

Should We Tell Others What to Do?

Scripture Reading — Galatians 6:1-10

*Whoever turns a sinner from the way of error will save them from death ...
James 5:20 —*

Years ago I received a letter from a leader in the church I was serving. It was a strongly worded letter, telling me that if I expected to be effective in my ministry, I should take a close look at my attitude and make some serious adjustments. My first reaction was to say to myself, “Who does he think he is, telling me to change my attitude?” Only after I read the letter a second time did I realize how right he was.

Unfortunately my initial response was one of the most common reactions we make when people point out our sins and shortcomings. And a fear of that kind of response keeps some of us from confronting someone else who lives in sin. We are afraid that we’ll be told to mind our own business because we ourselves are far from perfect. After all, who are we to point out to others “the way of error” (James 5:20)?

James gives the answer to that question in the closing lines of his letter. He knows that we ourselves are sinners. But James also knows that unconfessed sins can keep us from living out our faith and can even lead to death. That’s the reason why we have to speak up and confront.

As Paul puts it, “Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently” (Galatians 6:1).

Prayer

Lord, give us the grace to accept correction from others. Give us also the wisdom to caringly confront people who are living in sin, to help restore them gently. In Jesus, Amen.

Devotion topics: [Bible](#), [Books of the Bible](#), [James](#)

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