

# Dr. David Turner, Matthew

## Lecture 8B – Matthew 18: The Values of the Kingdom Community

### NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Briefing Document, 3) Study Guide, FAQs

#### 1) Abstract

This academic lecture, focusing on Matthew chapter 18, explores Jesus's teachings on the **values of the kingdom community**. It begins by establishing the discourse's **narrative context**, where disciples' preoccupation with greatness prompts Jesus's instruction. The core theme is **spiritual greatness found in childlike humility**, emphasizing total dependence on God and renouncing worldly status. The lecture then details a **three-step process for addressing sin within the community**, balanced by the **absolute necessity of forgiveness**, exemplified by the parable of the unmerciful servant. Ultimately, the text underscores how these **kingdom values of humility, patience, and brotherly love** prepare disciples for future trials and strengthen the church's internal relationships.

**2) Briefing Document:** Dr. David Turner's lecture on Matthew 18, "The Values of the Kingdom Community," focuses on Jesus' teachings regarding spiritual greatness, humility, the treatment of "little ones," church discipline, and the critical importance of forgiveness within the community of disciples. This discourse, the fourth in Matthew, directly addresses the disciples' misplaced preoccupation with status and offers a counter-cultural paradigm for living in God's kingdom.

#### I. The Narrative Setting and Core Themes

The discourse in Matthew 18 is set against the backdrop of the disciples' question about who would be "the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (18:1), a question that arose despite Jesus' recent announcement of his impending suffering and death (17:23). This highlights a persistent struggle among the disciples with worldly notions of greatness, a struggle that "simply doesn't go away." Jesus uses a child as a "visual aid" (18:2) to illustrate the true nature of greatness.

The "key theme of this discourse then is spiritual greatness," and the "key illustration of spiritual greatness is not anyone you would expect... but a child." The discourse emphasizes:

- **Spiritual Greatness through Humility:** True greatness in the kingdom is defined by childlike humility and dependence on God, not by earthly power, position, or status.

- **Care for "Little Ones":** Children, and by extension, all who "believe in Jesus" (18:6), are identified as "little ones" whose humble status is "zealously guarded by the Heavenly Father."
- **The Danger of Causing Others to Stumble:** There are severe consequences for those who "cause a disciple of Jesus to fall into sin" (18:6-14).
- **Community Relationships: Discipline and Forgiveness:** The discourse provides instructions for addressing sin within the community (18:15-20) and stresses the "absolute necessity of the rule of forgiveness" (18:21-35).

## II. Childlike Humility and Spiritual Greatness (Matthew 18:1-14)

Jesus' choice of a child as an object lesson is not due to sentimental notions of innocence, but because "a child is at the mercy of adults and lacks social status." This illustrates that "turning to God as a disciple of Jesus involves humbling oneself as a child before the Heavenly Father. Such humility amounts to total dependence upon the Father's mercy." This perspective represents a "total renunciation and reversal of the ways and values of this present world, where the drive to get ahead leads to all sorts of sinful strategies to achieve greatness."

Humility leads to "treating kingdom disciples well," which is "tantamount to treating Jesus himself well" (18:5). Conversely, "mistreating such disciples has eternal consequences." The call to radical self-examination and sacrifice ("cutting off one's hand or foot or even an eye," 18:8-9) underscores the gravity of not causing "little ones" to stumble and the importance of valuing fellow believers. This section concludes with the parable of the lost sheep, emphasizing God's "concern for one another that motivates the shepherd to rescue a straying sheep" (18:12-14).

Modern culture, tragically, often mirrors the devaluation of children prevalent in Jesus' day. "Modern culture then fits into what Jesus is speaking of here, that children tend to have no status, no value." Therefore, acknowledging our child-like status before God "continues today to demand deep humility." This "countercultural behavior" of humility and care for others is essential for the church to remain steadfast.

## III. Church Discipline (Matthew 18:15-20)

This section outlines a "three-step process in correcting a sinning believer" (18:15-17), followed by its "theological basis" (18:18-20). The process is "necessary one, since Jesus has just taught that offenses are inevitable." The "Father is totally dedicated to his little ones, and this dictates that offenses between members of the community be dealt with promptly and fairly." The offended person must take the initiative, demonstrating that "there's no place for the offended person to become bitter or to gossip about the offender."

