

God's Heart in Church Discipline

by Aaron Hurst

God's heart in church discipline is to save the soul and to remove sin and leaven from the church, maintaining a holy and blameless body of Christ.

Duration: 1:29:49

Scripture: Deuteronomy 13:1, Romans 16:17, 1 Timothy 5:19

Topics: "Church Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, Brother Denny emphasizes the importance of church discipline without any bias or favoritism. He quotes various Bible verses to support his message, including 1 Corinthians 5:6-7 and Ecclesiastes 8:11. Brother Denny believes that church discipline is necessary to maintain the purity of the church and to prevent evil from spreading. He acknowledges that he does not claim to fully understand God's heart in church discipline, but he aims to share a message on the topic with God's grace.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Who needs a sermon after that? It would be very easy for me to just lay this message aside and pick up on the one that has already been given.

But I do believe it's a worthy, necessary subject that we look at. And I want to say, as I give this title, God's Heart in Church Discipline, I want to say that I sure don't profess to know all of God's heart or be able to contain that or share that. But I desire by God's grace to share a message on God's heart in church discipline.

And I recognize this morning that this is a subject that is sensitive, may I say. When you think of church discipline, I don't know what first thoughts enter your mind. Maybe you've had an experience that has

been painful.

Maybe you've seen others where it has been painful and it has been an abuse of the subject or the doctrine or a misuse. Maybe you've never really heard about it that much because today we live in a society and in a church age where many because of various reasons, maybe because of abuses or misuses, choose rather to just lay it aside. Maybe because of fear of addressing it, they decide we're not going to touch it.

We'll just leave it up to God. We're not going to get involved. So there's many reasons, I believe, but I do believe there is a dearth of this practice, scriptural, scripturally done in a way that God has given to us in the scriptures.

And so we want to look into the Word of God this morning, see what the Bible has to say. I also would just like to say in the beginning here that it would have been my heart for Brother Denny, Brother Emmanuel to be here this morning. We're in a busy church.

It's a lot of work to be done. Church is to be planted. Message is to be preached to those calls coming from across the nation.

Won't you come and help us? And so I rejoice in that, in that way. That they're not here, but they're about the Father's business in other places. But I would have desired for them to be here to be able to bring any balance or correction that is needed.

God's heart in church discipline. What is God's heart in church discipline? What is your heart in disciplining? Fathers, what is your heart in disciplining? Isn't it love? Isn't it with desire to save? Isn't it with desire for blessing? Jesus Christ gave himself for the church. That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

That he might present it to himself a glorious church. Not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. I believe that's God's heart.

Part of God's heart in church discipline. Jesus is coming back for a glorious church. For a glorious bride.

Without spot, without wrinkle or any such thing. Paul told the Corinthians, I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy for I have espoused you to one husband. That I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

A chaste virgin. Revelation tells us, let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him. For the marriage of the lamb is come and his wife has made herself ready.

A glorious church. A prepared bride. A chaste virgin.

Not one who is committing adultery with the world. Not one who is two-timing and playing around. But one who is a chaste virgin.

1 Peter chapter 5. If you'll turn there with me, we'll look at some scriptures this morning. Laying some foundation here. 1 Peter chapter 5. Beginning in verse 1. The elders which are among you I exhort.

Who are also an elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ. And also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you taking the oversight thereof not by constraint.

But willingly, not for a filthy lucre but of a ready mind. Neither as being lords over God's heritage. But being in samples to the flock.

And when the chief shepherd shall appear. You shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise ye younger submit yourselves unto the elder.

Yea all of you be subject one to another. And be closed with humility. For God resisteth the proud.

And giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore unto the mighty hand of God. That he may exalt you in due time.

Casting all your care upon him. For he careth for you. I begin this message on this note.

That the elders he says. I exhort. I exhort you elders.

To feed the flock of God. And that word exhort. Is a pretty strong word.

It's a word of a warning. It's an admonition. I warn you.

I counsel you. To feed the flock of God. To tend.

To nurture. To guide. The flock of God.

Not being as lords. Over God's heritage. Not domineering.

Not dictatorial in your leadership or overbearing. But being examples to the flock. So this message first of all.

Speaks to my own heart. Speaks to us as elders here in the congregation. To nurture the flock of God.

To feed. And to be examples. And not to be domineering or arrogant.

Or dictatorial. And overbearing persons. Then he says likewise ye younger.

Submit yourselves unto the elder. Be subject to the elders. Be subject to your ministers and spiritual guides.

Submit yourself. Give them due respect. Yielding to their counsel.

Ye all of you be subject one to another. And be clothed with humility. Oh I like that.

Ye elders. Be clothed with humility. All of you.

