



TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

"If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Matthew 18:15-18

Words of Mass Destruction Combated with Words of Forgiveness

When you have been wronged or hurt by someone else, you may be tempted to go to five of your friends and tell them about how you were wronged and describe how the other person was so horrible. Jesus, however, does not tell you to go to five of your friends, but to go to the one who has sinned against you. He said to go to that person...and that person alone.

When Jesus says "Go," it means that we are not to ignore the sin. We aren't to expect the sin to go away by itself. We aren't to say we'd rather not get involved. We aren't to wait for the person to come to us. Jesus says, "Go."

Jesus' concern is not that we reform a fellow believer's irritating habits or change personality quirks. His concern is that we go to him when he has sinned. Jesus wants to go to this person and talk to him about his sin because not only does sin hurt us, it also hurts the heart of God. Jesus tells us to go to him, and him alone, to point out his fault.

Maybe you feel that your sins disqualify you from speaking with a fellow believer about his sin. Maybe your sins make you afraid because he might throw your sins back in your face. However, remember, it was to sinful disciples that Jesus first spoke these words. Awareness of our sin does not disqualify us from going. Rather, it prompts us to go in humility and win him back to God.

What a joy and a privilege it is, then, for us to proclaim to a repentant sinner that heaven's doors are wide open to him. What comforting assurance that others will take these words of Jesus to heart and lovingly point out sin in our own life. What love is shown by Jesus that he would send brothers and sisters to us when we are caught in sin and have them speak to us, not to shame or berate us, but win us over with words of forgiveness.

PRAYER: Jesus, we thank you for lovingly rebuking us through brothers and sisters who had the courage to point out sin in our lives. Give to us the Holy Spirit, so that when we speak to others about their sin we might be guided and motivated by your love for us. Amen.