

## **Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ**

### **Forgiveness**

Last time...Christ-likeness

To not offend one of these little ones that believe in Me,  
To not be the cause of such an offense...the consequences of sin are horrific

Christ came not to offend but to be made an offense for us, the offenders (2 Cor 5:21)

Mark 9:50     Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltiness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

Jesus is telling us to have salt

- that which preserves, prevents rottenness/corruption
- that which flavors/seasons/spices

in ourselves...is Him in us!

- restoring the broken bond/peace between God and man because of sin
- given the ministry of reconciliation by God the Father...forgiveness

resulting in peace

This time...more insight as to the meaning of “Salt is good, have salt in yourselves and have peace with one another.”

The very heart of Christ-likeness...forgiveness

What to do if someone offends you

We will be in Matt 18

### **Matt 18**

v15-17   if thy brother shall trespass against thee:

Moreover...in addition to “do not offend another” (v6-7)...

is the flip side of the coin of when someone offends you

The Lord’s expectation in both circumstances is Christ-likeness...  
being like Christ

When someone does you wrong, what is the Lord’s doctrine/teaching/instruction?

Note:   The Word of God is our Foundation and our Final Authority  
We are to act according to Word of God vs our feelings;  
therefore self-examination is required first

What we are to do is a one, two, three, or four step process

Step 1: Private

- lovingly go and tell him/her how he/she offended you...sinned (according to the Word of God, not our fragile emotions)
- a private/1:1 conversation

If he/she “hears” (agrees with you that he/she did you wrong, repents, asks for forgiveness), you have “gained” your brother (restored the peace with “salt”, been reconciled to)

If he/she will not hear, does not agree with the Word or repent and ask for forgiveness...

Step 2: Witnesses

- take 2 or 3 witnesses  
Deut 17:6
- try again – lovingly tell him/her how he/she offended you...sinned (according to the Word of God)

Gal 6:1-2      Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

If he/she “hears” (agrees with you and the 2 or 3 witnesses that he/she did you wrong, repents, asks for forgiveness), you have “gained” your brother (restored the peace with “salt”, been reconciled to)

If he/she will not hear you and the 2 or 3 witnesses, does not agree with the Word or repent and ask for forgiveness...

Step 3: The Church

- bring the fault/offense/sin to the church
  - those in authority/leadership
    - elders
    - pastor
  - publicly
    - entire body
- because now the issue affects the health of the church, the entire body
  - a person in the Body is stubbornly rejecting the counsel of God
  - a little leaven leavens to whole lump
  - as every family needs discipline, so does the family of God

Note: When Jesus is teaching this Godly method of conflict resolution and interpersonal reconciliation, what is the status of the Church?  
Future

At this point the 12 were not sure what “the Church” was;  
“church”/*ekklesia* is not “synagogue”/*sunagoge*  
(synagogue was Jewish, church was Jew and Gentile)  
These instructions were to be carried out during the Church Age...  
from birth (Acts 2) to Rapture (1 Thes 4:13-18, Rev 4:1)

If he/she “hears” (agrees with you plus the Church that he/she did you wrong, repents, asks for forgiveness), you have “gained” your brother (restored the peace with “salt”, been reconciled to)

If he/she will not hear you and the Church, does not agree with the Word or repent and ask for forgiveness, does not receive the rebuke...

Step 4: break fellowship

- consider this unrepentant brother to be as a heathen and a publican (traitor, tax collector)
- no fellowship  
2 Cor 6:14-18 be not unequally yoked with unbelievers  
what fellowship have righteous with unrighteous  
be ye separate, touch not the unclean thing and  
I will receive you  
Titus 3:10 A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition, reject
- but continue to work toward
  - repentance...healing of this brother’s relationship with the Lord
  - salvation of a stubborn, God-defying/denying soul
  - reconciliation and peace

Practical experience:

Person A offends Person B (or use 5 men in the congregation)  
Offense according to the Word of God, our Final Authority

Step 1: Person B goes privately to Person A; if needed,

Step 2: Person B goes with Persons C, D, and E to Person A; if needed

Step 3: Person B goes with Persons C, D, and E to

- a. Keith, Jeff, Tony
- b. me

Step 4: (if needed), break fellowship with Person A

In any other sequence,

- reconciliation is made much more difficult
  - If Person B goes to Person C instead of Person A
  - If Person B goes to Persons D and E instead of Person A
  - If Person B goes to elders or pastor instead of Person A
  - And Persons C, D, E, church goes to Person A...or not
- offenses can be multiplied

Very first: examine yourself

Go first and directly to the person who offended you...sinned

Do NOT go first to anyone else

Do NOT go first to me...I'm Step 3 (unless I'm the one who offended you, in which case you come first to me)

Reconciliation of sins (v15) is a very simple process...God's way

Let's apply some common sense to this process of reconciliation when you have been hurt/wronged by someone else

Is this process necessary for every little thing that upsets or irritates us?

No

If we did, every molehill would be made into a mountain and discord would be rampant and continuous  
(for we all give each other many opportunities to be gracious!)

Instead, for the majority of "conflicts" in our lives we need to

- Rom 12:18
- 2 Peter 3:18
- Be Christ-like...give grace, forgive, forget, and move on

But in those instances where it is not possible to move on, the conflict must be resolved if peace and unity are to be preserved

Then, we have to talk it out...standing on the Word of God

Open and honest communication is vital for healthy peaceful relationships,

- conversations seasoned with salt (Col 4:6)
- speaking the truth in love
- gracious
- respectful

When relationships are unhealthy and discord/strife rules,  
when grace fails, the Church is impacted

A Church must be in harmony with Jesus Christ, the Head of the Body...  
in every regard including on issues such as sin, holiness, grace...  
or it is just a social club, a fraternity

When the Body is in harmony with Jesus, it's a beautiful thing!!!

- the spiritual work of God is accomplished
- lives are changed/transformed
- souls are saved
- disciples are made
- Jesus Christ is lifted high and magnified
- The Father is glorified
- fruit pleasing to the Father is borne...love
- the world knows that we are disciples of Christ...Christ-like

In v15-17, the one offended is to seek reconciliation with the offender

In Matt 5:23-24, the offender is to seek reconciliation with the offended

Therefore, according to the entire counsel of God, both parties of a wrong are to seek reconciliation with the other

Reconciliation of relationships is very important for the results are “salty”  
(preservation, flavor)

- healthy relationships (family, church)
- fruit of Jesus’ ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:17-21)
- peace and unity (“in one accord”) that is precious!

Unity/harmony and peace are rooted and grounded in...Truth, doctrine of God

Unity is “in Christ” and in being Christ-like

NOT as is widespread in the Church today

- unity among men with no regard for doctrine/Truth/WoG
- unity for unity’s sake

We must be Christ-like to have healthy relationships...peace and unity, V+H

- humble
- least
- last
- servant of all
- kind
- slow to anger
- gracious/forgiving

Mark 9:50     the salt of Christ-like forgiveness

It takes courage, humility, forgiveness/grace, and effort to resolve conflicts

God’s way in order to have healthy relationships...peace and unity

v18-20 bind...loose...where two or three are gathered:

In the context of v15-18, Jesus now says unto the 12 what He said to Peter in  
Caesarea Philippi...Matt 16:19

Bind on earth: bound are sins of one who refuses The Word of God as the  
Final Authority and refuses to repent  
e.g. 1 Cor 5

Bound in heaven: When the Church has the mind of Christ and is acting in  
harmony with the Head of the Body

Loose on earth: sins forgiven, relationships reconciled, using the Word of God as  
the Final Authority

Loosed in heaven: When the Church has the mind of Christ and is acting in  
harmony with the Head of the Body

Jesus Christ is the link between heaven and earth

If the Body of Christ is of one accord, like minded with Jesus Christ,  
the Head of the Body, the Father in heaven will do as is asked on earth  
We must pray in the will of God for the Father to do as we ask

Now...“where 2 or 3 are gathered in My name, there am I in the midst of them”

The context of v20 is...v15-19

- offences by brethren
- forgiveness or retention of sin (binding and loosing)
- conflict resolution
- reconciliation of relationships
- family discipline

The basis/foundation is “gathered in My Name”

- character, Christ-likeness
- authority, God/I AM

over 100X in OT

- confess Thy Name
- know
- fear
- love
- wait on
- by
- call upon

“Moreover, if thy brother trespass against you”

v15-20 is about the Christ-likeness of forgiveness of sin

The 12 disciples understood this

v21-22 how oft...seven...seventy times seven:

Peter (of course) asks a question:

How often should I forgive my brother (v15), seven times?

