

Colossians 3:16

*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly,
teaching and admonishing one another
in all wisdom,
singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs,
with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*



While on vacation the next two weeks I will be sharing some devotionals written by others. This week's are by Mr. Jim Wilson, a 92 year saint from Moscow, Idaho. You can find more of his meditations at: <https://rootsbytheriver.blogspot.com/>.

When Your Brother Sins Against You: God's Teaching on Reconciliation

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

"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" (Matthew 18:15).

These two paragraphs both involve estrangements between you and your brother. In the first passage, the estrangement is your fault (or at the very least your brother thinks it is), because "your brother has something against you." When you attempt to draw near to God, you find you cannot until you are reconciled. The initiative for reconciliation rests on you.

In the second passage, the estrangement is your brother's fault. He has sinned against you. But the initiative still rests with you. The responsibility to reconcile is yours in both cases.

In the second instance there is specific direction on what to do: "Go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone." Every year many people come to me because another Christian has sinned against them. The gist of my counsel is "Go to the brother and tell him his fault between you and him alone." The problem is that they have already violated Jesus' teaching, because they have come to me instead of to the brother. Seeking counsel from others in this way is often an attempt to justify their own reasons for not being reconciled. They want sympathy and endorsement. This causes people to choose up sides on issues they should not even know about in the first place.

If Christians took God's teaching on reconciliation seriously, they would be closer to the Lord, they would be much happier, and most of the counsel they currently seek from others would be unnecessary.

Jim Wilson