

Jesus Christ, Our Savior King

Review of Matthew 1–17

Before we resume our passage-by-passage exposition of Matthew’s Gospel, let’s take a moment to recall what we have learned thus far.

Genre. New Testament Gospels are theological biographies about Jesus Christ. They declare God’s fulfillment of promise in Jesus’s Spirit-empowered person and work. Gospel writers (“evangelists”) write to persuade readers/hearers to believe in, follow after, and call others to follow after this Jesus.

Author. Technically, the Gospel of Matthew is anonymous, since the author never explicitly identifies himself. Nor does he identify the particular audience to whom he writes. Early church tradition and early manuscripts of the Gospel attribute authorship to the apostle Matthew, the tax collector who leaves his tax booth to follow Jesus (Matt 9:9; “Matthew the tax collector” in 10:3).¹ Matthew relies on eyewitness testimony, his own and others’, to retell the story of Jesus Christ and explain the significance of Jesus’s suffering and exaltation.² Matthew possibly composes his Gospel during the AD 60’s. He almost certainly composes the Gospel prior to AD 70 when the Jerusalem temple is destroyed, since in passages such as Matt 5:23–24, 17:24–27, and 24:1–2ff, the author makes no editorial comment indicating that the temple’s destruction has already happened.

Original Audience. Matthew’s strong emphasis on Scripture’s fulfillment, as well as his characterization of Jerusalem and its establishment, suggest a predominantly Jewish audience for his Gospel. Yet Matthew goes to great lengths to confirm Jesus’s purpose to spread his kingdom to all the nations. So, either Matthew’s original audience includes Gentiles, or else Matthew simply stresses the inclusion of Gentiles to his Jewish audience so that believing Jews will embrace God’s global salvation purposes in Christ. Ultimately, Matthew composes his Gospel for the church, both Jew and Gentile.

Whole Gospel’s Unifying Theme. In fulfillment of Scripture, God the Father sends his Spirit-empowered Son, Jesus, to suffer, die, and be exalted in order to save his people from their sins, incorporate them into his kingdom, and send them to all nations as his disciple-making church.

Opening Emphasis. Matthew begins his Gospel by presenting Jesus as the long-promised Messiah, the Anointed One in whom God fulfills his old-covenant promises. Jesus brings redemptive history to its climax. Matthew’s opening genealogy (1:1–17) introduces Jesus as the “Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham” (v. 1). Matthew includes two titles in the genealogy: “David the king” (v. 6) and “Jesus, the Christ” (vv. 1, 16, 17). Having established Jesus’s genealogical “beginning” (1:1), Matthew narrates Jesus’s “origin/birth” (1:18) by recounting the angel of the Lord’s appearance to Joseph (1:18–25). The angel clarifies that this child, Jesus, will save God’s people from their sins (1:21). Matthew further explains the child’s significance in terms of his being the promised Immanuel, “God with us” (1:22–23).

So What? At the climax of Israel’s story, we discover the climax of our story. Israel’s tragic predicament of sin and consequent exile from God’s presence is also *our* tragic predicament, apart from Christ. Jesus Christ is the Savior King who saves God’s people from their sins and secures God’s everlasting presence among them. So trust him, embrace his kingdom, and follow him.

¹Matthew is also known as “Levi” (Luke 5:27) and “Levi the son of Alphaeus” (Mark 2:14; “Matthew” in Mark 3:18).

²It is reasonable to assume that Matthew’s narration of those episodes for which he was not personally present derive from *his firsthand interviews of witnesses* or from *oral history* that developed immediately following Jesus’s ascension. For an insightful study of the evidence of eyewitness testimony throughout the Gospels, see Richard Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006).

Notes from Small-Group Discussion

Small-Group Discussion Questions:

Opening Question: What was the highlight of your past month?

HEAR THE WORD

1. *For those who have studied Matt 1–17:* If you had to choose only four passages in Matt 1–17 that together clarify the main themes of the Gospel, which four would you choose? Why these four?
2. Read Matt 9:35–38. Describe the various characteristics of Jesus’s ministry. Which characteristic stands out the most to you? Why?
3. Read Matt 10:1–8. In what ways does the ministry to which Jesus calls his disciples reflect Jesus’s own ministry (as described in Matt 9:35–36)? How are they similar, and how are they different?
4. What does Matt 9:35–10:8 mainly reveal about Jesus?

