

On September 20 and October 4 we focused on this command in Matthew 18:15.

**Matt. 18:15** Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

We have answered these questions by examining the scripture?

What is a trespass?

What if an offense is not personally against you?

Why should you go alone?

How should you approach your brother?

What about children and other special situations?

When does a brother's sin before others call for immediate correction before others?

Today let's focus on the next command.

**Matt. 18:16** But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

Some brothers feel like they have done their duty and loved God if they just follow the command in verse 15 and go to their brother alone. They feel this way even if their brother does not repent.

These commands cannot be isolated. The wording that Jesus used to give these commands causes them to be linked as one command.

**Matt. 18:16** But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more

**This is one command with three different parts.**

Jesus did not give us the option of leaving things undone after we go to our brother alone.

Why?

If there has not been repentance for the charge or a resolution to the charge, you will not be able to fully trust your brother or be fully reconciled with him.

If you make an accusation against your brother, and your brother will not accept responsibility for the offense and repent, and there has been no

resolution after your meeting with your brother, you will look upon your brother with suspicion from that day forward. Your trust in that offending brother will be damaged from that day forward until there is a resolution. You will not fully trust him.

Also, your brother will not fully trust you.

[Has a brother ever come to you and made an accusation against you and you left that meeting feeling like you had been falsely accused?](#)

What does that do to your trust in that brother? If he has made a false accusation against you, he has now offended you.

And if you are the accused and you do admit to your brother that you are guilty, but you refuse to repent, from that day forward, you will be at odds with your brother.

For trust to be full restored in a relationship, once you have brought an accusation against your brother, either your brother will have to accept responsibility for the charge and repent or you will have to repent for making the charge and dismiss the charge, acknowledging to your brother and to anyone else that has heard the charge that your brother is innocent. Until one of these two actions is taken, the relationship will be broken.

You can forgive one another but the relationship will still be broken. You can serve one another but the relationship will still be broken. You will not fully trust him and he will not fully trust you. You will not be able to give a good report without hesitation about your brother and he will not be able to give a good report without hesitation about you. You will look at one another with suspicion from that day forward.

This happens between husbands and wives. This happens between parents and their children. This happens between Pastors and the members of their flock. This happens between employers and employees. This happens between friends. This happens between siblings.

That is why if you go to your brother alone with an accusation and there is not repentance or resolution, you cannot leave things undone. This would be a sin against your brother and the commands of Jesus in Matt. 18:15-17.

You must follow through. You must go back to your brother with witnesses.  
**Matt. 18:16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.**

If the witnesses confirm your brother's guilt and he will not repent, you must tell it to the church.

**Matt 18:17**

**17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.**

If you are not willing to follow through, then don't go to your brother alone. Give your brother the benefit of the doubt. Believe the best about him and move on.

**Don't go alone to your brother and make an accusation against him unless you are willing to follow all the commands of Christ!**

As with so many teachings in the bible, one of the purposes of the commands is to correct human behavior that does injury to others. So many brothers will not go to their brother alone. They judge their brother in their hearts, whisper about him, and cast doubt on his character to others.

Then there are those who will go to an offending brother alone, but they are not willing to follow through if their brother will not repent.

**Being committed to follow through with these commands creates accountability for both the accused and the one who makes the charge.**

**Following through with this command can bring a guilty brother to repentance or it can vindicate a brother who is being subjected to false accusations.**

The requirement to take witnesses and then tell the church if our brother will not repent prevents us from feeling the freedom to go to our brother with a charge that cannot be confirmed. There will always be maverick prophets in the body of Christ who are not accountable to any church or any Pastor.

It is a serious matter for us to personally charge our brother will sin. We need to be cautious.

Rom 14:1-4

14:1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

KJV

There are so many differences between brothers that may be offensive but these differences need to be overlooked.

We need to be on solid ground if we charge our brother with a trespass.

The only solid ground is the moral commands of scripture that Jesus expects all of His disciples to follow.

2 Tim 3:16

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

KJV

The greatest injury to unity in the body of Christ has been caused by brothers who will not follow through with Matthew 18:15-17 and brothers who make false accusations against their brothers.

Ex 20:16

16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

KJV

Deut 19:18-19

18 And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother;

19 Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

KJV

The commands of Christ are designed to create both genuine purity and unity in the body of Christ.

Jesus prayed for our unity before He went to the cross for us.

**John 17:20-21**

**20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;**

**21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.**

**KJV**

If we would follow the commands of Christ, his prayer for unity in His church would be answered.

There would be genuine love in the body of Christ that brings a brother in sin to repentance and would protect all of us from being subjected to false accusations.

We cannot determine what will happen in other churches but we can determine what will happen here.

Our congregation needs to establish a standard based on these commands in Matthew 18:15-17. We do not love Jesus if we are not willing to keep His commands.

**John 14:23-24**

**23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.**

**24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.**

**KJV**

Is it any wonder that the world does not believe that we love one another?

If you are personally guilty for falling short and not keeping these commandments, you need to be willing to do whatever you need to do to make things right with your brother and others that you have injured.

If you believe your brother is guilty of a trespass and you have gone to your brother alone and there was not repentance or resolution, you need to repent to God and to your brother for not following through with this command.

**Matt. 18:16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.**

You have failed to love Jesus or your brother. You have left a door open for discord in your relationship with your brother and other brothers. You cannot give a good report without hesitation about him and he cannot give a good report without hesitation about you. You are a hindrance to the prayer for unity being fulfilled that Jesus prayed in John 17. You have not loved Jesus or your brother.

Will you trust Jesus that His ways are better than your ways?

Will you surrender your life to Jesus Christ and commit to Him that you will follow His commands, even the ones that are the most difficult to follow?