

Matthew 18 (Part 3) :15-20

If Your Brother Sins Against You

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Matthew chapter 18 beginning at verse 15 let's read the for these verses we're gonna go down through verse 17 and then we're gonna pray all right goes like this if your brother sins against you go and tell him his fault between you and him alone if he listens to you you have gained your brother but if he does not listen take one or two others along with you that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses if he refuses to listen to them tell it to the church and if he refuses to listen even to the church let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector stop there if you would please let's pray Lord we're gonna need some real grace here to look into these verses understand them and then more importantly to apply them your word we believe is true we believe it is powerful we believe that it will set us free we believe that it gives insight and understanding into the issues and circumstances of life and living and and we believe Lord God that that there's just great wisdom just packed into these words and we ask that you would open our hearts to it this morning Lord you are the teacher we want to be the recipients today we want to hear your voice we want to respond to you appropriately and so we ask you to guide us this morning in all that we see and hear and understand through Jesus Christ our Lord amen amen when we began Matthew chapter 18 you might remember that Jesus was talking about his how about believers he referred to them as these little ones he talked about children but he wasn't talking literally about children he was referring to believers and he said that we need to be like children in the sense that we need to be trusting and open-hearted and so forth and he said unless you become like a little child you won't even enter the kingdom of heaven remember it was in answer to their question the disciples question who's the greatest in the kingdom of heaven and he put a child right in front of him and said here you go this is the greatest and you must become like this little child well obviously he didn't mean for you to shrink down and become you know an adolescent or whatever again he was telling you and I to be like little children so then he began to talk about those little ones meaning believers and he said about us if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to stumble and then he began to talk about how he was going to deal with that issue and you know we we read that we went through that here earlier in Matthew and it was it was pretty cool because Jesus was kind of like saying hey I'm on your side and if

anybody causes you to stumble into sin meaning okay if anybody causes you to stumble into sin they will answer for it and we saw in that passage how it really kind of takes the whole issue of vengeance out of our hands you know as Christians we don't need to worry about things like vengeance because vengeance belongs to God he's gonna take care of us he's gonna see to those issues of people who are who are making opportunities for sin that Christians could potentially stumble into he's gonna take care of that all right good we're good are we are we good yeah I mean I like I said before when we were teaching through there you know it's kind of nice having somebody watching your back but wait a minute now we're entering into a little bit more difficult and a bit more complex situation what if the person is a brother or a sister in the Lord what if they're part of the family of God now what do you do you know this is this is this is difficult I have to deal with this person on an ongoing basis we have to interact and we're going to spend eternity together what are we gonna do what happens in a situation where someone sins against you I mean really offends you you can't just ignore it well you can I suppose but you shouldn't but Jesus outlines what to do in a situation like that and you'll notice that in these verses he gives us kind of some step-by-step instructions of what to do in a situation like that and the first step is given to us in verse 15 look with me again in your Bible let's read it again it says if your brother sins against you it says go and tell him his fault between you and him alone and if he listens to you you have gained your brother all right the first step in resolving a case of personal offense between two believers is to go to that person alone and talk to them face to face and please take note of the fact I said face to face not on Facebook which unfortunately many people default to and they take their personal drama on Facebook and it's a shame it's a it's a crying shame I wish we could I wish we could report them you know for like unnecessary drama there should be a drama button huh like anti-drama you can like things you can block things or you can say you're a drama queen boom sort of a thing it's not a good place to take care of those things don't go on Facebook and and publicize issues like that if somebody has offended you if somebody has sinned against you go to them face to face talk to them about it and then you know what in a lot of cases this will take care of it in many instances this is enough to just go and talk and and you can you can resolve the thing and and and it's in it's just it's over I mean if people would just take the time to sit down and talk about those sorts of offenses I know that a lot of things could get cleared up and it goes on to say if he listens to you Jesus said you've gained your brother meaning you've won back your brother you've restored that relationship and your brother and your sister and you you know can be close once again and there can be fellowship and and it's a wonderful thing and it's what God I believe wants us to do we serve a God of restoration you know he loved us and wanted restoration with us so much he sent his only son to die on the cross that there might be restoration of that of those broken relationships and God wants us to exemplify excuse me that heart of restoration you know to to our brothers and sisters in Jesus now having said that have ahead of having

