Live in Union With Christ

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Ephesians 4:32.

"If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother" (Matthew 18:15). This is the way in which misunderstandings are to be settled. Speaking alone, and in the spirit of Christ to the one who is in fault, will often remove the difficulty. Show Christlike love for your brother by seeking to adjust the difficulty "between thee and him alone." Talk quietly together. Let no angry words escape your lips. Present the subject in a way that will appeal to his best judgment. And if he will hear you, you have gained him as a friend.

Whatever the character of the offense may be, this does not change the plan God has made for the settlement of misunderstandings and personal injuries. Act out the spirit of Christ. Take the recipe God has provided, and carry it to the spiritually diseased [one]. Give him the remedy that will cure the disease of disaffection. Do your part to help him. Feel that it is a duty and privilege to do this, for the sake of the unity and peace of the church, which is very dear to the heart of Christ. He does not want any wound to remain unhealed on any member of His church. All heaven is interested in the interview between the injured member and the one who has been guilty of error. After settling the difficulty, pray together, and angels of God will come to you and bless you. There is music in heaven over this union.
As the erring one accepts the testimony borne, and gives evidence of true repentance, the sunshine of heaven fills his heart. Hearts are drawn together. The healing oil of love removes the disease and soreness of the wrong. The Holy Spirit binds heart to heart.

Those who have been united in Christian fellowship offer prayer to God, and pledge themselves to deal justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God. If they have wronged others, they continue the work of repentance, confession, and restitution; and the disease is healed. They are fully set to do good to one another. This is the fulfilling of the law of Christ.

Repentance, confession, and restitution are all required. But these cannot atone for the sin, for God has been wronged in the person of His saints. The Lord Jesus alone is able to atone for sin, by the application of His blood, shed for the guilt of the sinner. His blood cleanses from all sin.—Manuscript 47, April 2, 1902, "Lessons From the Eighteenth of Matthew."

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