The three stages of confrontation (private, with two or three witnesses, and finally before the church) aim for "fair treatment of both the offender and the injured party with as little

fanfare as possible." Rejecting these overtures is "tantamount to rejecting Jesus and the Father themselves."

Crucially, this instruction on discipline is "embedded in a section filled with kindness." The sinner is still considered a "brother," a "fellow child of the heavenly Father." The process allows for multiple chances to repent, with the goal being "reconciliation and return to the flock, not severance of the relationship." Jesus promises his presence and heavenly confirmation when "two or three of us even agree on earth about some matter involved in this," particularly in the context of seeking reconciliation. However, the lecture cautions against misinterpreting 18:19-20 as a casual reassurance for any small gathering, stressing that "taking this solemn passage out of context... cheapens the passage and profanes the sacred duty of the church to maintain the harmony of its interpersonal relationships."

#### IV. The Necessity of Forgiveness (Matthew 18:21-35)

This section, prompted by Peter's question about how many times he should forgive, stresses the "necessity of forgiving a sinning believer" and balances the need for correction. Peter suggests forgiving "seven times," but Jesus' answer is a hyperbolic "77 times" or "70 times seven," meaning "forgiveness within the community when there has been repentance is an ongoing thing, and we don't put notches in our belt for how many times we forgive our brothers."

The parable of the unmerciful servant vividly illustrates this principle: a servant, "forgiven a vast amount," then "refusing to forgive a paltry amount owed him." This servant's unforgiving nature reveals his "repentance is shown to be bogus by his lack of forgiveness of anyone else who has sinned against him." The core message is that "someone who is unforgiving to his brothers and sisters in the Christian community probably has never been forgiven by God." Genuine forgiveness from God "empowers" believers to forgive others.

The "infinite grace of God in forgiving us our many trespasses against him" is contrasted with a disciple's refusal to forgive a "minor offense." The "incompatibility of the two situations couldn't be clearer, and the resulting teaching is that those who have been forgiven by God can and must forgive their fellow believers."

#### V. Synthesis and Conclusion

The apparent tension between discipline (18:15-20) and forgiveness (18:21-35) is resolved by the "controlling motif of this chapter: that the disciples are the little ones of the Father. They are brothers and sisters of one another. They are together in the first family, children of the Heavenly Father." Disciples must not allow their spiritual family to be "disrupted by offenses," requiring both correction and a "forgiving, humble spirit." The chapter thus presents a "very delicate balance here between discipline and forgiveness that has to be faithfully maintained." When an individual resists all faithful

efforts at reconciliation through discipline, their "excommunication from the church is in reality a self-imposed exile."

In conclusion, Matthew 18 serves as a crucial preparation for the disciples as Jesus approaches Jerusalem and his suffering. The values taught—"humility, patience, and brotherly love"—are essential to "strengthen our community's relationships, and they will enable it to withstand the rigors that are ahead in Jerusalem and beyond." Living out these "kingdom values" is a "countercultural behavior" that prepares believers for external challenges and maintains the integrity of the Christian community.

### 3) Study Guide:

Study Guide: Matthew 18 – The Values of the Kingdom Community

#### I. Overview of Matthew Chapter 18

Matthew Chapter 18, the fourth discourse in the Gospel of Matthew, focuses on the values and concerns that should characterize the community of Jesus' disciples. It follows the Sermon on the Mount, the Discourse on Mission, and the Parables of the Kingdom. This discourse is presented as a response to the disciples' question about who would be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, and Peter's subsequent question about forgiveness.

#### II. Key Themes and Narrative Setting

- **Narrative Setting:** The discourse is set around the time of the temple tax events in chapter 17, shortly before Jesus and the disciples go to Jerusalem. It begins with the disciples asking about greatness in the kingdom (18:1) and concludes ominously with Jesus departing for Judea (19:1), hinting at his impending suffering.
- **Key Theme: Spiritual Greatness:** The central theme is spiritual greatness, which Jesus illustrates using a child as an object lesson.
- **Key Illustration: The Child:** Contrary to worldly expectations of greatness (military general, rich person, preacher, etc.), Jesus identifies a child as the model for spiritual greatness. This choice emphasizes humility, dependence, and lack of social status.
- **Family Imagery:** The discourse extensively uses family imagery, identifying disciples as "children" and "little ones" and fellow community members as "brothers," highlighting their shared relationship with the Heavenly Father.