DO THE WORD

5. If you more fully believed what Matt 9:35–10:8 mainly reveals about Jesus and his desire for those who follow him, what’s **one thing that would change** in your life this coming spring? How so? *Be specific.*

RETELL THE WORD

6. What person you particularly want a God-given, fresh opportunity to share truths about Jesus this spring? What are the specific challenges of sharing truths about Jesus with this person?
7. How would you particularly value prayer from your small group regarding your desire to communicate the gospel with this person? *Be specific.*

Conclude by praying for one another in light of your discussion.

The Son Teaches the Ethics of His Kingdom: On Humility and Love Among the Church

Matthew 18:2–19:2

If we want to cultivate right relationships among one another in the church, we must begin by cultivating a right view of our ourselves. We must humble ourselves and take seriously our utter dependence on God’s mercy. It is those who are “poor in spirit” to whom the kingdom of heaven belongs (see Matt 5:3). The more profoundly we understand that we are *children* of our heavenly Father through Christ, the more ready we will be to relate to one another as *siblings* in Christ.

Jesus certainly desires that his twelve disciples humbly love one another—and also that we believers today humbly love one another. In **Jesus’s fourth discourse** (Matt 18:2–19:2), he instructs his disciples regarding how citizens of the kingdom of heaven must relate to one another.

Let’s remember where we are in Matthew’s Gospel. Matthew brings his (mostly) eyewitness testimonial to a climactic moment when he recounts Peter’s confession of Jesus’s identity: “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*” (16:13). Following this moment, Matthew smoothly pivots to bring into focus Jesus’s substitutionary atonement. Jesus begins making more explicit his imminent suffering, death, and resurrection in Jerusalem (16:21ff). God the Father then gloriously demonstrates his unique pleasure in his beloved Son, Jesus, and commands Peter, James, and John to listen to Jesus above all others (17:5). Jesus subsequently travels southward with his disciples: from Caesarea Philippi (16:13) to Capernaum (17:24), toward Jerusalem.

But before Jesus moves further south into Judea, which he will do in Matt 19:1ff, he gives his disciples further instruction in Galilee about how they must treat one another. Jesus knows they soon will face fiery tests, personally and corporately. So, Jesus fleshes out key relational implications of belonging to the kingdom of heaven. He shows that any person who genuinely professes to follow “the Christ, the Son of the living God,” will embrace a distinct manner of relating with others who profess to follow him. A true confession of faith in Christ always to a deep commitment to Christ’s community, his church (see Matt 16:18). Always.

As Jesus instructs his disciples, he is sober minded about the near and present danger of sin among them. Similarly, Jesus knows that we redeemed sinners will face temptation in this world, such as selfish ambition, spiritual drifting, resistance to forgive, greed, and self-centeredness. That is why Jesus addresses the reality of lingering sin among the kingdom community and how his followers must confront this sin. **Genuine followers of Jesus are those who lead lives of humble, ongoing repentance.** More specifically, Jesus exhorts his followers to humble themselves (18:1–4), resist tempting others to sin or giving into temptation themselves (18:5–9), pursue wanderers (18:10–14), lovingly confront those who sin against them under the authority of the church (18:15–20), and forgive from the heart as those who have been forgiven from the heart (18:21–35).

Basic Preparation: Read Matt 18:15–20, and respond to questions 3, 5 (for focus passage), 8, 12, 14, 15.

Full Preparation: Five-Day Plan

- **Day 1:** Read Matt 18:1–14; Questions 1–2
- **Day 2:** Read Matt 18:15–20; Questions 3
- **Day 3:** Read Matt 18:21–19:2; Questions 4–6
- **Day 4:** Read Matt 18:1–19:2; Questions 7–10
- **Day 5:** Read Matt 18:1–19:2; Questions 11–15

HEAR THE WORD

Pray that God will open your heart to receive his Word. Pray that by his Word he'll strengthen you in knowing Christ, becoming like Christ, and making Christ known. Then, remaining in that posture of prayerful God-reliance, **read** the full passage (perhaps even aloud). For help in answering these questions, see the appendix, which defines tools for biblical exposition and offers guidance on how to use them.

