

*“But If He Does Not Listen – Part 3”*

*2 Thess. 3:6-15; Matt. 18:15-20*

*Finding Peace in the Midst of the Storm*

In our culture of fast food and immediate gratification, we often find ourselves seeking and then demanding instantaneous resolution to any perceived conflict or imagined inconsistency. Yet what we cannot expect to happen is a 1-2-3 step procedure as it relates to the ministry of helps.

Regardless of the context, we are always to help people with a spirit of humility, charity, and teach-ability. Because we approach the situation from a God-centered and grace-based mindset, we can never be sure of what God is doing, only that He is.

Matthew 18:16 and 17 the contrasting connector three times. Each refusal meets with a stronger embrace.

A question we wish to address this morning is, “What does love’s embrace look like for those who are under **paracletos**?”

I. Defining love’s embrace (1 Corinthians 13:1-8)

A. An Embracing Love’s priority (1 Cor. 13:1-3)

B. An Embracing Love’s portrait (1 Cor. 13:4-8a)

Take this thought and place it in the context of “Church Discipline” and the ministry of helps.

II. Demonstrating love’s embrace

A. The procedure for an embracing love (Matt 18:16 – “Take one or two along with you”)

B. The picture of an embracing love

1. As it relates to a believer

2. As it relates to an unbeliever

This individual is to be treated like an unbeliever who has no relationship to the believing family.

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### III. Depicting love's embrace (Luke 15:11-32 - "The parable of the prodigal son")

**First**, the son left the father, the father never left the son. The father embodied First Corinthians 13:1-8.

**Second**, the son did repent and was restored into the conscious awareness of his father's lavish love for him.

**Third**, I feel comfortable in saying that though the son was physically removed from his father's presence, he was not removed from the father's thoughts.

**Fourth**, nothing is known concerning how long it took his son to return.

**Fifth**, the father never mentioned what had happened. I am confident that the father forgave his son the moment he left. Non-forgiveness was never an option.

**Sixth**, love's embrace grows stronger in the midst of a rebellious child. It will never let you go.