

## **Intervention**

**Proverbs 25:1-28; Matthew 18:15-20 / 1 Corinthians 6:1-11**

### **I. Jesus Came to Seek the Lost**

A. Jesus bluntly summarized the purpose for His incarnation. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. (MATTHEW 18:11)

B. Jesus came to gather incompetent, needy, dissatisfied, and world-weary sinners; the gospel message does not appeal to satisfied people. But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. (MATTHEW 9:12-13)

C. The key to Christianity is understanding and applying SOVEREIGN GRACE. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. (1 TIMOTHY 1:15)

### **II. Seeking the Lost Is a Familiar Concept in Human Experience**

A. People invest themselves in finding what has gone missing. How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? (MATTHEW 18:12)

B. The psalmist portrayed God's people as lost sheep wanting to be found. I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments. (PSALM 119:176)

C. Scripture teaches the SUBSTITUTIONARY ATONEMENT with lost sheep imagery. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. (ISAIAH 53:6)

D. Jesus makes the image personal for Himself and for those He redeems. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. (JOHN 10:11)

E. Finding what is lost brings the same kind of joy on earth and in heaven. And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. (MATTHEW 18:13-14)

F. This UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION charms and comforts believers. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. (MICAH 7:18)

### **III. Jesus Calls Believers to Illustrate the Pattern**

A. Count the sheep and confront the missing; start with problem sheep. Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. (MATTHEW 18:15)

1. The Bible demands documentation for conviction. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death. (DEUTERONOMY 17:6)

2. Personal opinion is not reliable. Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. (2 PETER 1:20)

B. Use the guidelines God provides for interventions. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. (MATTHEW 18:16)

1. Christian interventions must be above reproach; when Christians follow the rules other cultures cave before them. Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? (1 CORINTHIANS 6:1-3)

2. Constantly disrupting is not helpful. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. (ROMANS 16:17-18)

C. Expand the search; a sheep will be happy to be found and a predator will continue to run. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. (MATTHEW 18:17) See also 1 Corinthians 5.

D. The Biblical INTERVENTION carries eternal consequences; no human court has comparable jurisdiction. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. (MATTHEW 18:18-19)

E. Jesus presides over genuine INTERVENTIONS. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them. (MATTHEW 18:20)

F. Jesus told believers what to do and promised to be with them as they do it. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (MATTHEW 28:20)