



## Getting Help with Conflict

Matthew 18:15-17

**Big Idea:** Peace at home, work, with family, friends, and even enemies is not only possible but closer than you might think. These messages of hope will help you find the way to peace in the most challenging relationships.

**Bottom Line:** Discipline is God's Gift and Blessing to the Church.

### Review:

The first thing we learned is conflict is our opportunity to glorify God. As Jesus followers, we seek to glorify God in every area of our lives, and conflict is no exception.

The second thing we learned is the importance of examining our hearts at the start of every conflict. We like to go in with gloves on, swinging, but God wants us to begin with a gracious and gentle attitude dealing with how we contributed first.

The third week, we discussed the importance of confessing sin and how to confess sin – 7 A's: Address everyone involved; Avoid if, but, and maybe; Admit specifically; Acknowledge the hurt; Accept the consequences; Alter your behavior; and Ask for forgiveness.

Last week, we learned about the importance of forgiveness. We learned what it is not, and we learned what it is. It's four promises.

1. I promise I will not dwell on this incident.
2. I promise I will not bring up this incident and use it against you.
3. I promise I will not talk to others about this incident.
4. I promise I will not allow this incident to stand between or hinder our personal relationship.

### Introduction:

Today, we want to talk church discipline and getting the help we need in conflict.

We admire discipline in sports, the performing arts, the armed forces, and even in our families.

We see the peace and contentment such diligence produces. It's a highly desirable quality when cultivated with humility, consistency, and love.

It moves you toward excellence, and it opens the way to a fulfilling, productive, and joyful life.

**Discipline is all about love (Hebrews 12:6; Psalm 94:12; Revelation 3:19).**

**There are two types of discipline: Formative and Restorative.**

### **Truth**

Jesus establishes church discipline as an **essential characteristic** of a true church (Matthew 18:12-35).

The ultimate goal of church discipline is to forgive and be reconciled.

Church discipline should never be carried out in a harsh or vindictive manner.

### **Correct Privately**

Matthew 18:15, “If your brother sins against you, **go** and **show** him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.”

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*“Nothing is so cruel as the tenderness that consigns another to his sin. Nothing can be more compassionate than the severe rebuke that calls a brother back from the path of sin.”*  
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer

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### **Take One or Two Others Along**

Matthew 18:16, “If he will not listen to you, **take** one or two others **along** so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.”

### **Tell It to the Church**

Matthew 18:17, “If he refuses to listen to them, **tell** it to the **church**.”

### **Treat Him as a Pagan or a Tax Collector.**

Matthew 18:17b, “If he refuses to listen even to the church, **treat** him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.”

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*“Biblical church discipline is simple obedience to God and simple confession that we need help. We cannot live the Christian life alone, Our purpose in church discipline is positive for the individual disciplined, for other Christians as they see the real danger of sin, for the health of the church as a whole, and for the corporate witness of the church to those outside. Most of all, our holiness is to reflect the holiness of God. It should mean something to be a members of the church, not for our pride’s sake but for God’s name’s sake.*  
*Biblical church discipline is a mark of a healthy church.”*  
- Mark Dever

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Discipline is God's **gift** and **blessing** to the church.

### **Conclusion**

Hebrews 12:11, "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

### **Application & Next Steps**

- Memorize Matthew 18:15-20
- Walk through this process in obedience to God.