

SERMON OUTLINE

SERMON TITLE: How to Heal Broken Relationships

SERMON REFERENCE: Matthew 18:15-22

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #5731

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Matthew 18:15-22
- b) We have all had someone who has wronged us or trespassed against us.
 - i) The Greek word for “to sin” literally means “to miss the mark,” “to be out of bounds,” or “to trespass.”
- c) Today’s message will help us learn how to heal broken relationships.

2) A PAINFUL PROBLEM

- a) When someone sins against another person (trespasses against that person), the relationship is broken and the fellowship is severed.
- b) It disgraces God the Father.
 - i) We shame God the Father when we don’t get along as brothers and sisters.
- c) It discourages the faithful.
 - i) There is nothing worse than being in a church where there’s no harmony.
 - (1) There’s nothing sweeter than being in a church where there is harmony.
 - ii) Psalm 133:1
 - iii) John 17:21
 - (1) Our unity is a form of evangelism.
- d) It delights the foe.
 - i) Satan loves to see brothers and sisters who cannot get along.
 - ii) The cause of Christ is hurt by church squabbles.

3) A PROPER PERSPECTIVE (MATTHEW 18:15)

- a) If we are going to solve the problem, then we must get a proper perspective.
- b) Matthew 18:15
- c) Consider your relationship to the person who has sinned against you.
 - i) This person is your brother or sister.
 - ii) The word for “brother” in Matthew 18:15 literally means “someone out of the same womb.”
 - (1) Someone who has come out of the womb of grace.
 - (2) Someone, who along with you, calls God “Father.”
 - iii) If this person is not a brother (has never been saved), then he is lost and blind.
 - (1) He all the more deserves your pity and your prayer.
 - iv) If he is a brother, then to harm him is to harm you because not only are you both brothers or sisters, but you’re also members of the same body.
 - v) No matter what an individual does or how they trespass against you, they are to be loved.
 - vi) 1 John 3:16
 - (1) We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
 - vii) Galatians 6:10
- d) Consider the responsibility.

- i) Matthew 18:15
 - ii) Every failing Christian is another Christian's responsibility.
 - (1) When one brother or sister fails, it's up to another brother or sister to lift him or her up.
 - (a) Galatians 6:1
 - iii) If someone trespasses against you, it is your responsibility to try to make it right.
 - e) Consider yourself.
 - i) Galatians 6:1
 - ii) Consider yourself by asking yourself if you are sinning in a similar area as the person you are trying to restore.
 - (1) Romans 2:1-3
 - iii) Consider also if you have been praying for the individual who sinned against you.
 - (1) 1 Samuel 12:23
 - iv) Ask yourself if you have been a good example to this individual in this area of question.
 - (1) Hebrews 12:13
 - (a) If we don't walk straight, then someone else is liable to be turned out of the way.
- 4) A PROSCRIBED PROCEDURE
- a) First of all, you go see them.
 - i) You lovingly visit and confront them.
 - (1) Matthew 18:15
 - ii) Visit them privately.
 - (1) When someone sins against you, you don't tell anyone else.
 - (a) You go to that individual.
 - (2) You don't tell anyone else because that person might take up an offense, and the Bible says that it's wrong for people to take up an offense.
 - (a) Proverbs 16:28
 - (b) Proverbs 25:9
 - (3) Also, you speak to them alone because they might not have actually sinned against you.
 - (a) You may have just perceived that they did.
 - (b) You might be wrong in your facts.
 - (i) We sometimes assume things that aren't true.
 - iii) Visit them lovingly.
 - (1) The greatest test of love for a brother or sister is whether you are willing to confront him or her if and when he or she does wrong.
 - (2) Proverbs 27:5-6
 - (3) When you go to this brother or sister, you don't go to tell him or her off.

- (a) You go to win him, not condemn him.
- (b) Matthew 18:15
- (4) If someone sins against you, you are to go to him and seek him out.
 - (a) Ephesians 4:32
 - (i) God sought us.
 - (b) We love God because He first loved us.
 - (i) 1 John 4:19
 - (c) Romans 5:8
 - (d) If someone sins against us, we don't wait for them to come to us.
- iv) Visit them humbly.
 - (1) Galatians 6:1
 - (2) You must go humbly and in prayer because you yourself are not perfect.
- b) After visitation, hopefully there is restoration.
 - i) Matthew 18:15
 - (1) If he will hear you, then you have gained your brother.
- c) Simon Peter questioned where the limits are regarding forgiveness.
 - i) Matthew 18:21-22
 - (1) Forgiveness is not a matter of mathematics.
 - (2) We are to forgive to infinity.
 - ii) We are to forgive freely.
 - (1) If the other person repents, then we are to forgive him.
 - (2) Love does not keep a record.
 - (3) Forgive before it becomes an infection.
 - iii) We are to forgive fully.
 - (1) When you go to a person to ask forgiveness, be sure it's forgiveness that you get.
 - (a) Oftentimes, a proud person will just say that it didn't matter and to forget about it.
 - (i) But it does matter for his sake and yours that there be some closure.
 - (ii) Forgetting comes as a result of forgiveness.
 - 1. There can be no forgetting until the slate is clean.
 - (2) Don't be sloppy when it comes to getting forgiveness.
 - iv) We are to forgive finally.
 - (1) Bury it in the grave of God's forgetfulness.
 - (2) We are to forgive even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us.
 - (a) Ephesians 4:32
 - d) If the individual will not hear you, then you'll have to get some confirmation.
 - i) The individual may say that he did nothing wrong, that he doesn't owe you an apology, or that he doesn't need forgiveness.
 - (1) He may also say that he knows that he's doing wrong, but so what?
 - ii) Then, you'll need to get some people to go back with you.
 - (1) Matthew 18:16

- (2) Get someone to confirm what's going on.
- (3) The Bible is clear that two or more are necessary to witness and to confirm something because you might be wrong.
 - (a) We all have blind spots.
- iii) The witnesses that you take with you are not to witness against him but to witness to him, to try to win this individual back.
- e) If the individual rejects all efforts (you've gone to him privately, humbly, lovingly, but he won't hear you; you've taken godly friends back with you, and they confirm that he's done wrong, but he won't hear them), then you tell it to the church.
 - i) Matthew 18:17
 - (1) The matter now is brought to God's leadership in the church.
 - ii) This individual is now confronted with spiritual leadership.
 - iii) Again, the desire is not to condemn or expose him, but to reclaim him.
 - iv) This ought to cause the individual to go into deep self-examination.
 - (1) The church ought to also examine whether or not they have truly ministered to him.
 - (a) Have they prayed for him?
 - (b) Have they lovingly entreated him?
 - f) If he will not hear the church, then he must be excommunicated.
 - i) Matthew 18:17
 - (1) Publicans were the tax collectors of that day.
 - (a) Most of them were dishonest people.
 - (2) A heathen man was outside the household of faith.
 - ii) This individual needs to be told lovingly that he cannot continue to disgrace the Father, distress his faithful, delight the foe, and be in communion with the church.
 - iii) 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15
 - (1) Don't just keep fellowshiping with him.
 - (2) Don't let him feel that he's still in the fellowship.
 - (3) Admonish him, love him, pray for him, but don't let him continue to disgrace God.
 - iv) 1 Corinthians 5:5
 - (1) To deliver him to Satan means to take away the umbrella of protection, and he's excommunicated.
 - (2) He is turned out, not because we don't love him, but because we do love him.
 - (3) This verse is referring to either his actual physical body or that carnal, fleshly nature, or both.
 - v) 1 Timothy 1:20
 - vi) To excommunicate (to put out of the fellowship) is to be done as the very last resort.
 - vii) It is not that we put someone out of the fellowship if they fail.
 - (1) We all fail.

- (a) A church is not a museum of saints but a hospital for sinners.
- (b) Romans 14:1
 - (i) We're to receive a brother into the church, even if he scarcely believes that Christ can save him.
- (2) We ought to take babes in Christ, weak and stumbling people, people who get into sin, and love them, confront them, help them and build them up.
 - (a) Don't exclude them, for they need the church.
- viii) This process refers to a recalcitrant person, a stubborn and unyielding person who says that he will not change.
 - (1) This is his chosen way and lifestyle.
 - (2) He rejects the love of the church and will not hear the brother or sister who has gone to him.
 - (3) He will not hear the committee that has come to him, and he will not hear the church that has challenged him.
 - (4) The church then says with a broken heart that he cannot continue to live that way and be in the fellowship of the church.
- ix) What do you do with a heathen?
 - (1) You love them and try to win them to Christ.
 - (2) But you don't let them hurt and distort the cause of Christ.
- g) If someone has sinned against you, don't make it a matter of gossip.
 - i) Go to that individual, pray, consider yourself, go lovingly, humbly, gently, and try to win your brother or sister.
 - ii) If he or she won't hear you, get a few trusted friends who are spiritually mature to go back.
 - iii) If he or she won't hear them, then bring it to the church, and the church must confront him or her.
 - iv) If he or she won't hear the church, then the church would have to treat them as though they've never met and known the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (1) Attempt with all your heart to win them to Christ.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) As Christians, we need to ask the Lord to help us know how to love others and how to restore and reclaim brothers and sisters who have fallen.
- b) If you are not a Christian, you can trust Jesus Christ today and be saved.
- c) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16