over words and doctrine. One side says the other is Babylon, and the other side calls its accusers "legalists". It's never ending, it engenders perpetual conflict like a bad soap opera, and whoever indulges in it suffers in their walk.

There is a time to rebuke and a time to keep silent. Most of the rebukes you see in this forum - I'll say 99% of them - are done in the wrong spirit and out of season. The truth is, people are not content with God in their own walks due to various reasons (i.e. defiled conscience, unrepentant sin, hurt pride, unforgiveness, etc.) and so they have no peace with God. Because of the lack of peace, they cannot be edified by things and topics that are lovely, noble, of good repute, full of charity and devotion, gentleness, kindness, peaceable to the soul, born of meekness, etc. These things are not conducive to their turbulent spiritual condition, and so they are drawn to fault-find and meddle in other men's affairs and ministries that rub them the wrong way. Since misery loves company, they relish in publishing their attacks in public forums in the form of libel and slander.

The thing is, however, many of their criticisms are correct and true! They may have the correct doctrine and their rebukes are foundationed on scripture and healthy theology; sadly, though, all this is often negated through a fleshy rebuke and a spirit of contention. The correction itself is true, but the spirit in which it is done is false, and thus God does not accept it; He does not anoint it or put His authority behind it...and all it ever accomplishes is the furtherance of more strife and contention.

As for me, I would rather be labeled a coward by other believers and accused as one who does not stand zealously for truth - and keep the anointing of God upon my life and ministry - than join the popular rebuking crowd of critiquing believers and lose God's anointing upon my life and ministry. The truth is that God very seldom calls us to publically rebuke another man. Most of what we see and the letters we read are but the spoiled fruit of believers out of touch with God and expressing what is only natural to them.

(Cont)

When I first came to SermonIndex I lacked discernment in this area. I too eagerly jumped on the bandwagon of what we are talking about. Consequently, there are threads and posts one can dig up in the forum archive that I am not very proud of. Little did I know that during these times, God was testing and trying me and challenging my pride at the inner heart level. His voice became more and convicting until finally I remember a thread popping up bashing Joel Osteen (if my memory serves correct) and as I got ready my flamethrower to torch the territory, I heard the Lord speak to my heart discreetly: "Let him alone"

I had no stirring in my spirit over the "other gospel" the man preached; I had no inclination to grieve over his probable demise and over those who followed him, heading into the ditch. What right did I have then to lambast? To defame, to rebuke and torch? My heart simply wasn't right, though in my head I knew he was preaching another gospel and leading millions astray.

It suddenly became a heart issue each time one of these heretic threads emerged, and I discovered that the verve to publically flay these men went away. It became sufficient instead to warn without condemning; I saw myself instead as a witness in court and not the judge. God sent His Son into the world not to condemn, and therefore God also sent me to SermonIndex not to condemn. The blind leading the blind both fall into the ditch irrespective of anonymous forum diatribes.

That all took place a few years ago, and I lost some friends because I've refused to take sides or support one camp over another. I just want to be on the Lord's side. I have also found that God honors those who honor Him, and if you humble yourself He will for sure exalt you in due time. The secret is in not giving up doing good before the harvest. If we are careful to keep a good, clear conscience and walk in the humility of what we know the Lord expects from us, He will show Himself mighty in our lives.

We also find that the more we submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit, the more peaceable our lives become...and the more insight God lends us to see the compassion and longsuffering He has for all men. As we continue to look unto Jesus we learn these things, and much more, as we become more and more fashioned into His image.

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2010/1/27 16:32
Amen. This is a tremendous article. Oh that we would learn the lessons of the commands of Christ such as not to speak evil of "any" man. That we would desire to be more like Christ and "consider others" better than ourselves.

Re: , on: 2010/1/27 16:32

Quote:
----- Paul West said: So I too stopped publically rebuking others

hmmm...the beloved apostle who wrote most of the New Testament had no problem exposing heretics.

2Ti 2:17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: **of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus;**

2Ti 2:18 Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of so me.

