

EFFECTUAL PRAYER

It grieves my heart when I hear other Christians gossip about another believer or minister who has fallen into sin. Worse yet, I believe it grieves the heart of God. Yes! Sin is to be judged and repented of and not glossed over, yet on the other hand, we must be careful of our own heart motivation and attitude towards other fellow believers and ministers who have succumbed to sin.

I was watching TV a while ago and heard a minister tear down a fellow minister because of a sin in his life. It was right out in the open on secular TV. This minister was not just addressing the sin, but he was tearing down this minister as well.

I felt just as badly for the man who was tearing down the fallen minister. He had no idea that by judging the heart of another minister he was opening up himself to be judged as well. Matthew 7:1, “Judge not that ye be not judged”. Romans 14:10-13, “For God knows the heart of us all. We will all stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ and give an account for ourselves alone”.

Actually, God hates all sin in our lives. Not just sexual sin, but unbelief, worry, fear, lying, hating, gossip, gluttony, slander, cheating and pride. Anything apart from faith, is sin. (Romans 14:23) Pride was the sin that caused the fall of Lucifer.

In the case of personal disputes with another believer, Jesus makes it clear in Matthew 18:17 we should first try to reconcile it between ourselves privately. If it cannot be reconciled, then bring one or two witnesses to weigh it out. Going before the church body is only a last resort.

In the case of a believer or minister who has fallen into sin, scripturally what should we do? Paul addressed this in Galatians 6:1, “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are SPIRITUAL restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted”. Verse 2, “Bear ye one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ”.

What law is Paul talking about? The law of love! What would Jesus do? How would you want someone to treat you if you had fallen into sin? I heard a preacher say one time, “The reason we don’t see more ministers restored is because we don’t have many true spiritual men and women”. Ye that are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of meekness.

Leaders who are truly spiritual will **restore** others. They won't further destroy lives. They won't condemn and then leave a person helpless. A person who is full of pride is not full of love. Love covers a multitude of sin. (I Peter 4:8)

The Apostle John says in I John 5:16, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death". The last time I checked there was only one sin unto death according to Jesus and John, and that is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, all other sins are forgivable.

We should be praying for our fellow brothers and sisters who are struggling with temptations. Instead of gossiping, we should be interceding for them.

James 5:16 says it this way, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed". The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much". In other words, effectual, heartfelt supplication and intercession on behalf of someone else makes much power available from God to that person you are praying for.

Instead of gossiping, judging or walking in pride, why not fall on our knees, skip a meal and cry out in prayer to God on behalf of a brother or sister who is struggling with temptations and weaknesses or sin. This kind of prayer makes more power from God available to them to break the bondages in their lives.

Our hearts should hurt when we see a brother or sister fall. I Corinthians 10:12, "Therefore let him who stands take heed lest he fall". We are all subject to temptation. We can help a struggling brother or sister by praying for them with real heartfelt prayers, supplicating in the spirit. Now this is true love in action. This is how we would want someone to pray for us.

If you know someone who has backslidden or has fallen into sin, take some time to supplicate in tongues for them. Let the Spirit of Prayer come on you for them.

Ask God to give you a heart of compassion so that you can stand in the gap for them. So begin today and make a change. Instead of talking about the person or the problem, begin to pray for them.