

**Moreover, if your brother
commits a sin against you....**

Matthew 18:15



- Includes Jews in general, but followers of Yeshua specifically
- Yeshua is currently speaking ONLY to the 12
- ***Hamartano*** = an offense, breaking a law, upsetting someone
- “Against you” is left out in some ancient manuscripts
- This is probably about a dispute between 2 people

DEALING WITH SMALL MATTERS



- This is not about criminality
- Also NOT about avoiding the criminal justice system
- The issues at stake are compensation, satisfaction and restoration
- This is about the local Believers community and all its members



STEP 1



STEP 4



COMMUNITY DISCIPLINE

- This is about dispute resolution
- Step 2 is to bring 1 or 2 witnesses, but still privately
- Deuteronomy 19:15
- Step 3 is announcing the offense to the community at large
- *Ethinkos* = a gentile
- Step 4 is expulsion from the community

A photograph showing a woman in a green shirt being embraced from behind by several people. The scene is intimate and supportive. Overlaid on the image is the title of the presentation in large white text.

The Real Meaning of 'When Two or Three are Gathered' in the Bible

MATTHEW 18:20

- The hope is that the expelled person will realize his wrong, repent, and have fellowship restored
- Vs. 18 is saying that if the outlined steps are followed, then rest assured God (and Yeshua) back the decision
- Vs. 20 is NOT about reducing the number needed (a *minyan*) for effective prayer from 10 to 2 or 3!
- This is not about prayer in general; it's about decision making in regards to community discipline



FORGIVENESS + MERCY

- 1 Corinthians 6:1 – 6
minor matters, affairs of everyday life
- Mercy does NOT mean declaring a person not guilty
- Mercy doesn't just include love, it includes wisdom
- Decisions can reach farther than perpetrator
and victim

