



Grain

"An ounce of action can crush a ton of fear." Tim Fargo

Submitted by JJ Godwin, Fort Worth, TX

Field

15 "If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. 16 But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. . .20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Matthew 18:15-18, 20

Thoughts

Dealing with conflict can be unnerving. So much can go wrong. Who hasn't stumbled around clinging to resentment without ever addressing it? Or perhaps we've witnessed people launching campaigns to attack a person instead of seeking resolution, or to crush someone rather than removing them with compassion. Sometimes we fear as though Jesus were not in the room. However, we are assured that when two or three are gathered in Christ's name in the middle of any muddles Jesus is indeed present. Is that something we need to hear? Does Jesus seem to disappear as life falls into disharmony?

Mt. 18 presents a timeless method for addressing conflict, even though no one process fits all situations especially if bullying or other forms of abuse call for different tools. But Jesus offers more than a pragmatic conflict/resolution model; the spirit of loving one another and knowing God is right here engage us. Not only a goal or mission for outreach matter, but how we treat one another does, and that extends into how we have a non-violent voice as a public church. Taking action to address conflict can dispel fear and be a way to love. And we know that God isn't walled off in the sanctuary waiting for things to cool down in our conflicted relationships and troubled society. Jesus is in the room. Happy Monday!

Prayer

Highly recommended.

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Many blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy