



Maintaining True Community: Love your enemies!

Greg Wendschlag

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"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Him who is the head, that is, Christ. From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."
Eph. 4:14-16

1. When someone is caught in a sin.

"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." Gal 6:1-3

- Be mature and gentle – make sure your heart is in the right place.
- Determine if you are the right person to confront – relationship will determine effectiveness.
- Pray for and with the person – Only God can transform.
- Patiently walk through restoration – accountability for support.
- Risk rejection

2. When someone sins against you.

"If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector." Mt. 18:15-17

- Step one - Confront the person in private and in person.
- Step two - Bring one or two others with you as witnesses.
- Step three - Bring the matter to the church authority.
- Step four - Cut off the relationship.
- Step five – Welcome the person back if they repent.

3. When you realize you are the offender.

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift."
Mt. 5:23-24

- Take your own internal temperature.
- Is the correction accurate? If so, own it. If not, learn why the other person was offended.
- Offer a sincere, accurate apology.
- Ask for reconciliation while allowing the offended person time to heal.

4. When you have a disagreement with someone.

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye." Mt. 7:3-5

- Check your motive - Is the desired outcome to win or to restore?
- Be calm.
- Plan what, when and how you will have the conversation.
- Give affirmation.

"A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver." Prov. 25:11