

Receiving Correction

Introduction

We often talk about how to correct someone, but rarely about how to receive corrections. For everyone who gives corrections there must be someone receiving it. In this lesson I want to look at both some of what the Bible says about it and some Bible examples.

First I want to distinguish between corrections and giving advice. This lesson is specifically about receiving corrections. The difference I see is that correction is based on something revealed in God's word, while advice is based on a person's thoughts and experience.

Proverbs 15:5 WEB 5 A fool despises his father's correction, but he who heeds reproof shows prudence.

Correction Isn't Pleasant

Hebrews 12:11 WEB 11 All chastening seems for the present to be not joyous but grievous; yet afterward it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

When we receive correction, it isn't pleasant. We shouldn't expect it to be. This makes it more difficult to receive correction. Unpleasant, painful things often provoke a flight or fight reaction. We have to be prepared for this so that temptation doesn't overcome us.

As this verse states, we need to focus on the eventual benefit, not on the immediate circumstances.

Correction May Not Be Right

We'll look at some examples, but while being careful not to reject true correction, we need to realize that sometimes people are wrong. This can easily happen in today's world where it is not unusual for people to call wrong right and right wrong. Sometimes even people in the church can let the so often repeated world's standards slip into our thinking.

Receiving Correction

Old Prophet

1 Kings 13:15-18 WEB 15 Then he said to him, “Come home with me, and eat bread.” 16 He said, “I may not return with you, nor go in with you. I will not eat bread or drink water with you in this place. 17 For it was said to me by Yahweh’s word, ‘You shall eat no bread or drink water there, and don’t turn again to go by the way that you came.’” 18 He said to him, “I also am a prophet as you are; and an angel spoke to me by Yahweh’s word, saying, ‘Bring him back with you into your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.’” He lied to him.

When we know what God has said, we must not let anyone (even if it were an angel) persuade us otherwise.

Peter Rebuked Jesus

Matthew 16:21-23 WEB 21 From that time, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up. 22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “Far be it from you, Lord! This will never be done to you.” 23 But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, for you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men.”

Peter’s rebuke seems to be based on his own feelings. Don’t talk this way. But his rebuke wasn’t from God but from Satan!

Jesus - Handles False Accusations

Matthew 26:59-63 WEB 59 Now the chief priests, the elders, and the whole council sought false testimony against Jesus, that they might put him to death, 60 and they found none. Even though many false witnesses came forward, they found none. But at last two false witnesses came forward 61 and said, “This man said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.’” 62 The high priest stood up and said to him, “Have you no answer? What is this that these testify against you?” 63 But Jesus stayed silent.

Wrong Ways to Receive Correction

Adam and Eve - Blame Someone Else

Genesis 3:11-13 WEB 11 God said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” 12 The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be

Receiving Correction

with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” 13 Yahweh God said to the woman, “What have you done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

One reaction is, “It wasn’t my fault.”

Cain - Wrong Focus - What Happens to Me Now

Genesis 4:13-14 WEB 13 Cain said to Yahweh, “My punishment is greater than I can bear. 14 Behold, you have driven me out today from the surface of the ground. I will be hidden from your face, and I will be a fugitive and a wanderer in the earth. Whoever finds me will kill me.”

Sometimes we focus on what will happen to me now, what will people think, instead of how can I repent and correct this issue.

Israel - Not as Bad as Neighboring Nations

Habakkuk 1:12-14 WEB 12 Aren’t you from everlasting, Yahweh my God, my Holy One? We will not die. Yahweh, you have appointed him for judgment. You, Rock, have established him to punish. 13 You who have purer eyes than to see evil, and who cannot look on perversity, why do you tolerate those who deal treacherously, and keep silent when the wicked swallows up the man who is more righteous than he,

Why me, shouldn’t you be focusing on those who are more evil? We attempt to deflect the correction to someone else. But that doesn’t change the truth about our correction. We may be limited in how much we can influence others at times, but we absolutely can change ourselves and what we do. We need to focus on what we need to correct. Later we can help others, after we’ve removed our own beam.