I think it can be a danger to take "what the Lord told Paul West" and to make it a law to everyone. Instead he should admonish people to follow the Lord. It might be different for different people.

So Greg, if I could ask you a question....was Paul speaking evil of these men?

edit: said Paul Washer by mistake..changed to Paul West.

By the way, I'm not trying to come against Paul West just wanting to see what the word says in all of this.

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul - posted by Goldminer (), on: 2010/1/27 16:32
Truly this is the heart of God. Thank you for sharing it.

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul - posted by Mikeydarev (), on: 2010/1/27 16:32
Thanks for this.

I remember taking the time to look into false teachings and getting my heckles raised in the process. I then remember praying about it and hearing the words Jesus spoke to Peter after he asked if John wouldn't die in John 21... "What is that to you? You follow me."

I think the heart of that is reflected in this post and is fantastic.

sscott... the passage you're referring to Paul used them as an example. Obviously something the church could see and refer to. Take some time to reflect on and wrestle with this post. It's worth while.

God bless y'all

Re: , on: 2010/1/27 16:52

Sure...I'm not saying people are to be "heresy hunters" but Paul named heretic's "by name" to warn others. I don't believe Paul was speaking evil but was simply speaking the truth.

I've just noticed people have a tendency to jump from one extreme to another. The answer is to be led by the Lord in all things.

Re: The other side of shepherding. The brother's keeper., on: 2010/1/27 17:37

Titus:1, 10-16

If we are shepherds, or our brothers keepers, there is a time and place for rebuke and confrontation upon deceivers.

.....
"For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, 11 whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.

12 One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." 13 This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, 14 not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth.

15 To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but even their mind and conscience are defiled. 16 They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.

"Whose mouth must be stopped..."..."therefore rebuke them sharply."

Deceivers will kill and destroy God's people. It is the shepherds duty, and ours as good brothers and sisters to protect and feed.

Acts:20

Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. 31. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

"Therefore watch."

"Take heed to yourselves, overseers."

2 Peter 2

1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption, 13 and will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, 14 having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children.

Destroyers in the midst of the flock.

Rev:2, vs. 6...and 15 and 16

Jesus speaking;...vs:6 "Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate." and...

15. "So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.

16. Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth."

Jesus himself despises deceivers, and controllers, and indeed makes war with them. every heresy and deception that entered the holy church ever, to defile her... Satan's motivation...], BEGAN WITH SMALL HERESIES AND LIES, AND WERE NOT CONFRONTED, AND SPREAD LIKE CANCER!

I do appreciate Paul's article, and especially the idea of the critical spirit, and know personally how quickly it can devour you , and rob you of Peace....; we must however, judge according to the bright mirror of the Word...the Bible, and judge what a man DOES...His DEEDS and His teachings...what he writes and holds to. It is our duty, for the wolves are in the majority today, for the lack of the protective shepherd.

Let us be gentle, and "if a brother is overcome with a fault...

"you who are spiritual"...RESTORE such a one..."

If at all possible...then, as Matt. 18 says...your out without repentance.

I believe the moderators here have done a very good job displaying patience and fairness.

A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul West - posted by Goldminer (), on: 20

I think it is correct that there is a time for rebuke and correction, but where the problem comes in is carrying it out in an unbiblical way. The word say to go to your brother and talk to him and if he doesn't receive it take one or two others and then if he doesn't receive it take it before the church. There is a order in God's book.

How many of those that we talk about on this forum were ever talked to by any of us? Not many I bet. A lot of what we share is heresy and probably false and we are in danger of harming someone God is maybe using.

Acts 5:36-39

36 For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. 37 After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. 38 And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: 39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God

I think that the first post is correct if we speak out against unbiblical teaching, like the unbalanced prosperity doctrine, and don't attach names to it, the readers will understand what we are saying and will be warned, but we won't be in danger of slandering someone God is using. If we know for certain that someone is in error we should follow correct biblical procedure in our approach.