It doesn't exempt the elders. Ye be clothed with humility. Take it as a garment.

And gird it on. Apron yourself with humility. Take it fast to yourself.

And hold it fast. That it cannot possibly be stripped away from you. Be free from pride.

And arrogance toward one another. For God resisteth the proud. But he giveth grace to the humble.

God's heart in church discipline. You know in a family. Where there is loving.

Nurturing. Tending. Feeding.

Instructing. Guiding. Shepherding.

Takes less discipline doesn't it? Takes less times to pull out the rod. Of discipline. I believe that's God's heart for us.

In the body of Christ. That there be such a love. And such a care one for another.

And such a humility. That the body is growing. In grace.

And in unity. And oneness. And holiness.

That the need for discipline. Yes it will. It will happen.

From time to time. It does happen. But that when it does arise.

It's not because. Of elders who are lording it over the flock. It's not because.

That the body is not being cared for. Or ministered to. Or fed.

But I have to say. Unless God feed us. We elders.

We are going to fail you at times. It's not our heart to fail you. It's not our heart not to feed you.

And tend to the flock. But oh when we fail. If there's that love.

And that humility and grace abiding in our hearts. We can communicate one with another. And we can have an understanding.

And we can build one another up and go on. That it doesn't have to come to a matter of discipline. God's heart in church discipline.

You know if neglected. If refusing to look at it when it is needed. It will have a devastating effect upon the body of Christ.

In Corinthians it tells us. Your glory is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven.

Leaveneth the whole lump. Therefore purge out the old leaven. That you may be a new lump.

As you are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. In Ecclesiastes 8.11 it tells us.

Because sentence against an evil work. Is not executed speedily. Therefore the heart of the sons of men.

Is fully set in them to do evil. In Isaiah 26.10 it tells us. Let favor be showed to the wicked.

Yet will he not learn righteousness. In the land of uprightness. Will he deal unjustly.

And will not behold the majesty of the Lord. You know these are serious words. If we neglect.

Or refuse. To look at the scriptural. Teaching.

And doctrine. That is clearly taught. Of church discipline.

We will suffer for it. In Revelation it tells us. Unto the angel of the church of Pergamos.
Write these things saith he. Which hath the sharp two edged sword. I know thy works.
And where thou dwellest. Even where Satan's seed is. Thou holdest fast my name.
And hast not denied my faith. Even in those days. Where Antipas was my faithful martyr.
And was slain among you. Where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee.
Because thou hast there. Them that hold the doctrine of Balaam. Who taught Balak to cast a stumbling
block.
Before the children of Israel. And to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And to commit fornication.
So hast thou also. Them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. Which thing I hate.
Repent. Or else I will come unto thee quickly. And will fight against them.
With the sword of my mouth. The church of Pergamos. He says.
I have a few things against thee. Because thou hast there. Them that hold the doctrine of Balaam.
Who cast a stumbling block. Before the children of Israel. They are there in the church.
They cast a stumbling block. They cause people to sacrifice things to idols. And to commit fornication.
And you have also them there. That hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. Which thing I hate.
He says. Repent. Is that why the church may be so powerless today? Because there is sin in the camp.
There is leaven in the body. And it will not just stay small. A little leaven.
Will begin to ferment and grow. Till finally it can become into a monster. Which robs the church of its
power.
Of its spiritual authority. Of its place of blessing and grace before the Lord. And the church becomes
lukewarm.
And anemic. And backslidden. Is no longer a city set on a hill.
No longer a glorious, beautiful church. But now you can't tell the church from the world. Where is the
church? And the world says.
Where is your God? And so the church is sending the people with needs. To the psych wards. And to the
mental institutions.
And to all kinds of places for help. Is there ever a place for those things? You know, there may be. I don't
want to make any strong, all-inclusive statements here this morning.
Someone is deranged. Giving themselves over the devil so far. Maybe there is a place that they should.

I don't know. But where is the power of God? Where prayers want to be made. And intercession and fastings.

That the devil could be cast out. And the man could be restored and be in his right mind. But that's too hard.

Let's just dial 9-1-1 and put them in the lock-up. So they won't hurt themselves. And I don't want to speak in such a way that would condemn anyone this morning.

Please. I am so grateful for God's mercy and God's power. And God's grace.

But I do have to question this whole area of sin in the camp. Wasn't it when there was sin in the camp of Israel. That they had to turn their backs and flee from their enemies? Wasn't it when just one Achan took that spoil of that Babylonish garment.

And that wedge and put it under his tent. And all of Israel was powerless. If neglected to deal with it.

When there is sin in the camp. It will spread like a cancer. And like a lemon in the body.

It's an awful thing. I'd like to look a little bit at the purpose for church discipline. We've already alluded to it.

