

Lesson D13: Living in Kingdom Community

Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 6:1-8

I. **CALLED TO COMMUNITY** (15)—Holiness is relational.

A. **Created for Community** (Gen 2:18)—**CREATION**

Humans were not created for solitary relationship with God.

B. **Disruption of Relationships** (Gen 3)—**FALL**

Sin disrupted not only relationship with God, but also with one another.

C. **Restoration of Fellowship** (Rev)—**REDEMPTION**

The coming kingdom of God will bring the restoration of human community.

II. **RESPONSIBILITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL** (15; Lev 19:17)

A. **Be Honest** (Eph 4:25)—**Don't live in denial; be honest with yourself.**

B. **Speak Up** (Lev 19:17-18; Eph 4:26-27)—**Hidden, unacknowledged anger leads to sin.**

1. **To the Offender**—*first, not to everyone else.*

2. **In Private** (Prov 17:9)—*in order to protect his reputation and keep damages to a minimum.*

C. **Pursue Relationship** (Gen 3:8-9)—**Seek out the offender to save the relationship**

1. **The Isolating Effect of Offense**—*shame and fear compel us to withdraw from the person we have wronged.*

2. **The Pursuing Grace of God** (Rom 5:6-10; 1 Pet 3:11) **God initiated conversation.**

III. **INVOLVEMENT OF THE COMMUNITY** (16)

A. **Public Concern for Private Relationships** (1 Cor 12:26)—**The way members of the church relate to one another affects the entire community.**

1. **Health of the Church Body** (1 Cor 12:26)
2. **Beauty of the Church's Witness** (Jn 3:35)

B. The Ministry of Mediators—without a vested interest in the case except in bringing about repentance and restoration for the sake of peace.

1. **Provide Perspective**—*see things you don't*
2. **Assist Communication**—*help both sides understand each other*

C. The Role of Witnesses (Deut 19:15; 2 Cor 13:1; 1 Tim 5:19)—stand with you before the church

1. **Establishing Truth**
2. **Protecting Both Parties**

IV. JURISDICTION OF THE CHURCH (17-20; 1 Tim 5:19-21)—We are citizens of Christ's kingdom and are held to the standards of His kingdom.

A. Over Its Members (1 Cor 6:1-6)—not civil society at large

B. Spiritual Authority—binding and loosing is witnessed and ratified by heaven
An offense between Christians is a spiritual *matter* and must be handled in a spiritual *manner*.

1. **To Censure**—to withhold the sacraments and to excommunicate
2. **To Allow**—to admit to membership and to restore membership and benefits.

C. Corporate Authority (19-20)—not in the hands of only one person

1. **Decided in agreement**—*one angry person can't decide this on a whim*
2. **Conducted prayerfully**—*asking God to do it*
Must be done according to *His will*, honoring *His character*, in the interest of *His kingdom*
3. **In the Presence of Jesus** (Ezekiel 34; Jn 9:35-35)
Not the *number* of people gathered but the *identity* and *purpose* of the gathering.