#### III. Structure and Key Sections

The discourse can be broadly divided into two parts or sections, often marked by a question or ending in a parable:

1. **Matthew 18:1-14: Childlike Humility and Concern for the Little Ones**
  - **The Object Lesson of the Child (18:1-5):** Jesus uses a child to demonstrate that true greatness in the kingdom requires humbling oneself and becoming like a child. This signifies total dependence on God and a renunciation of worldly power and status.

- **Warnings Against Causing Offense (18:6-9):** Jesus speaks vividly about the severe consequences for anyone who causes a "little one" (believer) to stumble or fall into sin. This emphasizes the importance of protecting the vulnerable within the community.
- **The Parable of the Lost Sheep (18:10-14):** This parable illustrates God's zealous concern for the "little ones" who believe, demonstrating that no effort is too great to rescue a straying disciple. It underscores God's desire for none to perish.
- 1. **Matthew 18:15-35: Community Discipline and Forgiveness**
  - **Procedure for Church Discipline (18:15-20):** Jesus outlines a three-step process for confronting a sinning believer:
    1. Individual confrontation (18:15)
    2. Confrontation with two or three witnesses (18:16)
    3. Confrontation before the whole church (18:17)
  - **Theological Basis:** This procedure is grounded in the authority of the church, the promise of answered prayer when two or three agree, and the presence of Jesus within the gathered community (18:18-20). The goal is reconciliation, not punishment.
  - **The Necessity of Forgiveness (18:21-35): Peter's Question and Jesus' Hyperbolic Answer (18:21-22):** Peter asks about forgiving "seven times," and Jesus responds with "seventy-seven times" (or "seventy times seven"), emphasizing an ongoing and limitless commitment to forgiveness.
  - **The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (18:23-35):** This parable highlights the striking contrast between God's immense forgiveness towards believers and a believer's refusal to forgive a minor debt owed by a fellow servant. It illustrates that genuine experience of God's forgiveness empowers and necessitates forgiveness of others. Unforgiveness implies a lack of true experience of God's grace.
  - **Balance of Discipline and Forgiveness:** The discourse maintains a delicate balance, showing that discipline is necessary to address sin and protect the community's harmony, but it must always be pursued with a humble and forgiving spirit, mirroring God's concern for His children.

#### IV. Core Values and Application

- **Humility:** The foundation of greatness in the Kingdom is humility, demonstrated by a childlike dependence on God and a renunciation of worldly status.
- **Hospitality/Concern for Fellow Disciples:** Humility leads to treating other disciples well, recognizing that mistreating them has severe consequences. This includes protecting the vulnerable ("little ones").
- **Responsibility for Sin within the Community:** Offenses are inevitable, and the community has a solemn duty to address sin promptly and fairly, aiming for reconciliation.
- **Limitless Forgiveness:** Believers, having received immense forgiveness from God, are called to extend boundless forgiveness to those who sin against them and repent. Unforgiveness indicates a lack of true understanding of God's grace.

- **Countercultural Behavior:** The values espoused in Matthew 18—humility, concern for others, and forgiveness—are countercultural, challenging a world obsessed with power, status, and self-advancement.
- **Preparation for Trials:** Embracing these kingdom values strengthens the community's relationships, enabling it to withstand external pressures and trials, anticipating the suffering and cross that await Jesus and his disciples.

#### V. Connections to Other Scripture

- **Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:3, 5:5):** Humility (blessed are the poor in spirit, meek)
- **Discourse on Mission (Matthew 10:40):** Receiving disciples is akin to receiving Jesus.
- **Parables of the Kingdom (Matthew 13:44):** Kingdom values demand significant sacrifice.
- **Jesus' Suffering and Destiny (Matthew 16:21-28; 20:20-28):** The disciples' preoccupation with greatness is ironic given Jesus' teaching on suffering and cross-bearing.
- **Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:12, 14-15):** Connection between receiving God's forgiveness and forgiving others.
- **Galatians 6:1-5; 1 Corinthians 5:1-6:11; 2 Corinthians 2:5-11:** Further New Testament passages on church discipline.
- **Philippians 2:5-11:** Christ's humility as a paradigm for believers.

#### Quiz: Matthew 18 – The Values of the Kingdom Community

Please answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. What is the main question asked by the disciples that prompts Jesus' discourse in Matthew 18, and how does it contrast with what Jesus had recently taught them?
2. Why does Jesus use a child as the primary illustration for spiritual greatness in this chapter?
3. Explain the concept of "little ones" in Matthew 18. How are they to be treated by the community?
4. Briefly outline the three-step procedure for church discipline described in Matthew 18:15-17.
5. What theological truths underline the authority and effectiveness of the church discipline process in Matthew 18:18-20?
6. How does Jesus' answer to Peter's question about forgiveness (18:21-22) challenge Peter's initial understanding?
7. What is the striking contrast presented in the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant?
8. According to the lecture, what does one's willingness to forgive others reveal about their own experience of God's forgiveness?
9. How does the chapter balance the need for church discipline with the necessity of forgiveness?
10. In what way are the values taught in Matthew 18 considered "countercultural," particularly in modern society?

#### Quiz Answer Key

1. The disciples ask, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" This question ironically contrasts with Jesus' recent teaching about his own suffering, death, and resurrection, and the disciples' sharing in his destiny, highlighting their continued preoccupation with worldly notions of greatness.
2. Jesus chooses a child not for sentimental reasons, but to stress that a child lacks social status and is totally dependent on adults. Therefore, becoming like a child symbolizes humbling oneself and demonstrating complete dependence on the Heavenly Father, renouncing any claim to power or position from human resources.
3. "Little ones" refers to those who believe in Jesus, including actual children and disciples who embody childlike humility and dependence. The community is enjoined not to cause them to stumble into sin, not to despise them, and to receive them, demonstrating hospitality and concern for their welfare.
4. The three-step procedure involves, first, the offended person confronting the offender privately. Second, if the offender does not listen, the offended person should bring one or two others as witnesses. Third, if the offender still refuses to listen, the matter should be brought before the church.
5. The theological truths supporting church discipline are the authority granted to the church to "bind and loose" (implying divine confirmation), the promise that God will answer prayers when "two or three agree," and the assurance that Jesus himself will be present where "two or three are gathered" with sincere and humble motives.
6. Peter suggests forgiving "seven times," which he likely considered generous. Jesus' hyperbolic answer of "seventy-seven times" (or "seventy times seven") challenges this by implying that forgiveness within the community should be continuous and boundless, not a limited number of times to be tracked.
7. The parable contrasts a servant who was forgiven an immeasurably vast debt by his master with that same servant's refusal to forgive a trivial debt owed to him by a fellow servant. This highlights the disproportionality between God's immense grace and human stinginess in forgiveness.
8. The lecture explains that one's willingness to forgive others demonstrates whether they have truly experienced God's forgiveness through the gospel. An unforgiving person likely has not genuinely received God's grace, as true forgiveness from God empowers and enables a person to be forgiving themselves.
9. The chapter balances discipline and forgiveness by showing that while correction of sin is necessary to maintain community harmony, it must always be carried out with a humble, forgiving spirit, aiming for reconciliation. Discipline without forgiveness would worsen the problem, and forgiveness without addressing sin would allow disharmony to persist.
10. The values in Matthew 18 are countercultural because they prioritize humility, dependence, and self-renunciation over the world's obsession with power, status, and self-advancement. Treating children or "little ones" with high regard and

practicing limitless forgiveness does not typically earn worldly applause but exemplifies walking in Jesus' steps.

#### Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze how Jesus' use of a child as an object lesson in Matthew 18 fundamentally redefines traditional notions of "greatness." Discuss the implications of this redefinition for individual discipleship and the collective values of the kingdom community.
2. Discuss the interconnectedness of the Parable of the Lost Sheep (18:10-14) and the instructions on church discipline (18:15-20). How does God's concern for the "little ones" and straying sheep inform the approach to handling sin within the community?
3. Examine the central message of the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant (18:23-35). How does this parable illustrate the absolute necessity of forgiveness in the kingdom community, and what are the spiritual implications for those who fail to forgive?
4. The lecture emphasizes a "delicate balance" between discipline and forgiveness in Matthew 18. Elaborate on how these two concepts are presented as complementary rather than contradictory, and explain why both are essential for maintaining the harmony and health of the Christian community.
5. Matthew 18 is presented as Jesus' preparation of his disciples for the "rigors" ahead in Jerusalem. Discuss how the kingdom values of humility, concern for others, discipline, and forgiveness taught in this chapter would equip the disciples to face suffering and external pressures.