About 15 years ago someone started sending me newsletters about all the "error" in the church, hitting this on and and that one. I guess he was the only one that could rightly divide the word of truth, because surely everybody else was messed up. I finally felt the check of the Holy Spirit about even reading it and canceled my subscription. I felt peace return to my heart. You can't accomplish anything positive by focussing on the negative.

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul - posted by Compton (), on: 2010/1/27 22:28

Quote:
-----You can't accomplish anything positive by focussing on the negative.

The point of this thread, is to recognize that we can become more zealous about error than about truth. Most of us can admit to stumbling in this area, so the point needn't be a condemnation, or a controversy, but simply a caution.

Blessings,

Mike

Re: - posted by Christisking (), on: 2010/1/27 22:28

Amazing words from the Lord through brother Paul West!!! This is also the testimony in my life - thanks so much for these encouraging words!

Patrick
(www.jonahproject.com) www.jonahproject.com

Re: - posted by DBen (), on: 2010/1/27 22:40

Quote:
-----God told me was to warn others not to follow them, and "not to do as they do"

sscott - I believe what you were sharing in Scripture is what Paul West was saying in the copied post that was submitted . What he stated in the quoted section would most likely come with a name and the admonition not to follow their ways.

Hope that helps to clarify the thoughts a bit.

The writing is a blessing and gives some great points for all of consider. Thanks for sharing.

Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/1/27 22:42

Hhhmmm, do these principles also apply to Obama and his buddies?

Yesterday I was traveling in Alabama alone and listened to Rush Limbaugh; then today I listened to American Family Radio and they echoed Limbaugh's show from the day before. I got disgusted and played a CD instead....so much more edifying and peaceful - no strife, no debate...

SIGH.

ginnyrose

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/1/27 22:56

One thing I have learned over the years is, as the apostle Peter said, we've been called to be a people who proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. When we make this our consuming passion, there is little room for anything else. Oh, in proclaiming Him, we may very well address false doctrines. But such is secondary to our primary work, to proclaim Him. It's a certain irony that most "discernment" ministries and ministers are guilty of missing it in regard to these things. When we make it our focus to proclaim Him, the truth becomes evident, and error is exposed. Much like when Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, he naturally saw the error of his ways, and the ways of his people.

Re: - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/1/27 22:56

Good word KingJimmy, I believe it was Spurgeon who said, "You can lie a straight stick next to a crooked one and the difference will be apparent and sufficient."

Re: - posted by KingJimmy (), on: 2010/1/28 0:29

Amen. Spurgeon had such a way with words :-)

Re: , on: 2010/1/28 8:13

I see both sides here. Deception is a terrible thing, it caused the fall and will cause many more to fall. I'm not a heresy hunter but if anyone speaks out against false signs and wonders they get that label from that side. Heresy hunters have a spirit of pride in my observations, it has a tone of: 'I'm right, you're wrong, now repent and agree'. They search and look for confrontation. It's not a loving warning to the sheep, it's a condemnation of the deceiver. And I would also like to say that sometimes heresy hunts us, the Church, by creating movements of sweeping deception that screams at the door of the church 'we have them now'. I wasn't looking for Lakeland, it became a global phenomenon and knocked loudly at our door. Not all people are supposed to be a watchman who discerns the spirits just like not all people are supposed to preach or speak in tongues. It's when we define our own role that we get into trouble.

Sometimes giving a loving warning can seem very harsh on the false teacher but I believe that sometimes you have to scream loudly to drown out the sound of the train of deception that is about to run over some people. I don't want to be that way and I know that I can always do better. But I pray much more than I speak on these things because God has shown me firsthand at what it is doing to His church. I would rather boldly pray than boldly speak because one can speak out of frustration, and I have to my shame. That's not God's fault, it's all mine. But I know that God works something up within me that I know has to be done or said. I know this because I complain about it and would rather just pray. We hear testimonies of people who were once bound to these deceivers and what they went through to get out of it. I pray their testimony is used mightily to save more. I don't care how it gets done or who's doing it as long as the sincerity and love for the sheep outweighs any malice, anger, or condemnation for the deceivers. God said to leave room for His vengeance and so it is. Now I have gotten angry with some who are angry and apologetic for these movements, and I'm aware of it and I always ask God to help me do better next time. We live in dire times and scripture admonishes us to keep watch, pray, and follow Christ's leading in these areas.

