

# **Matthew 18 and Church Discipline**

## **Matthew 18:15-20**

### **Matthew 18 is Just an Outline**

- 1- Go to the person in private
- 2- Bring in others to verify the facts
- 3- Take it to the church
- 4- The church treats the person as an outcast

Matthew 18 is just the framework of how to go about church discipline. It leaves many, many questions unanswered that we must look elsewhere in Scripture for. Along with this, wisdom and good 'ol common sense play a major role in going about this delicate process.

### **You Should Probably Start Church Discipline Today – Verse 15**

Church discipline should be started (and hopefully stopped) regularly. This is the everyday, radical response of faithfulness. 1 Peter 2:22, 1 John 4:21

The first step of church discipline applies, whether you have been sinned against or not. 1 John 5:16, Galatians 6:1-2, Mark 12:28-31

A successful first step of church discipline means to “win” your brother. Bringing your brother back from the “dark side” is what your goal should be. This means your goal is repentance. 2 Timothy 2:24-26, 1 Peter 3:1

And if God is the only one who can cause someone to repent (and He is), then it is crucial that we ask God to do that. Acts 5:31, 1 John 5:16

### **Calling for Backup – Verse 16**

Church discipline is not always a neat process. Other people may need to get involved. This step serves a couple purposes:

- either establishes or denies the case against the person in question
- adds more pressure if the accusations are true

### **Tattletaling the Godly Way – Verse 17a**

Because of the love that the confronters have for the person in question, they should take this to the next level, telling the church. The church's role is to uniformly confront the person and push them towards repentance. The pastors of the church should be the first involved at this step and will be crucial in guiding the process from this point onward.

### **No Fruit = No Fellowship – Verse 17b**

The final step in the process of church discipline involves treating the person in question like he is acting, an unbeliever. Another way of saying this is to treat them like a pagan or a tax collector. Scripture indicates that we are to not fellowship with the person. This

does not mean that you have nothing to do with the person at all. It simply means that your interaction must communicate the judgment that the church has agreed upon. The church is indeed making a judgment call upon the person's salvation (insofar as the church handles this correctly). Romans 16:17, 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Thessalonians 3:14

### **Jesus Tells the Truth – Verse 18**

Matthew 16:13-19 gives us more insight into Jesus' statements on binding and loosing. His statements refer to the authority that the church now has been given. The church's judgment will stand in Heaven, because they have the authority and they accurately reflect what God has said. (The Bible)

Verses 18 and 19 are meant to communicate the authority that Christ has given the church to make judgments on people's salvation.

### **Will You Agree I Need Money? – Verse 19**

This verse isn't about asking for what you want. It has a context and it is authority in church discipline. This verse simply backs up what was said previously about the authority of a group of believers who understand the gospel and the importance of its purity.

### **The Most Misinterpreted Verse in the Bible? – Verse 20**

This verse is not about poorly attended prayer meetings. It refers back to the idea begun in the second step of church discipline. This idea is that God's approval should be reflected by the church, that is, a group of believers, which could be two or three. Christ's presence, and in this case judgment, is given to the church. Matthew 16:13-19, Matthew 28:18-20