

Lesson 13: Reconciliation/Restoration

Overview:

1. Why Do We Need to Be Reconciled?
2. Who Should Initiate?
3. In What Manner Should I Go?
4. What Do I Say/Do When I Get There?
5. What Do I Do if They Refuse to Repent?

I. Why Do We Need to Be Reconciled?

- A. Because God, in Christ, has forgiven you and reconciled you to himself (2 Cor 5:18-19; Rom 5:10; Col 1:20).
- B. Because we have been given “the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor 5:18).
- C. Because seeking peace and reconciling with others is all over the Bible!

II. Who Should Initiate?

- A. If *you* sinned, _____ initiate (Matt 5:21-26).
- B. If *they* sinned, _____ initiate (Matt 18:15).

III. In What Manner Should I Go?

A. Overarching principles of love:

1. You are to start with a purposeful commitment to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind (Matt 22:36-40).
2. Logically, then, you must love others as you already love yourself (Matt 7:12).

B. Specific characteristics of love (1 Cor 13:1-13, cf. *SCM* p. 217):

1. (A) LOVE IS PATIENT
2. (B) LOVE IS KIND
3. (C) LOVE IS NOT JEALOUS
4. (D) LOVE DOES NOT BRAG
5. (E) LOVE IS NOT ARROGANT
6. (F) LOVE DOES NOT ACT UNBECOMINGLY
7. (G) LOVE DOES NOT SEEK ITS OWN
8. (H) LOVE IS NOT PROVOKED
9. (I) LOVE DOES NOT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT A WRONG SUFFERED
10. (J) LOVE DOES NOT REJOICE IN UNRIGHTEOUSNESS

- 11. (K) LOVE REJOICES WITH THE TRUTH
- 12. (L) LOVE BEARS ALL THINGS
- 13. (M) LOVE BELIEVES ALL THINGS
- 14. (N) LOVE HOPES ALL THINGS
- 15. (O) LOVE ENDURES ALL THINGS
- 16. (P) LOVE NEVER FAILS

C. A life characterized by love:

- 1. Your love and affection for other believers should cause others to wonder, “_____?” (Rom 12:10).
- 2. Your prayers should be that God would help you to know the love that is _____ in you, and for Him to help you share it (Rom 5:5; Eph 3:14-19).
- 3. Your regular practice of biblical love should not be based on your _____ (Eph 4:1-3).
- 4. Additionally, you are commanded to “_____” love for others (1 Pet 1:22).

“This heartfelt love may be where Peter actually places his greatest emphasis. Notice how he repeats himself... This means it is not enough to say the right thing or even do the right thing; you need to work at feeling the right thing. Sincere love requires compassion. If you are going to be the right kind of person God wants you to be, who He saved you to be, you need to do more than just look like you care for the people you are speaking to; you need to actually care – and if you don’t, you need to make a priority out of becoming a person who does...We must not try to serve God without a love for people.” – Joshua Mack, *Compassion*

- 5. You must practice biblical love even when it hurts. For example,
 - a. We may be biblically bound to admonish someone even if it might cost you a friendship, your job, or a fun-filled evening.
 - b. We must discipline our children even though it will not be pleasant in the moment.
 - c. We may need to call the police regardless of the personal fallout that may occur.

IV. What Do I Say/Do When I Get There?

A. Seek reconciliation (meaning, a harmonious relationship)

1. If you sinned, ask for forgiveness
 - a. Acknowledge the hurt you've caused to both God and them (i.e. "I'm sorry..."),
 - b. Confess your sin with specifics,
 - c. Then ask, "Will you forgive me?"

2. If *they* sinned, lovingly confront, but only if you can answer "yes" to all these questions:
 - a. Have I removed the _____ from my own eye? (Matt 7:1, 5)
 - b. Am I able to go with a spirit of _____? (Gal. 6:1)
 - c. Have I thought through how they'll receive this, and that it will be a _____? (Heb. 12:11)
 - d. Am I going with the goal of restoring them to God and for the _____? (Matt 18:12-15; I Cor 5:5; Heb 12:15)
 - e. Is my concern due to their sin against God and me as opposed to a concern over a violation of my preferences?

