THE ART OF ADMONISHMENT

Life Group Discussion Guide | Colossians 3:12–17; 2 Samuel 12

BIG IDEA

Because Christ loves us enough to confront us with the truth and lead us toward life, we should love one another enough to gently and wisely correct one another when we are straying from God's way.

GETTING STARTED

1. The sermon described teaching as "Here is the path" and admonishment as "I think you are beginning to leave the path. Let's talk about how to return." What stands out to you about that distinction?
2. Think of a time when an admonishing conversation did not go well – either when you tried to admonish (correct) someone or someone tried to admonish you. Why do you think it didn't go well?
3. Think of a time when someone lovingly helped you see something you were missing. What made their words easier—or harder—to receive?

LOOK AT THE SCRIPTURES

4. Read Colossians 3:12–17. Which qualities in verses 12–14—compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with, forgiveness and love—are especially important when correcting someone? Why?
5. Read 2 Samuel 12:1–13. What do you notice about Nathan's approach to David? Why do you think Nathan used a story before confronting him directly?
6. David responds, "I have sinned against the LORD" (v. 13). What does his response teach us about receiving correction? What can make it difficult for us to respond that way?

DISCUSS AND APPLY

7. The sermon named three reasons why we often avoid admonishing others: 1) fear of conflict, 2) fear of seeming judgmental, and 3) thinking it is none of our business. Which of these most often holds you back? What might love require instead?
8. The *way* we admonish is just as important as the words we say. How can we speak truth with gentleness and humility while still being clear? What is the difference between calling someone out (criticism) and lovingly calling them back (admonishment)?
9. Before offering correction, the sermon suggested four practices: 1) examine yourself, 2) speak truth in love, 3) aim for restoration rather than condemnation, and 4) pray, before, during and after the conversation. Which one do you most need to be aware of and grow in?
10. It's not always our place to admonish. When might it not be our place to admonish someone?
11. How can we distinguish an *issue* that calls for loving correction from a *personal preference* or a situation where we do not know enough?

TAKE IT WITH YOU

Admonishment is not only something we offer; it is something we need to be willing to receive.

12. What is one practical step you can take this week—either to lovingly encourage/correct someone, or to become more open to receiving correction?

Pray for humility to speak truth in love, wisdom to know when to speak, and grace to receive the truth.