

September 23, 2012

Stir up!

Key Texts:

- Deut. 30:6
- II Thess. 3:5
- Matt. 18:15-20
- Matt. 5:23,24
- I Cor. 5:6-8
- II Thess. 3:13-16
- Matt. 16:17-19

1. The word sin means, "to miss the mark". To what "mark" is this referring?
2. **Review** the following information (which we covered this week) and **then answer** the two questions below.

We discussed why it is most likely that all sin is technically against God not man. Some of the scriptures we used to demonstrate this reality are the following:

"Every one who is guilty of sin is also guilty of violating Law; for sin is the violation of Law" ~ 1 Jn. 3:4

To the chief music-maker. A Psalm. Of David. When Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.

"Have pity on me, O God, in your mercy; out of a full heart, take away my sin. Let all my wrongdoing be washed away, and make me clean from evil. For I am conscious of my error; my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I done wrong, working that which is evil in your eyes; so that your words may be seen to be right, and you may be clear when you are judging." ~ Psa. 51:1-4

We also discussed the connection between the law, God's character and God's people.

"But Saul, still burning with desire to put to death the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and made a request for letters from him to the Synagogues of Damascus, so that if there were any of the Way there, men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. And while he was journeying, he came near Damascus; and suddenly he saw a light from heaven shining round him; And he went down on the earth, and a voice said to him, Saul, Saul, why are you attacking me so cruelly? And he said, Who are you, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom you are attacking: But get up, and go into the town, and it will be made clear to you what you have to do." ~ Act 9:1-6

"Do not criticize each other, brothers. Whoever makes it his habit to criticize his brother or to judge his brother is judging the law and condemning the law. But if you condemn the law, you are not a doer of the law but its judge." ~ James 4:11

- In what ways is it true that if we sin against God we also sin against our brother?

 - In what way is this NOT true?
3. We read a scripture this past week (listed above in the "scripture references") that if everyone in the body of Christ practiced what it said, Matthew 18:15-20 would never be necessary. What was it and why is that true?

 4. In Matt. 5:23,24 - why are we cautioned to leave our "gift at the altar"?

 5. What is God's #1 goal in giving the instructions in Matt. 18:15-20?

 6. Why does God command us to go privately and what precedence does that set for the rest of this scripture? (Consider these verses if you have difficulty with this one - ; Prov. 17:9; 25:2, 9;

 7. What does that tell us should be our motive in approaching our brother who sinned against us?

 8. In what ways are we often tempted to make this process of reconciliation about ourselves as the offended?

 9. Why is this wrong?

 10. Does scripture advocate "requiring an apology" from our brother or even an acknowledgement of how much they have hurt you?

 11. Why do you believe this is true?

12. Who should we take with us if we have to bring others (Matt. 18:16)? What clues does this passage offer which would aid us in that decision?

13. Realizing that the "church" (as mentioned in Matt. 18:17) as we know it did not exist when Jesus spoke this command, how do you believe we should interpret that word under the New Covenant?

14. What does it mean by "*let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector*" vs. 17? What actions would this require out of us as a church? How would you do this in any given situation?

15. Why do you believe this action is necessary? (Reviewing similar passages may aid you on this - I Cor. 5:6-8; II Thess. 3:13-16)

16. Describe what is meant in verses 18-20 - please be thorough, because this will be a specific focus of discussion in small groups. (You may want to reference Matt. 16:17-19 on this one)

17. What are some necessary steps you need to take in changing your thinking about "sins against you" in order to see the offense as God does and honor Him in it - rather than giving place to your flesh or selfish emotions?