#### Glossary of Key Terms

- **Binding and Loosing:** A phrase used in Matthew 18:18, referring to the authority given to the church to make decisions regarding spiritual matters, particularly discipline and reconciliation, with the assurance that these decisions will be confirmed in heaven.
- **Childlike Humility:** The quality of spiritual greatness taught by Jesus in Matthew 18, characterized by total dependence on God, lack of social status, and a renunciation of worldly power and self-importance.
- **Countercultural Behavior:** Actions and values that go against the prevailing norms and priorities of secular society, as seen in Jesus' teachings on humility, service, and forgiveness which contrast with the world's pursuit of power and status.
- **Discourse:** A lengthy, formal discussion or treatise. In Matthew, it refers to significant sections of Jesus' teaching, such as the Sermon on the Mount or the Parables of the Kingdom.
- **Fourth Discourse:** Refers to Matthew Chapter 18, which is identified as the fourth major block of Jesus' teaching in the Gospel of Matthew, focusing on the values within the community of disciples.



- **Greatness (Spiritual):** As redefined by Jesus in Matthew 18, it is not found in worldly power, status, or achievement, but in childlike humility and total dependence on God.
- **Hyperbole:** Exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally, used by Jesus (e.g., forgiving "seventy-seven times") to emphasize a point about limitless forgiveness.
- **Little Ones:** A term used in Matthew 18 (e.g., 18:6, 10, 14) to refer both to actual children and to disciples who embody the childlike humility and dependence on God. They are the focus of God's zealous concern.
- **Narrative Setting:** The context or background story within which a discourse or teaching is delivered. In Matthew 18, it's the disciples' question about greatness and the approach to Jerusalem.
- **Object Lesson:** A practical demonstration or an example used to illustrate a moral or abstract principle, as when Jesus used a child to teach about humility.
- **Offense/Stumble:** To cause someone to sin, fall away from faith, or be led astray (Matthew 18:6-7). Jesus warns severely against causing "little ones" to stumble.
- **Parable of the Lost Sheep:** A short story (Matthew 18:12-14) illustrating God's compassionate pursuit and zealous concern for every single one of His "little ones" who goes astray.
- **Parable of the Unmerciful Servant:** A story (Matthew 18:23-35) told by Jesus to emphasize the absolute necessity of forgiveness among believers, contrasting God's boundless forgiveness with human unforgiveness.
- **Prosaic Answer:** A direct, propositional, or factual answer, as distinct from a poetic or illustrative answer (like a parable).
- **Reconciliation:** The act of restoring friendly relations, particularly emphasized as the goal of the church discipline process in Matthew 18.
- **Seventy-Seven Times (or Seventy Times Seven):** Jesus' hyperbolic response to Peter regarding forgiveness, emphasizing that forgiveness should be limitless and ongoing.
- **Straying Sheep:** A metaphor used in the Parable of the Lost Sheep to describe a disciple who has gone astray or fallen into sin, for whom the community (like a shepherd) should seek to restore.
- **Unmerciful Servant:** The central character in Jesus' parable, who, despite being forgiven an immense debt, refuses to forgive a much smaller debt owed to him, illustrating the hypocrisy of unforgiveness.

## 4) FAQs

### 1. What is the main theme of Matthew Chapter 18, and what is its significance?

Matthew Chapter 18, the fourth discourse in the Gospel of Matthew, primarily focuses on the **values of the Kingdom Community**, particularly **spiritual greatness**. Its significance lies in Jesus' direct challenge to his disciples' worldly concerns about status

and their instruction on how to live and interact within the community of believers. This discourse serves as a crucial teaching moment, preparing the disciples for the challenges ahead, especially as Jesus' journey toward Jerusalem and his suffering intensifies.

2. How does Jesus use a child to illustrate spiritual greatness?

Jesus uses a child as a **visual aid and an object lesson for humility and total dependence**. Contrary to any sentimental notion of innocence, Jesus emphasizes that a child lacks social status and is entirely dependent on adults for their welfare. Therefore, to become "greatest in the kingdom of heaven," disciples must humble themselves and become like a child, renouncing worldly power, position, or status and instead exhibiting total dependence on the Heavenly Father's mercy. This counter-cultural perspective reverses the world's drive for self-advancement.

