



# THOMAS HALE MINISTRIES

A KINGDOM MULTIPLIER

**Matthew 18:15** *Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. (KJV)*

## **If thy brother...**

Thayer's Definition: *adelphos* - "From the womb"

- a brother, whether born of the same two parents or only of the same father or mother, having the same national ancestor, belonging to the same people, or countryman, any fellow or man, a fellow believer, united to another by the bond of affection, an associate in employment or office, brethren in Christ

## **Shall trespass against thee...**

"Trespass" - Strong's #264 *hamartano* (ham-artan'- o); perhaps from 1 (as a negative particle) and the base of 3313; properly, to miss the mark (and so not share in the prize), i.e. (figuratively) to err, especially (morally) to sin: KJV-- for your faults, offend, sin, trespass.

- A personal offense.
- Observing someone missing the mark.

The words "against you" do not appear in some manuscripts as reflected by some translations. However, when anyone sins (misses the mark), they bring harm to the reputation of Christ and offends the body of Christ, which is made of all Christians! When David sinned, the prophet said, "Thou has given great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." (2 Samuel 12:14)

The immediate response when we see a brother missing the mark is to think, "He/she hasn't actually offended me, therefore, I'm not responsible." But Scripture makes it every Christian's responsibility when another Christian stumbles. When one member of the body hurts, the whole body suffers. (Romans 12:5) (Gothard)

## **Go And Tell Him...**

Going to an offending brother to restore him has been and always will be God's greatest test of genuine love. The goal is restoration. Only a "spiritual" person can restore one "caught in a sin." (Galatians 6:1)

It is easy to pass judgment in our mind and then forget it. It is also easy to tell someone else in a spirit of genuine concern and hope they will do something about it.

**Galatians 6:1** *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (ESV)*

### **ONE TRUTH**

If God gave me the opportunity to exchange my life for the establishment of one truth among all Christians and I wanted to make my life count to the greatest possible extent, I would choose the truth of Matthew 18 in the spirit of Galatians 6:1.

If every Christian were committed to this principle, three results would transform the church into a dynamic force in our nation and the world. Disloyalty with its gossip and slander would cease and give way to a rich fellowship among sincere Christians; Christians would become a corrective and edifying force to each other with the result that weaker Christians would be strengthened and false teachers would be exposed; and the world would believe that God sent His Son with a message of hope for them.

Bill Gothard  
Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts

### **STOPPING A BAD REPORT**

As soon as we realize that someone is giving us a bad report we should lovingly ask them if they have gone to the person yet.

If yes, we then can ask, "Are you telling me so I can go with you to help restore him/her?" "Do you feel I am responsible to know about this? I would rather not hear it unless I am directly involved."

Another method is given in Proverbs 25:23. It explains that as the north wind drives away rain, so a grieved countenance drives away a backbiting tongue.

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## **Tell Him His Fault...**

"I always want to give a good report about you. There is something that I do not understand. Could you explain why..."

## **Between Thee and Him Alone...**

Here Jesus gives double emphasis to "go to him." Note that the initial context of conversation is one to one.

## **If He Shall Hear Thee, Thou Hast Gained Thy Brother**

The biblical assumption is that we want to win the brother rather than condemn him. If we go in the spirit and purpose of exposing rather than restoring, we fall into the temptation warned about in Galatians 6:1, "...restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."

Thayer's Definition: *kerdaino* - "Thou hast gained"

- to gain, to acquire, to get gain, used of gain arising from shunning or escaping from evil, that is, to win him over to the kingdom of God, to gain one to faith in Christ, to gain Christ's favor and fellowship

*Matthew 5:23-24 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*

## **NOTES**

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### **THREE PROBLEMS WE CREATE**

If we tell anyone else about an offending brother before talking to him, we create three problems.

First, we prove to God and the ones that we tell we don't love the offender and, in a deeper sense, we also prove that we don't love the Lord Himself who said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:15)

Second, we tempt the listener to take up an offense against him and may even destroy a strong friendship that might have existed between them. "A whisperer separateth chief friends." (Prov. 16:28)

Third, we destroy the sincerity of our approach to him and hinder the potential of restoring him. It is for these reasons that Scripture warns, "Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself; and discover not a secret to another." (Proverbs 25:9)

Perhaps the most important reason to go to the offender first is to check out the facts. When we hear a report and share it with others, it is almost impossible to be accurate in words and in the inflection of our voice.

Bill Gothard  
Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts

### **STANDARD JEWISH CUSTOM**

This procedure was standard Jewish custom; the Dead Sea Scrolls, the rabbis and others demand that one begin with private reproof. Publicly shaming someone unnecessarily was considered sinful, and Jewish teachers stressed the importance of receiving reproof.

Bible Background Commentary