

Forgive others with perseverance and hope

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Reflection on Matthew 18:15-22

The concern with a person who is sinning should be focused on the harm that is being done to the person. Be assertive but gentle in pointing out sin to someone. Respect privacy, but be forthright. Begin with one-one conversations. If that does not succeed, take two or three brothers or sisters with you who witness all that happens. If that does not succeed, then go to the church. The church establishes moral standards in the world. The church seeks to restore someone who has violated the standards, but if the person refuses, then the person must be put outside the fellowship.

Jesus gave us the guiding principle for relating to others who have wronged us. Forgive not just seven times, but seventy-seven times. After I have forgiven 77 times, I will have established the habit and can continue until the person has a change of heart or God calls me home.

As a transformative evaluator discusses evaluation findings with stakeholders she should be ready to facilitate discussion of these principles of forgiveness. The evaluator should prayerfully consider how to formulate recommendations for dealing with sin around forgiveness rather than punishment.