Re: - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/1/28 14:22

Brother West's post hardly needs explanation as it speaks for itself. He did not put any law down for all believers to adhere to. He did not ban 'rebuking' or 'discernment.' He merely presented the Bible's heart on the issue and how an individual's heart should be postured before engaging in these matters.

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul - posted by myfirstLove (), on: 2010/1/28 14:22

I appreciate Paul sharing his testimony. We all can learn from each other's testimony. Now, not all go through the same things because not all have the same problems. I myself understand what Paul West shares because I have gone through it myself. I use to have a lot of zeal, but lack knowledge in many areas! And, I'm sure many of you can relate to that, especially with doctrines. But, now I've learned there is a godly balance. Instead of leaning from one extreme to the other, the Lord has taught me much about being led in the Spirit. There is a time for everything, to rebuke, proclaim God's excellency, exhort, encourage, expose, be quiet....But, we all must be led by the Spirit to know when... As Jesus say, I only do what I see the Father do.

It sounds like Paul was speaking about focusing too much on exposing, and little on giving the life of Jesus. That is a problem that many Christians have! Many can easily spew out doctrines, exposing, debate....But, not many can show the life of Jesus because not many will take true discipleship seriously and deny themselves and carry their cross. And, I sa

y, if you don't take true discipleship seriously, you have no right to expose or correct!

God Bless, Lisa

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul , on: 2010/1/29 10:05

Quote:

-----Leave Them Alone

I remember this admonition given by the Lord years ago and I had briefly forgotten it when I too was not in fellowship with Him. And yes, I had no peace, so I was becoming discontent with myself and began to defend the word by taking up a sword to defend Jesus. Just like the Apostles did in the garden of Gethsemane. Brother Paul West brings out a very important issue that I am glad I read. It just reinforced what I have already believed, but also gave the assurance that this is the better way of living this Christian life before God by.....leaving them alone.

I do have some questions though and I feel it is important.

On SI, how do we know that a rebuke is from God or from our own vengeful flesh? What if it really is from God and it's perceived as wrong by posters and moderators? What if it is spoken in love but perceived as unloving?

ugh!!

Re: - posted by Goldminer (), on: 2010/1/29 10:31

It seems to me that exposing the error and not the person is the answer here. I can tell you that hitting someone on the head to try to knock the down to make it look like the Holy Spirit did it is wrong without telling you who did the hitting. Having said that, when the folks who read this post go to a service and see someone doing the push, they will remember that someone said to question this practice.

I do believe there is a time for rebuke and correction, but following biblical guidelines is the way. Not when I haven't even spoke to the person myself and given them an opportunity to defend themselves, or am just passing along what I heard, and name calling just seems to lack love to me. Yes there are false prophets, but we need to be very careful who we call one because we just may have to answer for it later if we call it wrong or in the wrong spirit.

Re: motive and heart, on: 2010/1/29 13:15

Diotrophes, the heretic with the original Papist ambition, was called out by the apostle John.

9. "I wrote something to the church; but Diotrophes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say.

10. For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.

11. Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. The one who does good is of God; the one who does evil has not seen God."

Paul the Apostle wrote to his faithful protege Timothy a similar command to a couple of heretics.

Hymenaeus and Philetus...
2 Timothy 2

16. "But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more ungodliness. 17 And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, 18 who have strayed concerning the truth, saying that the

resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some."

This has always been a holy function of the leaders of God's people, from the very beginning, through all the prophets, the Lord, the Apostles, through to today.

The problem comes when doctrinal differences and petty whims are substituted in place of the HERESY, to justify position or power. Slaughter the flock; save our ministry. We announce heresy upon those we disagree with, to justify our dogma; our doctrinal stance. Everything from the rapture, once saved always saved, to pre-trib to post trib, Calvinism to Charismatica, IS VIOLENTLY OPPOSED BY SOMEONE, TO THE POINT OF PRONOUNCING HERESY UPON EVERYONE ELSE!