Saul - Denies the Action

1 Samuel 15:12-15 WEB 12 Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning; and Samuel was told, saying, “Saul came to Carmel, and behold, he set up a monument for himself, turned, passed on, and went down to Gilgal.” 13 Samuel came to Saul; and Saul said to him, “You are blessed by Yahweh! I have performed the commandment of Yahweh.” 14 Samuel said, “Then what does this bleating of the sheep in my ears and the lowing of the cattle which I hear mean?” 15 Saul said, “They have brought them from the Amalekites; for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the cattle, to sacrifice to Yahweh your God. We have utterly destroyed the rest.”

Receiving Correction

Peter - Deny that He'll Fall

Matthew 26:31-33 WEB 31 Then Jesus said to them, "All of you will be made to stumble because of me tonight, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.' Zechariah 13:7 32 But after I am raised up, I will go before you into Galilee." 33 But Peter answered him, "Even if all will be made to stumble because of you, I will never be made to stumble."

Sometimes we can fail to believe we have a problem.

Pharisees to Jesus - Blame the Messenger

John 8:39-41 WEB 39 They answered him, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. 40 But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham didn't do this. 41 You do the works of your father." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality. We have one Father, God."

Instead of listening and responding to Jesus's corrections, the Pharisees chose to attack the messenger. While they had no legitimate charge, it is the wrong answer even if we did. Instead use this time to accept the correction. If you later need to go to them about some other matter, you can do that after the immediate problem is resolved.

Right Ways to Receive Correction

David - Accept and Admit

2 Samuel 12:7-12a WEB 7 Nathan said to David, "You are the man. This is what Yahweh, the God of Israel, says: 'I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you out of the hand of Saul. 8 I gave you your master's house, and your master's wives into your bosom, and gave you the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that would have been too little, I would have added to you many more such things. 9 Why have you despised Yahweh's word, to do that which is evil in his sight? You have struck Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and have taken his wife to be your wife, and have slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. 10 Now therefore the sword will never depart from your house, because you have despised me, and have taken Uriah the Hittite's wife to be your wife.' 11 "This is what Yahweh says: 'Behold, I will raise up evil against you out of your own house; and I will take your wives before your eyes, and give them to your neighbor, and he will lie with your wives in the sight of this sun. 12 For you did this secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.'" 13 David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against Yahweh."

We have to admit, especially truly to ourselves, that we have sinned. How can we make a real correction if we don't truly believe we were wrong.

Receiving Correction

Moses - Make Changes Needed

Exodus 18:13-18,24 WEB 13 On the next day, Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood around Moses from the morning to the evening. 14 When Moses' father-in-law saw all that he did to the people, he said, "What is this thing that you do for the people? Why do you sit alone, and all the people stand around you from morning to evening?" 15 Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. 16 When they have a matter, they come to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and I make them know the statutes of God, and his laws." 17 Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you do is not good. 18 You will surely wear away, both you, and this people that is with you; for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to perform it yourself alone.....24 So Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law, and did all that he had said.

We not only need to admit that we've been wrong, we need to make changes for the future. If we keep doing the same things, we'll likely fall into the same temptations.

Simon - Pray

Acts 8:20-24 WEB 20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! 21 You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart isn't right before God. 22 Repent therefore of this, your wickedness, and ask God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. 23 For I see that you are in the poison of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity." 24 Simon answered, "Pray for me to the Lord, that none of the things which you have spoken happen to me."

Pray, have others pray, don't just depend on your own strength.

Pentecost - Accept and Commit

Acts 2:37-38 WEB 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" 38 Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

They heard what sin they had committed and responded. What shall we do? They accepted the answer and acted upon it. Repented - changed direction. Baptized - burying the old man to walk a new life. They made a 100% fully committed change.