1. Arrogance and selfish ambition never produce love. Jesus's disciples ask him, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (18:1). Jesus's response must have surprised them. He sets a child in their midst and declares, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (18:3).³
 - a. What do you think the disciples mean by "the greatest"? What is "greatness" in their thinking?
 - b. According to Jesus in Matt 18:2–6, what is the essence of greatness?
 - c. What do you think Jesus means by "unless you *turn*" (18:3)?
 - d. In what way does Jesus's response challenge your own worldly assumptions about what makes a person "great"? *Be specific.*
2. Jesus warns his disciples about falling into temptation and about tempting others (18:7–9). He then exhorts his disciples to cultivate the same concern for one another as God has for every sheep in his fold, so that they would even pursue "stray sheep" who wander (18:10–14).
 - a. What stands out to you in Matt 18:10–14 about God the Father's *will*, as Jesus describes it?
 - b. In what season of your life have you experienced the Good Shepherd's pursuit of you when you have wandered?

³Jesus again stresses that the kingdom of heaven belongs to children in Matt 19:13–15, when he tenderly receives the children, lays his hands upon them, and prays for them. He demonstrates his love for little ones and calls those who would follow him to emulate his gentle kindness towards children.

- c. What professing believer in your life right now is straying from the fold? What responsibility toward him or her might you have as a fellow professing believer in Christ? *Be specific.*
3. In Matt 18:15–20, Jesus continues unfolding the way in which citizens of his kingdom must relate to one another, not least in light of the reality of lingering sin among us. Not only must we pursue stray professing believers and rejoice over their returning to God the Father (18:10–14), but we also must confront fellow professing believers who sin against us (18:15–20).
 - a. What are some *unhelpful ways* we are tempted to deal with people who have sinned against us, rather than lovingly confronting them as Jesus instructs? *Give at least four examples.*
 - b. When a professing brother or sister in Christ sins against you, how does Jesus instruct you to deal with this situation? *List the specific elements of his instruction in Matt 18:15.*
 - c. What does Jesus mean by “you have gained your brother” in Matt 18:15?
 - d. If a professing believer whom you have directly confronted refuses to listen to you and repent, how does Jesus instruct you to respond? *List the specific elements of Matt 18:16–17’s instruction.*
 - e. What does Jesus’ presence among the kingdom community (18:18–20) have to do with how we deal with sin among us?
 4. As you aim to understand Jesus’s instruction in Matt 18:15–20, bring to mind some personal experiences you have had with confrontation among professing believers, both positive and negative experiences.
 - a. Think about a time that a professing believer sinned against you, and you chose to confront them. *What made it difficult for you to follow Jesus’s instructions here for confrontation and reconciliation? What was most challenging about it for you, and why? Be specific.*

- b. Think about a time that a professing sibling in Christ lovingly confronted you, along the lines of Jesus's instructions in Matt 18:15–20. How did you respond to that confrontation? How did that confrontation affect your relationship? *Be specific.*
5. In Matt 18:21–35, Jesus continues teaching about right relationships among citizens of the kingdom of heaven. Peter approaches Jesus with a question that, Peter imagines, shows off Peter's generosity: Peter is willing to forgive his brother *seven times* (18:21). But Jesus raises him: "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven" (18:22). Jesus proceeds to tell a parable that exposes the wickedness of any kingdom citizen's refusal to forgive a fellow citizen (18:23–34) and then directly applies this parable to his disciples (18:35).
- a. What stands out to you in this parable (18:23–34) *about sinful human nature*?
 - b. What stands out to you in this parable (18:23–34) and in Jesus's application of it (18:35) *about God and his kingdom*?
 - c. Why is the king's/master's judgment of the unforgiving servant so severe?
 - d. In what specific relationship(s) in your life do the truths of Matt 18:21–35 most challenge you? How so? *Be specific.*
6. What are some **themes** (that is, recurring ideas) of this passage? *Note specific verses in your answer.*

Pick one of these themes. How is this theme **relevant** to your current circumstances?

7. What are the distinct parts of this passage, and how do they hold together **structurally**?
To show the passage's shape, briefly outline it in whatever form of outline you prefer. For help in discerning structure, see "Toolbox: Structure" in the Appendix.

