

"If Your Brother Sins"

Matthew 18:15-18

Scripture: Genesis 4:9 "Then the Lord said to Cain, " Where is Abel your brother?"
And he said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?"

Introduction:

There were five of us in the house while we were growing up. My dad, mom, two sisters and myself. Now, having two sisters....well it was good sometimes, and I'll have to admit it was kind of fun picking on them and play pranks on them. Don't tell my mom this or I will still get in trouble.

Now it is a well known fact that little boys don't care a thing in this world about being clean or keeping anything around them clean, but by the time high school rolled around I had decided that appearance was important.

It's at this point that my sisters forever made my life miserable because you see we only had one bathroom. And man, let me tell you, girls really care about their appearance....for hours they care and keep on caring.

You know I look around this morning, and see that all of you are all pretty spiffed up, hair brushed nicely, girls with their make up on, nice clothes and smelling good on and leaning tall.

Have you ever been all spruced up thinking that you were looking your best and then end up in a bathroom somehow only to notice that you have been walking around talking with people with a big booger on your nose? That has to be one of the most embarrassing things in the world.

Here is a question, why would anyone let someone else walk around with a booger hanging off their nose and not tell them about it?

I have a personal theory on this. I would rather you come up and tell me so I can get that thing off my nose and not go around all day looking like a goof ball.

Transitional Statement:

Church, a booger is just a trivial matter, it won't kill us, you don't ever see any movies about a killer booger. But Church, if we are going to hit God's mark in our lives we must understand that sin is a serious matter and left unchecked it can and will destroy us for eternity. And we must ever be aware of the fact that God has not placed us here to only be concerned for ourselves. But God has obligated us to each other.

Read Text: Matthew 18:15-18

*“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that **BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED.** 17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18 "Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”*

Lesson:

I. First, “if a brother sins”

A. Part of the idea here is that we need to be watching out for each other.

1. My wife says I am way over protective of our kids, and she is right.
It's because I love and care for them so much that I am doing my best to watch out for them every second.
2. Church shouldn't we love each other the same way?

B. Then, we must understand what sin is and be able to recognize it.

-Well sin is that which contradicts God's word.

-Either, the breaking of God's word

-Or failing to do something that we should do James 4:17

-And as far as recognizing it.

-We must be diligent in our study of God's word 2 Tim 2:15

-Sin is a chameleon

-It's like camouflage

-It hides well

-It is allusive

C. In the past, I have really wrestled with this idea of a brother in sin. If I see a brother in sin I have most generally always tried to give them enough time and room to figure it out and get it right. And only if I see them give up on trying have I went and talked with them.seems like a good idea but it is not what God tell us.

II. We are to “go to him”

A. God says we are to “go to him”

1. Throw out the life line

-Sin is a serious matter and left unchecked can kill our brothers and sisters in Christ. I grieve my heart to know many friends who have turned away from our Lord.

2. "Going to him" shows:

-Concern / Love
-It says "Your worth it and I care"
-It is caring about more than ourselves

B. Going to him is Not:

-Not call on telephone call
-Not write a letter
-Not talk it over with a friend
-Gossip
-Not report it to the elders
-Not sit back and judge him ...I can't believe he is doing that
-Not just hope that he will figure it out on his own.
-Not listen to modern reasoning
-No absolute truth
-You handle your problem and I'll handle mine
-Not listening to your own mind that doesn't like confrontation
-Not buying into the idea that he / she will come to you when they need something or are ready to talk.

C. Going to him is:

-Face to face
-You can't see facial expressions over the phone
-You can't see trembling hands
-It's One on one
-Heart to heart & tear to tear
-It is meeting them where they live and struggle
*element of face to face that can't be replaced

D. The purpose

-Is not to judge
-It is to turn a sinner from the error of his way
-And to set up accountability

E. The resolution of sin is suppose to be a godly priority

Matthew 5:23-24

"Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering."

F. Left unattended it grows worse

-And it turns into a sin leading to death. 1 John 5:16

III. Then, we are to show him his fault.

Matthew 18:15b "...show him his fault..."

A. Preparation steps

1. Examine the truth of God's word and make sure we understand the truth in regard to what we think is a brother's sin.

a. Good intentions leave us holding the short end of the stick.

-I can come to sinning brother and tell him he needs to change.

-I can tell him about my past experiences

-I can make up a story to illustrate the need for change

*These kind of things often leave a brother confused and struggling more than when we came to him.

b. But, God's word is suppose to be the focus of correction. And it is God's word that has power in it Romans 1:16

-Isaiah 55:8-9

8 "For My thoughts are not your thoughts,

Nor are your ways My ways," declares the Lord.

9 "For as the heavens are higher than the earth,

So are My ways higher than your ways

And My thoughts than your thoughts.

