

Warning Against Rebellion

or

Benefits Of Respect

by

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First Edition

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Publisher: [Adam Woeger](#)

Every believer in Christ should strive to know more of Him continually, for He is the author and finisher of our faith, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. He is “Christ in you, the hope of glory...”
Colossians 1:27.

“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Hebrews 12:2.

All Scripture references in this writing are from the King James Version of the Holy Bible.

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A Rebel Without A Cause

God is a loving, majestic God. He is worthy of all the praise of men and of angels. Yet, why over history have both angels and men rebelled against such a loving Creator? What cause have they against Him who sits on the Throne in Heaven? Did He mistreat them or deceive them to earn their disrespect, loathing, and rebellion? Heaven forbid! No one may say that God mistreated them or was unfair with them. He is holy, and His nature of holiness excludes certain kinds of behavior. By what cause, and with what charges, does a rebel have a legitimate complaint against God? Yet millions of people over the years have decided to exhibit their displeasure against God, through various acts of rebellion against Him.

The Source Of All Rebellion

Satan, the deceiver, is the author of rebellion. He once was Lucifer, or “light bringer,” but has now fallen to the current estate where he has been renamed Satan or the devil, and is a deceiver of many and a rebel against God. Satan accuses the brethren, and is at work trying to destroy and deceive as many people as possible before his time on earth runs out. He started out by injecting Adam and Eve with doubt concerning God’s goodness with the phrase “hath God said?” “...And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” Genesis 3:1. Next he introduced the lie about them becoming as gods if they would eat of the forbidden tree in the Garden of Eden. “For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3:5.

Satan was cast out of Heaven by God for the same type of rebellious treasonous thinking against God: “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will be like the most High**. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.” Isaiah 14:12-15.

Satan was cast down due to his rebellion against God. He thought that he knew better than God how to run the universe. He questioned God’s abilities, and plotted a violent overthrow in Heaven. When he failed in Heaven, he attacked God’s creation Adam, through Eve, in the Garden. He deceived them into believing a lie that they shall be like gods, knowing good and evil, and that God was somehow withholding this from them.

Any time someone or something thinks that they know better than God how to do something, they are in essence calling God’s judgment into question or doubt. They are in disobedience and rebellion against God! Anyone who attempts to take away or overthrow the proper authority over them is in rebellion and in danger.

“**The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.**” Luke 6:40.

It is said that emulation or imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. When your child wants to act like you, or be like you, out of awe and respect for who you are, it pleases you. There is nothing wrong with wanting to act like Jesus, but woe to anyone who tries to exalt themselves up as God, for **pride goes before a fall...** “The highway of the upright *is* to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul. **Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.** Better *it is to be* of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud.” Proverbs 16:17-19. Also see James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5.

Rebellion Is As The Sin Of Witchcraft

“For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry.” 1 Samuel 15:23a.

Any time anyone rebels against another, it creates chaos, disorder, rejection, pain, and abandonment. Trust is severed, plus punishment must be swiftly instituted to prevent the spread of the rebellion. Such is the case with Satan’s rebellion against God. A judgment was made by The Almighty to expel Satan and his followers out of Heaven, and they were cast down to the earth. Also a place that we call Hell was reserved for them for punishment, and there was a future sentence of the lake of fire which was also promised. **“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”** Revelation 20:10.

“Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, **witchcraft**, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, **seditions**, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that **they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**” Galatians 5:19-21.

“He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.” 1 John 3:8.

“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:” “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” Matthew 25:41,46.

God will always deal swiftly with any rebellion against Him, be it from a man or a fallen angel. That is why we must be very careful in our conduct, our words, and our speech, to not encourage rebellion against God in others. Our own rebellion against God is punishable severely enough, but to incite others to rebel is a serious offense. It is treason against The Almighty. That is what Satan is guilty of, for he wants to encourage as many people as possible to rebel against God, thereby losing the possibility of them spending eternity with God.

Be very careful to not engage in any of the offenses described as separating yourself from God. You must repent quickly of all of your sins, and refrain from all sinful activities. Ask God for help through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, so that you can resist all temptations thrown at you to engage in sinful activities.

