

Church Discipline

- I. Introduction
 - a. Requested topic
 - b. Needed
 - c. Timely
- II. Key Statement: The New Testament gives instructions to the local church on how to carry out discipline of its members, and instructions to individual Christians of how to relate to those who have been disciplined
- III. The Local Church
 - a. The church at Corinth was commanded to discipline the sexually immoral man (1 Cor. 5)
 - i. He should be removed from among them (v. 2)
 - ii. With mourning (v. 2)
 - iii. Delivered to Satan in the assembly (v. 4-5)
 - iv. So that his flesh may be destroyed, but his spirit saved (v. 5)
 - v. So that the leaven of sin may not affect the whole church (v. 6-8,13)
 - vi. The same action was to be taken for those practicing other obvious sins (v. 11)
 - vii. The church was commanded to accept him when he repented (2 Cor. 2:6-11)
 - b. Christ commanded the church to discipline a Christian who would not repent of an offense against his brother (Matt. 18:15-17)
 - i. The offended part should seek reconciliation on his own first (v. 15)
 - ii. Then take others (v. 16)
 - iii. Then bring it to the church (v. 17)
- IV. The Individual Christian's responsibility to those who are sinning
 - a. Discipline is sometimes a church action, but it involves individual Christians following the NT instruction on how to relate to Christians who are in sin
 - b. First, restore
 - i. Mat. 18:15 – call him back
 - ii. Gal. 6:1 – restore him
 - iii. 1 John 5:16 - Pray for him
 - iv. 2 Cor. 2:7-8 - Forgive him if he repents
 - c. Then, ESCALATE
 - i. Matt 18:16, 17
 - d. Finally, WITHDRAW
 - i. Mat. 18:17 – treat him like a Gentile or tax-collector
 - ii. 1 Cor. 5:9-11 – do not associate; do not even eat with him
 - iii. 2 Th. 3:6 – keep away
 - iv. 2 Th. 3:14-15 – have nothing to do with him/warn him as a brother
 - v. Titus 3:10-11 – avoid
 - vi. Rom 16:17-18 – avoid

- vii. 2 Jn. 10-11 – do not partake with him in his evil deeds
 - V. The scope of church discipline
 - a. Things we are to discipline or withdraw for
 - i. Some are very specific
 - 1. Sexual immorality, greed, idolatry, drunkenness, reviling, swindling – 1 Cor. 5:11
 - 2. Refusing to work for a living – 2 Th. 3:6
 - 3. Causing division – Tit. 3:10-11; Rom. 16:17-18
 - ii. Others are very broad
 - 1. Any offense against a brother of which one will not repent – Matt. 18:15
 - 2. Not keeping the teaching of 2 Th. - 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15
 - 3. lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God – 2 Tim. 3:1-5
 - 4. Does not abide in/bring/keep the doctrine of Christ – 2 John 9-11
 - 5. These general instructions to withdraw and avoid make it clear that any clear instruction of the New Testament which a brother or sister is in open and unrepentant violation of may result in that Christian being withdrawn from by individual Christians and the church as a whole
 - 6. The commands to avoid and withdraw are no less clear than the commands which the erring brother or sister has violated in becoming unfaithful and we must not overlook them – Consider yourself, lest you also be tempted!
 - b. Some cannot be Jesus' disciples
 - i. They will not deny themselves, take up the cross and follow Jesus – Luke 9:23; 14:27
 - 1. Church discipline occurs when the congregation as a whole recognizes that a brother or sister is no longer following Jesus
 - 2. And cannot be considered a faithful disciple of Jesus any more
 - ii. Our recent actions regarding church discipline
 - 1. Sexual immorality – 1 Cor. 5
 - 2. Forsaking the assembly – Heb 10:25
- VI. Conclusion
 - a. Review
 - b. Invitation

1 Corinthians 5:1-13 ESV 1 It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father's wife. 2 And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. 3 For though absent in body, I am present in spirit; and as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. 4 When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. 6 Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7 Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. 8 Let us therefore celebrate the festival, not with the old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. 9 I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people-- 10 not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world. 11 But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler--not even to eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? 13 God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

2 Corinthians 2:6-11 ESV 6 For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, 7 so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him. 9 For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything. 10 Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, 11 so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

Matthew 18:15-20 ESV "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18 Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 19 Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

Galatians 6:1 ESV Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

1 John 5:16 ESV If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life--to those who commit sins that do not lead to death. There is sin that leads to death; I do not say that one should pray for that.

2 Thessalonians 3:6 ESV 6 Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.

2 Thessalonians 3:14-15 ESV 14 If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. 15 Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

1 Timothy 1:18-20 ESV This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, 19 holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, 20 among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 NKJV If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 ESV And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, 25 correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, 26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

2 Timothy 3:1-5 ESV But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. 2 For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, 3 heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, 4 treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.

Titus 3:10-11 ESV As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, 11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.

Romans 16:17-18 ESV I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. 18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.

2 John 1:9-11 ESV Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, 11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.