**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | How to Heal Broken Relationships |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Matthew 18:15-22 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #5731 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. Matthew 18:15-22
   2. We have all had someone who has wronged us or trespassed against us.
      1. The Greek word for “to sin” literally means “to miss the mark,” “to be out of bounds,” or “to trespass.”
   3. Today’s message will help us learn how to heal broken relationships.
2. a painful problem
   1. When someone sins against another person (trespasses against that person), the relationship is broken and the fellowship is severed.
   2. It disgraces God the Father.
      1. We shame God the Father when we don’t get along as brothers and sisters.
   3. It discourages the faithful.
      1. 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.
      2. Psalm 133:1
      3. John 17:21
         1. Our unity is a form of evangelism.
   4. It delights the foe.
      1. Satan loves to see brothers and sisters who cannot get along.
      2. The cause of Christ is hurt by church squabbles.
3. A proper perspective (matthew 18:15)
   1. If we are going to solve the problem, then we must get a proper perspective.
   2. Matthew 18:15
   3. Consider your relationship to the person who has sinned against you.
      1. This person is your brother or sister.
      2. 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.”
      3. 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.
      4. 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.
      5. No matter what an individual does or how they trespass against you, they are to be loved.
      6. 1 John 3:16
         1. We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.
      7. Galatians 6:10
   4. Consider the responsibility.
      1. Matthew 18:15
      2. 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.
            1. Galatians 6:1
      3. If someone trespasses against you, it is your responsibility to try to make it right.
   5. Consider yourself.
      1. Galatians 6:1
      2. 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
      3. Consider also if you have been praying for the individual who sinned against you.
         1. 1 Samuel 12:23
      4. Ask yourself if you have been a good example to this individual in this area of question.
         1. Hebrews 12:13
            1. If we don’t walk straight, then someone else is liable to be turned out of the way.
4. A proscribed procedure
   1. First of all, you go see them.
      1. You lovingly visit and confront them.
         1. Matthew 18:15
      2. Visit them privately.
         1. When someone sins against you, you don’t tell anyone else.
            1. 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.
            1. Proverbs 16:28
            2. Proverbs 25:9
         3. Also, you speak to them alone because they might not have actually sinned against you.
            1. You may have just perceived that they did.
            2. You might be wrong in your facts.

We sometimes assume things that aren’t true.

* + 1. 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.
          1. You go to win him, not condemn him.
          2. Matthew 18:15
       4. If someone sins against you, you are to go to him and seek him out.
          1. Ephesians 4:32

God sought us.

* + - * 1. We love God because He first loved us.

1 John 4:19

* + - * 1. Romans 5:8
        2. If someone sins against us, we don’t wait for them to come to us.
    1. Visit them humbly.
       1. Galatians 6:1
       2. You must go humbly and in prayer because you yourself are not perfect.
  1. After visitation, hopefully there is restoration.
     1. Matthew 18:15
        1. If he will hear you, then you have gained your brother.
  2. Simon Peter questioned where the limits are regarding forgiveness.
     1. Matthew 18:21-22
        1. Forgiveness is not a matter of mathematics.
        2. We are to forgive to infinity.
     2. 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.
     3. We are to forgive fully.
        1. When you go to a person to ask forgiveness, be sure it’s forgiveness that you get.
           1. Oftentimes, a proud person will just say that it didn’t matter and to forget about it.

But it does matter for his sake and yours that there be some closure.

Forgetting comes as a result of forgiveness.

There can be no forgetting until the slate is clean.

* + - 1. Don’t be sloppy when it comes to getting forgiveness.
    1. 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.
          1. Ephesians 4:32
  1. If the individual will not hear you, then you’ll have to get some confirmation.
     1. 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?
     2. 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.
           1. We all have blind spots.
     3. 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.
  2. 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.
     1. Matthew 18:17
        1. The matter now is brought to God’s leadership in the church.
     2. This individual is now confronted with spiritual leadership.
     3. Again, the desire is not to condemn or expose him, but to reclaim him.
     4. 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.
           1. Have they prayed for him?
           2. Have they lovingly entreated him?
  3. If he will not hear the church, then he must be excommunicated.
     1. Matthew 18:17
        1. Publicans were the tax collectors of that day.
           1. Most of them were dishonest people.
        2. A heathen man was outside the household of faith.
     2. This individual needs to be told lovingly that he cannot continue to disgrace the Father, distress he faithful, delight the foe, and be in communion with the church.
     3. 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15
        1. Don’t just keep fellowshipping 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.
     4. 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.
     5. 1 Timothy 1:20
     6. To excommunicate (to put out of the fellowship) is to be done as the very last resort.
     7. It is not that we put someone out of the fellowship if they fail.
        1. We all fail.
           1. A church is not a museum of saints but a hospital for sinners.
           2. Romans 14:1

We’re to receive a brother into the church, even if he scarcely believes that Christ can save him.

* + - 1. 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.
         1. Don’t exclude them, for they need the church.
    1. 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.
    2. 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.
  1. If someone has sinned against you, don’t make it a matter of gossip.
     1. Go to that individual, pray, consider yourself, go lovingly, humbly, gently, and try to win your brother or sister.
     2. If he or she won’t hear you, get a few trusted friends who are spiritually mature to go back.
     3. If he or she won’t hear them, then bring it to the church, and the church must confront him or her.
     4. 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.

1. CONCLUSION
   1. 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.
   2. If you are not a Christian, you can trust Jesus Christ today and be saved.
   3. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   4. 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.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16