2 Timothy 3:16

"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;"

* We must prepare with God's word

2. Then, in preparing we must do a self examination

Matthew 7:3-5

3 "Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? 4 " Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? 5 "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye."

-James 1:23-25

“For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; 24 for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. 25 But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.”

-hypocrite....with no credibility

-Ask ourselves about our motive?

-Is it about proving we are right?

-In some warped way is it about establishing our own righteousness?

*Or is it simply to help a brother and glorify God.

3. Preparing always includes prayer

-Asking for direction and leadership from God

-Jeremiah 10:23

“I know, O Lord, that a man's way is not in himself, Nor is it in a man who walks to direct his steps.”

-Pray:

-For God's direction

-Your presentation

-Their acceptance

-Understanding that:

James 5:16b

“... The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.”

B. Then, confront the brother

-*“In Private”*

1. Greek “him alone”

-You don't want him to feel crowded or pressed.

-This might lead to self defense

-Or embarrassment that makes a person want to run away.

-A pressured response is about as good as a plug nickel.

-One on one

- So it is Quiet and full attention can be given.
- To provide an opportunity for open frank talk.
- To remove the feeling of a jury standing before him.

2. Show fault....in scripture....it has power

-Expose sin, that is what God tells us to do in Eph 5:11

-Using the Word of God to do it. 2 Tim 3:16

-i.e. bring the darkness out into the light.

-Hebrews 12:6

*“FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES,
AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES.”*

-Sometimes He initiates this discipline through fellow Christians.

3. Gently

-Galatians 6:1

“Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.”

-Gentle here is a medical term for setting a broken bone.....

*Like a Doctor

- Ask questions
- Know that it has to be done
- But gentleness is crucial
- *Understand: There will be pain
- *Continued care will be required

4. Hear them out....

-James 1:19 “...quick to hear...”

-Listen to their heart.....

-They may have other needs

-Maybe he doesn't even know Num15:22

-Unwitting sin

*They may be at the end of their spiritual rope

IV. **If he listens to you, you have won your brother**

-While attending SIBI I had a teacher named Ted Stewart. He taught us Christian evidences and Greek. He also owned a local Christian bookstore. Ted was a nice enough man but as time went on I started having some difficulty with him. He was always late for class which just simply irritated the hound dog out of me. I figured if I had moved my family 500 miles out into the desert he could be on time. Then he didn't fit my idea of organized and structured. But one day he told us that he had revised a bunch of notes for the class and made them available at his book store for \$15.00. I really got irritated thinking he was trying to prophet from his own mistaken notes. So I went to him in private for some correction. I'll have to admit my heart was wrong. I felt violated, I was upset and wanted vindication.

-His godly response knocked my socks off. Not to mention the eternal consequence for him

-He put pride and position to a side

-He owned up to it and set it straight publically in class the next day.

-And it touched my heart for all these years.

-Psalms 141:5 David's view of brotherly correction

*5 Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me;
It is oil upon the head ... "*

-We have an obligation to listen carefully when bro / sister comes to us

-Take seriously

-Probably sent by God

V. **But if he does not listen to you.**

A. *"If he won't listen"*

-Maybe he doesn't accept your right to come to him

-Maybe he denies the sin

-Maybe he becomes stiffed necked and doesn't think it really matters

-Maybe he hardens his own heart

*And not willing to hear any more he sends you away.

B. Then, God says go to him again

-But take with one or two others to try to help him

-And if that fails, the others will serve as witnesses to Confirm the facts

C. Then, it is to be told to the church

D. Then the Church approaches Him

-Collectively the whole body tries to help the brother

E. If he chooses not make the correction

1. Hebrews 10:26 “For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,”LOST !!!
2. What fellowship does light have with darkness 2 Cor 6:14
3. Matt 18:17b Jesus says “...*let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.*” NOT BEING AROUND THEM !
4. Then 1 Corinthians 5:2 addresses the subject.

-There was a man sleeping with his fathers wife and the church wasn't doing anything about it.

-To that God says:

“You have become arrogant and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst.”

5. And 2 Thessalonians 3:6,14 goes on to say:

6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.

14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame.”

6. This is what we have termed “dis-fellowshipping”

F. But, we are to leave the door open for him to change his mind

-2 Timothy 2:24-26

“The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.”

Conclusion:

So God answers Cain's question "Yes you are your brothers keeper"

*And in keeping our brothers we play a part in their salvation.

-James 5:19-20

19 My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins."

-Jude 23 "save others, snatching them out of the fire..."

Do you remember the story of the good Samaritan? The truth is you are one of the three characters mentioned. The truth is that you are either a priest / Levite passing by caring only for himself or you are a good Samaritan willing to put your own desires and plans aside and jump in and help.

*We all need to own up to what character we are.

*Today, through some self examination maybe its time to make some changes.

*Church we must care enough to help each other with the spiritual boogers in our lives, and its about time we start placing value in correction.