



## **Class 9. Take One or Two Others Along**

- Last week we talked about “Effective Confrontation”
- Effective Confrontation has been described as a graceful dance between supportiveness and assertiveness
- We talked about focusing on your listening as much as what you are going to say
- Focus on all of the good that God has done for us, and not on the bad that they have done
- WAIT, clarify, reflect - Give them the benefit of the doubt
- Avoid things that you know could be upsetting to them
- Today we move forward to that next step in Matthew 18
- You’ve had your visit, and it didn’t go too well
- The person really doesn’t feel that they did anything wrong
- Or... They acknowledge that what they did is wrong, but they really don’t feel that repentant over it
- Either way, you want to help save your Brother
- **Matthew 18:16**
- A general principle that we can get from Matthew 18 is that we should make every attempt to try to keep the number of people involved in a conflict as small as possible for as long as possible
- Try to resolve it on your own without gossiping about it
- If you can’t, then only involve ONE or TWO others
- Matthew 18 refers to a simple five-step process:

- Overlook Minor Offenses
  - Talk in Private
  - Take One or Two Others Along
  - Tell it to the Ecclesia
  - Treat Them as a Nonbeliever
- The First Step is the easiest
- Figure out how you can make this an opportunity for you to grow to be like Christ and simply overlook what they've done
- We talked last week about the Second Step... Getting up your courage, saying a prayer, taking the time and having a loving conversation with the person
- This is the bedrock of Christian Fellowship
- Talking through our problems and living together peaceably
- But, if a dispute cannot be resolved in private, then Jesus tells us to ask others to get involved - The Third Step
- In most cases, the additional people will mainly act as mediators, meeting with both parties together to facilitate better communication and offer biblical counsel
- There are two ways to include someone else
- 1) By Mutual Agreement - If you and the other person can't resolve a dispute in private, you can both agree on who to involve
  - 2) On Your Own Initiative - It's always better to both agree on it, but if you can't, it's not required by Matthew 18
- What is the role of the one or two others?
- Their primary role is to restore peaceful fellowship
- The majority of the time they will probably agree with the person who asks them to come along... But, not all the time
- Their role is to determine what the most Christ-like position is and to encourage BOTH parties to follow it
- Step Four follows if even the One or Two have been unable to turn the person from their wrong thinking

- At this point, the only avenue you have left is to “Tell it to the Ecclesia”
- In theory, the whole process is about restoring Fellowship
- You are doing something that I don’t agree with, and if you want to continue to enjoy the benefits of my fellowship, then you must change
- You are doing something that WE don’t agree with, and if you want to continue to enjoy the benefits of our fellowship, then you must change
- You are doing something that the ENTIRE ECCLESIA doesn’t agree with, and if you want to continue to enjoy the benefits of our fellowship, then you must change
- You alone may not be enough of a motivation for them to give up their current course of action
- The two or three of you together may not be either
- Hopefully, the entire Ecclesia will be enough to motivate them to change
- Now, this only works if:
  - 1) Our Fellowship has “benefits”
  - 2) They have been enjoying the benefits of our Fellowship
  - 3) The Members of our Ecclesia all agree to DENY that person the benefits of our Fellowship
- That is Step Five
- One of the hardest parts... Treat them as a Nonbeliever
- There is some pretty strong Biblical instruction on how to treat someone who is not following God’s commands
- We are commanded to gently but firmly remind that person that they have important issues to take care of before they can properly worship God and Fellowship us
- **2nd Thessalonians 3:6 & 13-15**
- **1st Corinthians 5:9-11**
- As we have talked about many times, God continually calls us to act justly, seek peace, and be reconciled with each other

- If a Brother or Sister refuses to do those things, then they are violating God's will
- Jesus tells us to "treat them AS a you would a pagan or a tax collector"
- Jesus use of the word AS is significant
- Since only God can know a person's heart, we can't decide if they really are a believer, we are only called to make a simple decision: If they behave like a nonbeliever would, then they should be treated like a nonbeliever
- Don't pretend that things are all right with people who claim to be Believers, but refuse to listen to God's Commandments
- But, treating people as nonbelievers also means that we look for every opportunity to preach to them
- We remind them again and again of the good news of the salvation through Christ and urge them to receive his forgiveness by repenting and turning from their sin
- Disfellowship serves three important purposes:
  - 1) It prevents the Lord from being dishonored if that person continues to act in blatantly sinful ways
  - 2) Other believers are protected from being led astray by a bad example of bad behavior
  - 3) It helps them to realize the seriousness of their sin, turn from it, and be restored to God
- The intention of Disfellowship is NOT to punish or hurt them, but rather to help them see the seriousness of their sin and their need for repentance
- We are held responsible by God for helping our Brothers and Sisters untangle themselves from sin
- Galatians 6:1-2
- We can't just ignore it and hope that it goes away!
- Our best way to make this work is to concentrate on the three issues above:
  - 1) Our Fellowship has "benefits"
  - 2) Our Members are enjoying the benefits of our Fellowship

3) The Members of our Ecclesia all agree to DENY  
that person the benefits of our Fellowship

- Strengthening THESE things will make Disfellowship more effective when it comes to  
the point that we have to use it