8. How does this passage **relate to the words surrounding it**: to those passages immediately preceding it and following it (immediately literary context), to the whole Gospel (whole-book literary context), and to the whole Bible (whole-Bible literary context)? And so what?

Immediate Literary Context

TOOLBOX | Context

To determine what portion of text constitutes your passage's "immediate literary context," identify the immediately preceding and following **thought unit**.

For example, for Matt 18:2–19:2, some might view the preceding thought unit as **Matt 18:24–27** and highlight the thematic connection of "*rightly living under authority*." Some might view the following thought unit as **Matt 19:3–15** and highlight the thematic connections of "*right living with respect to the family*" (from church family in Matt 18 to marriage/ singleness in Matt 19:3–12) and "*the kingdom of heaven belonging to children*."

Whole-Book Literary Context

TOOLBOX | Context

There are a number of key questions to ask in order to discern which other passages in the Gospel to highlight for "whole-book literary context," including: *Does the specific passage under analysis initiate, develop, or bring to a conclusion one of the book's key themes? If so, how does the whole-book development of this theme affect your interpretation of this specific passage and what the author intends to accomplish in this passage?*

Look for a word/phrase/image/idea that recurs throughout the book that also directly or indirectly appears in your passage.

For example: where else does Matthew mainly develop the concept of the "**kingdom of heaven**" (18:1, 3, 4, 23), and how does this chapter contribute to the whole Gospel's development of this theme?

For example: how does Jesus's **fourth discourse** (Matt 18:2–19:2) develop the ethics of the kingdom he has already established in his **first three discourses** and will establish in his **fifth discourse**?

TOOLBOX | Context

Helpful tools for whole-Bible context include Study-Bible cross-references (often located in the central margin), online concordances (such as biblegateway.com, in which you can search a word or phrase in a particular English version), and commentaries.

For example, the cross-references for Matt 18:10–14 or 18:15 might mention **James 5:19–20**. James also exhorts new-covenant Christians to pursue any professing believers who wander. Likewise, James also stresses the tragic outcome the wanderer will face without being restored and the blessed outcome of restoring him or her.

Whole-Bible Literary Context

If the whole Bible is about God's redeeming a people for himself through his Son, for his glory, then how does this passage in Matthew's Gospel fit into the Bible's redemptive storyline and ethic?

9. What does this passage **mainly** reveal about the character and ways of **God**, specifically **the Lord Jesus Christ**? *Articulate your answer in one sentence.*

TOOLBOX | Theme

Discerning a Passage's Main Revelation about God

The Bible is a thoroughly God-centered book. It's theological literature. Scripture mainly focuses on revealing who God is, how he acts (past, present, future), and how human beings can and must relate to him. **Preeminently, the Bible reveals God's character and ways as displayed in his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and in his Son's gospel.**

Since every biblical author aims to reveal God's person and work, believers who desire to *hear, do, and retell this Word* ought to focus our attention on what every passage of Scripture tells us about God. We aim to make progress in seeing Scripture's God-centeredness so that our hearing, doing, and retelling of Scripture will likewise be God-centered.

10. Based on the passage's various themes and structure, what do you think is its **unifying theme**? *Articulate the passage's main, unifying theme in one sentence.*

11. Considering all that you have observed about this passage, how would you summarize the author's main **aim/purpose** in writing it? That is, what effect did Matthew intend his words to have in his original audience? *Articulate the author's aim in one sentence.*

TOOLBOX | Author's Aim

To help clarify an author's peculiar purpose in one passage within its whole-book context, ask:

If this passage were to drop out of the book, what would be missing?

DO THE WORD

Relying on God's grace, we believers in Christ must not only be *hearers* of the Word, but *doers* of the Word (see James 1:22). The following questions lead us to consider how God pierces our hearts through this passage and equips us for life and godliness.

12. In what ways do you find this passage accomplishing the **author's aim/purpose in your own heart**? *Refer to your summary of the author's aim/purpose in the previous section.*
13. What professing believer in your life is the Lord bringing to your mind, whom you need to **confront** in love or/and **forgive** from the heart? What practical steps will you take to do this today? *Be specific.*
14. If you more fully believed what this passage reveals about God, what's **one thing that would change** in your life—perhaps a change in attitude, practice, thought life, a relational pattern, or something else? How so? *Refer to your summary of what the passage mainly reveals about God.*
15. Practically, how will you rely this week on the **resources God provides you** to trust this truth about him? *Consider how this passage indicates certain divine provision for believers' ongoing and ever-deepening trust.*

Word-Filled Prayer | Respond to God's Word by writing out a prayer to him.
Allow the words and ideas of this passage to guide your heart's meditation.
Let the passage's revelation of Jesus shape your praise and petitions.

Jesus shows his disciples that their humble entry into the kingdom of heaven *like a child* ought to reflect their humble perseverance in repentance *like a child*.

RETELL THE WORD

Relying on God's grace, we believers in Christ must not only be *hearers* and *doers* of the Word, but *sharers* of the Word. That is, God grants his redeemed-in-Christ image bearers the privilege of seeking opportunities in our various relationships to **retell God's Word clearly, wisely, and boldly** (see Eph 6:17–20; Col 4:2–6; 1 Pet 2:9–12; 3:15–16).

16. Who is **someone** with whom you want to retell the truths of this passage, especially its main theme and what it mainly reveals about God—perhaps a coworker, friend, family member, or neighbor?

Specific person/group: _____

Specific truth to share: _____

TOOLBOX | Application

For example: God gives mothers daily opportunities to disciple their children regarding the truths of Matt 18. Christian mothers do not disciple from a position of moral perfection—*far from it!*. Rather, Christian mothers effectively disciple their children from a posture of ongoing, daily repentance—daily reliance on and delighting in God's mercy in Christ. For parents, some of the greatest opportunities for clarifying the gospel arise when seeking a child's forgiveness or when assuring a child that he or she has received the parent's forgiveness.

Possible occasion for sharing this truth: _____

17. How will your retelling and applications of this passage turn your listener(s) to **the person and work of Jesus Christ**, who is at the center of the Scriptures?

Word-Filled Prayer | Respond to God's Word by writing out a prayer for this person/ group.

You may want to use words and ideas from the passage as you pray. Pray that God would open a door in their heart for his Word and enable you to speak his Word clearly, wisely, and boldly.

Pray that God's Spirit would help you exalt the Lord Jesus in your retelling.

Notes from Video Instruction

Notes from Small-Group Discussion

Small-Group Discussion Questions:

Opening Question: While relationships with family and friends are some of God's greatest gifts, they also can be really difficult! What has been the (1) best and (2) most challenging part of relating with family and friends over this past month?

HEAR THE WORD

1. Although the focus passage is Matt 18:15–20, **read Matt 18:10–35** for context. Before discussing Matt 18:15–20 in depth, how do the passages surrounding it (i.e., Matt 18:10–14 and 18:21–35) provide helpful context? How do these surrounding passages relate to Matt 18:15–20?
2. Discuss the various aspects of Study-Guide question 3.
3. In your opinion, what is the most “radical” aspect of Jesus’s instruction here, relative to the way people in our culture normally relate to one another?
4. What does this passage mainly reveal about Jesus? *Refer to Study-Guide question 8.*

DO THE WORD

5. If you more fully believed what this passage reveals about Jesus, what’s **one thing that would change** in your life? How so? *Be specific. Refer to Study-Guide question 12.*
6. What resources does God provide you to follow this instruction, even though it is difficult to do so? *Be specific. Refer to Study-Guide question 13.*

RETELL THE WORD

7. What are some opportunities and strategies for sharing this truth about Jesus? *Be specific. Refer to Study-Guide questions 14–15.*

Conclude by praying for one another in light of the passage.

RESTORATION AND PEACEMAKERS MINISTRY

WHAT IS THE RESTORATION MINISTRY?

Second Presbyterian Church has a ministry specifically designed to help its members restore broken relationships by following the blueprint given to us in the Bible. Did you know that God cares very much how you handle problems such as family communication, personal or business disputes, or dysfunctional relationships? Before you give up or call a lawyer, contact the Restoration and Peacemakers Ministry. (“RPM”)

Some relationships suffer due to circumstances outside our control; other relationships fail due to our lack of communication or coping skills, physical or emotional issues, or inability to forgive one another. This ministry seeks to heal these strained or broken relationships. Ministry team members work under the authority of the Church Session with the supervision of the RPM Committee and our pastoral staff. We are committed to this way of restoration because believers are commanded by Scripture to be proactive in efforts to restore one another and to “Bear one another’s burdens,” thereby fulfilling the law of Christ set out in Galatians 6:1-2.

WHAT ARE TYPICAL PROBLEM AREAS?

Although we all face conflict in relationships and struggle in our Christian walk at times, members who need help from other believers might be involved in one or more of the following typical problem areas:

- Unresolved personal or business disputes
- Addictions of various kinds (alcohol/drugs, sex, pornography, gambling)
- Communication breakdowns
- Dysfunctional relationships
- Physical, mental, or emotional abuse
- Marital infidelity
- Parent/child issues
- Unwillingness to submit to the authority of the Church

These types of problems not only affect our relationships with other people but also our fellowship with God. Therefore, the ministry team also desires to restore hope in the forgiving grace of Christ.

HOW DOES RESTORATION WORK?

The RPM follows the plan given by Christ in Matthew 18. Ideally, the process begins first with the one who has been offended prayerfully going to the one who has caused offense with his or her concern, addressing the matter privately and informally.

Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:15, “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.” Most relationships can be restored in this way, and nothing more is necessary.

If the offender is unrepentant or resists attempts at restoration, one or two others may be enlisted to attempt restoration as a small, informal group. Matthew 18:16 says, “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.” The aggrieved party or a concerned friend may contact the RPM through a pastor, Sunday School teacher, or elder. If the committee deems it necessary, a ministry team will be formed to meet with the parties in confidence to determine the facts and the willingness of the parties to repent and be restored.

If the matter is resolved, the team will be disbanded, praising God for His faithfulness. Although the restoration process in a very few cases may lead to formal church discipline, the ministry's approach is gentleness and a non-judgmental spirit. The ministry teams will be able to draw on the full resources of the church, including confidential financial and psychological counseling, mentoring, accountability, and any other means necessary in an attempt to make peace. This is a vital ministry of our church that flows from the core of the Gospel, for it was Jesus who came as the great peace-bringer, restoring us to a right relationship with the Father: "All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation." (11 Corinthians 5:18-19)

What if restoration fails?

If an offending party refuses to repent and be reconciled, the ministry team may decide that the church should become formally involved through action of the Session. Jesus continues to lay out this process in Matthew 18:17a: "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church." In such cases, the team will recommend a course of action to the RPM Committee, which has several options available. Formal discipline will be considered only after all other less formal means of resolving the offense have been exhausted, and it must usually involve a lack of repentance in the areas of heresy, immorality, or contempt for the established order of the church (set out in the Book of Discipline, EPC Book of Order, 11 1-20).

What can I expect of restoration teams?

Team members who have a heart for and engage in this ministry approach this work in a careful, gentle, and loving manner, guided by God's revealed will in Scripture: "Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 6:1-2)

Team members base their work on God's Word: "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness," (11 Timothy 3:16)

Team members approach their work prayerfully: "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

Team members approach their work humbly: "But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble." (James 4:6)

Team members undergo self-examination: "You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." (Matthew 7:5)

Team members are ready to forgive: "...bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive." (Colossians 3:13)

Team members respect confidentiality: "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." (Matthew 18:15)

Team members are seeking repentance not perfection from the offending member: "For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." (1 Peter 2:25)

What about confidentiality?

The Restoration and Peacemakers Ministry keeps the highest standards of confidentiality for those coming for help. Unless the offense precipitating a broken relationship is of such a public nature that it requires formal and/or public discipline, confidentiality must at all times be observed. The ministry team engaged in restoration may not discuss the reported offense, the attempt at reconciliation, or the progress of the restoration with anyone other than the team members themselves, the pastor assigned to the team, or the chairman of the Restoration and Peacemakers Committee. Although permanent records of each case must be kept for statistical and historical purposes, these records are securely stored in the church office.

If you are interested in accessing the resources available through this ministry, contact the Restoration Office at 454-0034, ext. 123 or peacemakers@2pc.org