MATT.
18:21

Not Seven
But 70 ~~x~~ 7

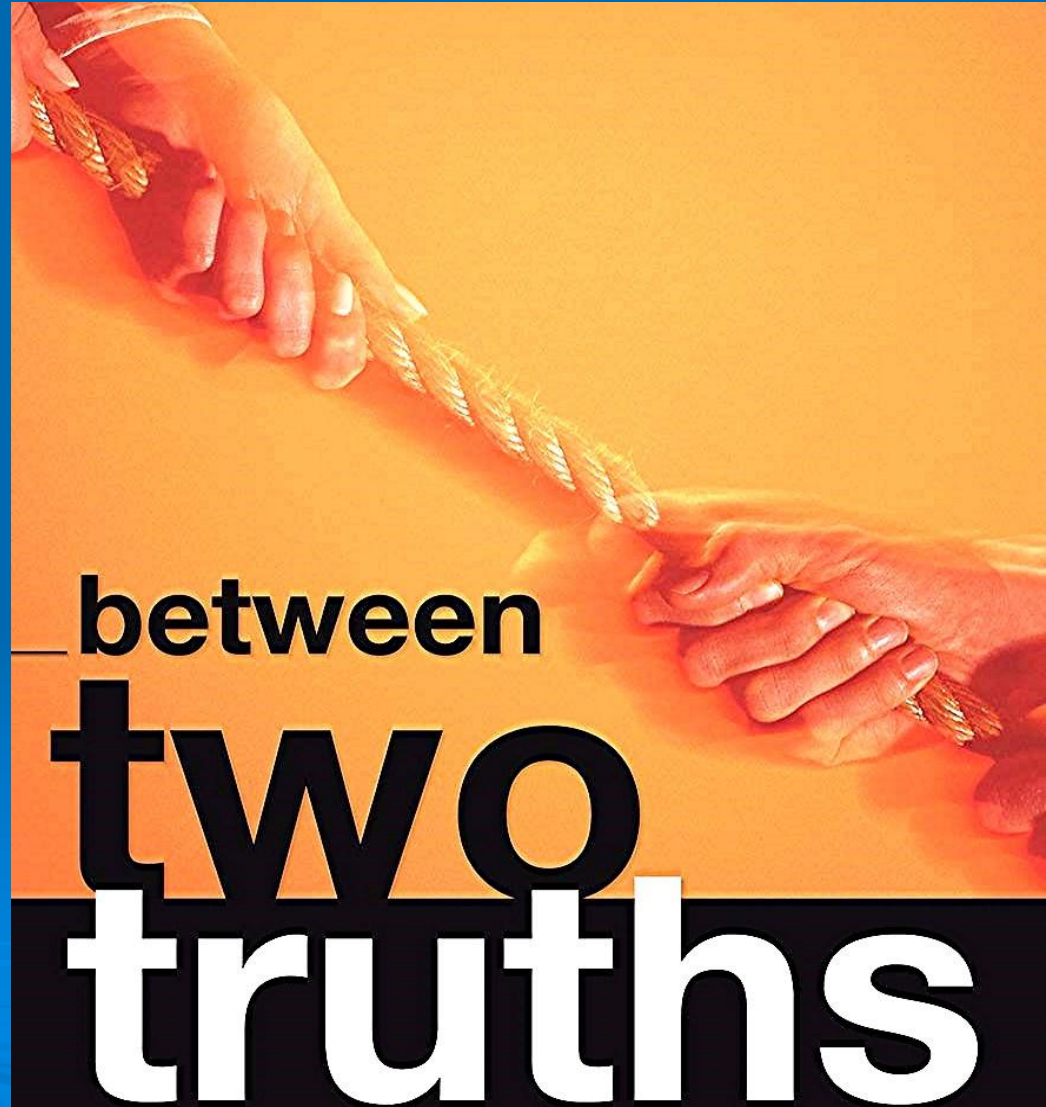
MATT.
18:15



- 18:21 What happens to a serial offender?
- $70 \times 7 = 490$ does not mean on the 491st offense NO forgiveness is required
- Limitless forgiveness because The Father forgives us so much
- Matt. 6:12 & 14, 15
- Matt. 18:15 -20 DOES stand in tension with verses 21-35...
For a good reason

A BUILT-IN TENSION

- Yeshua not an idealist, He was a pragmatist
- Retribution & revenge the human un-Godly norm
- Love, mercy, discipline & forgiveness are dealt with in different aspects in the Bible
- Example: Does God forgive all? No.
- If God is our example, is the human response then to be a higher standard and so we forgive all?
- Complex matters with shades of gray



between
two
truths



What is a **parable** in the Bible?



- Remainder of Matthew 18 is a Parable
- Parable: fictional story, fictional characters, only 1 moral to the story, details unimportant... Only for color
- The point of this Parable concerns the nature of divine forgiveness within human to human relationships
- Yeshua NOT a revolutionary, rather a reformer
- Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 151b

FORGIVENESS AND MERCY IN THE KINGDOM OF



- 10,000 talents like the 70 X 7 instruction; they both mean limitless amounts
- 10,000 talents is like trying to imagine our national debt !
- The servant asking the king for more time is absurd because he couldn't acquire that much in 1000 years

PARABLE OF THE WICKED SERVANT



- An unexpected solution !
- King shows incredible mercy and cancels his servant's debt
- The forgiven servant then confronts another servant that owes him just a tiny amount
- The wicked servant threatens the other servant
- The king hears of what happened, revoked the servant's forgiveness, and sent him to jail until everything owed was paid

THE COMPLEXITY OF MERCY AND FORGIVENESS



- Underlying principle: mercy and forgiveness are reciprocal
- Matt. 18:23 “*Because of this the Kingdom of Heaven may be compared to.....*”
- Mercy and forgiveness are not natural for humans, but it is for the Kingdom of Heaven
- Vs. 34 ***Basanistes*** = torturer
- The wicked servant would suffer unspeakable pain... forever