

2 Thessalonians 3:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Analysis

Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother—Yet qualifies the shunning (v. 14). **Count him not as an enemy** (mē hōs echthron hēgeisthe, μὴ ὡς ἐχθρὸν ἡγεῖσθε)—don't treat as an outsider or opponent. **But admonish him as a brother** (nouthetreite hōs adelphon, νουθετεῖτε ὡς ἀδελφόν)—warn, correct, instruct him as family.

This distinguishes church discipline from excommunication. The disobedient brother remains a brother—family under discipline, not expelled. Noutheteō (νουθετέω, admonish) combines warning with instruction, confronting while offering a path to restoration. Discipline without hatred, distance without divorce—tough love that pursues the wanderer.

Historical Context

Jewish synagogues practiced excommunication (being 'put out,' John 9:22). Paul's milder discipline keeps the door open for repentance. This reflects Jesus's treatment of straying sheep—pursue, not abandon. Early church discipline was consistently redemptive, not merely punitive.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How do you correct fellow believers without treating them as enemies?
2. What discipline have you received that felt like punishment versus loving correction?
3. How can you pursue a wayward Christian's restoration while maintaining appropriate boundaries?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	μὴ	ὥς	ἐχθρὸν	ἡγεῖσθε	ἀλλὰ	νουθετεῖτε	ὥς
Yet	him not	as	an enemy	count	but	admonish	as
G2532	G3361	G5613	G2190	G2233	G235	G3560	G5613

ἀδελφόν
a brother
G80

Additional Cross-References

Titus 3:10 (Parallel theme): A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

1 Corinthians 5:5 (Parallel theme): To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 (Parallel theme): Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

1 Corinthians 4:14 (Parallel theme): I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you.

Proverbs 9:9 (Parallel theme): Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning.

Proverbs 25:12 (Parallel theme): As an earring of gold, and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear.

Galatians 6:1 (Parallel theme): Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.

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