

# CHURCH DISCIPLINE

## Pt. 3

### Int.

1. Aim: To show how we should treat those who have been withdrawn from and why we fail to practice church discipline today.
2. 2 Thes. 3:6 "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."
3. Corrective church discipline is necessary when a brother is walking disorderly. We have discussed:
  - a. (1) Why ? Because it is a command of God
  - b. (2) Purpose ? To save souls
  - c. (3) Who ? - all who walk disorderly
  - d. (4) How? - the scriptural approach - privately, semi-privately, publicly
4. In This lesson we will discuss:
  - a. (1) How we should treat the ones withdrawn from
  - b. (2) Excuses for not practicing discipline

### Discussion

#### I. HOW DO YOU TREAT THEM ?

##### A. They still need love

1. Jn. 13:34-35 V. 35 "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."
2. We ought to love them even though we have exercised church discipline with them.
3. We love our children even when it is necessary to discipline them

B. **Withdraw yourselves** - 2 Thes. 3:6-15

1. All personal association for the purpose of social fellowship is to be withdrawn, that he may be ashamed
2. They must be caused to realize that their sin has rendered them unfit for the association of Christian people. It is designed to shock their senses as to cause them to see the gravity of their condition and repent.
3. How do we treat them if they continue to attend the worship services?
  - a. They need to be here!!! We should not discourage them from attending.
  - b. Can't include the men in any act of worship.
  - c. When it comes to the Lord's Supper we do not practice closed communion.
4. 2 Thes.3:15 "Yet count him not as an enemy but admonish him as a brother"

C. **Mark them and Avoid them** - Rom. 16:17 "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

1. This does not mean we cannot speak to them!!! If so then we could not talk to them concerning the salvation of their soul. We are told to admonish them.
2. This does not mean we cannot shake hands with them. We can shake hands with an atheist and this does not mean we agree with or are in fellowship with them.
3. There must be a difference in the way that we treat them. If they cannot see that there is a difference then we have not withdrawn fellowship from them.
4. The fellowship of Christians should be so sweet that when their fellowship is withdrawn, the erring member may feel a vacuum in his life and feel the need for repentance!

D. **Not to eat with them** - 1 Cor. 5:11

1. This does not mean the Lord's Supper
2. We are not to eat a common meal with the one from whom we have withdrawn.
3. We will not go to their homes for a meal with them, nor invite them to our homes for a common meal.
4. I cannot fellowship with them in the same way as before withdrawing of fellowship took place.
5. What do we do when a family member is withdrawn from by the church? -----  
 "Family responsibilities toward a father or mother, son or daughter withdrawn from is a challenge indeed. Since God ordained marriage in Genesis 2 and the church did not arrive until Acts 2 there are some God-given appointments in the marital realm such as 1 Corinthians 7:1-5. A wife should continue her normal responsibilities but never a day pass without lovingly exhorting her mate to come back to the Lord." [Answer by Johnny Ramsey]

E. **Put them away** -

1. 1 Cor. 5:13 ASV "... Put away the wicked man from among yourselves."
2. Put away - no longer have fellowship
3. This does not mean that we lock them up
4. Church Discipline is not kicking someone out of the church, it is not excommunicating someone.

F. **Admonish Him** - 2 Thes. 3:15 "Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."

1. We cannot leave them alone completely, because we are told to admonish him.
2. He is still our brother after we have withdrawn our fellowship. Therefore we have concern for him.
3. Every opportunity that we have we will admonish, encourage this erring brother to return and come back.
4. We can admonish without having fellowship with him. If we meet them on the street or anyplace it would not be out of place for us to admonish them.
5. It would not be wrong to go the person's home as long as we are going to admonish him and encourage him to repent!! It would be wrong if we were just making a social call and not warning or admonishing him.

G. **Pray for Them** - not that they will continue in their sin but that they will repent.

H. The purpose of discipline is to bring the one to repentance and save his soul!!

## II. **EXCUSES FOR NOT PRACTICING DISCIPLINE**

A. **WHEAT AND TARES** ——— Mt. 13:24-43

1. Objection to church discipline
  - a. Some say the Lord is speaking of the church with good and bad members
  - b. We should not try to remove the bad for fear of causing the good to be uprooted.
  - c. On judgment God will take care of the tares

## 2. Answer

- a. This parable has nothing to do with church discipline or withdrawal of fellowship
- b. If it condemned corrective church discipline it would contradict other passages like II Thes. 3:6 I Tim. 1:20 & I Cor. 5:5
- c. Field = it is the world not the church
- d. Wheat = sons of kingdom Christians Tares = sinners, sown by devil
- e. In this world we must live with or around sinners.
- f. But there is a time coming when God shall separate the two
- g. It is a perversion & twisting of this passage to say Jesus meant for the wicked church members to continue in the church.

B. **JUDGE NOT THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED** - Mt. 7:1-5

## 1. Objection

- a. The exercising of corrective discipline does require judging.
- b. Therefore many quote this as proof that such should not be administered

## 2. Answer

- a. Does this mean all judging is condemned?
- b. If so what about: I Cor. 6:5 Jn. 7:24?
- c. The meaning of Mt. 7:1-5
  - (1) Warning against hypocritical harsh judging.
  - (2) First remove beam from own eye
  - (3) V. 5 requires that we be righteous in our judgment
  - (4) In I Cor. 5:11-13 Paul commands them to judge those within the church.

C. **WE CAN'T WITHDRAW FROM THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY WITHDRAWN FROM US**

1. Objection

- a. Frequently people use the excuse for not withdrawing from those who walk disorderly by forsaking the assembly, that they have already withdrawn from us.
- b. Since he has withdrawn himself the Church needs no further action
- c. He has no fellowship with us, so just drop his name from the roll

2. Answer

- a. This objection shows that people fail to understand:
  - (1) The purpose and
  - (2) The Method of church discipline
- b. The one who has quit attending is still lost - I Cor. 5:5
- c. The Bible commands the church to withdraw from those who walk disorderly - II Thes. 3:6
- d. It's the Church that does the withdrawing, not the sinner that withdraws from the church.
- e. The discipline is to make him ashamed (II Thes. 3:14) so he will desire to return!!!

D. **IT WILL DO MORE HARM THAN GOOD**

1. Objection

- a. If we start throwing people out of the church it will cause a lot of hurt feelings and more harm will come.

- b. If we withdraw from old Brother Moonshine Maker what about the rest of his relatives? They are liable to get mad and quit the church also and if we loose many we will be hurting the church!!

2. Answer

- a. We are not throwing people out of the church, we are withdrawing fellowship from them to try to restore them.
- b. If Church discipline is carried out in the right way it will never do more harm than good
  - (1) If so then God made a mistake
  - (2) If So God did not know it would hurt for in Acts 5:1-11, He disciplined Ananias & Sapphira. In Acts 5:11& 14 we see the good results
  - (3) Discipline does not destroy the church, it makes it healthier so it will grow stronger!!!

E. **THE LORD ADDS WE CANNOT SUBTRACT**

1. Objection

- a. The Lord Adds to the church (Acts 2:47)
- b. We cannot subtract from the church - God is to do that. Therefore we should not practice church discipline

2. Answer

- a. Scriptures teach that discipline is necessary
- b. When one obeys he is born again:
  - (1) Jn. 3:3-5 He is a member of the family of God and always will be!
  - (2) We cannot change that and do not desire to do so.

- c. But there are 2 kinds of God's children
  - (1) Those who are faithful and Those who are not faithful
  - (2) Those who are unfaithful :
    - (a) Can repent and return to God
    - (b) If not God will disown him or : disinherit him

## F. NONE OF US ARE WITHOUT SIN

1. Objection
  - a. This is a magic wand that some wave to dismiss the subject
  - b. Since all of us are sinners, none has the right to point out a flaw in the life of another!!
  - c. Some have skeletons in their own closet
    - (1) It has been there for a number of years and most have forgotten about it
    - (2) If discipline is practiced they are afraid this skeleton will be brought to light
2. Answer
  - a. If you have skeletons in the closet - clear them out
    - (1) He must not be guilty of the same sin - Rm. 2:1 Mt. 7:1-5
    - (2) He must be willing to humble himself and ask forgiveness
  - b. Yes we all sin through weakness and ignorance but there is a big difference in those who sin willfully & those trying to do something about their sins.
  - c. Paul called himself the chief of sinners - I Tim. 1:15 b. Yet he was forgiven - I Tim. 1:13

- d. And he wrote to Corinth, a church that had faults, telling them to discipline a brother!
- e. We must confess our sins ( I Jn. 1:9) and consider self (Gal. 6:1) and then obey the Lord's command to practice discipline

## G. VARIOUS OBJECTIONS TO CHURCH DISCIPLINE

- 1. It isn't pleasant
  - a. That is correct -
  - b. Heb. 12:11 NKJV "Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it."
- 2. I'm against it
  - a. No person has the right to neglect commands of God
  - b. This is the forgotten commandment
  - c. Jas. 4:17
- 3. We've never done it before
  - a. It's been neglected and ignored
  - b. Not much preaching or teaching on the subject
  - c. It's a Bible command that we must obey

4. I Don't want to get involved
  - a. This is the attitude of Society today in general
  - b. Paul says we must be involved - Rm. 14:7 " For none of us liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself."
  - c. As Christians we must be involved and be concerned about other people
  - d. Gal. 6:1
  - e. Jas. 5:19-20
  
5. We can't know the other person's heart
  - a. That is correct
  - b. That's the reason for Mt. 18:15 - go to him and "tell him his fault between thee and him alone."
  - c. Gal. 6:1 In spirit of meekness we talk to the person letting them know we are concerned and care for them
  
6. Done to show authority - therefore done with discrimination
  - a. Our attitude must be correct
  - b. We would be wrong if we practiced discipline just to show our authority and just to get even with someone
  - c. Jas. 2:1 & 9

## **Conclusion**

1. I have a responsibility to proclaim the truth on every subject and unless I do I will be lost.
  - a. 1 Cor. 9:16 "...woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!"
  - b. Acts 20:26-27 "Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."
2. Each of us has the responsibility to carry out God's commands as a Christian
3. Christ purchased the church with his blood and he desires that it remain pure. Acts 20:28
4. Let us not make excuses for failing to carry out church discipline, but practice it in order to keep the church pure.
5. Heaven is prepared for those who make preparation.
6. It could be that if the brethren knew how you were living they would withdraw fellowship from you. If so repent now!!!

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Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Evening - April 20, 2008  
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