

## GUIDELINES FOR PASTOR – CHARGE ASSESSMENT

## MATTHEW 18: THE RULE OF CHRIST

There may be issues of concern that pastors and congregations must work through.

The Bishop and District Superintendents expect that congregations and pastors will use “The Rule of Christ” (*Matthew 18*) to address issues of concern directly, honestly, and with mutual accountability.

If resolution is not possible after following this method, the chairperson and/or the pastor are encouraged to contact the District Superintendent.

## MATTHEW 18: THE RULE OF CHRIST

*If your hand or your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life maimed or lame than to have two hands or feet and to be thrown into the eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out and throw it away; it is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into the hell of fire.*

*If another member of the church sins against you, go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.*

*But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses.*

*If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church.*

*...and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you, as a Gentile and a tax collector.*

*For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.*

**1. Look at Yourself – Matt 18: 8-9**

Jesus tells us to take time to examine our role in the conflict. Ask yourself these questions:

- Can I let it go? (If the answer is “yes” there is no need to confront the other person.) If not...
- What may the other person perceive that I have contributed to this problem?
- What does God see?

Change your behavior based on these insights.

*If not resolved...*

**2. One on One – Matt 18:15**

The purpose of this second step is to resolve the conflict... not to get mad or to get even. Remember to:

- Speak for yourself by starting your sentences with “I”
- Work hard to understand the other person’s point of view
- Work together to create solutions

*If not resolved...*

**3. Get Some Objective Help – Matt 18:16**

Others can help the two parties see possibilities. Take someone with you to help mediate or to help facilitate the process.

*If not resolved...*

**4. Take it to the Church – Matt 18: 17a**

Use the resources of the Church. Bring in someone with skills in conflict resolution or someone who has the power to resolve the issue.

*If not resolved...*

**5. Shake the Dust – Matt 18: 17b**

There are some issues that can not be resolved. The church should remember its mission. Let go of the anger and disappointment at the unresolved issues and move on with your ministry.

**6. God is There – Matt 18: 20**

This is God’s powerful promise to be with us in the midst of our problems.

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