This is precisely the reason the Pharisee's, the religious leaders of the day, murdered Jesus. "If we let Him continue, the Roman's will come and remove the Nation, and OUR PLACE. They could care less about their nation, except within the context that it provided them power, and of course, they DID murder Jesus out of their plot, and attempted to murder Lazarus also; the undeniable witness that Jesus was indeed God, and their Messiah.

I wouldn't want to be in their shoes on the Great Day of the Lord. Yes, we should be careful not to accuse those upon the same path as we, with differences, but at the same time we must be diligent, as the Apostles and Prophets have always been, to stand against the "damnable Heresies", like Roman Catholicism, Mormonism, and deceivers and liars like Todd Bentley and his supporters.

Are our hearts right, to protect the people of God, and proclaim truth?...for the glory of Jesus?...or is it for our own self righteousness or promotion that we stand?

Re: MARTYRS, on: 2010/1/29 13:22

Let us not forget that the martyrs of old...those burnt alive and tortured, All stood against Tyranny and heresies...which inevitably unite with INDIVIDUALS in every generation.

There is great glory given to the Lord when a brother or sister stands for the truth, and inevitably for the Body of Christ against Satan as the heretic.

It is part of the war against the saints that he will rage until the Lord puts an end to him.

Re: - posted by Goldminer (), on: 2010/1/29 13:47

You are right brother, but I would think that Paul, etc. went in some way first and confronted the error before exposing it. There is a procedure with those in ministry or not. It is for us to make sure even this is done in a correct biblical pattern.

Re: , on: 2010/1/29 16:38

Quote:
-----I wouldn't want to be in their shoes on the Great Day of the Lord. Yes, we should be careful not to accuse those upon the same path as we, with differences, but at the same time we must be diligent, as the Apostles and Prophets have always been, to stand against the "damnable Heresies", like Roman Catholicism, Mormonism, and deceivers and liars like Todd Bentley and his supporters.

I think what Paul West was referring to was these groups and their ministry that we are to leave alone.

There is a fine line here that is difficult to decipher. We are to rebuke but it's within the body of Christ. We know that Mormonism is not Christian, why rebuke it? Only if it's coming into our ranks that we should lift up a standard against it. They believe they are doing a work for God and the Lord is saying, "leave them alone". Don't get all tangled up in what they believe.

believe and fighting with them, "You Follow Me", let the dead bury their dead.

There will be times by the Spirit that we will rebuke those that are not in the body, but those times are rare.

Re: - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/1/29 18:12

Also, consider that both Paul and John had direct, apostolic ties with those to whom they wrote these things. They were shepherds and overseers of these people. Whereas on an internet forum, there is likely no one here under another's spiritual authority and covering. Therefore the critical love factor and relational intimacy for the hearers that these men had for the churches they planted and oversaw, is most likely not present.

And as has been mentioned, the apostles usually rebuked only when they confronted or had confronted the heretical party directly. Here on the internet boards that's not likely to have happened, and even if it has, the same authority to rebuke would not be there because they'd be outside of their sphere of authority.

And then there's character. Paul and John (and for this post's sake Brother West) have proven their integrity and maturity by demonstrating a long lifestyle of holiness, pursuit of the Lord, and ability to lead and guide. On the forums this is absent from 99% of the people that step into this rebuking role. They have either:

a) 10 posts or less and decide they are going to straighten out the Church

b) many posts but have demonstrated a lack of character, always criticizing everything, always the antagonists, always straining for the gnat with no one meeting the high, holy standard; they alone, like Elijah, are "the last true follower of God left"

or c) again many posts but are missing the crucial love for both the hearer AND whom they are rebuking; they lift the skirts of these false prophets in the wrong, often carnal, spirit done in the name of holiness and discernment and for the life of the Church; they usually only want to make a name for themselves or give the appearance of a watchman though they probably lack a flock of their own; they want only to tear down not to build up; only to root out, never to plant; these are people that have usually heard too much teaching and have not the depth of relationship with the Lord to be able to wield it effectively and with the power of the Spirit; the list could go on and on.

