Scripture: Matthew 18:15-35

Singing: 207 – 174 – 83 – 369

Intro: *In the keeping of His commandments is great reward* (Ps. 19:11)

**Keys of God’s Kingdom (5)**

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

**III. How are the *key of Christian discipline* to be used?**

A. It begins on ***personal level***(Matt. 18:15): the *home-medicine*

B. It is followed with ***brotherly level*** (Matt. 18:16): the *hospital care!*

 a. What qualities are these *men/women* to have to assist as witness?

 ● wisdom: James 3:13, 17

 ● meekness Gal. 6:1-3

 ● faithful to God – integrity (Prov. 20:6-7)

 ● willing to go all the way: Deut. 17:5-7

C. It concludes with the ***corporate level***(Matt. 18:17): the *intensive care!*

 1. Jesus’ instructions are His Divine command

 a. starts upon *the neglect to hear*

b. leads to *tell it unto the church*

 ● either *full membership* or *consistory*

● purpose of this next level: ***enlarge circle of love***

 c. if neglect to hear the church, *excommunication is final step*

 ● see Psalters pages 131-135

 - silent censure

 - first step: *general announcement*

 - second step: *personal announcement*

 - third step: *excommunication announcement*

 - fourth step: *excommunication*

 d. why public:

 ● follows example of Scripture: *Paul publicly named sinners in*

 *his letters (Rom. 16:17-18; Gal. 2:11-14; Phil. 4:2-3*

 ● follows command of 1 Tim. 5:19-20 and example 1 Cor. 5:4-5

 2. Excommunication by God’s body is the echo of heaven: Matt. 18:18

D. The *evangelizing* of the excommunicated members

 1. Considerand deal with them *as heathen/publican*

a. they aren’t any more *brother/sisters in church* (1 Cor. 5:11)

 ● Bible doesn’t mandate *extreme shunning*

 b. but they are *sinners gone astray* (Luke 15; Romans 12:19-20)

Close: *What if they repent again and return to us?*

A. Why did Peter raise this question in Matt. 18:21-22?

 1. He realized that *confrontation may mean call to forgive: measure?*

 2. Jesus illustrated in Matt 18:23-35 that grace is *immeasurable*

 a. the King showed exceeding grace

 b. the servant (church member) refused to show any grace

B. Christ’s call to His Church: *be grace filled and grace giving!*

 1. An unforgiving attitude towards a sinner also affects his/her family

 2. A cold attitude towards those fallen reflects on badly on God

**Thoughts on Church**

As the saving doctrine of Christ is the life of the church,

So the discipline is, as it were, the sinew. (Calvin)

Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, there a church of God exists, even if it swarms with many faults. (Calvin)