

Sermon Outline
“Rescuing One Another”
Matthew 18:10-14

- I.** Flow of the passage
- a.** The Church’s revised social order characterized by humility vv. 1-5
 - b.** The problem of causing offense for fellow members vv. 6-20
 - 1. Do not cause others to stumble vv. 6-9
 - 2. Do not treat others with contempt vv. 10-20
 - c.** The problem of forgiving the offenses of fellow members vv. 21-35
- II.** Instruction for the “many” to care for the “one”
- a.** “You” (plural) must care for the “one” (*cf.* v. 14)
 - b.** Similarity of instruction in vv. 6 & 10
 - Do not cause them to stumble v. 6
 - Do not treat them with contempt v. 10
 - Not only must we refrain from pushing others to fatally stumble, we must rescue them from danger!
(*cf.* WSC Q68 & Q69)
 - c.** Lost sheep is often a metaphor for God’s people vv. 12-13
See Ps 119:176; I Pet 2:25; Mt 9:36 (*cf.* Ps 23:1)
 - d.** Humility in the church requires care for fellow members
 - The sheep are portrayed as “wandering” (3X here)
 - “Loss prevention” is the issue v. 14 (*cf.* Gal 6:1-2)
 - e.** It is “not pleasing” to “**your Father**” that one be lost v. 14
(idiomatic Hebraic phrase, *see* v. 10, *cf.* 11:26)
- III.** The importance of this parable in the whole passage
- a.** Humble yourselves as the lowest member of society vv. 1-5
 - b.** Do not be a cause of stumbling for your brothers vv. 6-9
 - c.** Do not act as if your brother is less important than you vv. 10-14
 - d.** Work to restore your brother when he stumbles vv. 15-20
 - e.** Treat one another with forgiveness as Christ forgives you vv. 21-35

The emphasis on “shepherding” responsibility in this passage is not upon Christ as the Good Shepherd (as in John 10:1-21), nor is it on the elders as God’s under-shepherds (as in Acts 20:28 and I Pet 5:1-4). Rather it is said to be the responsibility of **all** church members to “shepherd” one another. It begins with each of us, although it may come to the point where we need the support of others to accomplish our (God’s) purposes (vv. 16-17).