made that point it's obvious that that a lot of people quite often a lot of people just they just don't really want to do this step because it's really uncomfortable I mean I've heard many many times I just am not good at confrontation you know and if that's you you know who you are and yeah I mean I don't think confrontations fun for anybody you know but I mean there are some people who literally would rather die and I mean quite seriously rather die breathe their last then then go and confront someone with a situation and I've had many people tell me that because sometimes people will come to me and express a hurt or an offense or or something like that a sin that someone has done against them and and my suggestion is in keeping with Matthew 18 we need to go address that with that brother or sister and instantly there's like oh no no no no I couldn't I couldn't do that I can't do that well you know that is your choice let me just say that is your choice if someone has done something against you you can say you know what we're just gonna drop this right here and I'm not going to confront the situation and we're just gonna kind of let it go and again you can do that if you want but let me say this to you if that is your choice you need to understand that you have just forfeited your right to speak of it ever again and that means what you're basically saying is you're gonna drop it you're gonna forgive and you're going to forget because the Bible says if your brother sins against you go and talk to your brother it doesn't say go and tell as many people as will listen which unfortunately is often what happens rather than going to the one who has offended us we go and we tell other people and we tell people for whom it is not their business they don't need to know it's not their concern it's not their issue they weren't the one offended and we go and we kind of you know yak about it and then what happens well first of all we're guilty of gossip that's the first thing and secondly we often burden someone to take up an offense on our behalf and they do and you've ever noticed how people quickly take up offenses for other people somebody will come to them and say do you know what so-and-so did to me or what they said or whatever oh that is terrible and instantly we pick up this And now we're mad I mean we're met and we'll stop talking to that person Oh, I can't believe you know sort of a thing and and he and you know, and we've only heard the story from one side Which is never a smart thing to do. There's a passage in the Proverbs that talks about when one person says One person advances to kind of give his story and it all sounds very very good and very convincing until the next Person steps up and gives his side of the story and then we're kind of oh There's I see there's maybe a little bit more to this dynamic than I originally thought listen if you're hearing about Somebody's tale of woe from just one side of the coin You're not getting the whole story and it's wrong of them to bring it to you in the first place and frankly as Christians we should recognize and put a stop to someone coming to us and To use an old term tail-bearing When it just it isn't our concern or isn't our issue not that we don't care about the person But we ought to have the gumption to say to him. Um You're gossiping. I Mean I I

love you and and I appreciate the fact that you want to entrust this thing to me But have you gone to this brother? Have you gone to this sister?

Have you told them because the Bible says you're to go to them directly. You're not to come to me. I'm not even involved Why are you telling me this? But we don't do that very often. Do we you want to know why?

there's another passage in Proverbs that kind of tells us why we have a hard time doing that sort of thing from Proverbs chapter 18. It says the words of a gossip are like choice morsels Yeah, in other words tasty snacks We don't do anything about it because we want to hear it We want to hear he did what I mean as soon as someone says Something about something that happened where they've piqued our interest and we're interested to know and we've just got to know what happened here And the Bible all along said yeah it's kind of like eating real tasty snacks when somebody comes up with a juicy bit of Gossip, and it's the hardest thing in the world to shut it down But Christians we need to learn to shut it down We need to learn to say you know what You're going at this all wrong And you know I wouldn't even think it's a bad thing at all to take them to Matthew chapter 18 and say you know what? Jesus gave us steps of ways to resolve these kinds of things and It's not coming and talking to me So why don't we sit down with the Word of God? Let's just take a look at those and maybe that's the direction that you need to go and so forth so All right If going to a brother or sister personally and That is what you're to do to go to them personally alone and tell them about the offense if that doesn't work in other words if the person doesn't respond well if they don't receive your desire your your Invitation for restoration you know you're you're and and by the way can I let me stop here for just a minute I probably should have said this earlier Why would you go to someone if they've sinned against you See, that's that's the big issue isn't it? Sometimes you know we want to go and just rub their face in it the whole point of Matthew chapter 18 remember this is Restoration that's it.

