PARABLES

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

October 11, 2026

Matthew 18:1–20 | Mending & Repairing Christian Relationships | Pastor Brent Foster



Icebreaker — Where the Rubber Meets the Road

- Pastor Brent described mending and repairing relationships as the unglamorous but essential part of Christian community—where the rubber meets the road. **Why is repairing relationships often harder than building them?**
- John Gottman's research highlights the importance of repairing relationships. What makes saying **"I'm sorry"** or **"I forgive you"** so difficult, even among Christians?

Get Low — Matthew 18:1–5

- Jesus tells us to become humble like little children. **What does childlike humility look like when we feel someone has wronged us?** What does pride look like?
- Pastor Brent shared the quote, *"There is something about everyone you meet that if you knew it, it would change how you treat them."* How might remembering that we don't know someone's whole story change the way we respond to them?

Continued on the other side.

Look at Yourself — Matthew 18:6–9

- Jesus uses some extreme language about dealing with sin in our own lives. **Why do you think it's easier to recognize someone else's sin than our own?**
- Before confronting someone who has hurt us, what questions should we honestly ask ourselves? **What might God need to cut out of our own hearts?**

Pursue the Person — Matthew 18:10–14

- When someone hurts or disappoints us, it's often easier to create distance and build negative stories about them. **Why do we tend to do this, and what damage can it cause?**
- What perspective does Jesus give us in v.10 that can help us when we want to build up evil stories about another Christian?
- Jesus reminds us how valuable every believer is to the Father and tells the parable of the lost sheep. **How should God's heart toward that person change our attitude and actions toward them?**

Address the Issue Directly — Matthew 18:15–20

- Jesus tells us to go directly to the person who has wronged us rather than talking to others about them. **Why is this so difficult, and what usually happens when we don't follow his instruction?**
- Jesus teaches us to take an issue only as far as necessary to resolve it. What does this teach us about his goal for confrontation? **Have you ever experienced a difficult conversation that led to a healthier relationship?**
- Pastor Brent emphasized that how we handle sin in our relationships affects our relationship with God and our Christian community. (v.18) **Why do you think God takes this so seriously?**

Personal Application — Putting It into Practice

- Think about the four steps Jesus teaches us:
  - **Get low** — Approach others with humility.
  - **Look at yourself** — Examine your own heart first.
  - **Pursue the person** — Move toward restoration, not distance.
  - **Address the issue directly** — Have the necessary conversation.
- **Which of these four steps is most challenging for you, and what is one practical way you could grow in this area this week?**

Continued on the other side.

Praying for One Another

- As we think about Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18, take a moment to prayerfully consider:
  - **Is there a relationship in your life where God is asking you to take a step toward healing and restoration? Share as much as you're comfortable with, without naming names or sharing someone else's private details. Then pray for one another—that God would give each person the humility, wisdom, courage, and love to take the next step toward restoration.**

- ***Optional Bonus — Going Deeper** - How does our approach to relational conflict differ when dealing with a fellow Christian versus someone who doesn't follow Jesus? Consider Romans 12:18.

***Leader's Note:** These principles are not intended to pressure someone experiencing abuse to confront an unsafe person or remain in a harmful situation. Safety, appropriate boundaries, and seeking help take priority.*

