

“If Your Brother Sins Against You”:
Corrective Church Discipline @ MEFC
Sermon Notes

- **In the gospel, God stops at nothing to make peace with us, so in the church we stop at nothing to make peace with one another**

1. Make every effort to pursue _____-centered
_____ (vv.15-17; Proverbs 19:11;
Matthew 7:1-5; Psalm 141:5; Proverbs 27:6)

2. Make sure you understand the _____ we possess in the
_____ of the _____ of heaven (vv.18-20; 16:13-20;
Isaiah 22:22)

→ *A Time of Questions & Answers*

Other potential passages for discussion...

- *1 Corinthians 5-6
- *Galatians 6:1-10
- *1 Timothy 5:17-25
- *And...

Community Group Study Guide
For the Week of November 26th – December 2nd

Please read Matthew 18:15-20.

1. In Matthew 18:15, the Lord commands us to confront a brother who sins against us with his fault.

- a. Why does it have to be the offended party who takes the first action? Do you think it should be the offender who makes the first move? Why?
- b. Should this be done in public or in private? Please explain.
- c. Do you risk stirring up more trouble for yourself by confronting the sinning brother? Please explain.
What if you would rather say nothing? Doesn't love cover a multitude of sins? (See 1 Peter 4:8)
- d. What if you notice a brother sinning, but you aren't the offended party? Are you required to say something then? Why or why not?

2. The Lord says we should take the next step if the offender does not listen (verse 16).

- a. What does it mean to listen?
- b. If he says he's sorry, is everything OK? What if he says he's "sorry you feel that way"?
- c. What if he says that it is your fault because you provoked him?
- d. What is the point of having two or three witnesses? Is more better?
Why or why not?
- e. What is the goal of this meeting?

3. The Lord says if he refuses to listen, then we should take the matter to the church.

- a. How is this different from gossip?
- b. What gives us the right to air someone's dirty laundry in public like that? (See 1 Corinthians 5:12-13; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3)
- c. What does this say about church membership? Does every church member have the right to participate in judgment? Why or why not? (See 1 Corinthians 6:2) Should someone be capable of making such a judgment before they become a church member? Please explain.
- d. The Lord commanded us not to judge in Matthew 7:1. How is the type of situation described in Matthew 18:15-22 different from that in Matthew 7:1? What are the consequences

to the church if we judge poorly?

- e. What does it mean that the person who does not listen is "to you as a gentile or tax collector"? (See 1 Corinthians 5:5 and 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15)
- f. In the Greek, "to you" is singular. Does this mean that only the offended person should treat him as an outsider, or everyone in the church? Please explain your answer.
- g. What is the ultimate goal of this process? (See 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 and 2 Corinthians 5-11)
- h. What if the individual wants to sue the church? Is the threat of lawsuit a reason to avoid this process? Why or why not?
- i. What are the consequences of ignoring this requirement for church discipline?

4. In verse 18, the Lord mentions binding and loosing.

- a. Who is given the ability to bind and loose in this verse?
- b. What does it mean to bind and to loose? (See John 20:23)
- c. How can human judgment have implications in heaven? (See John 20:22-23)

5. According to verses 19-20, what is the role of prayer in this matter?

- a. What should the church be praying for in a situation like this?
- b. The promised response to prayer in these verses obviously applies in the setting of church discipline. Does it apply in all circumstances? Why or why not?