

Better Together

*EXPLORING REAL WAYS
TO LIVE IN AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY*

STUDY GUIDE





ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER // *Colossians 3:12-17*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Greek word for “admonish” literally means “to set right, correct, warn, lay on the heart of someone.” Admonish one another is a confrontational command, intending to challenge or correct someone. It assumes that there is something wrong in the life of the believer who is being admonished.

To admonish means to help a disobedient Christian turn around, to help someone who is out of step with the Holy Spirit to get back in step again. Note in *Colossians 3:16* how admonishing is linked to teaching and wisdom. The instruction to admonish one another often appears with the command to teach or is in the context of a warning. Teaching sets the course for walking in the Spirit. The source of teaching and correction must be guided by “the word of Christ.” This refers to the literal words of Jesus from the Bible, and also points to the broader reality of the nature of the living Christ. “What would Jesus do?” and “What is Jesus doing?” are helpful questions in the giving and receiving of admonition.

Admonition issues a warning of what will happen if the believer does not change. The options are laid out for the believer to choose and to understand the consequences of his or her choice.

Admonition addresses attitudes and actions that are hindering growth and/or causing harm.

Love must rule in Beloved Community. A community can admonish effectively only when it is intentionally loving, forbearing, forgiving, and serving one another. This is true for the credibility and integrity of those admonishing as well as for the edification of those who receive the warning. In the Beloved Community of the forgiven, love must rule.

PRAY:

Ask God to reveal something meaningful through this time of reflection.

READ:

Offer your full care and attention to reading the provided scripture passages.

DISCOVER:

Colossians 3:12-17 As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-22 But we appeal to you, siblings, to respect those who labor among you, and have charge of you in the Lord and admonish you; esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. And we urge you, beloved, to admonish the idlers, encourage the faint-hearted, help the weak, be patient with all of them. See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not despise the words of prophets, but test everything; hold fast to what is good; abstain from every form of evil.

DISCOVER, CONTINUED:

1) When reading through the Colossians and I Thessalonians passages, note the character of God's Spirit-filled people who are called to admonish.

Colossians 3:12-17

I Thessalonians 5:12-22

2) What common threads do you see running through these character traits?

3) What is the difference between admonition and being judgmental, critical, or intolerant?

4) When admonishing, what must we be careful to avoid?

5) Why do we avoid admonishing one another?

6) What would a community of people that made admonishing one another natural and welcomed look and feel like?

Do I/we really want this? Why or why not?

