

## COVERS A MULTITUDE OF SINS

The phrase, “love covers a multitude of sins”, is part of a biblical verse in 1 Peter that has been misinterpreted and, as a result, misunderstood and misapplied.

1 Peter 4:8

*“Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.”*

The way most read this scripture is that God is telling us not to confront or address the sinner, but to leave the issue alone and love the person, despite what they are doing. This is only partly true in that we are to love the person. However, we are also to address the problem or we become an enabler that, in essence, approves of what is going on. Matthew 18:15 says that we are to go to our brother and address the sin. Paul says, in several places, that we are to admonish others (1 Thessalonians 5:14, 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15). In addition, Proverbs indicates we are truly someone’s friend when we tell the truth.

Proverbs 27:6

*“Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.”*

The real meaning of the phrase “covering a multitude of sins” is explained elsewhere in the Bible – in James 5:19-20.

James 5:19-20

*“My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth, and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death, and will cover a multitude of sins.”*

The intent is for us to be restorers, that is, addressing issues and negative problems to help people get rid of them. Jesus came to set the captives free and we are called to do the same. In fact, according to the book of Galatians, we prove we are spiritual by being restorers.

Galatians 6:1

*“Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; {each one} looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted.”*

Fear of man, fear of losing a friend, or fear of losing a family member would keep us from telling the truth and attempting restoration. 2 Timothy 1:7 explains that where fear is, love is lacking. This means that if we are afraid to address people’s issues, we are not restorers, are not spiritual, and really don’t love people.