

Study 3: Humbly helping a hurting brother or sister

Introduction

Remember we are praying and encouraging everyone who is part of Cross of Glory to pray:

“...asking God to transform us into a people of deep unity and rich community.”

He needs to transform us and we need to be open to and expect him to do so. It begins with him giving us the desire to bring him glory in all situations. It continues as we take responsibility for our part in all relationships. This involves getting the logs and the idols out of our own lives FIRST! We need to come to believe that we can be who God calls us to be in our relationships regardless of how the other person reacts. Learning honest confession avoiding if, but and maybe while being willing to forgive as we have been forgiven leads us to our third study: Humbly helping a hurting brother or sister.

Of the four major studies on developing healthy Biblical relationships this is probably the most difficult for a number of reasons. It can be hard to offer or receive help. It is so easy to judge or feel judged. There needs to be relationship in place when help is offered. It is humbling to admit we need help. Help has been offered in many unhelpful ways. We could go on; you know yourselves why it can be so challenging.

What does the Bible teach though? Right from our memory verse for this study we read; “Brothers (sisters implied), if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him (or her) gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.” Galatians 6:1

Beginning with this passage this study will address this important yet complex issue. [Those studying ahead of time read and study Galatians 6:1,2. What is Paul teaching us about our responsibility to our brothers and sisters who are caught in sin? What does it mean to be “caught in a sin”? Who should restore this person and how? What does it mean to be spiritual in this context? What caution does he give? How does verse 2 fit?]

Study of Galatians 6:1-2

What guidance does Ephesians 4:15 give us in all relational situations?

These passages give us a good start. There are more situations though where a brother or sister needs help or maybe where we have been hurt by or have an unresolved issue to work out with a sister or brother. Jesus gives us a pattern to follow in Matthew 18 which helps us address these broader aspects.

[Those who are studying this ahead of time read through 18:15-17. What steps does Jesus give and how are they to be followed?]

Study of Matthew 18:15-17

Small group time:

Discuss anything from the teaching that needs more interaction.

Recognizing our limits when we go to a brother or sister...

The following is also taken from the book, "The Peace Maker" by author Ken Sande: "Whenever you are trying to show someone his fault, remember that there are limits to what you can accomplish. You can raise concerns, suggest solutions, and encourage reasonable thinking, but you cannot force change. God may use you as a spokesperson to bring certain issues to the attention of another person, but only God can actually penetrate the other person's heart and bring repentance. Paul clearly describes this division of labor in 2 Timothy 2:24-26: "And the Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, *in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth*, and that they come to their sense and escape the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will" (emphasis added).

God calls us to be concerned with faithfulness, not with results. If you prayerfully prepare, speak the truth in love, and do all you can to effectively communicate your concerns to the other person, you will have succeeded in God's eyes regardless of how others respond (see Acts 20:26-27). God will take it from there—in his time your words will produce exactly the results he wants." (Page 182)

Discuss the implications of this as you seek to be faithful to God's glory in all relational situations!

Does even God himself succeed every time?

Does he force change?

We studied our memory verse break up in 2's and read or say it out loud to each other!

Prayer suggestion: Pray for each other by praying for the person sitting to your right or left, encourage everyone to try praying outloud.

Please email Pastor Ron questions you may have from this study. The next home study will deal with knowing when and how to actually go to a brother or sister to offer them help.