That's that's the reason we're gonna do this. I'm not gonna go to somebody to make him feel bad I'm not gonna do it because you know until I see him cry I'm not gonna be satisfied, or I just want to hear them get down on their knees and in Apologize, that's not why we're doing this We want to see this person restored both to the Lord and to the fellowship of believers including ourselves That's why we go, and if you don't have that in mind Don't go until you can have your heart changed in such a way that that is your goal All right, that's really really important, so you go to this individual you speak to them one-on-one Personally about it, and they and there's still no resolution. There's no admission of wrong And and and so forth so what are you gonna? Do you go to step 2 verse 16? But if he does not listen Jesus says Take one or two others along with you that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three

witnesses Now this again this second step involves the taking of witnesses Along with you and by the way This is the only time you should tell someone else about this offense, and this is only after you've gone to the person alone Then you go and you take some other people along with you and obviously you've got to tell them what's going on But can I just make a suggestion?

You don't tell them what the thing is all about Until you have a commitment from them to go as your witnesses in other words You don't go to somebody and say hey I need you to come to be a witness as I go and talk to somebody about some sin that was committed Against me and so forth and I'm gonna do this and and and here's what happened Now will you come with me? That's gossip if that what happens then if that person comes back and goes Yeah, you know I'm not really comfortable doing that or you know. I I don't have the time or the desire or whatever well You've just you've just told your whole thing, and you know where that's gonna Go it's like a small spark in a dry grassy field. It's gonna be a fire before you know it So you go to that individual say listen according to Matthew chapter 18 I need to go confront a brother or confront a sister I want to do it in love, and I want to see this person restored I really want to speak the truth and love to this person. I've already gone to them personally But it didn't work Would you be willing?

To commit to coming with me to go and speak to this individual if they say yes fine Give them the details if they say no say thank you very much I need to find someone who will and if they say to you so what happened anyway. I'm sorry. I can't talk about it Because according to the scripture I am NOT to go and tell this to other people that's a tailbearer That's a gossip, and we're not going to do that and so as you enlist them to help you You then go to the individual and you speak to them with? Witnesses and and bringing others into the resolution process, I think this is just such a wise thing to do It keeps the matter Well let's say this it keeps the main thing the main thing Do you ever realize sometimes that when you have an issue with somebody? It'll just go on and on to the point where neither of you even know what it's even about anymore Yeah, we've done something.

They did you know I forget. I just hate them now. That's all you know well What happened? I don't remember exactly you know, but I just hate them and we don't talk You know what that's just an issue between two people It's just an issue between two stubborn people and You want to keep this out of the arena of being thought of as just an issue between two people This is an issue of sin that needs to be resolved This is not necessarily even just an issue between you and this individual you're bringing God into it and and bringing witnesses Helps to to to kind of buttress that that goal of Dealing with the issue and not just a personality conflict Because personality conflicts happen all the time. That's not what we're dealing with here We're dealing with a specific issue of sin that has not been resolved that has not been

confessed and by bringing other people into it They can help keep it on track You know what I'm saying, and and if there starts to be some words going back and forth that aren't part of the original goal which is dealing with the issue and Restoring the people then when they say whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, hold on.

Hold on. Hold on We're not even talking about what we came here to talk about We're here to talk about sin. We're here to address the issue of sin. Not just how much you don't happen to like this person Okay, we're dealing with a specific matter here. And that's what we want to do and you know another thing that is I think very useful about taking outsiders along as Witnesses at that step in the restoration process is that they are going to hear now from both parties And they might be able to bring some some Balance to even your understanding if you're the person who's going to a brother or sister Maybe there's some issues of misunderstanding that can be brought up or when they hear the issue and they hear the other person's response They might say whoa, this isn't as clear as I thought it was There are some extenuating issues, there's maybe there's a need for You know forgiveness on both sides of the equation, you know But that's something that we might not have the objectivity to see all by ourselves bringing in a couple of witnesses though They can bring a little more dimension and and understanding to the thing and it can just be it's just a good thing all Altogether so, you know you come with these other individuals and you say listen brother sister, whatever We want to get this thing resolved and and and you you attempt to do that.

All right What if it still doesn't work? What if you still aren't getting any satisfaction the person's still, you know unwilling to respond Well, that's where you come to the next step and that is in verse 17 where Jesus says if you refuse to to listen to them, meaning the witnesses you brought along, then tell it to the church. Stop there. Now, Jesus is saying here that if there is present in this situation a stubborn refusal to confess the sin that is known and to repent of it, then it needs to be made public to the church body. And there's a twofold reason for this.

And by the way, this is never fun. And it may sound to some of you to be unnecessarily drastic, but let me explain the wisdom behind it. First of all, it is important that there be an attitude or an expression of tough love. You know, tough love is not something that's a biblical term, but it's what they're talking about here. That's what this is.

It's the body of Christ, you know, putting accountability and pressure on a brother or sister in the Lord to resolve this issue of sin, to come before the Lord, to confess it and to find forgiveness and restoration. That's the goal. Remember? And that's necessary. And sometimes the whole church and the weight of the church, the strength of the church needs to be brought into the process of accountability.

It needs to be done right. Sometimes it needs to be done. And the other reason why we need to sometimes tell the church is because the church needs to be aware that in our midst is one who has chosen to live in a sinful lifestyle and they have refused repeated attempts to get them to repent of their sin, and yet they are just right there. Why is that a problem? Well, as we're going to see here in a little bit, Paul will make reference to the permeating influence of sin in the body of Christ.

And he'll talk about that here in a little bit. But you know, what you're not seeing in this passage, when Jesus says, if this guy won't listen to these witnesses, take it to the church, there's an assumption here that when we go to the church, it's reinvestigated, you know, these, these witnesses come and they speak to the leadership of the church and they say, all right, here's the deal. Brother so-and-so had this issue. He was so-and-so committed sin against this brother. And so he went to him according to Matthew chapter 18, and they talked about it face to face one-on-one and there was no positive response.

So he enlisted our help as witnesses to come and to go along with him. We did. We appealed to the brother. We, you know, in the name of Jesus to, to confess his sin and so forth. And he would not respond to our repeated attempts to, to do that.

So, you know, we're bringing it to the church. Well, at this point, church leadership goes in and reinvestigates the matter. You know, you don't just pull it and go, okay, fine, you know, and just, we're going to make an announcement, you know, if we, if we start making announcements about people's sin, we'd be doing that every day, all day. You know, yeah, so, but, but the church needs to then step into the situation and say, okay, we're going to investigate these things. We're going to, we're going to see, we're going to, we're going to interview these people.

We're going to find out what's going on because these people have expressed this concern here. But again, it's still to bring restoration. The goal is to bring restoration. We want these people to get back. We want them to get on the right track.

We want them to be walking with Jesus with open heartedness and clear mindedness and, and so on and so on and so on. So the church gets involved. The church gets involved in kind of a, kind of a community wide, you know, disciplinary action where, where we, we hear about this and then there's, there's people in the whole body just going to this brother or sister and going, Hey, what are you doing? Knock this stuff off. If this sin is genuine and it sounds like it is, then you need to repent.

Don't do this. Don't walk away from the Lord. And you, you see there's this greater pressure, okay, that this tough love. Now, by the way, some of you who have, some of you are squirming in your seat right

now. Uh, and, and that's because you have a gift of mercy and compassion and we love you and we need you in the body of Christ.

But can I just say something to you other than the fact that we need you in the body because we do. We need your balance and we need your influence in the body of Christ. But when it comes to church discipline and tough love, you guys are wimps. Sorry. I'm sorry.

It just, you just, it just, you're going to have to excuse yourself from the whole disciplinary process because one of the things about people who have the gift of mercy and the gift of compassion is they, if not, if they're not careful, they will actually enable sinners to keep sinning because they love them so much and they want to see them restored, but they don't want to see any difficulty come into the person's life. Brothers and sisters, can I tell you right now that sometimes without difficulty coming into somebody's life, some people will never change. If there isn't some level of the uncomfortable, they will never come to a place of resolving the issue. You know, even God lets us go through the seasons of our sin. You know, there's the springtime when sin is like, ah, and then the summer when sin is like, yeah, and then we get into the autumn of our sin when the sin is kind of like, and then we get into the winter of our sin when it's like, oh, kill me now, right?

God lets us go through that process where we have to come to the end of ourselves. And sometimes from a church standpoint, we need to have a responsive voice into this person's life to say, knock it off. Do you know? And we need to understand as believers, the gravity of sin. So many times we wink at it, you know.

