

Matthew: The story of the King, Part 7
Remember to Re-Member
Matthew 18:15-35
February 17, 2019

I. The STORY before the PROCESS. (v.10-14)

- A. The HEART of God for His PEOPLE. (v.10-13)**
- B. The GOAL is always RESTORATION. (v.14)**

The story of 99 sheep at home and the 1 who wanders away is well known. Not so commonly remembered is that this story sets the tone for something Jesus is going to teach the disciples about how they are to live with disagreement with and hurt by others.

1. Doesn't the story about the wandering sheep seem risky? Why leave ninety-nine unprotected to rescue one? What does that say about God?
2. Kid's Question: What would it feel like to be the one lost sheep? When you were lost? When you were found?

II. The PROCESS toward RESTORATION. (v.15-20)

- A. Specific STEPS to TAKE. (v.15-17; Mt. 5:23-24)**
- B. The WORST CASE scenario. (v.17; Lk. 15:1-2)**
- C. WHY this is so IMPORTANT. (v.18-20; I Cor. 12:27-26)**

Jesus sandwiches an important and practical teaching between two stories. This section of Matthew 18 is often referred to as a passage on church discipline. While I think it is talking about what to do when someone sins, our emphasis is often more towards correction and being right than it is about restoration.

3. What is your first tendency when someone has hurt or sinned against you? Is that the best action to take?
4. Do you agree with Jeff about how we are to treat "sinners and tax collectors"? If not, how do you understand this idea?

III. The STORY after the PROCESS. (v.21-35)

- A. Always LOOKING for the LOOPHOLE. (v.21-22)**
- B. FORGETTING our FORGIVENESS. (v.28)**
- C. BLIND to our own BLINDNESS. (v.29-30)**

Leave it to Peter to seek to nail down the details. He said what I am sure others might have been thinking. How far is too far? How much forgiveness is reasonable?

5. Do you identify with what Jeff called “looking for the loophole” in your own life? If so, when have you seen that in yourself?
6. Spend some time thinking about what you have received from God. Does that impact how you are currently treating anyone else?

IV. A COMMITMENT to RELATIONSHIPS.

- A. CHALLENGING but IMPORTANT work. (Prov. 27:17)
- B. GIVE what you have RECEIVED. (Mt. 10:8)
- C. Let GOD deal with JUSTICE... (Rom 12:17-21)
- D. ...we should WORK to RE-MEMBER. (Rom. 12:5)

This passage has a lot to say to us at GBC. Since we believe that committing to our relationships with each other is a key part of our spiritual journey, learning how to live this out in the face of hurt or willful sin is important. How can we apply the whole spirit of this passage, both the understanding of God’s priorities and the practical outworking of that, in our relationships with one another?

7. In what situation do you need to let go and leave the justice required to God?
8. Forgiveness doesn’t equal a return to trust. Is it okay to forgive and not trust someone? How might that look?

“To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.”

— Lewis B. Smedes