

## Heart Attitude #3: Giving and Receiving Spiritual Correction

Memory verses: Hebrews 3:12,13

### I. **What do they need to know:**

Rebuke or spiritual correction are words the Bible uses for bringing truth to where change is needed, yet most of us don't have positive reactions when we hear these terms. Many of us when we hear these terms often think of a tense moment, harsh words, ultimatums, and threats. We usually do not think of something that is an act of patient and committed love. So it is important for us to consider what the biblical model of correction looks like. We need to know what "speaking the truth in love" is all about.

According to 2 Corinthians 5:20 we are called to be God's ambassadors. We are His representatives and therefore do not speak words to advance our own goals but rather God's. Our motivation should be two things: (1) To serve as an instrument of seeing in this person's life. Our hope is that my words would help the person see himself in the mirror of God's word. (2) To be an agent of helping this person have a change of heart that leads to a life that honors God.

We need to remember that the person's heart is the target. We want their heart to change not just their actions, words, or attitudes. Because our life really flows out of our hearts Luke 6:43-45. If the heart has not changed then they really have not changed either.

### II. **Why do they need to know it:**

As members of the body of Christ we are to be united to advance the gospel together for the glory of God. Therefore we are to encourage one another and challenge each other so that we can accomplish that goal. Hebrews 3:12-13 shows us why we need to give and receive spiritual correction. These verses warn us against falling away from the Lord. It shows us that sin is deceitful, which makes us all candidates for spiritual blindness. If we walk in this blindness for very long a person experiences progressive steps that leads a person away from God rendering him ineffective to accomplish the goal. It starts with unbelieving heart (subtle excusing of my sin, backing away from the clear teachings of the Word). Next a person experiences a turning away or falling away from God. Ends up with a hardened heart (a heart calloused over that is no longer tender to the Spirit).

If we truly love God and others we will fulfill our responsibility as ambassadors for Christ to one another for the glory of God and the sake of the Gospel.

### III. **What do they need to do:**

As representatives of God we first need to start with making sure we are sharing the message God wants and not our own agenda. Start with asking the Lord to check our hearts Ps. 139:23-24, Mt 7:3-5. Do we have a humble heart or a heart that seeks revenge, control, or vent something that bothers us personally? When we have prepared our own hearts we are in a better position to be an instrument God can use to help bring change to another.

To help us get to the heart of the person we need to ask a series of questions in order:

1. **What was going on?** Don't assume you know everything let them tell their perspective.
2. **What were you thinking and feeling as it was going on?** This question helps them examine their hearts.
3. **What did you do in response?** This question reflects that the fact that our behavior is not shaped by the facts of our situation and relationships, but by our response to those facts.
4. **Why did you do it?** What were they seeking to accomplish? This question reveals motives. This gets to what the heart is serving/ worshipping.
5. **How did it work out for you?** This helps them see that the consequences are a direct result of the thoughts and motives of the heart.

This series of questions should lead them to a confession. You then want to help them make a commitment to change.

### **Lesson Plan:**

Ask people to share a time in their life when they were blessed by someone pointing out something in their lives that saved them from an embarrassing situation. (ex. Food stuck on their teeth or other things like that, social fopas). How did they feel towards the person who shared it with them?

Think of a time when you were (1) spiritually corrected (2) when you spiritually corrected someone else. How did you feel ? How did you respond? How well did you think the goals of spiritual correction were fulfilled?

Share with them the ideas above on being an ambassador of Christ.

From Luke 6:43-45 what needs to change in a person's life? Why?

Read Hebrews 3:12-13. Why do we need to give and receive spiritual correction?

Most people do not like to correct others. Why? How do the following verses help?

1. Proverbs 27:5-6
2. Proverbs 28:23

Most of us have some resistance to receiving correction. Why? How do the following verses help?

1. Proverbs 29:1
2. Proverbs 15:31

When we confront others first we need to prepare our own hearts. What do the following verses instruct us to do?

1. Psalm 139:23-24
2. Matthew 7:3-5

What do you think some wrong motives are?

Teach them the 5 questions and the need to have them confess and commit to change.

## WEEK 2

Get them in groups of three. Have them go through the series of confrontative questions. One person corrects another person (make up some scenario that is realistic. Ex. Bad attitude towards roommate, someone who was gossiping and slandering another person) and the third makes observations. Then switch places until everyone has done all three.

Debrief the session by asking how they felt about receiving correction and giving correction. What did they observe from watching the others that revealed some helpful things?

How did having the series of questions help? Was there anything that they did not like about the series of questions?