B. Seek restoration (meaning, to put the relationship into its proper condition)

V. What Do I Do if They Refuse to Repent?

A. If they are not a professing believer (Rom 12:18):

1. Do _____ part to live peaceably with all, by continuing to love them.
2. Remember that reconciliation is _____.

B. If they are a professing believer, we must pursue church discipline (Matt 18:12-17; 1 Cor 5:5; 1 Tim 5:19-21):

1. Step ONE: _____ (v15)
 - a. Which sins?

- b. Sins against me only?
- 2. Step TWO: If he doesn't listen to you, _____(v16)
 - a. Why take 1 or 2 others? Isn't this ganging up?
- 3. Step THREE: If he refuses to listen to them, _____(v17)
 - a. Who is the "church?"
 - b. How do you "tell" it to the "church?"
 - c. What is "it"?
 - d. Why tell it to the church?
 - e. How much time is between each step?
- 4. Step FOUR: Treat him as someone who does not _____
 - a. What is meant by "a Gentile and a tax collector"?
 - b. What would that look like in our context? Any interaction with the person beyond a basic, loving greeting must include a consistent plea for his need for repentance.

** Remember, the goal is to do the most loving thing for them and for the church. What's the most loving thing to do, let them go on sinning as if it didn't matter? No! It's to restore their soul to the Lord Jesus Christ and to reconcile with the members of the church.

C. NorthCreek's Process

NorthCreek Church Bylaw Section 4.07 Church Discipline
Adopted by the congregation May 19, 2013

If any member shall conduct himself in a manner which, in the studied opinion of the Senior Pastor and the Board, is not in harmony with scriptural principles and for which they do not show evidence of repentance, he shall be interviewed and counseled by the pastoral staff and/or the Board after the manner clearly indicated in the Word of God: Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1. The motivation behind the disciplinary process is the glory of God, the purity of His church, and love for the erring brother or sister in Christ. The process of discipline is halted at any time by a confession on the part of the erring member and a commitment to turn from his/her sin. Confrontation of a member in sin, with the goal of restoration, shall proceed as follows:

- A. The erring member is lovingly confronted and called to repentance one-on-one by the individual aware of or observing his/her sin.
- B. If the erring member does not turn from his/her sin, the individual who issued the call to repentance is joined by one or two other individuals who shall confirm that the sin has occurred or is continuing to occur, and/or that the erring member has been appropriately confronted and has refused to repent.
- C. If the erring member still does not turn from his/her sin, a specific allegation of sin shall be submitted in writing to the chairman of the Board, or his designee.
- D. If the chairman of the Board or his designee regards this as an issue that needs to be pursued (as defined in our policy paper on church discipline), he will appoint at least two Elders and/or Pastors to talk with the erring member regarding his/her sin. The specific allegation, the timing of the visit by the Elders and/or Pastors, and the results of the meeting shall be documented in writing with a copy sent to the erring member.
- E. If the erring member still does not turn from his/her sin or is not responsive, the matter will be referred to the Board.
- F. The Board shall make another attempt to meet with the erring member, and shall document the specific allegations, the ensuing attempts at reconciliation, and the further attempts being made to bring a godly resolution to the matter. This documentation shall be sent to the erring member in written form.
- G. If the erring member continues to rebuff the attempts of the Elders, or is not responsive, they will “tell it to the church” for the purpose of calling the church to reach out to the erring member and call him/her to repentance. This will occur in an appropriate gathering of the church body. If the erring member does not respond in repentance within a specified period of time, they will be removed from the fellowship and membership of the church. Written notice shall be sent to the erring member, both of the intent to follow this final procedure, and when the procedure has been completed.
- H. It is understood that the discipline process will be carried through to its conclusion, at the discretion of the Board, even if the erring member leaves the church or seeks to withdraw membership to avoid the discipline process
- I. If, after dismissal, the erring member demonstrates repentance, and requests reinstatement to the Board, he/she will be publicly restored to membership upon the approval of the Board.
- J. Members of the church agree that there shall be no appeal to any secular court or ecclesiastical authority because of the person’s removal or because of public statements to the congregation during the discipline process.
- K. The Board reserves the right to prayerfully employ this discipline/restoration process for non-members.