

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE DISORDERLY
2 Thess. 3:6-15

Introduction:

1. In 1981, a church discipline case made national news.
 - a. The church of Christ in Collinsville, OK withdrew from one of its members because of fornication.
 - b. She sued the church and was awarded \$390,000 in damages.
2. Marian Guinn's husband had left her and her children destitute.
 - a. Her sister, a member of the Collinsville church, took them in.
 - b. Members of the church cared for her children while she went to nursing school.
 - c. The church bought a car for her to drive to classes and gave a party for her when she graduated.
 - d. Ms. Guinn became a member of the Collinsville congregation.
3. Soon after her graduation, she became involved in an adulterous relationship.
 - a. The elders met with her on three occasions urging her to repent.
 - b. In the third meeting they warned her she would be withdrawn from if she did not repent.
 - c. She refused and was withdrawn from by the church.
 - d. She sued alleging her privacy was violated by the public withdrawal.
4. She was courted by the liberal media, appeared on the Phil Donohue Show, and Hollywood proposed making a movie of her "ordeal."
5. The church appealed the case to the Supreme Court of Oklahoma and the lower court's judgment was overturned.
6. Discipline is very unpopular today.
 - a. Schools may face lawsuits if they punish children for misdeeds.
 - b. Little discipline is done in many homes by busy parents.
 - c. It has become a "forgotten commandment" in most churches.

Discussion:

- I. WHAT IS CHURCH DISCIPLINE?

- A. **“Discipline” is from the same root as “disciple;” it means to teach, instruct, or guide.**
- B. **Discipline is essential to the well being of society.**
 - 1. **We must have law enforcement to protect us.**
 - 2. **When I was in school, the “switch” was in a prominent place above the blackboard.**
- C. **Discipline has two sides to it:**
 - 1. **Positive: sound teaching shows the right way to behave.**
 - 2. **Negative: correction enforces the right way to behave.**

II. WHO SHOULD BE DISCIPLINED?

- A. **One who wrongs his brother and refuses to repent (Matt. 18:15-18).**
- B. **Everyone who walks disorderly (2 Thess. 3:6).**
- C. **Those who are immoral (1 Cor. 5:9-11).**
- D. **Those who teach false doctrine (Rom. 16:17,18; Eph. 5:11; Tit. 3:10).**

III. WHY SHOULD DISCIPLINE BE DONE?

- A. **Since discipline is commanded by the Lord, it is part of the pattern for the church (Luke 6:46).**
 - 1. **It is as binding as baptism for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38).**
 - 2. **A church which refuses to discipline is no better than a church which refuses to have the Lord’s Supper (Acts 20:7).**
- B. **There are three purposes for church discipline (1 Cor. 5).**
 - 1. **To save the soul of the sinner (1 Cor. 5:4,5; 2 Cor. 12:4-11).**
 - a. **It is an act of love.**
 - b. **As a father disciplines his children because he loves them, God disciplines us (Heb. 12:5-11).**
 - 2. **To protect other Christians and keep the church pure (1 Cor. 5:6,7).**
 - 3. **To preserve the good name and influence of the church (1 Cor. 5:1).**

IV. HOW SHOULD DISCIPLINE BE CARRIED OUT?

A. Every effort must be made to bring the sinner to repentance for his soul is in jeopardy.

- 1. There should be a “first and second admonition” (Tit. 3:10).**
- 2. There should be a public marking (Rom. 16:17,18).**
- 3. It must be done by the whole church (1 Cor. 5:4; 2 Cor 2:6).**
- 4. It must be done in humility and gentleness.**

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted” (Gal. 6:1).

- 5. It must be done in love (1 Cor. 16:14).**

B. How should the disciplined member be treated?

- 1. He is to be regarded as “a heathen and a tax collector” meaning he is no longer regarded as a faithful brother (Matt. 18:17).**
- 2. We must “have no fellowship with him” (Eph. 5:11).**
- 3. Social activities with him are forbidden (1 Cor. 5:11; 2 Thess. 3:14).**
- 4. He is still our brother and must be admonished:**

“Do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother” (2 Thess. 3:15).

Conclusion:

- 1. Because there is little discipline in the home, school, or church, children grow up insecure, unhappy and without order or meaning in their lives.**
- 2. When discipline is not practiced by the church, worldliness, false teaching and tolerance of sin destroys its influence.**
- 3. The Lord will no longer consider a sin filled church one of His own:**
“Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lamp stand from its place - unless you repent” (Rev. 2:5).
- 4. One must obey the Gospel of Christ in order to be a Christian (Acts 22:16).**

