

Family Matters
Discipline in the Family, Part 1

Protecting Our Purity

Matthew 18:1-17

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / Feb. 24, 2019

I. Your Spiritual Life Can't Even Begin Until You See Your Great Need for Depending on Someone Other than Yourself

Matthew 18:2-4 “Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

II. Your Spiritual Growth Will Only Continue When You See Your Ongoing Need to Be Fighting Sin and Helping Others Do the Same

A. This Fight Starts with a Commitment to Getting Radical about Your Own Sin

As Christians, we're no longer slaves to sin, but our flesh still loves sin and is attracted to it. You're going to have to fight against sin and be willing to take drastic measures to remove it from your life.

Matthew 18:8-9 “If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.”

You should be willing to radically amputate what's making it easier for you to repeatedly sin in an area of your life and be willing to be inconvenienced by hurdles and hedges you've put in the way of getting to that sin again.

B. This Fight Should Include a Commitment to Loving One Another Enough to Speak to Each Other about Sin

1. You are your brother's keeper

Matthew 18:15 “... if your brother sins against you”

Jesus calls us to care like you care about somebody in your own family, but before you go make sure you've given love a solid chance to cover it.

2. Choose to love first and then go if necessary

I Peter 4:8 “... above all things have fervent love for one another, for love will cover a multitude of sins.”

In a church family, you have let some things go. If we confronted each other for every single sin, we would have little time for anything else!

Love does cover a multitude of sin, but sometimes sin keeps throwing the covers off! When a sin is a repeated pattern that you keep seeing and that you just can't get past, that's when you need to go.

3. Make sure it's a sin that you're going to talk to them about

V. 15 says "If your brother sins..." not if your brother has a different preference than you. Jesus says it needs to be about sin.

4. Don't wait for them to come to you

Matthew 5:23-24 ²³Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

If you are aware of sin that has not been reconciled between you and another brother or sister – whether it's your sin against them or their sin against you – go!

Jesus calls you to humbly own your sin, to make no excuses for it, to take responsibility for it and to ask for forgiveness.

5. Talk to that other person before talking to anyone else

Talk to that person first because what you might think is a sin might be a misunderstanding or a misperception on your part that could simply be explained by that other person and no one else needs to ever know about it.

This issue is so important and should be happening on a regular basis and Scripture shapes how we should do this.

Galatians 6:1 "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted."

6. Go with gentleness and humility

When you go with gentleness and humility you lead out with questions instead of accusations because you're assuming the best and you're giving that other person an opportunity to explain.

Humility allows you to remind yourself how much you have in common with that other person and what they've done. Pride always accentuates the differences, causes you to exaggerate the sins of someone else, and minimize the same sins in your own life, making you harsh.

Matthew 18:10 says if you keep going down that path you will despise them and when you talk to them it will not go well.

7. Go to persuade not to condemn

The Greek word for 'tell him his fault' is a word that the apostle Paul often used in reference to evangelism because you're not going to tell them off, but to persuade them or win them over, for the glory of God.

8. Don't give up easily

Matthew 18:16 “But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that ‘by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.’”

The one or two others that you take with you are more than just witnesses, they're also talking and trying to persuade this person to be reconciled.

Matthew 18:17 “And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church...”