

Week of September 6, 2020

Matthew 18:15-20

¹⁵ "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.

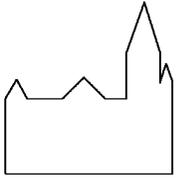
¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

¹⁹ Again, truly I tell you, if two of you agree on earth about anything you ask, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven.

²⁰ For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them."



Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

Gathering questions:

- A. If you see someone (or a business) flagrantly violating the safety rules regarding Covid-19, what would you do?
- B. Have you ever fired someone? Been fired? Have a story you want to tell about how it went?

Bible Study Questions:

1. Why do you think verse 15 includes the words, "against you"? How would it be different were that omitted? (Note: two important ancient manuscripts omit these words.)
2. What do you think is the purpose of the second step – taking one or two others with you? It says that they would be witnesses – but what would they be witnessing? Why is this an important step?
3. What do you imagine it looked like to "tell it to the church" in verse 17?
4. How would you define "authentic" community? What characteristics would it have? What are inauthentic communities like? How does this passage help us create authentic community?
5. Do you think you are an easy person to approach with a criticism? What do you see or look for in others that would make you think they were approachable?
6. When has a relationship of yours recovered from an offense?
7. Do you have a current situation in your life where you are tolerating behavior that you should confront? What is keeping you from doing so?

Closing prayer: particularly invite prayers about ways in which we can be open to giving and receiving criticism.