

The Spirit of God
Week 20
Reproof and the Holy Spirit

LBC 6/4/04

“Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you. Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.”

Proverbs 1:23-30

Introduction:

Tonight we will look at the word **reprove**. Many Christians are not filled with the Holy Spirit and have quenched the Holy Spirit because of the poor way in which they respond to reproof.

Definition: Reprove = *elegcho* (Gr). This is a very interesting word which has a variety of meanings depending upon its context and usage. It means:

- To admonish.
- To convict.
- To convince.
- To tell a fault.
- To rebuke and reprove.
- To put someone to shame.
- To prove someone to be in error.
- To correct or chastise in a moral sense.
- To train.
- To make manifest.
- To persuade.
- To expose that which is hidden.

We shall define the word **reprove** as follows: “to rebuke and correct someone that is in the wrong.”

ILLUSTRATION – Dr. Williams reprovved me when we crashed the snow ski. I wasn't happy!

No one **likes** to be reprovved and corrected. No one **likes** to be told that he is wrong. People will often get **offended** when you reprove them, however lovingly you might do it. Only a **spiritual** Christian will receive reproof – and **only** he that receives reproof can be filled with the Holy Spirit. **Let me explain.**

1. Reproof is the way of learning.

Proverbs 12:1 “Whoso loveth instruction loveth knowledge: but he that hateth reproof is brutish.”

Proverbs 15:32 “He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.”

God has ordained that reproof and correction are a part of the learning curve of life. The person who submits to reproof will learn and grow, whereas the person who refuses reproof remains stagnant. A person that cannot be rebuked and corrected is a person whose pride is stunting their own growth.

2. Reproof is the way of blessing.

Proverbs 13:18 “Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction: but he that regardeth reproof shall be honoured.”

God blesses those who receive correction. Why? The ability to accept reproof shows an attitude of humility and meekness, and God blesses the meek and the humble.

ILLUSTRATION – The differing attitudes of HAC students in the demerit office. Their response to a stern rebuke showed their heart attitude, and their heart attitude determined their level of blessing.

You call down the blessings of God when you humbly submit to reproof and correction. On the other hand, you **reject** reproof at your own **peril!**

Proverbs 15:10 “Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.”

3. Reproof is God’s expression of His love for us.

God does not correct us because He **hates** us – He corrects us because He **loves** us. It is not cruel to chastise, reprove and rebuke – it is cruel NOT to chastise, reprove and rebuke!

ILLUSTRATION – Why does Sam spank Azure? Because he enjoys it? Because he is a sadist? No – Sam corrects Azure because he loves Azure. If Sam refused to spank Azure, he would show that he really hated Azure.

Revelation 3:19 “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

Proverbs 3:11, 12 “My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.”

4. Reproof is a key function of the Bible.

One reason that the Lord gave us His Word is that we might see where we are **WRONG**. God reproves us, convicts us, admonishes us and corrects us using His Word.

2 Timothy 3:16, 17 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

ILLUSTRATION – Why do I look in the mirror when I shave? So that I can clearly see if I have missed any spots. If I have made a mistake or done a bad job, I want to know.

5. Reproof is one of the main goals of preaching.

There is a lot of misunderstanding around today concerning the subject of **preaching**. What are the goals of preaching? Well, firstly consider what are **NOT** the goals of preaching:

- To be popular.
- To please the hearers.
- To feed the flesh.

- To make people feel good about themselves.
- To cultivate the power of positive thinking.
- To show off one's knowledge and intellect.
- To impress and sway the crowd with charisma and charm.

There are several goals of Bible preaching. Of course, the **main** goal is to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ. Preaching is also supposed to comfort, instruct, encourage, and challenge the hearers. Another goal of preaching is to use the Word of God to rebuke, reprove, correct, chastise, shame, convict, convince and admonish the people of God. The Word of God is a powerful, two-edged sword that must sometimes be used to boldly and plainly tell the people of God where they are WRONG!

2 Timothy 4:1-4 "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

6. Reproof is one responsibility of the man of God.

One of the least enjoyable, and least popular, roles of the pastor is to rebuke the flock of God. The pastor is given the authority and the responsibility to tell people where they are wrong!

Titus 1:13 "This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;"

Titus 2:15 "These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee."

ILLUSTRATION – Bro. Hyles would preach a very hard, strong message, then go back to his office and weep. He HATED to scold his people – but he did it because God told him to.

7. Reproof is a ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has many various ministries, as we have studied. One of those ministries is to convict and reprove the sinner and the saint.

John 16:7-110 "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:"

ILLUSTRATION – I became **VERY CONVICTED** while reading "Why Revival Tarries" It wasn't Leonard Ravenhill that convicted me – it was the Holy Ghost of God!

8. Reproof is welcomed by the spiritual Christian.

One of the easiest ways to tell if a Christian is carnal or spiritual is to watch how he or she responds to a sharp and stern REBUKE.

Psalms 141:5 "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities."

If a person is proud, hard-headed, stubborn, disobedient, and easily offended, they are a not Spirit-filled.

ILLUSTRATION – Bayliss. [Do **NOT** name] He could not be corrected – now he and his family are suffering for it.

Psalms 119:165 "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

9. Receiving reproof is a condition of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 1:23 “Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you.”

You will never be filled with the Holy Spirit until you learn to receive a loving rebuke. Why? Because a refusal to receive reproof indicates a PRIDE problem, and the Holy Spirit fills only the humble Christian.

How do **YOU** respond to someone when they lovingly rebuke you?

- Do you defend yourself?
- Do you get angry?
- Do you ask yourself, “Who are THEY to tell me I’m wrong?”
- Do you get into an argument?
- Do you criticise the person who corrected you?
- Do you pretend to listen but ignore what they are saying?

How **SHOULD** you respond to correction?

- Consider carefully what the person has to say.
- Ask God to show you if they are right.
- Submit to the correction if you are in the wrong.

Conclusion:

How do you respond to reproof and correction?

**** If you will be filled with the Holy Spirit, you MUST receive correction.**