

Part 3 - Matthew 18:15 -20

What Kind of Community is Created by the Reign of God?

❖ **Read Galatians 6:1**

- ❖ What is Paul telling us today?
 - Watch out for our brothers and sisters, and watch out for ourselves.
- ❖ What is Church discipline and why do we need it within the Church?
 - Not judgment but reconciliation with Christ's Church.
 - Bring wandering sheep back to flock.
- ❖ How does Church discipline differ from worldly discipline?
 - Worldly discipline is punitive.
 - Church discipline is restorative.

❖ **Read Mathew 18:1 -6**

- ❖ Who does Jesus center on within His discussion with His disciples?
 - A child - In the context of what a child's role was in that time period.

❖ **Read Matthew 18:7-9**

- ❖ Who does Jesus center on within His discussion with His disciples?
 - Little ones - those weak in faith or new to the faith.
 - Keep them from wandering away from the Gospel.

❖ **Read Matthew 18:10 -14**

- ❖ Who does Jesus center on within His discussion with His disciples?
 - A sheep - 99 with shepherd 1 wandering away. How the shepherd views the 1.

❖ **Read Matthew 18:15 -20**

- ❖ Who does Jesus center on within His discussion with His disciples?
 - A brother or a sister.

❖ **Read 1 Corinthians 6:1 -8**

- ❖ What would cause a person to take their own brother or sister to court? How serious would this be?
 - Total breakdown in communication.
 - Hate and distrust, bitterness and anger, refusing to be reconciled.
 - Very serious - For some the ending of all relations with the other.

Follow-up questions

- ❖ Some look at this passage as a pattern given to us by our Lord to deal with conflict resolution, in the context that Scripture is giving us is this correct?
 - No - it not conflict resolution it is about reconciliation with a brother or sister in Christ.

- ❖ If this passage is not speaking to conflict resolution what is it speaking to?
 - Your brother is exhibiting a life of sin that leads you to wonder if he is even a Christian.
 - Your brother is living so far away from the Gospel.
 - Fearing for the spiritual life of a brother or a sister.
 - Not to push somebody out of the church but to gain somebody back.

- ❖ Why is there a progression from going in private, to taking two or three, to going before the whole church?
 - We need to do whatever it takes in order to get a brother or sister back.
 - Bathing in prayer.
 - Caring in humility for a brother or sister.
 - Not a checklist - re-establish a relationship.
 - Community - because of the seriousness of the offense.
 - Testifying to the brother and to the congregation.

- ❖ When we say that the person has wandered away, who has he wandered away from?
 - The Church - personal relationship with the members of the body.
 - Their Lord.

- ❖ **Read 1Peter 5:8**
- ❖ What is the devil's role in the world?
 - To devour God's people and tear them away from their faith in Christ.

- ❖ What does excommunication mean?
 - The Church declaring a person is no longer a member of Christ's Church, period.
 - No longer a part of the body of Christ anywhere.
 - Not that you are not active in the Church, but dead in faith.
 - As a church we have failed.

- ❖ **Read Galatians 6:1**
- ❖ What is our role as Christians as being part of the entire body of Christ? How is this shown in the singular and plural use of verbs in the Matthew reading?
 - Being concerned about our brothers and sisters because if we do not do our job as part of the Body they may fall away from their faith.
 - Truly caring about and calling on our brothers and sisters.
 - Not just a person but the Church, Christ's community speaking.

- ❖ What is our Lord telling us in verses 19 & 20?
 - When we treat each other in love and respect as brothers and sisters truly caring about each other He is with us.