

"It's None of Your Business" Doesn't Belong in the Church

The song is over 40 years old, but Billy Joel wrote what has become the anthem for 2023:

*I don't care what you say anymore, this is my life;
Go ahead with your own life, leave me alone.*

We are a nation of individuals—with individual rights.

- *Don't you dare tell me what I'm doing is wrong.*
- *It may be wrong to you, but IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.*

None of us like people sticking their noses in our business, but how does this play out in the church? I'm talking about how Christians relate to other Christians. If we are both followers of Jesus, just how far can I stick my nose in your business?

The Bible seems to say two different things on the subject:

IT'S NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS

If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler.
1 Peter 4:15

Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you.
1 Thessalonians 4:11

Like one who grabs a stray dog by the ears is someone who rushes into a quarrel not their own.
Proverbs 26:17

MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS

I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, my true companion, help these women.
Philippians 4:2-3

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.
Galatians 6:1-2

Hmm. So which is it? If you are a Christian, you are a part of the body of Christ. We are one in Christ.

"In Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (Rom. 12:5).

So your business *is* my business. And vice versa. That flies in the face of the way we have brought American individualism into the church, but we have an obligation to take care of each other and support each other. And sometimes that means we get in each other's business.

But how far do we take that? The answer is in the Scriptures listed above.

1. Don't meddle. If you're hungry for a little Greek lesson, feast away: the word *meddler* is a compound of two words.

- **Overseer.** A person who has a responsibility to manage things or people. She sees over.
- **Alien.** You know, like a foreigner, someone who doesn't live here.

Put those two words together and you've got someone trying to be an overseer in a country not his own. That's the polite Greek word for a person who sticks his nose where it doesn't belong.

A meddler is not solving a problem; he is creating one. Don't go there.

Scripture points to two times we *should* step in.

- **When two Christians disagree.** We don't know what Euodia and Syntyche were fussing about in Philippians 4, but it was big enough that it got back to Paul. And he told others to step in.
- **When a believer sins.** Sin harms. Sin separates. Sin hurts the body of Christ. We have a responsibility to help each other grow in Christ, and that includes dealing with sin and error, which brings us to the three positive steps we can take to help someone.

2. Step in with grace. Did you notice the word *gently* in Galatians 6:1? That's kinda important.

3. Step in with humility. In Galatians 6:1-2, Paul also stressed watching ourselves, so that we don't fall. We never help anyone when we're harboring arrogance or spiritual pride. We are sinners under the grace of God.

4. Step in with love. When we carry each other's burdens, we fulfill the law of Christ. Love seeks to be redemptive. It's not just about dealing with sin. It's about seeing the other person grow closer to Christ.

It takes discernment to know when we're meddling and when we are stepping into a person's life to love them and encourage them in Christ. But let's lose the notion that "it's none of our business." If Jesus cares what's happening in the other person's life, we should too.

We are family.