We see Jesus highlight the 2 things necessary to speak in these matters:

"Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?" John 8:46

1. The pure conscience and equally clean character
2. To actually be speaking words of truth.

The man has to match his message. Often these criticisms are rehashes of rehashes of smear campaign stuff that the finger-pointer has never witnessed first hand. Anyhoo, I've probably said too much myself here. God bless.

Re: , on: 2010/1/29 20:45

"and as has been mentioned, the apostles usually rebuked only when they confronted or had confronted the heretical party directly. Here on the internet boards that's not likely to have happened, and even if it has, the same authority to rebuke would not be there because they'd be outside of their sphere of authority." giggles

This site is for those seeking the truth. You can debate doctrine all you want but people who may feel uncomfortable with a ministry may find out why, here. I did. I was up in the prosperity movement and prophetic movement for awhile. When I felt weird about it all I was guided to some ministries, including Paul Washer, Tozer, Ravenhill, Carter Conlon, Jim Cymbala and the like. They walked the talk so to speak. They weren't preaching signs, wonders, prosperity, and the like. I began understanding those who truly care about their sheep. The Roman Catholic church has been deceiving for many generations, I grew up in it and my parents and some sibs are still deceived. What seems to be so obvious to us in the Protestant Church seems to be elusive in the Catholic church. I remember going to a 'Marian apparition' gathering back in the late 80's in Florence KY. False signs and wonders all around there and people were looking at pictures of the sun they had taken trying to see her figure in it. My rosary chain turned gold too.. I didn't know what to make of that but thought it just unbelievable. Still something wasn't right to me. I was saved probably 12 yrs later and thank God that I wasn't caught up in what I was only seeing with my eyes. Satan uses Mary and the 'slaying of the spirit' now in the Protestant c

church to deceive. Martin Luther stood up to the church and I believe he was sent by God to do so. It had to be done. When he plead his case, he was met with stern rebuke and condemnation. It was his determination to be loyal to the Spirit that kept God's truth alive. Chaos ensued, and he was labelled a madman.

But those who listened could tell there was something wrong with the Catholic dogma. They followed too. So throughout the generations since this time, there has been a type of war for the truth of the Gospel. So I grew up Catholic, was saved, then went into the word faith contingent by the influence of my mother in law, and then the prophetic where I found God speaking things to me that I knew the church did not want to hear. Since I was new I didn't want to offend anyone but what I knew was truth then, has never changed even now. Some ministries preach the Gospel in love and live it out, others obviously don't. We have an obligation to those who were just like me. How can I glorify God if I don't know where I came from and how I was spared?? It was the mercy of God, and the bold truth of those who said 'beware', that I were spared. We need this, not just at the pulpit, but on sites like this. People are looking beyond the pulpit for guidance and rightfully so. There are banterings here that you won't find at the pulpit. That can be a positive or a negative. But at least someone can ask the question without wondering if they are defying authority.

The pulpit seems too dictatorial these days and people are looking to other avenues to validate a wooing of God. That said, the hinderance is that too many people want to offer their insight in a spirit of contention and self-edification. Authority is God given, but the deceived don't know the difference and mainstream christianity has been very loose with what constitutes 'authority'. Some 'Mega churches' are a prime example of that. SI, I would say, wouldn't have Tozer, Ravenhill, Wilkerson, Cymbala, Katz, Reidhead, and the like if there wasn't a demand for the same ole' three point sermon and an offering. But then again this is a historical struggle. The boldness of deception has never wavered from telling people their 'truth'. This is why there is, and will be, a falling away from it. But if we don't have love then we have nothing as Paul says... He rebuked in love.

This doesn't happen overnight, and it's not limited to just the pulpit.... websites can offer something, and it has.... but it can also be a callous tool that turns away those who want the truth in love because we get too comfortable with the security of a desk and a computer.

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul , on: 2010/1/29 21:00

Quote:
-----Authority is God given, but the deceived don't know the difference and mainstream christianity has been very loose with what constitutes 'authority'.