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare *are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds*;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5. **“The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.”** Proverbs 18:10. I encourage you to also read [all of Psalm 91](#) and flee all forms of rebellion, and **“...be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.”** Ephesians 6:10.

“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse *your* hands, *ye* sinners; and purify *your* hearts, *ye* double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and *your* joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.” James 4:7-10.

Types Of Rebellion

Whether one rebels against the laws, commands, and instructions of God that come through His Word or through a minister of God, or through disbelief or disobedience, the result is the same. Rebellion can bear no good fruit, only evil, perverse, and corrupt fruit. **Faith will not flourish where there is rebellion**, only fear, despair, rejection, and abandonment will be there. It does not matter if one rebels against authority, parents, or God Himself, all rebellion brings forth bad consequences.

The opposite of rebellion is respect and honor. When you treat others right by showing them respect and honor, and deal fairly with them, you bear good fruit. When you mistreat, disrespect, and dishonor others you will earn a reward that rebellion brings. Failure to believe God, Jesus and The Holy Spirit shows dishonor. Disrespect for a man or woman of God, and for their authority and instructions, shows dishonor towards both God and that individual as well. Rebellion against authority (country, government officials, laws) is wrong.

Pride and Humility

From The Christian Warrior by Isaac Ambrose (1603-1663/4)

As pride is the resemblance of the devil and what brought him to ruin,
so humility is the resemblance of Christ, which exalted Him to honors.

Oh, then, let the same mind be in you as was in Christ Jesus.
Look at Him in all the actions of His life;
drink of His spirit and tread in His steps,
and then go to dwell with Him forever.

Remember that pride leads to hell, but humility to heaven!
God always beats down the proud, and lifts up the humble.

Disfigurement And Unhealthy Addictions

It has become popular today to disfigure one's body through various ways, such as tattoos and body piercing. God's Word is specific about your body, and specifically forbids tattoos (printing of marks upon your flesh):

"Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD." Leviticus 19:28.

Some people may say that is from the Old Testament and no longer applies to a Christian, but I point you to **"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."** 1 Corinthians 10:31.

Do you really think tattoos and body piercing glorify God and fulfill the command to dress modestly, by not drawing attention to ourselves, found in 1 Timothy 2:9? Are you being a good steward of this body (temple)?

The second commandment says that we should not have any engraved or cut images, or likeness of anything, which includes on our bodies. “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me;” Exodus 20:4-5. If you don’t see God’s name or face on your body, why should you put someone else’s name or image on it?

“What? **know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is in you***, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? **For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.**” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20. Why put graffiti and vandalism on God’s temple?

The body was made by God **to be a temple for the Holy Spirit to dwell in**. Your body is not your own, but belongs to God, and was paid for (bought) with a price by Jesus Christ’s sacrifice of His Blood on Calvary.

The enemy of your soul wants nothing more than for you to demonstrate rebellion against God and His Laws, by polluting or defiling your body. The enemy will try to get you to pollute yourself with sin, sexual immorality, damaging unhealthy addictions, disfigurement, or anything else that will serve to separate you from God. Using tobacco products, such as cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco, alcohol addiction, experimenting with drugs, narcotics, and other chemicals, and other addictions, will serve to pollute and destroy your body. They usually leave people depressed, hooked with dependencies, and feeling ultimately unfulfilled. This is the goal of the devil, as he seeks to destroy as many people as possible and make people unproductive in this life in serving God. Any temporary exhilaration or thrill that a sinful act may bring, is far outweighed by the pain, depression, and suffering that are sure to follow. The devil wants to separate us from God by using any method that will disqualify us from spending eternity with God. Our enemy knows that your body is holy to the Lord, as you were created in the image of God. “**So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him**; male and female created he them.” “And God saw every thing that **he had made**, and, behold, **it was very good**. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.” Genesis 1:27,31.

God does not make junk. He beheld everything He had created (including man and woman) and saw that it was very good. Therefore, we are stewards of our body, mind, spiritual man, talents, and everything else we have been blessed and gifted with. Keep up and maintain in good, proper operating condition this body and life you have been entrusted with. If you believe you can do anything you want with your life and body, you are in danger of letting selfishness and pride take over. **You would also be in rebellion against God.**

Avoid Rejection

Not dressing modestly, including the public display of tattoos and piercings, serves to bring rejection upon a person. It shows disrespect for one’s fellow man, just as wearing a shirt laced with profanities, or cursing in public where others hear your profanity, is disrespectful. We are all to conduct ourselves **at all times** in a manner pleasing to Christ, both in public and in private. “But as he which hath called you is holy, **so be ye holy in all manner of conversation**; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.” 1 Peter 1:15-16.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” Romans 12:1-2.

