

Reconcile While There is Time - Matthew 5:25-26

²⁵**Come to good terms with your accuser quickly, while you are with him on the way to court, so that your accuser will not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you will not be thrown into prison.** ²⁶**Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last quadrans.**

²⁵**Come to good terms with your accuser quickly**

Now, for Jesus to urge us to come to good terms with someone, what must the relationship be like in the first place between us? It must be on _____ terms. And Jesus is telling us that it is up to us to _____ the relationship. Jesus says to do this _____. Being angry isn't sin, it's a _____. It's our actions, because we are angry (and even our evil thoughts and words toward those who have angered us) that are the _____. Jesus urges us to resolve our anger quickly, rather than let it become _____.

Sin often _____ another person, but, ultimately, all sin is against God. David said something similar after he had sinned with Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11. When confronted with his sin, David repented in great sorrow, saying to God, "**Against You and You only have I sinned**" in Psalm 51:4. He had clearly sinned against Bathsheba and her husband, too, but it was the violation of God's law that grieved David the most. Sinning against someone incurs a debt to God that we have no _____ to repay. Of course Jesus paid for our sins, past, present and future on the cross, but since sin so often hurts others around us, Jesus commands us to make things right with them. We _____ want people to have a just cause against us in order to cry out against us to our just God!

while you are with him on the way to court,

And so Jesus says that if someone accuses us, and wants to take us to court, we should find a way to reconcile, to come back to _____ terms with them. The type of injury isn't the point—the broken _____ that hasn't been reconciled is the point. Today's verses are about what happens when we refuse to obey God, and reconcile. And the first, is that we may get sued, and _____ before the court. The walk to court presented a "window of _____" to make friends and resolve differences. Jesus is emphasizing that settling the matter then, will be less _____ than letting the matter go to court.

Jesus considers the reconciliation so important, and the opportunity to show a difference between Christians and the world so important that He tells us later in Mathew 5:40 **40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak also.** It's your witness and your ministry of reconciliation that are _____, not the tunic or cloak. Paul shames the Corinthians for not being able to resolve conflicts between Christians within the church in 1 Cor 6:1-8. Basically, Paul is saying that when believers air their dirty laundry in public, and display differences and conflict within the church publicly, they give the church and Jesus Christ a _____ name. If Christians fail to resolve problems on the individual level, or with the help of the church, they have already _____ before they even bring it to court. The loss in terms of their witness and the witness of Christ to the world is far more _____ than anything that they may gain by the lawsuit

When we're the ones who have wronged someone

Paul urges us to make sure that we're not the ones _____ the wronging or defrauding! If we have done this, it is our responsibility to _____. We serve a Just God a Righteous God. When Zaccheus, the rich tax collector was called by Jesus, he knew that his past sinful life of extortion and defrauding people was standing in the way of a closer _____ with God. So we read in Luke 19:8 **But Zaccheus stopped and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I am giving to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone, I am giving back four times as much."** And what was Jesus' reaction? ⁹ And Jesus said to him, "**Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a**

son of Abraham. Jesus forgave his sins. True conversion should be accompanied by the _____ to make things right with those we have wronged, and especially with our brothers and sisters in Christ whom we have injured.

And so, we see a principal that is found throughout the Bible: True _____ and repentance of our sin against God, and His forgiveness of us made possible accepting Jesus' atoning death on the cross both _____ us to Him and results in the desire and _____ to both forgive those who have wronged us, and to _____ our relationship with those we have wronged.

But what if we refuse to do all of this, refuse to repent of our sin, refuse to reconcile with our brother or sister, or make things right?

so that your accuser will not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you will not be thrown into prison.

Once the legal system is involved, and the wheels of our legal system begin moving, there is no telling where it will lead, and there can be some _____ consequences.

²⁶ Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last quadrans.

A quadrans was 1/64th of a standard minimum daily wages (a denarius), and that and the mite were the smallest coin in first-century currency. And the stakes are much higher than having to pay back a debt, whether emotional or monetary. The emphasis is on us making the decision to _____ God, and the horrible consequences of disobedience. Don't fear that someone might _____ your apology when you attempt to reconcile. Don't fear that they may _____ the door in your face, or hang up on you. Instead, fear the One that your going to have to stand before and explain your actions, or your failure to obey and reconcile.

But what happens when a believer _____ to disobey. Where in the Bible can we look for an example? Just what happened when David sinned and instead of reconciling, chose to try to cover it up? David's sin was _____ by deception, manipulation, dragging other people into the plot, and in the end, murdering Uriah. And God made sure that David did not get away with it. (2 Samuel 11:9-14). David was forgiven, but we still see horrible _____ of his trying to cover up his sin. David was at war from that day on until he died. He was at _____ with his own son Absalom, whom he loved. God caused David's sin to be known throughout the whole kingdom and the consequences to affect the entire nation of Israel for many years. And it ended up costing David 2 sons—the baby and Absalom. Do not let your refusal to _____ get to this point. Repent and reconcile _____. We must take action _____ to make amends, to take the initiative to apologize for the grievance that we have caused through our unkind deed, word, look, or thought by which we have hurt someone. And, as Paul reminds us in Romans 12:17-18 **17 Never repay evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all people. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all people.**