Well said, ccrider. Very well said.

Re: - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/1/29 21:14

ccrider I'm afraid I missed the point of what you were saying. Or perhaps you missed the point of what I saying. In any case I think we're talking from 2 different places. I'm trying to convey the spirit of the original post by Brother West, not argue doctrine.

His words are very valuable to me and I feel to all posters on internet forums in regards to the subject to which he is speaking. I did provide the link to the original thread, which can maybe help give context to his words and my comments on those words. Of note, at the time the original posts were made by West, there was a spike in the number of pretty aggressive anti-Warren threads and some on Calvary Chapel sliding into 'emergent heresy.'

I and I believe SI are all for people finding out the truth. That's not the issue, especially not through the preaching of the word. Again this was in regards to forum conduct primarily, though it can have overflow into other areas as applicable.

God bless.

Re: , on: 2010/1/29 21:37

Hi giggles. Don't take what I said as a counterpoint to Paul. Articles get posted and people expound.... that means we can respond to a post that is subsequent to the original and give our opinion beyond it, or just offer something in addition. I was offering a general observation more than a direct and acute counter point. Please understand, people chiming in on the subject itself doesn't preclude the wisdom of the original article. Some may take direct pot shots at an article but that shouldn't surprise anyone. After all Paul was describing what he said was 99.9% of people here. He's entitled to that and may not be far off in his assessment. But people will respond nonetheless and I hope that the conclusion will not be anything other than us getting closer to a perspective that won't offend, even if it's not complete agreement.

My circumstance is unique just like many others... that doesn't mean Paul's circumstance and admonishment is lacking in anything. It needed to be said at the time it was said and it definitely glorifies God's working in us on a personal basis.

Re: - posted by Giggles (), on: 2010/1/29 21:43

Indeed. Good words ccr.

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2010/1/29 21:43

Excellent article, Paul.

However, in my spirit I sense an unsettling....

Paul is writing about the work or 'ministry' of a religious muckraker which has no place in the kingdom of God. It is a critical spirit which will find fault everywhere with nothing to spare. I, too, have experienced this check in my spirit - one time a Church of Christ fellow wanted me to critique one of their books. I started and noted all things that were not said 'right'. Then the Spirit quietly told me to leave it be. And I did and was blessed for it. The jot and tittle I was picking at was nothing short of a critical attitude.

What do I find unsettling? People do get into the mode of only wanting to hear sweet things. Sometimes if a person is confronted privately of a sin in a loving way, they will defend themselves and say you are being judgemental - the Bible says 'judge not!!!' and say you are not loving. I have heard so many people who have apostatized badly throw this accusation at you when confronted about apostasy or sin. Too many times we are like Ahab who does not want to hear the word of the LORD because "he does not prophesy good concerning me" 1Kings 22:8.

As far as those watchman ministries, I must say we have personally benefited from "Watchman's Fellowship". They have analyzed cults and teach people where they are wrong. Without these teachings one can easily get snookered in because most of what these religious groups on the fringe teach are true. It is only within their doctrine one will find a nugget of poison that will contaminate the entire thing. I appreciate those prophets who work to sort out these errors - I do not have the time for it. Some errors are easily discernible but others are not because they are not always obvious.

"Christianity Today" used to be really good in alerting their readership about questionable ministries. Imagine my shock when I was told that the famous author Rosalind Rinker is a darling of the lesbian/homosexual movement. The reason I am so shocked is that a ladies group of whom I was a part of used her lit! And I promise you if you followed her teachings you will become the darling of these groups. Anyhow, after I learned this, I threw this book in the garbage and in doing so have even forgotten the title of this book. Yet, according to a survey done by CT her writings have impacted Christianity in a profound way.

I compile the church bulletin - have for many years and in it I love to add inspirational pieces in the empty spaces. To find these pieces I will go online. I have rejected many that upon further examination came from someone who teaches false doctrine. Now this particular article may have been fine, but someone may be so impressed with it that he/she will go online to check this person's writings and will not have the discernment to reject and get deceived. Plus I do not want to lend credibility to someone who is a false teacher. (EDIT: Many times I will experience a check in my spirit about these writings.)

