

CORRECTIVE CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Text: 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15

INTRO: There are different forms of discipline: instructive, preventative & corrective. This lesson deals with corrective church discipline.

I. IN ALL RELATIONS A DEGREE OF DISCIPLINE IS NECESSARY.

A. In the home, Eph. 6:1-4.

Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod he will not die. You shall beat him with a rod and deliver his soul from hell. (Prov. 23:13-14).

B. In society. Romans 13:3-4.

C. In all other relationships: school, business, etc.

D. The Lord's church is no exception.

1. The nature of the church demands discipline. Col. 1:13; 1 Cor. 5:6.

2. It is inconsistent to observe the law of God with respect to admission into the church, then to ignore the rules dealing with exclusion from fellowship.

3. In a scripturally organized congregation the elders, as overseers, should lead the way in the matter of discipline. READ TITUS 1:9-11.

4. In a congregation where elders have not yet been appointed, this matter must be handled in the same way any other important aspect of church work would be handled.

5. Church discipline necessitates the cooperation of the entire congregation in order that God's purposes might be accomplished.
READ I CORINTHIANS 5:4-5.

II. THE PURPOSES OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

A. Negative.

1. Not vengeance.

Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,": says the Lord. (Romans 12:19).

2. Not to "de-brother" the sinner.

Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother" (2 Thess. 3:15).

B. Positive.

1. To restore him to the Lord.

That the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (1 Cor. 5:5).

...that he may be ashamed. (2 Thess. 3:14).

...that they may learn not to blaspheme. (1 Tim. 1:20).

2. To save the church from his influence. 1 Cor. 5:6 rebuke before all that others may fear. (1 Tim. 5:20).

3. To maintain the respect of non-members. Tho this is not explicitly stated in connection with discipline, it is a Biblical principle, as can be seen in the qualification of elders.

Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach & the snare of the devil. (1 Tim. 3:7).

III. HOW IS CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE EFFECTED?

Now I urge you brethren, note those who cause divisions & offenses contrary to the doctrine which you learned and avoid them. (Romans 16:17).

READ I CORINTHIANS 5:2, 5, 7, 11-13.

If anyone comes to you & does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him: for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds. (2 John 10-11).

And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person & do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. (2 Thess. 3:14).

NOTE: When the sinner repents, he should be forgiven & restored to full association with the brethren.

READ 2 CORINTHIANS 2:6-7.

IV. WHEN SHOULD CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE BE ADMINISTERED?

- A. After admonition has failed to restore him.
Reject a divisive man after the 1st & 2nd admonition.
(Titus 3:10).

If he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector. (Matt. 18:17).

- B. But before he corrupts others. 1 Cor. 5:6.
Do not be deceived: "Evil company corrupts good habits" (1 Cor 15:33)

V. WHAT KIND OF SINS DEMAND CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE?

- A. Not secret sins. These demand self-discipline, and the sinner should seek forgiveness from God alone on a personal level.
- B. Personal & private sins should never become the occasion for church action, but if they are not properly handled, they will. LUKE 17:3.
- C. Public sins.
 1. Sins of immorality. I CORINTHIANS 5:11.
 2. Factious trouble-makers, Romans 16:17.
 3. Bums, busybodies & perhaps others who walk

"unruly." READ 2 THESS. 3:6-16.

VI. WHY HAS THIS IMPORTANT DUTY BEEN NEGLECTED?

- A. Preachers haven't preached it, 2 Tim. 4:2.
- B. Elders are afraid members won't back them up.
- C. Many brethren are more afraid of hurting someone's feelings than they are of displeasing God.
- D. Many in modern times fear the church will become involved in lawsuits.

Had we rather appear in the courts of men for having obeyed God, or appear in the court of God, having obeyed the commandments of men instead of God?

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