

One Anothering
ADMONISH One Another
Rom 15:14; Col 3:16

INTRODUCTION

The One Anothering Commands are NOT About What God wants FROM US, But What He Wants FOR US.

One of the top fears among people is public speaking (it doesn't seem to apply to twitter or Facebook).

If we took a poll, another fear ranked high on the charts would be confrontation. Most people just don't like it, and the ones who do are the people you want to avoid.

Many, or most of us, exert energy to avoid conflict. It is always seen as something bad

What if we learn to See Conflict as a FAITH Opportunity?

. **NOTE we'll spend two weeks on this theme – today and Nov 5th

Years ago, I read a book called, Caring Enough to Confront, by David Augsburger. It made the point that biblical confrontation was a way of loving people; it was a way to demonstrate that you actually care for them.

You would only engage in healthy confrontation with people you care about, people you want to be in a better relationship with. **An unwillingness to confront may well indicate that you simply don't care enough.**

Augsburger makes the point that we tend to put Care and Confront on opposite ends of a spectrum.

Care is good

Confront is bad

We treat them as being mutually exclusive. They don't go together. You can't care for someone while confronting, and you can't confront someone if you are caring for them.

What if that is WRONG?

Augsburger offer a new word "Care-fronting"

It is offering genuine caring that bids another to grow. (To care is to welcome, invite, and support growth in another).

Care-fronting is offering real confrontation that calls out new insight and understanding. It is to offer the maximum of useful information with the minimum of threat and stress.

Care-fronting unites love and power. It unifies concern for relationship with concerns for goals. So one can have something to stand for (goals) as well as someone to stand with (relationship) without sacrificing one for the other. Thus one can love powerfully and be powerfully loving. These are not contradictory. They are complementary.

Care-fronting happens when you actually sink your roots in the love of God in Christ to that you can truly engage with others in meaningful ways with humility and boldness. It is the movement of faith that is willing to risk speaking the truth in love. Too often, we don't believe God enough to risk living like he has told us – admonish one another.

If you are going to admonish someone in a biblical way, the first thing you must do is forget the other person and sink your heart into the love, grace, and truth of God and His Word.

Conflict is not necessarily bad or destructive. Even when conflict is caused by sin and causes a great deal of stress, God can use it for good (see Rom. 8:28-29). Conflict actually provides three significant opportunities.

By God's grace, you can use conflict to:

- **Glorify God (by trusting, obeying, and imitating him)**

- Serve other people (by helping to bear their burdens or by confronting them in love)
- Grow to be like Christ (by confessing sin and turning from attitudes that promote conflict).

These concepts are totally overlooked in most conflicts because people naturally focus on escaping from the situation or overcoming their opponent. Therefore, it is wise to periodically step back from a conflict and ask yourself whether you are doing all that you can to take advantage of these special opportunities.

Rom 15:14 And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able also to admonish one another.

Col 3:16 Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God

1 Thes 5:12 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction,

noutheteō Noutheteo is a term for counseling
admonish, warn (gently); give instruction

From the same as to *put in mind*, that is, (by implication) to *caution* or *reprove* gently: - admonish, warn.

When a possible conflict situation arises, how do you respond? We tend to move toward one of five options: (Augsburger)

1 – I'll get him, or her : "I win ; you lose"

2- I'll get out – flight response. "Conflict is hopeless and useless and is to be avoided."

3 – I'll give in: "I lose / you win." I'll give in to be "nice" or spiritual. It may look good on the outside, but often on the inside you are tense and angry.

4- I'll meet you halfway- this sounds like a winner, but it can be misleading. We may both come half way and end up losing the whole truth of an issue.

5 – I care enough to confront- that is the movement of faith in our hearts; it is faith working itself out through love.

Although scripture calls us to it, we don't like to hear the hard truth, but we need it – admonish one another.

There are things that need to be said – in the right way and context – for the individual good, or the common good.

Col 3:12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. 14 Beyond all these things *put on* love, which is the perfect bond of unity

Col 3:12-17 gives us some traits to be lived out before we admonish each other, but we must not think that those traits eliminate the need to admonish one another.

v. 16 – nouthesia – used 10 times – usually admonition. It has various nuances:
sense of warning or instruct or correct

- To warn strongly against danger or offense or put on guard – be ready Acts 20:31 – Paul's farewell address to Ephesian elders. Warns against division in church
- 1 Cor 4:14 warn against those who create division-

- 1 Thes 5:14 – those who complain, idle, not contribute; criticize leaders, not honor them. Rejoice, pray, give thanks
- 2 Thess 3:15 – context of division in the church; “basement” people from a few weeks ago. Healthy churches learn to do admonishment well

5 Dysfunctions of a TEAM - Lencioni

#1 The first dysfunction is an absence of trust among team members

#2 Fear of conflict (teams / churches / marriages / families need HEALTHY conflict)

Paul and Barnabas – Acts – they labored together and Baranabas was the “son of encouragement”, yet he and Paul had “no small dispute” between them.

