**Scripture:** Matthew 18:1-20

**Singing:** 276 – 101 – 40:1, 5-6 – 24:1-3

Intro: Jesus’ main two concerns of the Church He owns!

**Keys of God’s Kingdom (4)**

I.What is meant with keys? II. Who owns the keys? III. Who are called to use these keys? IV. How are these keys to be used?

**IV. How is the *key of Christian discipline* to be used?**

A. It is to be used *against those who are in Christ*

1. Christian Discipline applies only to *believers within the Church*

a. Matthew 18:14: *if thy* ***brother*** *shall trespass against thee*

b. yet consider 1 John 3:14-15 & 1 Cor. 5:9-11

B. What precedes *church discipline* upon brothers or sisters?

1. the *brotherly admonition* by fellow believers (Matt. 18:15-16)

a. concerns *errors and/or wicked course of life* (James 5:20)

b. doesn’t concern *minor life-style issues – opinions or tradition*

● Matthew 12:1-13

c. also concerns *sins – practices* that can’t be covered with love

● Prov. 19:11 -- 1 Peter 4:8

d. needs to address trespassed defined by the *revealed will of God*

2. this needs to be *often* (repeatedly, patient) (Catechism q. 85)

3. this admonition is to the *most genuine exercise of love*

a. consider Leviticus 19:16-19; Hebrews 10:24; Eph. 4:15 & 29-30

4. Having done the brotherly admonition *often – humbly – lovingly*, Jesus doesn’t welcome you at the consistory level (Matt. 18:16)

a. after ***personal*** *confrontation* comes the ***mutual*** *confrontation*

b. Jesus’s command is to *take one or more* ***witnesses***

● what is their task?

● how does someone become a ***witness***

c. if this *rescue effort* fails, then Jesus prescribes *stronger medicine*

Let’s ponder: Blessed are the *peace-makers* (not the trouble-makers!)

A. Some of the Lord’s children can be *troublemakers*

1. By following *troubling pathways of sinful errors or practices*

2. By being the *devil’s advocate:* Prov. 16:28a

**Gems to Wear and Practice**

He that is not a son of peace, is not a son of God. (R. Baxter)

Labor mightily for a healing spirit. (T. Brooks)

Few things more adorn and beautify a Christian profession than exercising and manifesting the spirit of peace. (A. W. Pink)

Peace is the deliberate adjustment of my life to the will of God.

Peace and comfort can be found only in the context of obedience.

Peace is never obtained but by the rooting out of sin.

Peace is such a precious jewel that I would give anything for it … except the truth. (M. Henry)

Peace flows from purity. (T. Watson)