“Let every one of us please *his* neighbour **for *his* good to edification.**” Romans 15:2. **“If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.** Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.” Galatians 5:25-26.

Another way to avoid rejection is to avoid gender neutral clothing, including displaying an androgynous appearance, but rather wear appropriate modest clothing that befits both your gender and being a follower of Christ. **“The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so *are* abomination unto the LORD thy God.”** Deuteronomy 22:5.

Out of respect and honor for others, we should not demonstrate or harbor any pride, gossip, jealousy, hatred, or bitterness. Anything we do that shows disrespect or dishonor to another will likely cause us to be rejected.

We must always remember that we are fearfully and wonderfully made by God. We should honor and respect the workmanship that He put into making us and celebrate His work. **“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully *and* wonderfully made:** marvellous *are* thy works; and *that* my soul knoweth right well.” Psalm 139:14.

Stop, Thief!

Rebellion is the lack of respect and honor that is rightfully due. When anyone steals something, they are taking something from another, including the rightful respect and honor of another. Others are due respect in their property, marriage, life, and in their peace. The Ten Commandments are found in Exodus 20 and dictate how we are to properly show honor and respect to both God and our fellow man. “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: *this is* the first commandment. And the second *is* like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” Mark 12:29-31. “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” Matthew 7:12.

Every sin involves stealing respect or honor from either God or a person. The first four commandments deal with dishonor toward God and the stealing of worship that is rightfully due Him. God said you shall no other gods before him (Exodus 20:3), you shall make no graven images or idols before Him (Exodus 20:4-5), you shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain (Exodus 20:7), to remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy (Exodus 20:8-10).

The last 6 commandments deal with stealing the respect and honor that is rightfully due to other people. These include the stolen honor rightfully due to your parents (Exodus 20:12), stolen honor of allowing people to live their life free from early death, such as through murder or abortion (Exodus 20:13), stolen affections and the dishonor of violating someone's spouse in the act of adultery (Exodus 20:14), all manners and types of stealing (Exodus 20:15), stealing a person's honor and respect through making false accusations (Exodus 20:16), covetousness, or the desire to take anything that belongs to another person (Exodus 20:17).

“And Moses said unto the people, **Fear not: for God is come to prove you**, and that his fear may be before your faces, **that ye sin not.**” Exodus 20:20. We are being tested and prepared in this life, for the eternal rewards that lie ahead in the next life, which, for those that believe in Jesus Christ, is eternity with God.

Some examples of disrespect and dishonor include the following stolen things: time, money, opportunities, happiness, focus, joy, and peace. Add these to some of the topics covered in the the Ten Commandments, including stolen affections from your spouse, stealing a life (through murder and abortion), false accusations, covetousness, stealing proper worship of God, and stealing honor from God and from your parents.

Satan is and was a liar and a thief (from the beginning). He claims to own and offer what is not his. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, **the same is a thief and a robber.**” John 10:1.

When the enemy has been caught, he must pay back many fold of what was stolen. Bad investment!
“*Men* do not despise a **thief**, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; **But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.**” Proverbs 6:30-31.

He steals our worship from God, for he knows whatever we worship, we are obligated to honor and serve.

The enemy wants to label us with the “thief nature,” so we will receive the same punishment of eternal separation reserved for the devil and his angels.

Would you take advice from a fellow convict, who is awaiting to serve out his sentence, and who is a thief and a liar, and wants nothing more for you than for you to bear the same punishment as he has received for his deeds? He wants to take you down with him through his deceit, lies, and destruction.

“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, **Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:** For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.” Matthew 25:41-46.

“**The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.**” John 10:10.

“Ye are of *your* father **the devil**, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: **for he is a liar, and the father of it.**” John 8:44.

“Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.” John 12:4-6. Judas was a thief and and liar and was concerned about someone taking money he felt he could have taken instead.

What you sow, you shall reap. If you steal from others, then others will steal from you. You will attract thieves to steal from you, and what you have will be taken away.

“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10.

Kinds Of People You Can Help

Showing respect, honor, and appreciation are very good indications that a person is qualified to be helped. Not everyone can be helped by you. Even Jesus found that there were certain people who, at least at that moment, were unable to be helped or healed. He could not do great miracles in certain cities because of their unbelief. **“And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief.** And he went round about the villages, teaching.” Mark 6:5-6. **“And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.”** Matthew 13:58.

Appreciation is the evidence that someone is ready to receive help. Go minister where you are appreciated. **“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.”** Matthew 10:14. **“And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.** And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.” Luke 9:5-6.

Don't try to force people to receive help, as there are so many hurting people out there in the world who truly desire to be helped. You can not help everyone, so decide to help those who will receive and appreciate your help. Too many Christians are wasting their energy and time trying to help people who can not, at a particular time, be helped. I know this may sound like a strange statement, but Jesus Christ did not help everyone in the world when He was here. **Jesus helped those who realized they needed help and who reached out to Him.** People are not saved automatically, nor were they healed by Jesus automatically. They needed to go to Him, express their need for help, reach out to Him, and receive their healing through Him. Likewise, a person must first admit they are a sinner (that they need help), then cry out to Jesus to receive their salvation.

You can not force anyone to change. The failure to change indicates that a person is in one or more states of deception or rebellion. **“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”** Isaiah 1:18. A person must be willing to listen and willing to be reasoned with to change. Stay clear of people who do not respect or appreciate you!

You can not help the following people: those who think they don't have a problem or need, those who think you are the problem, those who do not believe the Word Of God is the standard of truth for life, people who think they are superior or better than you, those who refuse to be helped, those who will not listen to your advice, counsel or instructions, those who disrespect, dishonor, and fail to believe either you or God, and anyone that refuses to change. Use your time, talents and energy helping those who will receive from you.

A person must have a desire and passion for change, and they must reach for help. “And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.” Luke 11:9-10.

People are like different types of soil. You need to have good soil into which good seed (The Word) is sown. The seed will expose the quality of the soil, but will not change the soil quality. “A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit an hundredfold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be? And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand. Now the parable is this: **The seed is the word of God.** Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away. And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection. But that on the good ground are they, **which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it**, and bring forth fruit with patience.” Luke 8:5-15.

Have nothing to do with any person in rebellion, or who is trying to stir up and spread the rebellion against another, especially rebellion against someone in authority over them. Bad soil will remain unproductive and bad, unless God somehow changes it. You can't change the quality of the soil, just like you can't change the will of a person. They must change their will, and desire to reach for change, to be qualified to receive help.

By targeting your time and energy to help people who sincerely desire and are seeking help, and not just a handout, you can be more effective with your ministry gifts and time. By avoiding spending your time and resources on those who you can't help, you will be freed up to help those who can truly receive your help.

Appreciating The Ministry

You show that you appreciate God by giving into good soil. Too many Christians are missing receiving the fullness of the blessings of God by their ignorance or disobedience in the area of giving to properly support the ministry of God here on earth. This lack of giving is used by the devil to prevent the work of God from going forth properly to reach people with the Gospel around the world. I have regularly fought a battle over the amount, and whether I should give, or not, to support a particular minister, ministry or church. The devil loves to show us bad examples of people misusing funds in the ministry, such as ministry financial scandals, and perceived extravagances and excesses, to keep us from giving to worthy people, churches and ministries who are striving to both serve God and also take care of their individual and family financial needs. Never let any man or woman put a burden on you to give, but rather always be led by the Spirit Of God in your giving.

To the shame of all Believers, I have met many poor, struggling pastors, and ministers of the Gospel, all over the country and world, who are struggling just to get by. I have also seen so-called prosperity preachers who are trying to get people to give them thousands of dollars in their appeals on TV and through their mailings.

