

WOUNDS FROM A FRIEND

TEXT: (Proverbs 27:5-6, NIV)

⁵ Better is open rebuke than hidden love. ⁶ Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.

I. TAKING SIN SERIOUSLY

1. “Jesus said to his followers, ‘Things that cause people to sin will happen, but how terrible for the person who causes them to happen! It would be better for you to be thrown into the sea with a large stone around your neck than to cause one of these little ones to sin. So be careful!’” (Luke 17:1-3, NCV).

A. Accomplices to Sin

1. “When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it” (Genesis 3:6, NIV).
2. “Then the LORD said to Cain, ‘Where is your brother Abel?’
‘I don’t know,’ he replied. ‘Am I my brother’s keeper?’” (Genesis 4:9, NIV).
3. “If your brother sins, rebuke him” (Luke 17:3, ESV).

B. Do Not Be the Source of a Stumblingblock

1. “Things that cause people to stumble are bound to come, but woe to anyone through whom they come” (Luke 17:1, NIV).
2. “Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Things that make people fall into sin are bound to happen, but how terrible for the one who makes them happen! It would be better for him if a large millstone were tied around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin’” (Luke 17:1-2, GNT).
3. “For everything in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:16-17, NIV).
4. “Do not conform yourselves to the standards of this world, but let God transform you inwardly by a complete change of your mind. Then you will be able to know the will of God—what is good and is pleasing to him and is perfect” (Romans 12:2, GNT).
5. “Don’t let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God remould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity” (Romans 12:2, PHILLIPS).
6. “From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ‘Never, Lord!’ he said. ‘This shall never happen to you!’

Jesus turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns’” (Matthew 16:21-23, NIV).

7. “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds” (Hebrews 10:24, NASB).
8. “Here’s another way to put it: You’re here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We’re going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don’t think I’m going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I’m putting you on a light stand. Now that I’ve put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you’ll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:14-16, MSG).

C. Rebuke and Forgive

1. “If you see your friend going wrong, correct him. If he responds, forgive him” (Luke 17:3, MSG).
2. “If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him” (Luke 17:3, ESV).
3. “Better is open rebuke than hidden love. Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses” (Proverbs 27:5-6, NIV).
4. “Brethren, if any person is overtaken in misconduct *or* sin of any sort, you who are spiritual [who are responsive to and controlled by the Spirit] should set him right *and* restore *and* reinstate him, without any sense of superiority *and* with all gentleness, keeping an attentive eye on yourself, lest you should be tempted also” (Galatians 6:1, AMPC).

II. READY TO FORGIVE

1. “If your brother or sister sins against you, rebuke them; and if they repent, forgive them. Even if they sin against you seven times in a day and seven times come back to you saying ‘I repent,’ you must forgive them” (Luke 17:3-4, NIV).

A. Must Be Willing to Forgive

1. “‘This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart’” (Matthew 18:34-35, NIV).
2. “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors” (Matthew 6:12, KJV).
3. “In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed” (Matthew 18:34, NIV).

B. The Command to Forgive Others

1. “For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins” (Matthew 6:14-15, NIV).
2. “Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:22, KJV).
3. “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to’” (Matthew 18:32, NIV).

III. BETTER IS OPEN REBUKE

1. “Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them” (Psalm 119:165, KJV).
2. “All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (II Timothy 3:16-17, NIV).

A. Open Yourself to the Word

1. "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12, NIV).
2. "Then Nathan said to David, 'You are the man!...'
Then David said to Nathan, 'I have sinned against the LORD'" (II Samuel 12:7, 13, NIV).
3. "Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil on my head. My head will not refuse it" (Psalm 141:5, NIV).
4. "Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses" (Proverbs 27:6, NIV).

B. Open Yourself to Correction

1. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable...for correction" (II Timothy 3:16, KJV).
2. "When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.' And you forgave the guilt of my sin" (Psalm 32:3-5, NIV).

CONCLUSION

1. "Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but whoever hates correction is stupid" (Proverbs 12:1, NIV).
2. "Whoever heeds life-giving correction will be at home among the wise" (Proverbs 15:31, NIV).