

▼ **Redefining Greatness When Christians Hurt You - Part 1**

Rocklyn Clarke Sr. - Sunday March 13, 2018

© 2018 Life Church Ministries, Inc.

<http://www.LifeChurchBoston.org/>

- **Read the Passage: Matthew 18:15-35**

▼ **Purpose of the Sermon (what listeners should do)**

- Understand the larger context of “greatest in the Kingdom”.
- See Christians who sin against you from God’s perspective.
- Confront them in love; follow Jesus’ process.
- Discipline yourself to forgive - practice makes perfect.

▼ **Understand the larger context of “greatest in the Kingdom”.**

- ▼ This follows on the heels of Matthew 18:1-14 where Jesus addresses “who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven”.
 - Whoever humbles himself like a child is the greatest.
- ▼ Humbling yourself is demonstrated in the following ways:
 - Welcome other Christians - be approachable.
 - Don’t cause others to stumble. Deprive yourself if necessary.
- ▼ Don’t look down on other believers. God doesn’t want to lose anyone.
 - You’re probably only tempted to look down on other Christians if they have struggles that you don’t have.
 - God doesn’t want them to lose them, so you shouldn’t either!
- ▼ This is consistent with what Jesus said elsewhere:
 - Matthew 23:11 - The greatest among you will be your servant.
 - Mark 9:33-37 - . . . “if anyone wants to be first . . .”
 - Mark 10:32-45 - . . . “whoever wants to be great must be slave of all . . .”
 - Luke 9:46-48 -

▼ **See Christians who sin against you from God’s perspective.**

- ▼ Be humble - prioritize God’s interests over yours.
 - Jesus teaches us to be humble with someone who sins against us.
 - Jesus wants us to see the need of believers who sin against us.
 - Someone who sins against you has a character problem. God cares about their character and wants to fix it (Matthew 18:10-14).
- Minimize their incentive to keep sinning. Maximize their incentive to repent.

- Don't look down on them and don't make it easy for others to look down on them.
- ▼ **Confront them in love; follow Jesus' process.**
 - ▼ Following the process that Jesus outlines maximizes the opportunity for their character flaws to be fixed.
 - Confronting them personally may not eliminate their temptation to become defensive, but it minimizes it because no one else is involved at this point. It also protects their reputation.
 - Taking along 1 or 2 witnesses demonstrates that it's not just a personal gripe on your part while still minimizing the damage to the person's reputation.
 - Telling it to the church is the last resort, but brings the wisdom of the body to bear on the issue. It also potentially exposes behaviors that are systemic rather than isolated.
- ▼ **Discipline yourself to forgive - practice makes perfect.**
 - If you don't forgive others, God won't forgive you.
 - The things you need to forgive pale in comparison to the things for which you need forgiveness.
 - This attitude will enable you to receive the forgiveness you need!