It takes gospel faith and courage to do admonishment well. Jesus practiced admonishment – it was directed to his disciples, the Pharisees, and to the crowd of followers.

It is not unchristian to admonish, but it can be unchristian to fail to do so.

While we are called to admonish, we must be careful that we’re not simply imposing our preferences.

“Some people can’t not do something without telling others not to do it also” – CS Lewis

Correcting gently, but seriously **Prov 15:2 When wise people speak, they make knowledge attractive, but stupid people spout nonsense.**

SPEAK SIMPLY, BUT HONESTLY

1. **Speak simply** – be as clear and open as possible – to speak “frankly” doesn’t entail being mean; it means speaking honestly. Some people use it as an excuse to be rude; others have a hard time with it. You may not agree, or may not have experienced it, but I’ve found that this is done better at Highlands than in any church I’ve been in.
2. **Speak personally** – use “I” sentences, not general statements, i.e. “I feel, think, want” rather than “most people, others say, or it seems”. Speak for yourself, not others. Don’t put words into the mouths of others or impute motives to them.
3. **Speak honestly** – truthing it is trusting others with my actual feelings and viewpoints. Selective honesty is not honesty. We avoid honesty because we “don’t want to hurt their feelings”, but in reality we’re afraid of their response – he or she may not like me afterward. We say we’re protecting them, but we’re really protecting ourselves. A failure to be honest is a way of saying “I don’t think you can handle truth”. **Pay the person the compliment of treating them like an adult.**
 - a. If you say, “he/she can’t handle it” then you’ve put that person in a box and you limit his / her growth.
4. **Speak directly** – Don’t talk about people when it is possible to talk to them. Whatever you have to say, the person should hear it from you FIRST.

Relationships are only as good as their communication. We’ll only grow in a relationship if we’re able and willing to be honest about who we are, what we think, value, feel, love, fear, desire, hate, believe in and are committed to.

EX: dating Linda- it knew I loved her in a real sense when I was willing to be honest with her, even it if might “hurt her feelings”. Only then did I know that I loved her enough to respect her as a mature adult, capable of hearing the truth. The feelings and attraction were there, but did I really love her as a person enough to risk alienating her? Or did I only love myself?

AUTHENTICITY is a buzz word in our culture today. The real meaning of authenticity as a person is that my exterior reflects my interior. (Augsburger)

Avoid admonition that is disguised as a question: These are loaded questions:

1. The leading question... they limit the range of possible acceptable answers and lead to a specific conclusion
“Don’t you think we should do it this way?”
“wouldn’t you agree that _____?”
“Isn’t it true that _____?”
2. The punishing question...- it seeks to arouse conflicts in the other person or it implies some disconnect between the intention and the action.
“Why did you say, do that?”
3. The demanding question... - it sneaks in a hidden command under the guise of an innocent request for information
“When are you going to do something about that
4. The set up or gotcha question...
“Didn’t you once say that...”

Love gives up the concealed weapons called questions and make clear statements like: “I care about you. I need your help. I want your respect.” Love is honestly open in conversation. Love sets no traps.

Just as the flip side of “serve one another” is be willing to be served, so too there is a flip side to “admonish one another”. And that is receive admonition.

The book of proverbs is filled with the teaching that it is a wise person who accepts and receives correction. Prov 9

7 He who corrects a scoffer gets dishonor for himself,
And he who reprove a wicked man gets insults for himself.
8 Do not reprove a scoffer, or he will hate you,
Reprove a wise man and he will love you.
9 Give *instruction* to a wise man and he will be still wiser,
Teach a righteous man and he will increase *his* learning.

Our response to correction indicates if we are wise or foolish. If we know Jesus as our savior and Lord, then we have also been given the Holy Spirit of wisdom. That means that when we walk by the Spirit, we will humbly receive admonition that we might become still wiser.

When you give correction in a biblical manner, then you are an agent in the growth of wisdom in the life of those who receive it.

If you pray for, seek, and pursue wisdom – as we should, then we should also expect God to put people in our lives to give us godly admonition.

Luke 2:52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

If Jesus grew in wisdom, let’s recognize our need to grow in wisdom as well as we walk in the power of His Holy Spirit.

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