KINGDOM of HEAVEN

A SERIES IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

Community Group Material

Matthew 18:15-20

Week of Sunday 28th of April

Sin in our Midst

Leader Preparation

Read through pages 6-8 of the study guide.

This week's study balances two issues:

1. God want us to rid the church body of any sin that leads to injury or disunity among us

   but

2. Before we approach any brother with suggestions of sin for them to deal with, we need to review our own hearts – recognizing that sin resides there also, and must be ruthlessly eliminated.

Group Time:

Group Sharing

Over the next few weeks, get your group members to share personally and refresh everyone's memory about some of the highlights of Matthew so far. Ask one or two people to share each week. They should share about something that has been meaningful to them in the passages we have studied in Matthew – not a whole sermon, but just a couple of verses and why that message is meaningful to them. Be sure to discuss it beforehand and warn people in advance so that they have time to prepare.

Exploring the Passage

As a lead-in to this week's topic, print out the last 2 pages for each person. It contains some verses we have previously studied in Matthew, with some words that need to be filled in. Then the words should each be found in the word search. Keep these verses in mind during the later discussion!.

Read Matthew 18:15-20

In the previous section of Matthew, Jesus gives instructions about the kind of action we should take when we identify sin within our selves. How seriously does he advise us to take this kind of sin? (see Matthew 18:8-9)

What is the end result that Jesus would like to see for us when we have been freed from sin?

What kind of sins does Jesus ask us to address with brothers and sisters? *(primarily sins between us, sins against us)*

What is the desired end result of discussing someone's sin with them? (Remember Matthew 18:14)

Have you ever approached someone to try to help them to address an issue of wrong in their life? What was the most difficult part for you? How did they respond?

If you were aware of an issue of sin in our community and you had followed these first steps but the person was not willing to respond, who would you approach to ask for help?

Why might it be important to take this difficult step – for the person you have confronted? For the church body as a whole?

Read Galatians 6:1

As we ask God for wisdom to prevent any "little ones" from stumbling, what should we be careful of in ourselves before we address problems in others?

Matthew 18:18-20 speaks of how God's Kingdom comes on earth as we carry out his will. Have a look at these three places where we see Jesus' presence expressed clearly to us in the book of Matthew:

1. Matthew 1:23
2. Matthew 18:20
3. Matthew 28:19-20

Prayer

Close the meeting by saying together the Collect for Purity:

> *ALMIGHTY God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

You may want to spend some time in silence, asking God to bring to mind any sinful areas of life or relationships that he would like to restore.

Specks and Sheeps

Fill in the missing words from these bible passages and then find them in the word search.

Matthew 5:23-24

So if you are 1 your 2 at the 3 and there remember that your 4 has something against you, leave your 2 there before the 3 and go. First be 5 to your 4, and then come and offer your 2.

Matthew 6:14-15

For if you 6 others their 7, your heavenly 8 will also 6 you, but if you do not 6 others their 7, neither will your 8 forgive your 7.

Matthew 7:3-5

Why do you see the 9 that is in your 4's 10, but do not notice the 11 that is in your own 10? Or how can you say to your 4, 'Let me take the 9 out of your 10,' when there is the 11 in your own 10? You 12, first take the 11 out of your own 10, and then you will see 13 to take the 9 out of your 4's 10.

Matthew 18:6

If anyone causes one of these 14 – those who believe in me – to 15, it would be better for them to have a large 16 hung round their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Matthew 18:12-14

'What do you think? If a man owns a hundred 17, and one of them 18 away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that 17ed off? And if he 19 it, truly I tell you, he is 20 about that one 17 than about the ninety-nine that did not 18 off. In the same way your 8 in heaven is not willing that any of these 14 should perish.

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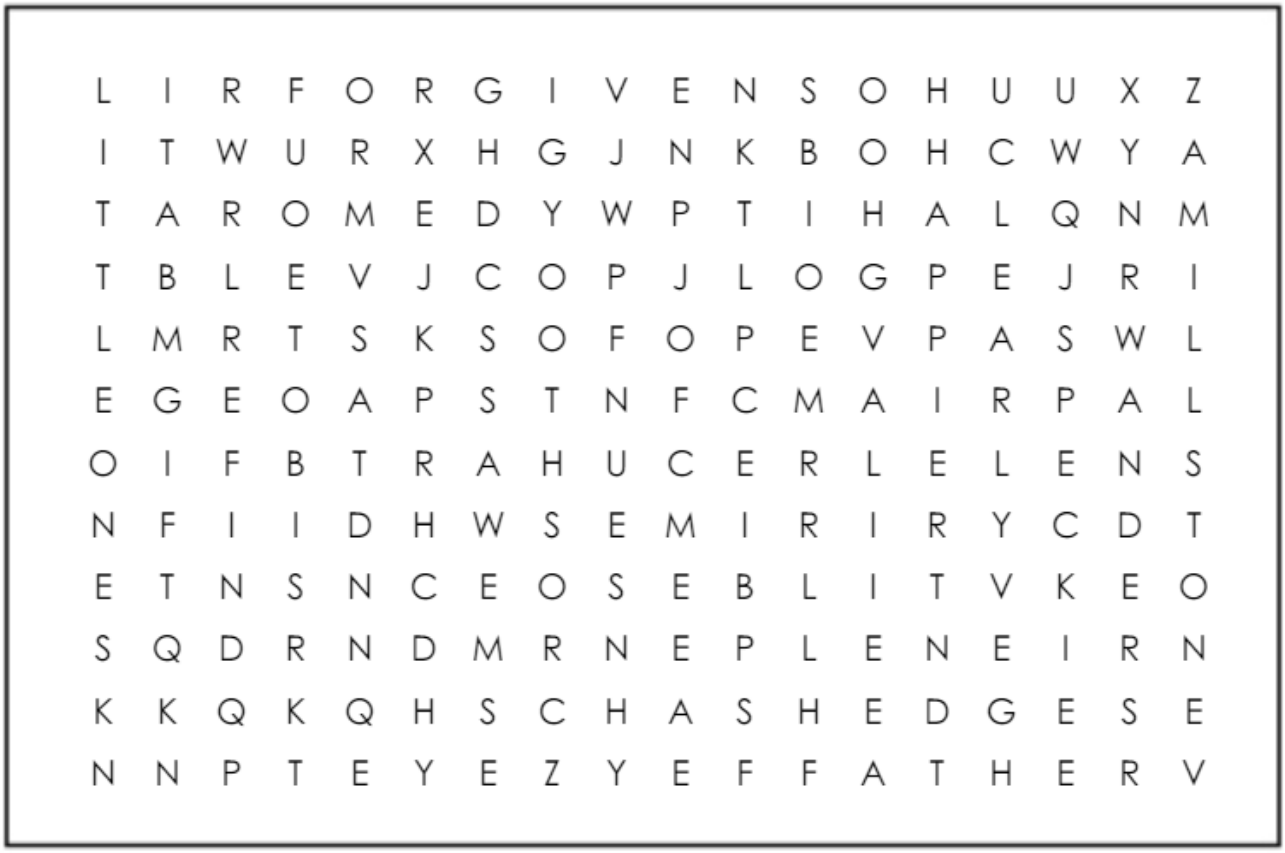
17 _____

18 _____

19 _____

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Specks and Sheeps



Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .