

When One Breaks Rank

Church Discipline: HIS Doctrine, OUR Responsibility (Part 1)

(1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15)

- Introduction:
1. Many, in and out of the church, may know very little about the Bible doctrine of church discipline.
 2. Others know of the doctrine, but just refuse to obey it.
 3. In this morning's lesson, we will briefly examine the doctrine, and this evening address our responsibilities.

I. The Church is Commanded to Discipline

- A. Discipline refers to training which instructs, corrects, molds, and strengthens.
- B. Types of Discipline.
 1. Instructive (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 2. Punitive (2 Corinthians 2:6-8).

II. Why are We to Discipline?

- A. The short answer – Because God tells us to (1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:6-15).
- B. The longer answer – Because it is necessary for the church to be what it is supposed to be (Rom. 2:24; James 5:19-20).

III. Who is to be Disciplined?

- A. Any Christian entangled in sin, given sufficient time and encouragement to repent, but refuses to do so, should be disciplined.
- B. Examples:
 1. One who sins against his brother (Matt. 18:15-17).
 2. One guilty of immoral conduct (1 Cor. 5:1-11).
 3. One who is divisive (Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10-11).
 4. One who walks disorderly and disobeys Scripture (2 Thess. 3:6,14).
 5. One who persists in any sin (1 Tim. 5:19-20).

IV. What is the Purpose of Discipline?

- A. Save the soul of the sinner (1 Cor. 5:5).
- B. Save the church (1 Cor. 5:6).
- C. Save the world (Matt. 5:16).

V. How are the Disciplined to be Treated?

- A. We are to withdraw from them (2 Thess. 3:6).
- B. We are not to keep company with them (2 Thess. 3:14).
- C. We are not to eat with them (1 Cor. 5:11).
- D. We are to turn away from them (Rom. 16:17).
- E. We are to admonish them (2 Thess. 3:15).

- F. In other words, church discipline is more than just a public announcement, but is to be lived out in our individual interactions with the one being disciplined.

VI. Why is Church Discipline Not Practiced In Many Churches?

- A. Because preachers haven't taught enough on the topic (Hosea 4:6).
- B. Sin may be so widespread; it seems like an overwhelming task (Rev. 3:2-3).
- C. It is unpleasant to confront people in their sin (James 5:20).
- D. Some may think it will be overlooked, since they're doing so many other things that are right (1 Sam. 15:22).
- E. They may be afraid of the consequences (Matt. 10:28).
- F. They may be lacking courage (1 Cor. 16:13).

VII. What Happens When Discipline is Neglected?

- A. Sin encroaches upon the church (1 Cor. 5:6).
- B. We disobey God (John 14:15).
- C. We fail to shine as lights to the world (Phil. 2:15).
- D. We give the world reason to criticize the church (2 Sam. 12:14).
- E. We may live with a guilty conscience until we sear it (1 Tim. 4:2).

- Conclusion:
- 1. Some of God's commands may be difficult to obey, but they are not arbitrary or burdensome (1 John 5:3).
 - 2. We see the purpose of discipline is to save souls.
 - 3. We must decide whether we are content to just know God's commandments, or if we also possess the desire to do them.
 - 4. (James 1:22).