

REVIVE



MATTHEW

~ Kingdom Life ~



MATTHEW *Kingdom Life*

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- v. 15-20 The person who **protects the fellowship** of believers by courageously engaging one another and resolving the conflict between them and among them.

- ¹⁵ “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.
- ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.
- ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church.
And if he refuses to listen even to the church,
let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.
- ¹⁸ Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven,
and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.
- ¹⁹ Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask,
it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.
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Greek: hamartanó

Definition: to miss the mark, to do wrong, to sin

Usage: originally: I miss the mark, (a) I make a mistake, (b) I sin, commit a sin (against God); sometimes the idea of sinning against a fellow-creature is present.

Properly: having no share in; to *sin*, which always brings *forfeiture* – i.e. eternal *loss* due to *missing God's mark*.

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¹⁶ **Leviticus 19:17-18**

¹⁷ “You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him.

¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself:
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Galatians 6:1-2

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.

² Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

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The meaning of “binding and loosing” has been disputed in the church, particularly since the sixteenth-century Reformation. But it is now widely recognized that “binding and loosing” is simply shorthand for what 18:15-17 said already about listening or not listening:

- the confronted brother or sister ***who listens*** to the church’s warning is loosed by the church’s pardon in Christ’s name;
- the confronted one ***who flaunts*** the church’s warning is bound in guilt by the church’s censure, whatever form the censure takes.

And, as our text stresses, the obedient church’s prayerful binding and loosing on earth is solemnly ratified by God in heaven.

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The binding or loosing of which Jesus speaks in 18:18 is precisely the retaining or the forgiving of sins. When concerned and loving Christians reprove one of the greatest in their midst and that brother repents and again believes, his sins are loosed from him, released and forgiven. The word of forgiveness that the Christians speak together will be the earthly enactment and bestowal of what has already taken place in God's own presence.

In similar but sorrowful fashion, if the congregation finds that it must bind upon someone his or her sins and announce that the unrepentant sinner is no longer (or was never) a Christian nor a member of the church, then that word that binds sins is a true word, fastening on earth what God has already done in heaven.

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