

## ***The Gospel of Matthew: Church Discipline***

Icebreaker: How did you practice BLESS this week?

Discussion: For group discussion to be fruitful and engaging for everyone in your group, make sure that your discussion groups are not larger than 4 people. If possible, break up into groups of 2 or 3.

Larger Group: (5 minutes)

- Welcome everyone
- Introduce the direction for the evening.
  - Read Hebrews 10 20-24 highlight the following
    - The starting place of this conversation is the gospel - “We have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus,”
    - Our goal is to “consider how to stir up one another to love and good works”
    - So, let us “Draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith”
  - When you see someone caught up in a fault, do you find it easier to back away from them, get caught up with their sin, or seek to restore them?
- Break into smaller groups

Smaller Groups (20-25 minutes) Give the following instructions and break into small groups (2-3 people).

Have someone read Matthew 18:15 and Proverbs 27:6. When we fail to call out a brother or sister’s sin we are revealing that we don’t actually believe the gospel. It’s vital to remember that the gospel is calling us in, not calling us out!

- Have you deputized someone in your life to call you back into the gospel when you stray? If not, why not?
- Has someone deputized you to call them back into the gospel when they stray? Why, or why not?
- What keeps you from having these kinds of relationships in your life?
- What are some reasons that you are reluctant to call someone back into the gospel?

Have someone read Matthew 18:16 - 17, Luke 15:15 - 17 and 1 Corinthians 5:5. When we refuse to be called back into the gospel by a sister or brother, then the circle of conversation will widen to include others who want to see you restored. Once again, the gospel is in focus and the impulse of our actions is care for the one who has strayed.

- When someone refuses to be restored we can tend to either become vengeful, or overly merciful. What is your tendency?
  - How do these Scriptures impact your view of people who refuse to be restored?
- Why is it vital to restoration that the whole church cooperates in this disciplinary action?

*(see more on next page)*

Larger Group:

Return to larger group to give summary of your discussion in smaller groups (5-10 minutes)

How can our practices of confrontation and restoration be a witness to the power of the gospel?

Allow time to pray for the lost, end with B.L.E.S.S. (10-15 minutes)

Where are group members in the B.L.E.S.S. process? Model for them how to answer briefly, for example:

"I'm praying for \_\_\_\_\_".

"I have been having good conversations with

\_\_\_\_\_". "I'm having lunch with \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ on

\_\_\_\_\_ (day of the week)."

Closing prayer - (2-5-minutes)