No wonder Christians get confused and become turned off to giving! There must be proper balance. No man or woman who is called to serve God full-time should have to struggle financially to do their work assigned by God, or struggle to feed and take care of their family. The fact is that the work of ministry costs money. No plumber, automotive repair person, or doctor I know of does work for free. Yet as I travel and minister, people regularly expect that I should minister for free, and they often do not even cover my gas and travel expenses. People must think that God supernaturally provides for His ministers. I am not ruling that out, but that is not God's preferred method for supporting His ministers and the work of His ministry. It is to our shame that ministers and ministries must scrounge for money to do the work of the ministry.

I see two things causing this problem. We, as Christians, have "been burnt" in the past by people who did not appreciate our giving or who misused our gifts. We were left feeling taken advantage of. In addition, Satan is fighting those in the true ministry by attacking people in their minds to not give to support the work of God.

To overcome these problems in giving, we need to find those people, ministries, and churches who are part of the "true ministry of God." God knows there are many false people out there trying to take money from His people. We must not let the "wolves in sheep's clothing" (see Matthew 7:15-23) siphon off the money intended for the true ministers and ministries of God. Have nothing to do with "bad soil in ministry." It will only destroy your faith, hurt you, and keep you from being faithful to God's commands and assignments.

Jesus was fully aware of what we would be facing after He left. **"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..."** Matthew 7:15-16. Paul also warned us in advance. "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock." Acts 20:29.

The key here is we **shall know them by their fruits.** Everything false will bear false fruit, for there is no love for God's truth in them. You are encouraged to inspect their fruit, and ask God for confirmation if they are truly His or not. The enemy will try and fight you "tooth and nail" at discerning true ministers from false ones, to deceive you from supporting the true ones, but ask God for Wisdom. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5.

Why is all of this so important? God commands us to respect and support those called into ministry who minister to us and to others. In the Old Testament, the tithe was used to support all those who ministered in the Temple of God in Jerusalem. In the New Testament, in place of the destroyed literal Temple where the priests served God, we have many individual ministers, ministries, and churches that need our support. God has always commanded His people to bless those who worked in the ministry. First the tithe, then later through Paul, who said it is was proper and acceptable to bless those in ministry, even though he chose to take nothing for himself. "For it is written in the law of Moses, **thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.** Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written: that **he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"** "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live *of the things* of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." 1 Corinthians 9:9-11,13-14.

“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” 1 Timothy 5:8. **“As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.”** Galatians 6:10.

The provision for our own house, includes not only taking care of our family, but also properly taking care of those who are called to be true ministers in the household of faith, since as Christians we are all members of the household of faith. Can you imagine yourself not taking care of a family member who is doing the work assigned to him by God, especially when God has called each of us to take care of provision for the ministry?

The problem also comes when people say they give or tithe to the church they attend, and they feel they have “done their duty” in relation to support for the ministry. True stewardship discerns, and checks with God, to see if their giving is into “good soil” or not, and directs finances to where God desires them to go. Remember that you show that you appreciate God by giving into good soil. Supplement your church giving by giving directly to ministers and ministries whom you are assigned by God to support, for their part in the ministry.

If the church that you attend does not post financial reports for all to see, you should ask to see the reports regularly, to check where the funds received are going and exactly which ministers and ministries are being supported by your giving to the church. It is increasingly common today to see almost all of the finances of a church being spent locally to pay salaries, expenses, building costs, and the like, with very little regard for giving to support missions and outreaches by others involved in ministry. Churches today have increasingly become “a fortress” where hardly anything leaves the castle for true outreach. No church can reach beyond its “four walls” to impact the world, unless it participates in work beyond itself and in the work of others who are impacting the nations. We need to change churches from “bless me clubs” to launching points for the Gospel that will change the world.

The fruits of your work are displayed by your finances. You will reap what you sow, either good or bad. Many Christians lack discernment and wisdom in the area of giving, and give out of obligation, rather than giving cheerfully to advance God’s Work here on earth. “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, **so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.**” 2 Corinthians 9:7.

Giving to support God’s Work is not only commanded, but it is beneficial to your Christian life. Your giving shows worship, honor, and appreciation to God. It shows respect to God and demonstrates your faith in Him.

Benefits Of Respect

You will want to help people who show you respect, appreciation, and honor. God also responds to people who show Him the proper respect, honor, and appreciation. We demonstrate these to God through our words, actions, thoughts, worship, and reverence. He is constantly testing our fruit to see if we are glorifying Him or not. “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 7:20-21.

We show respect to God and to each other by following the Biblical command **to give honor to whom honor is due.** Without properly showing honor, we find ourselves engaging in disrespect and dishonor to either God or someone else. **“Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”** Romans 13:7.

Respect and honor are so important, but are often overlooked by those professing to be Christians. **For every action there is a law of reaction.** “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” Matthew 7:12. This is often called the Golden Rule. Some state the law of reaction as: **“What you sow, you shall reap.”** Be careful what you sow and how much you sow. Sowing good things produces a good harvest and a good reaction, but sowing the wrong things or too little can produce a bad harvest and a bad reaction. “But this *I say*, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.” 2 Corinthians 9:6.

“But I say unto you which hear, **Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.** And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak forbid not *to take thy* coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask *them* not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil. **Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.**” Luke 6:27-38.

You must **die to self** and allow Christ to live in you. Allow the seed of your fruit to produce the appropriate harvest, even after your death. **“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me:** and the life which I now live in the flesh I live **by the faith of the Son of God,** who loved me, and gave himself for me.” Galatians 2:20. **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”** John 12:24.

I am astonished today that so many people are disrespectful of one another. Even complete strangers will treat others with contempt by their behavior, such as when they are speaking and driving. We used to treat others with respect and honor, as commanded in the Bible, but this is unfortunately becoming all too rare. It has come to the point where I dislike driving my vehicle, because so many people choose to disrespect me and others who are out driving. They see fit to cut in front of others, usually with little notice and without proper signaling. Also, they often drive at speeds which are unsafe and above the posted speed limits. This disregard for their fellow man is not only evident when people are driving, but also in public places like restaurants and theaters. How many people talk loudly on their cell phones or loudly to one another, and don't seem to care that they are interrupting other peoples' enjoyment of peace and quiet? Rudeness abounds today. Insults, profanity, obscene speech and gestures are unfortunately becoming more common. People are becoming creatures of disrespect and dishonor. Don't owe a debt of respect to anyone. Give proper respect.

We are reaping a harvest of the fruits of lack of respect for others. **Impatience is evidence of disrespect.** The Bible is clear that we are to be anxious (**to have cares,** or be careful) for nothing. **“Be careful for nothing;** but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ

Jesus. Finally, brethren, **whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.**” Philippians 4:6-8. When we stop making our requests known to God, and instead try to fix things ourselves, without asking for help from God, we bring **cares and anxiety** down upon us like a weight. No wonder people are depressed!

If only people, especially Christians, got hold of the many powerful benefits that respect brings! We can trace evil back to a root of disrespect and dishonor. **“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”** 1 Corinthians 15:33. Our words are powerful. We must use them wisely to turn away the wrath coming from others. **“A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”** Proverbs 15:1.

A few words of honor and respect given to someone will reap a good harvest for a long time to come, and set in motion the **blessings of favor** coming into your life from others. People want to give to others who respect them, their time, and their money. No one gives of themselves willingly to be abused unless they are caught in some kind of physical, mental or emotional trap or bondage. Jesus came to set the captives free.

“...If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.” John 8:31-32,36. **“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”** John 14:6. **“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another...”** Romans 13:8. Do not withhold proper respect.

The goal of life is to allow Christ to help us get free from all the snares of this world. **“No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.”** 2 Timothy 2:4. **“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”** 1 John 2:15. **“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.”** 2 Corinthians 6:17.

God will reward respect and punish disrespect. You may not see the evidence of the punishment or reward in your lifetime, but know that God will provide true justice in the end. **“Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”** Galatians 6:7. See Psalm 37, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Psalm 34:16. People sometimes accuse God of being slow to respond to injustice. **“But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”** 2 Peter 3:8-9.

We should all constantly be respectful to one another, and also to God. As we conduct our lives showing proper respect and as we continually display Christlike behavior to the world, we shall qualify for the reward of the righteous. **“For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.”** Galatians 5:5.

We should wait patiently for the promises of God. **“Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.”** Psalm 27:14. The Lord is the hope of the righteous. **“Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is.”** Jeremiah 17:7.

“But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.” Isaiah 40:31.