I have personally been deceived in my youth and as a young mother. One of the issues I had to deal with is that there were people older than me who should have known better and told, taught me this was wrong. But they didn't and I promoted something dreadfully wrong...

Yes, I deeply appreciate those who will take the time to point out error lest we become deceived - muckrakers are not

eeded in the kingdom of God.

Blessings,
ginnyrose

Re: TO FEED AND PROTECT., on: 2010/1/30 17:54

I wrote:

"I wouldn't want to be in their shoes on the Great Day of the Lord. Yes, we should be careful not to accuse those upon the same path as we, with differences, but at the same time we must be diligent, as the Apostles and Prophets have always been, to stand against the "damnable Heresies", like Roman Catholicism, Mormonism, and deceivers and liars like Todd Bentley and his supporters."

Snufalapus responded:

"I think what Paul West was referring to was these groups and their ministry that we are to leave alone."

"There is a fine line here that is difficult to decipher. We are to rebuke but it's within the body of Christ. We know that Mormonism is not Christian, why rebuke it? Only if it's coming into our ranks that we should lift up a standard against it. They believe they are doing a work for God and the Lord is saying, "leave them alone". Don't get all tangled up in what they believe and fighting with them, "You Follow Me", let the dead bury their dead."

"There will be times by the Spirit that we will rebuke those that are not in the body, but those times are rare."

I wrote:

We should indeed ignore heresies and deceptions in general, but only in the context that they will not encroach into the holy fellowship of the true church.

It is then, that we must confront the deception as the lie, in order that the younger, and naive would see. This is the DUTY of the shepherd...

Below is the REST of my post...

"Are our hearts right, to protect the people of God, and proclaim truth?...for the glory of Jesus?...or is it for our own self righteousness or promotion that we stand?"

The point of rebuke IS NOT to start a fight with the Mormons or the Papists, and I most heartily agree with the tenor of the post to generally "leave them alone," but when and if they begin to seduce the body to accept them, or reel in a brother or sister to accept them as a valid form of serving Jesus, THEN the true under shepherd of Jesus must stand up against them, to expose them for what they are; agents of the devil.

Possible practical way to strike a balance... - posted by jpspeer, on: 2010/1/30 20:22

Considering the autonomous nature of the local assemblies of believers, it would seem to be scripturally wise to handle the types of situations that require such watchfulness and defense of the faith primarily within our own churches.

Just a thought.

Re: A Response to Contacting of Ministers before Criticizing their Teachings by Paul West, on: 2010/2/1 13:46

Hi Brothertom,

I found this thought helpful.

Quote:
-----The point of rebuke IS NOT to start a fight with the Mormons or the Papists, and I most heartily agree with the tenor of the post to generally "leave them alone," but when and if they begin to seduce the body to accept them, or reel in a brother or sister to accept them as a valid form of serving Jesus, THEN the true under shepherd of Jesus must stand up against them, to expose them for what they are;

You may remember exhorting me to 'RUN' a few months ago? I have now found out that the pastor in question is a glowing example of the new way of 'building a church', from reading the new website for (https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id32426&forum40&5) AoG, UK. (I have posted a link and expounded briefly my findings, in the Revivals forum, for further discussion. I would be glad if you'd take a look at it.) Also, I have stopped trying to attend that church as a worshipper, while keeping in touch with some who still do. It is still on my heart to find a way to explain to the leadership that they are falling for a subtle deception.

Re: , on: 2010/2/1 22:55

Brother Tom said,

Quote:
-----The point of rebuke IS NOT to start a fight with the Mormons or the Papists, and I most heartily agree with the tenor of the post to generally "leave them alone," but when and if they begin to seduce the body to accept them, or reel in a brother or sister to accept them as a valid form of serving Jesus, THEN the true under shepherd of Jesus must stand up against them, to expose them for what they are; agents of the devil.

I believe this is the gist of what Paul West was referring to.