

## Lectionary passage:-

**Exodus 12 v1-4:**

**Ezekiel 33 v7-11:**

**Psalm 149 :**

**Romans 13 v8-14;**

**Matthew 18 15-20**

We come to the final Sunday in the summer holidays from school as we continue to seek to learn from the allotted passages for the day. We consider how to deal with those who sin against us, who are unjust, unfair or just plain immoral!

1. A person wrongs you or your community. Jesus tells us the best thing to do is to take them aside and point out their wrong. The emphasis is on doing it quietly, not shouting the wrong from the tree tops. Give the person a chance to admit their error.

*But we often these days hear about aggression on Social Media, when someone has been offended the whole world knows often before the person.*

2. I have often heard of people who have made a comment on TV or publically in some way and before they know it a whole barrage of emails and negative comments come their way, they can be the last to know the person is offended. Jesus says that is not the way to deal with offences and sins. The Lord is always trying to encourage a person, including ourselves! To recognise sin and wrong and then turn from it!
3. Jesus is ever practical, the person may not consider they have done any wrong-and indeed they may not have done so!

In order to protect us from such individuals ruling the roost and making up laws and rules as it were. One is encouraged to go to a friend or a brother or sister in the church and have them join you in your comments to the brother about the wrong doing. So we have some sort of objective agreement about the wrong done. Again this is all done quietly.

I often think of this passage when journalists shout outside Number 10 Downing street, are you going to sack Dominic Cummings Prime Minister !

4. Of course if a person refuses to admit any error and remains fixed in their wrong ways then one is encouraged to go further and bring them before the church.

We see the way in which wrong and sin can be recognised. Sadly we live in days where the suggestions of Jesus in these matters are disregarded-it seems sometimes whatever a person does they have to be accepted as there is no longer any general consensus on right and wrong!

5. Finally Jesus reminds us of the real power we have in two respects

What ever we bind on earth as his people Heaven goes along with it. That is if we are in line with the eternal values of God then heaven is on our side but not on the side of petty squabbles.

6. Jesus end this passage by telling us when two of us agree on earth and pera in unity to God then he hears us for when two or three gather in my name and pray the prayers I want to hear, in line with divine desire, they will be answered.

There is a great onus on us to get with others and seek in prayer for change, blessing and justice in this world, is that not what Jesus says to us in the parable of the widow and the judge in Luke 18? Persistence to God over a just prayer and cause will receive a favourable answer.

Are our prayers too selfish?

Can we truly ask other to join us to pray for the request? If so then it will be answered because it is a just and fair prayer!