



Matthew 18:15-20

Matt. 18:15 “Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.

Matt. 18:16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that “by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’

Matt. 18:17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

Matt. 18:18 “Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Matt. 18:19 “Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.

Matt. 18:20 For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Something to think about

Jesus provides us with instructions regarding how to deal with a brother (or sister) who sins against us. The point we don’t want to miss is that Christians *are* going to offend one another—that’s why Jesus gives us these instructions! In other words we should not be surprised when we have conflicts with other Christians. Although Christians have been redeemed we’re still just imperfect men and women who are prone to hurt one another. Rather than ignore the person who has sinned against us, or worse leave the church so that we don’t have to be around that person, Jesus tells us how to handle a person when he or she sins against us.

Observations & Discussion

1. When dealing with a person who has sinned against you why is it important to begin the process of reconciliation privately?
2. What is the goal of approaching a person who has wronged you?
3. If the person who has wronged you will not acknowledge their sin what are you supposed to do next? Why?
4. If the sinner still won't acknowledge their sin what does Jesus tell us to do? What is the purpose of Jesus' instructions? For an example compare 1Cor. 5:1-5, & 11 with 2Cor. 2:5-11.
5. When Paul wrote to the Corinthians there was only one church in the entire city. Today there are hundreds of churches in any given community. How does this reality make it harder for church discipline to work effectively to bring a sinner to repentance?
6. Verses 18-20, especially vs. 18 have been interpreted in many ways. What do you think Jesus really meant?