

Community Group Study - Winter/Spring 2018

Matthew 5:21-24, 7:1-5, 7:12

Theme: Gospel Partners Reconcile Well With One Another

Introduction to Winter/Spring Study: Gospel Partnership

This semester we're doing a study on "Gospel Partnership" that ties in with our preaching series on Philippians. Paul thanks the church in Philippians for their "partnership in the gospel" (1:5). Today, our relationships in the church are still built on this "gospel partnership." We have explored the foundation of that partnership in the first two studies, we looked at the goal of the partnership (mission) for two studies, and now we're looking at some practical help for relating to one another as gospel partners.

Study Overview

When we become "gospel partners" we become united in Christ, but we must live out that unity practically. One key way we live out that unity is by dealing with the challenges to unity. From small miscommunications to major conflicts, brothers and sisters in Christ must fight for reconciliation and unity.

Text : Matthew 5:21-24, 7:1-5, 7:12

Matthew 5:21–24 [21] "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' [22] But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire. [23] So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, [24] leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. (ESV)

Matthew 7:1–5 [1] "Judge not, that you be not judged. [2] For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you. [3] Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? [4] Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? [5] You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye. (ESV)

Matthew 7:12 [12] "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets. (ESV)

Study Questions

1. Everyone acknowledged that murder is wrong, but Jesus addresses some “respectable sins” of his day that many people ignored or downplayed. What are those sins? Why does Jesus treat them so seriously?
2. In verses 23-24 Jesus shows us what priority reconciliation should take. How highly is it prioritized?
3. In chapter 7 verses 21-22 Jesus says “judge not, that you not be judged.” What does Jesus mean? What is the context of this “judgment” and how does that change how we understand this verse? (i.e. personal conflict)
4. In chapter 7 verses 3-5 Jesus says that often in conflict our vision is skewed. What is the word picture he uses and what does it mean? Before confronting someone else what are we instructed to do?
5. In chapter 7 verse 12 Jesus gives us a summary command for how to treat one another. How would that command apply to the situations of conflict that we covered earlier?

Application Questions

1. What are some reasons it’s often hard for us to pursue reconciliation with someone? What can hold us back?
2. What are some reasons that we *should* pursue reconciliation according to what Jesus says here?
3. What are the practical steps we should take when pursuing reconciliation or resolving conflict? [Maybe even ask the group to help make a list of “steps” to pursue based on this passage]
4. Jesus is telling us to treat others the way we’d want to be treated, but we should also remember how Jesus has treated us. How has Jesus treated us as sinners? How should this affect the way we treat one another?

Prayer

- Spend time asking God to help us remain in unity and pursue unity together as a group
- Pray for the married couples in the group that they would pursue reconciliation well
- Pray for any other needs in the group