The passage never leaves the issues of forgiveness of sin and reconciliation of relationships, therefore that is the context of v20

The teaching and the tradition of the Jews was to forgive someone 3 times  
Peter is either making himself out to look much holier than the typical Jews  
or is searching for the outer limits of forgiveness  
(according to Jesus his Master)

But Jesus quickly corrects Peter's thinking/reasoning with His answer of

- $70 \times 70 = 4900$ ?
- an expression of "without number, every time"?

Keeping book on every person by every sin is absurd, so Jesus is saying to forgive ALWAYS

To make that point, Jesus teaches a parable about forgiveness

v23-27 king...servants...ten thousand talents...compassion...loosed...forgave:

The Kingdom of heaven is like...

- a certain king...the Lord God is King of all creation
- take account of His servants...how much each person owed Him for their personal debt to Him
- one with a debt of 10,000 talents...an incalculable, enormous debt, a debt so large it could never be repaid (remember James 2:10!)
- he had not to pay...it was impossible for this servant to ever repay this debt (note that he did not argue the enormity of his debt)
- the King declared His judgment – to have
  - the bankrupt servant bound (v18) and sold (into slavery, to work off the debt)
  - the servant's family also sold into slavery and all his assets seized/liquidated and applied to his debt
- the servant
  - worshipping the King
  - begging for patience (longsuffering)
  - vowing to pay his debt in full
- the King moved with compassion, loosing (v18) the debtor and forgiving the debt

v28-30 the same servant...one of his fellow servants...hundred pence...into prison:

Then, this very same servant, the one who was blessed by the compassion of the King, being loosed of his debt (it being forgiven),  
marches off to a fellow servant who owes him a pittance

The fellow servant pleads as he did, for patience and a vow to pay in full

The servant forgiven of an astronomical debt (i.e. no longer has any debt) was

- given mercy but gives no mercy
- given compassion but gives no compassion
- pleaded for patience but has no patience
- forgiven (relieved of payment) but is not forgiving (demands payment)
- loosed from slavery and prison but sends his fellow servant to prison

The forgiven servant has not the nature of his King

v31-34 fellowservant...very sorry...lord was wroth:

Other servants witnessed how the forgiven servant treated his fellow servant  
and they were greatly distressed and grieved...  
and told the King what went down

So the King called the forgiven servant back before the throne, calling him...  
O wicked servant!

You should have treated others as I treated you,  
You should have had compassion on your fellow servant  
You should have given what you received freely from Me,  
as much as you freely received from Me

And the King handed the wicked servant/debtor over to the tormentors until his  
incalculable debt was paid...which could never be re-paid

The King passed righteous judgment on the wicked servant...  
a judgment that will be forever

v27 was taken off the table and v25 was re-instated...fair and righteous



v35 So likewise...forgive not every one:

If we treat each other as the wicked servant treated his fellow servant,  
we can expect the very same thing from the Father, King of all Creation –  
eternal judgment for a debt we could never ever repay

The Father's righteous wrath is upon those who are not Christ-like,  
not like His Son (forgiving, faithful to His ministry of reconciliation)  
To avoid eternal judgment (hell, hell fire, everlasting fire) for not being  
Christ-like (forgiving), we must

- in our hearts...the very core of our being, genuinely
- forgive EVERY brother of EVERY sin/trespass against us  
(v15)

Eph 4:29-32	responsibility for the riches in Christ Jesus
Col 3:12-15	

### **Application**

Christ-likeness: the forgiveness of someone who offends you, does you wrong.

The very purpose and power of the Cross –

- the sacrifice of the Offended to forgive the offender (Matt 18)
- the place the offender can go to seek reconciliation of the One he offended  
(Matt 5:23-24)

To receive the forgiveness of God (our greatest need), we must forgive others

Who are we to not forgive as we have been forgiven (of EVERY sin)?!

No person could ever “accumulate a debt” to us larger than the debt we have to God  
Unforgiveness carries a very steep price...the price is too high for any man to pay

Only Jesus

- the Christ
- the Son of the Living God
- the Lamb of God Who came to take away the sin of the world

could pay in full our debt!

We must forgive if we are to be forgiven

We must forgive as much as we have been forgiven...  
give as much grace as we have been given

When we do, all of our relationships (V+H) will be healthy

- with God (Table 1)
- with each other (Table 2)

Mark 9:50

Salt...that which preserves and flavors: forgiveness, grace...Jesus in us