



Week of Sept 24 - a

Scripture: Mt 18:15-20

Main Idea: This passage is about conflict. It starts with a great teaching that people don't do enough. Jesus says if your brother (or sister) sins against you, go talk to them. He ends the passage by reminding us that when 2 or 3 are gathered in his name, he is with them. Jesus is saying that if people meet together to work out their problems with each other, God will faithfully be there in spirit to help them.

Questions

Preschool: When someone upsets you, is it good to go and calmly talk to them about it or should you keep it to yourself and stay upset?

Grade school: If you and your brother/sister/cousin/friend have an argument, can you work it out? Or do you talk badly about each other? If you find out that someone has been telling lies about you, what do you do? Do you tell lies about them? Or do you go to them and ask to talk about it to fix the problem and become friends again? If you try to fix the problem with them, pray first, and God will help you.

Teen: How should you handle it if you know one of your brothers or sisters in Christ has sinned against you? Are we told to ignore it, or complain about them to our friends? If you were the one approached for sinful behaviors would you accept it with humility, knowing it was done in love and instructed by God?

Adult: How would you feel if someone came to you to point out a sin? Defensive? Angry? Ashamed? Verse 16 says "if they will not listen," so even in the first century, these might have been the reactions. Have you ever gone to someone who sinned against you? Or do we just wait for them to come apologize? And maybe while we're waiting, we tell a few folks about how that person treated us badly and the story spreads? How does unresolved conflict impact the church? Do you think this is why Jesus says to treat them as a pagan if they won't listen?

PRAYER REQUESTS

PRAY: For God to help us with any conflicts we have with others, to resolve them.

September Memory Verse:

Romans 5:8 (ESV)
8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.



Week of Sept 24 - b

Scripture: Mt 18:21-35

Main Idea: Peter asks Jesus if there is a limit to how much we have to forgive someone. Jesus tells a story to illustrate how hypocritical it is for us to welcome God's forgiving of our many sins, but then be stingy with the forgiveness we extend to others.

Questions

Preschool: Should we have a limit on how many times we will forgive someone that hurts us? Why not?

Grade school: This is a hard one for most people. Adults sin daily and want God to forgive them. Do we forgive people for whatever they may have done to us? Since God is willing to forgive us, we must learn how to forgive others.

Teen: Should we expect God to do for us what we are unwilling to do for others? Can holding onto hurt, and anger, affect your relationship with God? Is every instruction given to us by God for our good, and to help us grow closer to Him?

Adult: Forgiveness is a difficult concept. We want it extended to us when we sin but may find it hard to extend to others. Peter starts by saying "my brother or sister." It seems that family hurts are often the hardest to get over. Sometimes the resentments may simmer along with Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner and sitting around the family table for a holiday meal is torture, not only for those involved in the "issue" but for everyone else as well. If you are involved in a situation where forgiveness is needed, take that first step today. If you are in the wrong, call and ask for forgiveness. If you are the wronged person, call and start the conversation, even if it's to say you are sad the relationship has been fractured. Neither of those calls will be easy, but Christ calls us to hard actions.

PRAYER REQUESTS

PRAY: For God to help us be eager to forgive people who wrong us

September Memory Verse:

Romans 5:8 (ESV)

8 but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.