

Corrective Church Discipline

- Church Discipline is God's requirement for the holiness of his Church, the spiritual health of his children, and the glory of his name.

I. Definition: The bringing of correction to a sinning Christian, whether through rebuke or imposed consequences, the most severe of which is excommunication.

II. Purposes

- A. The holiness of the church
- B. The spiritual health of the church and each of its members
 1. Seeks to win the erring believer to repentance and right relationship with God so that they persevere in faith and salvation
 2. Protects the church/other believers from sin
 - a. From the influence of the erring brother or sister
 - b. By way of warning and example of consequence
 3. Exposes sin
- C. The testimony of the church to the World
- D. The glory of God

III. The Practice of church discipline

- A. Step 1: Confront the sinning brother privately in a spirit of humility and gentleness in order to bring him to repentance and healthy relationship with God.
- B. Step 2: If he does not repent, take one or two more believers to confront him to bring him to repentance or confirm that he is indeed in sin and refusing to repent.
- C. Step 3: If he still does not repent, bring the matter to the church for the church to confront him and lead him to repentance or confirm that he is indeed in sin and stubbornly refusing to repent.
- D. Step 4: If he still does not repent, the church is to excommunicate him.
 1. Expel him from the church.
 2. Consider and declare him to be an unbeliever.
 3. Church members are not to associate with him but to avoid him except for seeking to lead him to repentance.
 4. Hands him over to Satan, i.e., puts him into the realm ruled by Satan (the World) apart from the protection provided by the church.

IV. Some passages to consider

Matthew 18:15-20; Rom 16:17-19; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Cor 2:6; Gal 6:1; Eph 5:11; 1 Thes 5:14; 2 Thes 3:6-15; 1 Tim 5:19-20; 2 Tim 3:5; Titus 3:9-11; 2 John 10; Jude 22-23