

“Guarding the Integrity of the Gospel”

Matthew 18:15-20

The Gospel of Matthew

Theme:

The Church’s Mission calls her to defend the integrity of the Gospel by removing disciples and loving sinners.

Introduction:

This passage tells us how we are to treat those who claim Jesus but do not follow Jesus. It also tells us how we are to treat those who still need Jesus. We are to love sinners as Jesus loved sinners.

- I. Its literary context – The Parable of the Lost Sheep
- II. Its historical context – Gentiles and a tax collector
- III. Its ecclesiastical context - Formal and official [binding and losing]
- IV. Its practical context – between you and him alone

Only those who confess Jesus as Savior and Lord are to be identified as His followers. Everyone else is to be graciously given the gospel. The church is identified by the gospel. Anyone who does not identify with the gospel is not a part of the church (John 6:66). A non-Christian is one who does not identify with the gospel. Those who do not identify with the gospel are to be loved into the gospel.

1. There are two kinds of people in your world: those who identify with the gospel and those who do not. Both groups need the gospel, but for different reasons. To the wheat, it is a reminder. To the tares, it is a pulling in.
2. You live in a wheat and tare world. The two often mix. You need to know who wheat are and who tares are. Those who openly identify with Jesus are wheat. Those who do not are tares. It all boils down to the gospel. Only the gospel brings clarity to this matter.
3. When you live in and out the gospel, your life finds its center. Much of what we do on the horizontal is frustrating. It is only when we connect our stories to His that we find meaning and fulfillment.