*Monday, January 16, 2012*

**Slice of Life**

Matthew 18:15-17 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. (16) But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. (17) And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. (KJV)

I begin this week with this point for two reasons; the first being the importance of dealing with situations one on one and not behind someone’s back. I have seen personally where the above situation is done in the reverse order, where everyone but the person that needed to hear the correction heard it first. When things are not done decently and in order, it just may be that the person bringing forth the accusation or just plain old backbiting was in reality just foaming out some of their own shame and taking it out on others. The other point I wanted to address is when doing teachings it is imperative that you back it up with at least two or three witnesses; in other words, as you go through your Bible you will see the same words and same issues being mentioned throughout God’s word. Which is why we here try to stay on topic.

1 Timothy 5:19-20 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. (20) Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear. (KJV)

You have heard the term respect your elders? Well the Bible tells us clearly how that is done, and the proper order as well. The two or three witnesses that you bring forth are not just in the form as carnal ones rather it should include spiritual as well; being able to back up the accusation with the word of God in more than just one place. If one is not able to do so then it would be in your best interest not to bring forth the accusation.

2 Corinthians 13:1-2 This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established. (2) I told you before, and foretell you, as if I were present, the second time; and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare: (KJV)

Paul the Apostle, who I would definitely consider an elder, was letting the people know that there was a problem in their church and that he could back up his statements with the word of God. In order for you to ever be considered for the position of an elder you will need to know the Word well enough so that you become much quicker to hear first, slower to wrath or react in the flesh, and slower to speak.

Proverbs 18:12-13 Before destruction the heart of man is haughty, and before honour is humility. (13) He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him. (KJV)

Make sure Church that you get God’s take on things first, and that you are able to back it up with at least two to three witnesses in His word before you respond to situations that manifest. Otherwise you will find that the outcome will be based on the outward sight, and not getting the full insight into what really is taking place.