



## Going Deeper into

### Matthew 18:15-20 – “Jesus’ Instructions for Hard Situations”

1. Jesus reveals in Matthew 18:15 that when another Christian sins against us, we are to go to that person privately and honestly shed light on the offense.

How does it feel when another Christian sins against you? Does it hurt any more than when a non-Christian does so?

How do you usually resolve conflict when other people have hurt you?

How would you initially feel if another person honestly and loving informed you that you did something that hurt them?

How would you feel if they told others before coming to you?

***Pray: Heavenly Father, forgive me for the times I have spoken to others instead of the one who has hurt me. Give me the courage and grace to approach believers who have sinned against me, and to seek reconciliation with them before the hurt becomes a barrier in our relationship.***

2. Matthew 18:16-17 acknowledges that people may not respond positively when confronted by the reality of being in the wrong. However, this passage also illustrates the escalated consequences of sin if someone chooses not to repent.

Read Galatians 6:1. Have you been in a situation where someone close to you was heading down a path that you knew was not good? What would you say to that person?

What kind of effect would it have on your relationship if they refused to listen to you regarding this situation?

***Pray: Dear Heavenly Father, help me to be patient when I seek to help a fellow believer see the path they are following, and go before me so that they will be receptive to what I say. Amen.***

**3. In Matthew 18:18-20, Jesus reveals that the church has authority to make tough decisions. He also provides the promises to encourage us when it is necessary to do so.**

What does it mean to have the authority to act or make a decision?

List some things that you believe the church has authority to do?

How can the church ensure that we are using our authority in a way that matches God's will?

***Pray: Heavenly Father, the church often takes authority where you have not given it, and refuses authority where you have given it. Help us to come together in harmony as we seek to match your will in the decisions we make. Amen.***

**4. In Matthew 18:21, Peter asks a question regarding the limits of how often we are to forgive those who sin against us (Matthew 18:15). Jesus answers his question in v. 22 with a principle regarding forgiveness.**

On a scale of 1-5, how hard is it to forgive someone after you have already been hurt by them?

What would you say to a person that believes that they have sinned too many times for God to forgive them?

***Pray: Dear Lord, help me to remember that you will always forgive me, and that I cannot run out of your grace. Give me the strength and the patience to forgive others as you forgive me. Amen.***