We just kind of, well, you know, they're living together, big deal. Isn't everybody? I mean, aren't all couples today kind of just living together and just ignoring marital, you know, institution of marriage? Yeah, pretty much in the world. And is it happening in the church?

Oh, yeah. A lot. Do we even mention it anymore? Do we even talk about it? We got to be careful not to talk about it because about 30% of our body, you know, is living together outside of wedlock.

No, it's a sin and it needs to be dealt with. And we need to respond lovingly and respond to these people with the word of God. Say Jesus wants you to be restored. Now get on track, get where you need to be. Walk with God uprightly, you know, let's, let's do this thing.

Well, now we come to the worst case kind of scenario here and it goes on in this verse that we're looking at in, in, in math through Matthew 18 and Jesus says, listen, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, when that collective community wide pressure, tough love is, is extended to that person and they

refuse to listen, he says at that point, uh, let him be to you as a Gentile or a tax collector. You know what that means? It means have nothing to do with them. Yeah, that's what it means. And again, those of you with compassion, mercy gifts, you're kind of like, oh man.

And I understand that, but the wisdom of God's word is here for a reason because sometimes it's got to hurt. You know, every parent who isn't afraid of the culture and what the culture tries to infuse us with fear about biblical spanking, which is ridiculous. Those of us who believe in biblical spanking, which is by the way, never frustrated hitting, but true biblical spanking. We understand that it's all about making sure they understand the sin hurts that the foolishness or whatever the thing was, it's painful. It causes pain.

And when there is a recognition of that, there is a motivation to change. People don't even want to talk about spanking anymore. We've been so culturalized and I understand the issues of abuse are horrible. They're heinous and they need to be done away with. But listen, just we've thrown the baby out with the bathwater and, and, and, and we take that same weird sort of a, you know, sense of, of priorities as it relates to things like tolerance.

And we apply it to the church and pretty soon we're just, we're just living in a cesspool of sin and God's fat and happy and nothing's getting confronted and, and, and it's, and it's not a, it's not, we're not the people of God that he would have us to be shining the light of, of his presence into a, a lost and dark generation. In fact, we look just like the world, you know, why is anybody going to come to Jesus? You guys are just like us, you know. Reaction is never easy to watch, but Jesus is talking here about a kind of withdrawing from this individual, which once again is still not punitive. It's meant to bring restoration.

It's meant to shock the person into who I got to do something about this. All the people that I've cared about my life and, and that I love have withdrawn from me and they've done it with an attitude of love, but they've done it nonetheless. And we got to be careful, you know, not to, not to withdraw from people with anger or with bitterness or something, a US center sort of a thing. It's not where we're going at all with this thing. We are to speak the truth in love and we say, brother or sister, I love you and this breaks my heart that we have to do this, but you've left us no choice.

You have continued on in this stubborn refusal to confront your sin and repent of it. And now you have just, you've alienated yourself from fellowship and it just, and it, and it, it breaks my heart. I'm devastated. by it But I see according to the Word of God that there's an important step here that that we need to take so that hopefully you'll come to your senses It's caring enough about people to call it what it is You know, it's not caring about people this this modern form of tolerance that we're told to adhere to today That's not caring about people Jesus didn't exercise that kind of a relationship with people, you know He showed

compassion he showed Tenderness he showed forgiveness, but he did not show tolerance for sin He said to that woman caught in the act of adultery that was literally thrown at his feet He said to her neither. Do I condemn you now?

That's the that's the grace and mercy, right? But then he said now go and sin no more That's not tolerance with sin that's a hard and fast speaking the truth in love Jesus would say to people now stop sinning or something worse is gonna happen to you See, those are the realities that we need to deal with and it's hard to say that to somebody when we know that we're sinners Too we're all sinners, right? We're all sinners saved by grace, but we remember we're dealing with someone here who is refusing after repeated Loving attempts to resolve this issue and to confess it and to repent So This person has refused to repent. It's continues to be a serious matter and you know, what's interesting about this There's actually another step to this Which isn't recorded for us here in Matthew 18 But is recorded for us in the book of Corinthians and the reason I'm and I'm going to have you turn there So go ahead and do that turn over to Corinthians 1st Corinthians gives me chapter 5 We're going to read it because and we'll end with this but we're gonna read this chapter because in this chapter Paul actually Does what we've been talking about? He's actually gonna walk it out and So as we get into this chapter and read it We're gonna assume that all of the steps of Matthew 18 have all been played out and now Paul is dealing with the step after The the church basically treats this person or withdraws from this person's life You're ready 1st Corinthians chapter 5 beginning at verse 1.

We'll get through the whole chapter So don't read ahead when I stop give me your attention so we can talk about it Verse 1 says it is actually reported that there is sexual immorality Among you and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans for a man has and that means sexually his father's wife meaning literally that a man took his Stepmother, we don't know the circumstances. We don't know the situation All we know is that this kind of an incestuous relationship is going on even though it's a step son stepmother Relationship Paul says this is something you know pagans even stay away from you know And they're given to licentiousness when it comes to sexuality So he says and this is it's actually reported. This is going on in the church. It's going on in the church you guys So what are they gonna do about it? Paul says in verse 2 he says in you and you're arrogant about it.

You're you're proud Are you not rather to mourn when's the last time you mourned over sin in the church? And it says look at this let him who has done this be removed From among you Paul's talking about that last step. We talked about here in Matthew 18 Let him be removed in other words The church is to withdraw from this individual out of that love and desire to see them restored for though absent in body I am present in spirit and as if present I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a

thing When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present with the power of our Lord Jesus You are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh Why so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord stop there now? This is the next step that Matthew 18 doesn't talk about and Paul does And so after all these steps are done, and there's still no resolution He says that the church is literally to deliver this individual over to the disciplinary hand of the enemy So that even though his flesh is destroyed His soul might be saved. He still hopes for rest Restitution and restoration in this thing and with this man.

It's he's never never loses that there's never this kind of like yeah Get him now and this now he's gonna pay there's never any of that Never any of that. It's always a heartbroken. I love you I miss you in the fellowship of the Lord You have walked into this sinful condition and you refuse you refuse you refuse to change and I love you so much That I'm going to have to follow the Word of God as it relates to this thing But my goal make no mistake of it is that you may be restored So he goes on in verse 6 He says your boasting is not good. Do you not know and yes, I referred to this earlier that a little leaven or yeast leavens the whole Lump so and remember you guys know from the Old Testament Leaven or yeast is always a picture of sin here again Paul makes the connection and says, you know It doesn't take much yeast when you're putting it in dough and you're working it in there Do they have to put very much in just a little and pretty soon it permeates doesn't it? It permeates that whole batch of dough.

Well, guess what sin is the same way and He's telling the church and he's telling you and I that Even though we ourselves are sinners and we make mistakes if someone is caught in a situation for which they are unwilling to repent Something needs to be done because it will eventually have a decaying Permeating effect to the entire church. That's what he's saying here And so he says in verse 7 cleanse out the old leaven or the yeast that you may be a new batch or lump as you really are Unleavened for Christ our Passover lamb has been sacrificed Let us therefore celebrate the festival not with the old leaven the leaven of malice and evil but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth And he said, you know, I wrote to you in my letter and he's talking about a previous letter Which by the way, we have since lost it would have been our original first Corinthians But he says I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world or the greedy and the swindlers or Idolaters since then you would need to go out of the world. You'd need to leave the world stop there just for a moment See earlier in a letter. He said to them. I don't you know you shouldn't anything to do with sexually immoral people and they were kind of like We live in Corinth This place is known for its sexual, you know licentiousness This is like the sex pot capital of the world.

I Mean, you know, it's truly Corinth was in they used to call people whether you had ever set foot in that land If you were sexually immoral you were called a Corinthian. That was a derogatory name That would be like pervert today Very derogatory. I don't suggest you use it. The point is Corinth was known for its sexual perversity and so they're getting this letter from Paul and he's saying by the way, I Don't I don't want you to you know, interacting with people who are sexually immoral and they're like, um, that's everybody Yeah, so they write back to him what do you need to clarify this a little bit so he writes now he says listen I wasn't talking about the people of the world when I said don't interact with people who are sexually immoral I'm if I told you that if you tried to follow that you'd have to literally leave the world Or go live in a closet, you know and never have any interaction with anybody He says but now look at verse 11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of a brother I'm a believer in Jesus if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed or an idolater reviler drunkard or Swindler not even to eat with such a one by the way, let me just say this guys This is this is hard to hear but Paul is not saying if anyone's sins don't have anything to do with them in that case we would all have to vacate the room and None of us would have anything to do with each other because we all mess up, right? What's he saying again, he's using the same picture of what we saw in Matthew 18 somebody who has repeatedly been confronted with their sin and refused Stubbornly just said I don't care what you say.