3. What does Jesus teach about offenses and the "little ones" in the community?

Jesus strongly warns against causing "little ones" (identified as children and disciples who believe in him) to stumble or fall into sin. He uses vivid language to describe the severe consequences for anyone who offends them. The Heavenly Father zealously guards the humble status of these "little ones," and woe to those who cause them to sin. This teaching underscores the importance of hospitality and care for fellow disciples, as mistreating them has eternal consequences.

4. What is the three-step process for correcting a sinning believer outlined in Matthew 18:15-17?

Matthew 18:15-17 provides a three-step procedure for church discipline:

1. **Private confrontation:** The offended person should go alone to the offender to point out their fault. The goal is reconciliation and bringing the offender back into the community.
2. **Witnesses:** If the first step fails, the offended person should take two or three others with them. This provides objective witnesses and adds solemnity to the confrontation.
3. **Involve the Church:** If the offender still refuses to listen, the matter should be brought before the entire church. Rejecting the church's overtures is seen as tantamount to rejecting Jesus and the Father.

This process is embedded in kindness, viewing the sinner as a "brother" and aiming for reconciliation, not severance.

5. What is the theological basis for church discipline as described in Matthew 18:18-20? The procedure for church discipline in Matthew 18:15-17 is underpinned by three key truths:

1. **The Authority of the Church:** Whatever the church "binds or looses" on earth will be confirmed in heaven, indicating a divine endorsement of appropriate disciplinary actions.

2. **The Promise of Answered Prayer:** When two or three believers agree on earth about a matter, God will respond to bless His people, especially in the context of seeking resolution and reconciliation.
  3. **The Presence of Jesus:** Jesus promises to be present with the community in these situations, even when only two or three are gathered with sincere desire to correct a sinning believer with humility and good motives. This emphasizes the solemnity and sacredness of church discipline.
6. Why is forgiveness a crucial theme in Matthew Chapter 18, and how does Jesus illustrate its necessity?

Forgiveness is crucial because it balances the need for correction and is essential for maintaining harmony within the kingdom community. Jesus illustrates this necessity through Peter's question about how many times to forgive (Peter suggests seven times, which he considers generous) and Jesus' hyperbolic response of "seventy-seven times" (or "seventy times seven"). This means forgiveness, when there has been repentance, is an ongoing and limitless practice.

Jesus then tells the **Parable of the Unmerciful Servant**. In this parable, a servant is forgiven an immense, unrepayable debt by his master. However, this same servant then refuses to forgive a fellow servant a trivial debt. The master revokes the first servant's forgiveness due to his unforgiving nature. This parable powerfully teaches that those who have truly experienced God's immeasurable forgiveness *must* be willing to forgive others, demonstrating that their own repentance and experience of grace were genuine.

7. How does the passage emphasize the balance between discipline and forgiveness?
- The passage highlights a delicate balance between discipline and forgiveness. While correction (18:15-20) is necessary to address sin and prevent discord, it must always be undertaken with a forgiving, humble spirit (18:21-35). Both aspects are tied back to the central motif that disciples are the Father's "little ones," brothers and sisters in His first family. Disharmony cannot be allowed to disrupt the family of God, but correction without a forgiving spirit will only worsen the problem. The goal of discipline is always reconciliation, like a shepherd seeking a straying sheep and humbly receiving it back.

8. How do the teachings in Matthew 18 prepare the disciples for their future, and what relevance do they hold for believers today?

The teachings in Matthew 18 prepare the disciples for the "rigors ahead" in Jerusalem and beyond by emphasizing core kingdom values: **humility, patience, and brotherly love**. Jesus' own suffering, death, and resurrection, which the disciples will share, serve as the paradigm for their experience. A selfish preoccupation with greatness and devaluation of others would make them unable to face these challenges.

For believers today, these values remain crucial:

- **Humility** allows us to receive each other as we would a child.
- **Brotherly love and concern** motivate us to shepherd each other like lost sheep.

- **Patience and decisive action** are needed to deal with unrepentant sinners within the community.
- **Genuine, limitless forgiveness** is essential for those who sin and repent.

Adhering to these values strengthens community relationships, enabling believers to withstand external trials and maintain proper relationships within the Christian community, reflecting the counter-cultural behavior of walking in Jesus' steps.