



KIDS' LECTIONARY LEARNING TEACHING SUPPLEMENT

15TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10TH, 2023

BIBLE LESSON: MATTHEW 18:1-20

In the opening verses of Matthew 18, the disciples question Jesus about the hierarchy of heaven. Applying their earthly understanding, they want to know who ranks the highest in heaven. Jesus uses a child to demonstrate the model of humility that people should aspire to. He explains that a person should trust and be fully dependent on God's mercy, the way that a child trusts and relies completely on the people who care for them.

A little further on in verses 10-14 Jesus shares the parable of the Lost Sheep to demonstrate just how much God loves us, His children. In this parable the shepherd puts everything aside to search for one sheep out of one hundred that has wandered away. Jesus isn't suggesting that the Shepherd loves the ninety-nine other sheep less but is helping us to understand the extent that God goes to in order to save the lost. He did everything He could to seek and save the lost when He sent His Son to earth to die for our sins.



Through verses 15-20 we learn that the parable of the Lost Sheep is also a model for us in how we interact with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Jesus is helping the disciples and us to understand what we should do when someone sins against us. When we reach verse 17, He explains that if a person who has done something bad against you refuses to listen to you (refusing to see how they have sinned against you) and also doesn't respond kindly when you have brought witnesses that you are to "tell it to the church". This is not for punishment or to gang up on someone else, but it is so that they community might also have the opportunity to help save that person from staying on the wrong path.

The Concordia Study bible shares that "To humbly and lovingly speak to a brother who has headed in a bad direction is to follow the example of the Shepherd who searched for one lost sheep."

From here we are led into verse 18 where the difficult task of withholding forgiveness is addressed.



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(Continued)



LUTHERAN LAYMEN'S LEAGUE
OF CANADA

When Jesus tells the disciples that “whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” He is encouraging the disciples not to give up on their brothers and sisters. He is pointing out that the gift of forgiveness is to be cherished, as an opportunity to keep the door open for those who repent and ask for forgiveness. Treat them like a sheep that has wandered off (by joyously bringing them back!)



Prayer

Let us pray: Dear Father in heaven, thank you for sending your Son to save us when we were lost to sin. Please help us to have a heart that loves, and cares for each one of your sheep. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Notes: