

I. Into:

A. Text: Matt. 18:15-18

¹⁵ Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

¹⁶ But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

¹⁷ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

¹⁸ Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

¹⁹ Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.

²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Matt. 18:15-18

B. Recap

1. Week 1: The root of Offense
2. Week 2: The Dangers of Offense
3. Week 3: What to do when Offense Appears.

C. Question: If the solution is to simply let it go, why are we still talking about offense?

1. Forgiveness occurs the moment the one wronged releases it.
2. But reconciliation only comes through repentance (which requires an encounter).
 - a. God isn't satisfied with distant forgiveness.
 - b. He pursued us, reconciled us, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation (**2 Cor. 5:18**)

3. Practically, what do you do when offense comes knocking on your door?
4. The practical instruction that we will learn today is simple and is located in the text (**v. 15-18**).
 - a. But first we'll zoom out to see the whole chapter's context and then zero back in on the text to give us the proper posture to do what God called us to do.

II. Body

A. Kingdom Greatness Marked By “Childlike” Posture (v. 1-4):

"¹At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? ²And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, ³And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

⁴Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." (**Matt. 18:1-4**)

1. There is a prevailing culture in the Kingdom that confounds the wisdom of the world.
 - a. Kingdom culture is characterized by childlikeness.
 - b. Without the childlike posture, you shall not enter into the kingdom (**v. 3**)
2. Describe Childlikeness?
 - a. One who is in his/her formative years.
 - b. One who is completely dependent on another for everything.
 - c. One who walks in a humility that esteems others better than self.
3. Kingdom Greatness is based on the greatness of the King, not those He shares His Kingdom privileges with.
 - a. God's passion for your life is greatness veiled in mind-boggling humility.

B. In the Kingdom, Childlike Posture Depends on Jesus For Protection (v. 6-11):

"⁶But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. ⁷Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! ⁸Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. ⁹And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. ¹⁰Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. ¹¹For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." (Matt. 18:6-11)

1. Little Ones are vulnerable, defenseless (in and of themselves)

- a. "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," (Rom. 12:19)

Offend (skandalizo #4625): *to place a stumbling block or impediment in the way so that you cause another to trip and fall. A trap that the hunter lays for the hunted.*

- b. If you find yourself in the offense, let it go.

- i. Release it.
 - ii. Cut it off.

2. It must needs that offenses come (v. 7).

- a. The question is, what do we do when they get here?
 - i. Cut it out, Release it on the front end.
 - ii. But there's more... Reconciliation.

C. In the Kingdom, Forgiveness Is Without Measure (**Matt. 18:21-35**)

1. Limited Forgiveness is the Mark of Another Kingdom.

*²¹ Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?” ²² Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven. (**Matt. 18:21-22**)*

2. Kingdom Reconciliation Comes With Responsibility (v. 23-35)

²³ Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

²⁴ And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

²⁵ But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

²⁶ The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’

²⁷ Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

²⁸ “But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’

²⁹ So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’

³⁰ And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

³¹ So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

³² Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

³³ Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?'

³⁴ And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

³⁵ "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses." (Matt. 18:23-35)

3. 1 Denari = 1 day's labor (unskilled)
 - a. 100 Denarii = 1/3 year's salary (based on \$30,000/ year)
 - i. 100 Denarii = \$10,000
4. 1 talent = \$360,000
 - a. \$360,000 (1 talent) x 10,000 = \$36,000,000,000
 - b. 10,000 Talents = \$36 Billion
5. You owe your Heavenly Father far more than \$36 Billion.
 - a. It's in unpayable debt that you and I owe Him.
 - i. He forgave on the front end.
 - b. Then He sought you ought for reconciliation.
 - c. And because you've been reconciled, He calls you to extend reconciliation to others.
 - i. That's the gospel message.
 - d. If you don't forgive... If you still trippin'...
 - i. Indication that you just don't understand the responsibility that comes with forgiveness
 - ii. Or... You've never been forgiven.

D. When Someone Does Trip: Matt. 18:15-17

¹⁵ Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

¹⁶ But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

¹⁷ And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. (Matt. 18:15-17)

1. Kingdom Characteristics of Confrontation
 - a. Greatness → Childlike Posture (**Matt. 18:1-4**)
 - i. Humility and tenderness
 - b. Dependence On Jesus For Protection (**Matt. 18:6-11**)
 - i. Non-Defensive, Non-Offensive
 - c. Forgiveness Without Measure (**Matt. 18: 21-35**)
 - i. Run to forgive... because you've been forgiven
 - ii. Forgive on the front end. But aim at reconciliation.
2. Pursue, like Jesus Pursues.
 - a. Leave the 99 to seek the 1 (**Matt. 18:10-14**)
 - b. Start Privately
 - c. Reconciliation is the goal, not straightening folks out.
 - d. This is not a trial
 - i. Win your brother/sister.
3. Pursue Some More
 - a. Bring help... spirit-filled help
 - i. Keep it in-house.

¹Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? ²Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? ³Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life? ⁴If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge? ⁵I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren? (1 Cor. 6:1-5)

- b. This is not a trial.
 - i. Just win your brother/sister.
- 4. Pursue Even More...
 - a. Bring the authority, intercession and wisdom of the church.
 - b. This is NOT a trial
 - i. Just win your brother.
 - ii. Go all out.
 - c. If they reject the wisdom, authority and commands of Jesus...???
 - i. Characteristics of "Another Kingdom"

III. Conclusion: Spiritual Authority (Matt. 18:18-20)

¹⁸Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. ¹⁹Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. ²⁰For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (Matt. 18:18-20)

- 1. Choice: Bind or Loose?
 - a. Usually applied to demonic spirits, sickness, oppression,
 - b. Agreed, but as it relates to offenses and forgiveness.