

## The Straight Line

**Matthew 18:15-20** <sup>15</sup>"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. <sup>16</sup>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.' <sup>17</sup>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. <sup>18</sup>"I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup>"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. <sup>20</sup>For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them."

### I. The need for straight lines. V. 15

A. The war seed is made up of three parts: the victim, the rescuer, and the persecutor.

B. God's peace plan begins with one-on-one healthy relationships. V. 15

C. The "peace-making scale"

#### 1. A Grace-Check: **Proverbs 19:11**

<sup>11</sup>A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense. (NIV 84)

#### 2. A Gentle Restoration: **Matthew 5:23-24**

<sup>23</sup>"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, <sup>24</sup>leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. (NIV 84)

#### 3. A Give and Take Peacemaking: **Philippians 2:4**

<sup>4</sup>Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. (NIV 84)

#### 4. A Non-Biased Council: **Matthew 18:16**

<sup>16</sup>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.' (NIV 84)

#### 5. A Consensus Agreement: **I Corinthians 6:4**

<sup>4</sup>Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church! (NIV 84)

#### 6. A Binding Decision: **Matthew 18:17**

<sup>17</sup>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. (NIV 84)

**Conclusion:** What is the best way to apply these truths?