I'm going to live the way I want to live I don't give a rip what you think I don't give a rip what you think God's Word says this is just me You're gonna have to accept me the way I am. That's the person we're not talking about people who stumble Sometimes we all stumble every one of us without fail See, so we're not talking about not interacting with people who stumble we're talking about not interacting or withdrawing from those who have chosen a sinful lifestyle and yet who say I'm a Christian I'm a Christian I'm a follower of Jesus Christ and yet I'm involved in sexual immorality and totally unwilling to change my life right and I'm basically just looking you right in the eye and just saying you don't like it tough for you Paul says with such a one with such an individual don't even have lunch right and then he goes on here in in verse 12 he says for what what have I to do with judging outsiders in other words he's saying it's not my business to judge unbelievers do you know that do you know that that's true we are not to judge the world too many times Christians oh we're waving our Bible at the world get put it down the Word of God for you and I for a way to live is is for believers we share the only thing we share with unbelievers is the gospel of Jesus Christ that's all we share we share with them the way they may be saved but all this other stuff where we point to them and condemn them in their lifestyle it's not ours to do even Jesus said you know God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world but to save the world right so Paul says right here it's not what business is it of mine to judge the world I'm not here to judge the world it's not my job not yours either and then he says this verse 13 God judges those outside that's his business I'm not

gonna take his job from him but he says for you guys purge the evil person from among you Wow that's heavy-duty stuff isn't it and it's this kind of accountability and discipline that it makes us really kind of uncomfortable you know I I'm sorry about the fact that this hasn't been a real warm fuzzy message I'd love to leave you with devotionally uplifting sorts of things but you know this has been very informational and and so forth and we could sit and talk about this till the cows come home because the it's it's a very complex issue and I'm willing to bet some of you as we were going through these these sections of Scripture you're probably applying relationships in your life and wondering if there is application broken relationships well remember here in Matthew 18 they're talking about a very specific situation where someone is caught in sin and they refuse to repent many times relationships get frayed and broken just because of misunderstandings or hurt that really doesn't have anything to do with sin per se it's just personality relationship issues or whatever and and not that they're any less painful but sometimes it doesn't necessarily apply to this exactly and I you know I've tried to live by a scripture in Romans chapter 12 because I deal with relationship snafus just like you do but in Romans chapter 12 there's a wonderful passage where Paul addresses the issue of relationships and he says if possible so far as it depends on you live peaceably with all the reason I like this verse so much as he says if possible if possible what Paul is saying essentially is sometimes it's not possible to live peaceably with people because they don't make it possible they basically look at you and say I don't want to be restored to you I don't want to have our relationship with her to restore it and and and this tension and and stress will continue between us because I want it to continue and there's nothing you can do about that and so Paul says if possible but he also says so far as it depends on you in other words if there's a relationship in your life that is out of sorts if it's bad make sure it's not because of something that you did or something you haven't yet apologized for if you did do it make sure that when you go to bed at night you're not the one saying I'm the one keeping this relationship from a place of restoration I know the pain of this sort of thing there are two relationships in my life that were once very very strong and very warm and they are broken today and I'm obviously not going to mention names but they are very real and it's very painful and in both situations I have gone to these individuals and sought forgiveness for anything I might have done and sought restoration but it has not been forthcoming and you know those are places where you just have to commit it to the Lord in prayer and just keep praying for that person praying that God would just touch their heart and that that that whatever needs to happen would happen and and I do I pray about those things regularly and I and I believe one day God's going to restore those relationships that's my hope you know but until that time I'm just gonna keep praying you know and I'm gonna keep following the guideline of Romans chapter 12 as you know in whatever is in my you know ability to do let it be always a positive thing toward restoration and you know we we all make mistakes I have made so many mistakes in my life with people and but you

know we try our best you know why do we try our best for restoration why do we pray for restoration because it's the heart of God it's the heart of the Lord it is God's heart that people be restored and that's why we care and that's why we will continue to care you