

Knowing When It's Time to Shake the Dust Off Your Feet

"Shake the dust off your feet." I wasn't really surprised when I heard the **Holy Spirit** say those six words—but when I read the Scripture in context it sent me into **intercession** for the ones who rejected the word of the Lord.

The sad story begins in a local church where I was serving on the pastoral staff. The church's works were good, reaching out to the poor with food, clothing and shelter. The pastor's sermons were not theologically deep, but they were biblically sound.

Indeed, from the outside looking in it looked like an up and coming church that was really being the church. It was a breath of fresh air. Soon enough, I discerned spirit of compromise invading the hearts of leadership. Decision after decision was made to please man rather than please God. I knew these man-pleasing decisions would eventually erode the truth of the gospel in that local body. I just didn't realize it would be so soon.

The Sin of Compromise

Over the course of a year, I gently but directly pointed out areas of compromise. The senior pastor tolerated a woman with a **spirit of Jezebel** wreaking havoc in the church. He frequently attended "rock star" megachurch conferences and brought the seeker-friendly principles he learned back to the congregation. He refused to confront sin of all sorts, from adultery to homosexuality and beyond. Over the course of a year, my prophetic words of warning were pooh-poohed time and time again. I was told, in subtle terms, that I was missing God's heart in these matters.

The day finally came when the compromise was so blatant that

it sent me into weeping and travails for the church. After consulting with ministers more experienced and wiser than me, I boldly confronted the growing cancer in love with Scriptural backing that could not be denied. But the prophetic correction was once again rejected. And not only rejected, I was actually held in contempt for speaking the gospel truth in a Spirit-filled Christian church! And that's when the Holy Spirit told me to shake the dust from my feet.

Let's look at the Scripture: "Whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet" (Matt. 10:14). So what does it mean to shake the dust off your feet? I've heard that Scripture many, many times but I had never studied it out until the **Holy Spirit** gave me the personal instruction.

Why Shake the Dust Off?

With regard to this verse, Matthew Henry's Commentary suggests, "At their departure they must shake off the dust of their feet. In detestation of their wickedness; it was so abominable, that it did even pollute the ground they went upon, which must therefore be shaken off as a filthy thing. The apostles must have no fellowship nor communion with them; must not so much as carry away the dust of their city with them."

That sounds hard-core but it's reality. David Wilkerson used to say a "diluted gospel is no gospel at all." A diluted gospel willfully allows compromise. A diluted gospel refuses to confront sin. A diluted gospel seeks to please man at the sake of grieving God. A diluted gospel tolerates Jezebel. A diluted gospel makes you feel good even when you won't repent. A diluted gospel is powerless. A diluted gospel is no gospel at all.

Henry continues his commentary on shaking the dust off your feet, "It was to signify, that they were base and vile as

dust, and that God would shake them off. The dust of the apostles' feet, which they left behind them, would witness against them, and be brought in as evidence, that the gospel had been preached to them, Mark 6:11; Jas. 5:3. ... They who despise God and His gospel shall be lightly esteemed."

In Matt. 10:15, Jesus actually said it would be more tolerable in the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for the city that rejects the gospel. Woah! And that's what sent me into intercession for the pastors that would not receive the gospel truth the Lord had me to deliver in slow and steady drips over the course of a year.

The reality is that a little compromise opens the door for a great compromise. Pastors who tolerate Jezebel will meet with a strong rebuke from Jesus (Rev. 2:20). Pastors who propagate a seeker-friendly gospel that makes people comfortable in their sin will have to give an answer on Judgment Day. Pastors who refuse to preach the gospel to sinners for fear of offending them will be held accountable.

Sometimes we have to shake the dust off our feet and even shake out our garments (Acts 13:51; Acts 18:6). But before we do we must have a clear conscience. We must do everything we can to reach those God sends us to. We must not leave with self-righteousness or anger but with weeping and **intercession** for those who refuse to hear God's truth. Only then can we say "Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean" (Acts 18:6). Amen.

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