But if you'll turn with me to 1 Corinthians 5. In 1 Corinthians 5. We know the account there of sin in the body. And he says in verse 2. You are puffed up. Have not mourned.

But he that has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily absent in body but present in spirit have judged already. As though I were present concerning him that has so done this deed.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. When you are gathered together. And my spirit and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

To deliver such and one unto Satan. For the destruction of the flesh. That the spirit may be saved.

In the day of the Lord Jesus. You know the purpose for church discipline. In this case.

We're talking excommunication here in 1 Corinthians 5. The purpose is redemptive. The purpose is redemptive. He says to deliver such and one to Satan.

For the destruction of the flesh. That the spirit may be saved. Every discipline that is needed in the body of God's church.

Should be entered into with this. In the forefront and in the hearts. Beating within the heart of the body.

When discipline is exercised. When there is excommunication. That the spirit may be saved.

We need to be spiritual about this. Because our natural love. Is hard for us to do this.

This is not easy. We must walk in the spirit. We must be spiritual.

As we seek God. To do it God's way. Not our way.

Not man's way. Because when it's done man's way. It will not yield the right fruit.

It won't come out right. And we'll talk more about that later. But the purpose for church discipline.

Is redemptive. That the soul may be saved. Oh glory.

See maybe that would help us. When we can get God's perspective. Because the carnal man looks at it and says.

This is too hard. This is not right. You know this will just drive him further away.

But God says. It will equal to their salvation. It may.

It may. But if left in the body. Then what? God's purpose for church discipline.

Is for the purity in the body. As we shared already. This little leaven.

Just leavens the whole lump. So he says purge it out. Purge out that leaven.

That old leaven. In 1 Timothy it speaks concerning. Rebuking those that sin.

And I believe it's in context of elders. Be very careful not to take anything out of context this morning. In 1 Timothy 5.19 he says.

Against an elder received not an accusation. But before two or three witnesses. And then that sin rebuked before all.

That others may fear. I believe when church discipline. Is done in God's way.

It will yield God's promised results. I'd like you to turn over to Deuteronomy 13. For a scripture there.

Deuteronomy 13. Beginning in verse 1. This is no little matter with God. It never has been.

A small matter with God. In Deuteronomy 13. Beginning in verse 1. We'll read number of verses here.

Verse 1 through 11. If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams. And giveth thee a sign or a wonder.

And a sign or a wonder come to pass. Whereof he spake. Unto thee saying.

Let us go after other gods. Which thou hast not known. And let us serve them.

Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet. Or that dreamer of dreams. For the Lord your God proveth you.

To know whether ye love the Lord. Your God. With all your heart.

And with all your soul. Ye shall walk after the Lord your God. And fear him.

And keep his commandments. And obey his voice. And ye shall serve him.

And cleave unto him. And that prophet. Or that dreamer of dreams.

Shall be put to death. Because he has spoken. To turn you away from the Lord your God.

Which brought you out of the land of Egypt. And redeemed you out of the house of bondage. To thrust thee out of the way.

Which the Lord thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put away evil from the midst of thee. If thy brother.

The son of thy mother. Or thy son or thy daughter. Or the wife of thy bosom.

Or thy friend. Which is as thine own soul. Entice thee secretly saying.

Let us go and serve other gods. Which thou hast not known. Thou nor thy fathers.

Namely the gods of the people which are round about you. Nigh unto thee. Or far off from thee.

From the one end of the earth. Even unto the other end of the earth. Thou shalt not consent unto him.

Nor hearken unto him. Neither shall thine eye pity him. Neither shalt thou spare.

Neither shalt thou conceal him. But thou shalt surely kill him. Thine hand shall be first.

Upon him to put him to death. And afterwards. The hand of all the people.

Thou shalt stone him with stones that he die. Because he has sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God. Which brought thee out of the land of Egypt.

And from the house of bondage. And all Israel shall hear. And fear.

And shall do no more any such wickedness as this among you. You know those are strong words. In the Old Testament.

God dealt with sin in the camp. Sin in Israel. Deceivers.

Enticers to do evil. He said it doesn't matter how good a friend they are. It doesn't matter how close of kin they are.

You cannot play with sin. You cannot tolerate sin. If it be a spouse.

If it be a brother. If it be a friend. That entice thee secretly.

Say, let's go serve other gods. The gods of the people that are around you. Let's go serve them.

Let's go have a little fun. We're just young. Live it up.

Sow your wild oats. Just across the way here. Or let's take off and go to the west coast.

Near or far. Let's just cast off restraint and go to Florida. God said, thou shalt not consent unto him.

Nor hearken unto him. Neither shall thine eye pity him. There's that natural human love response.

Neither shalt thou spare. Neither shalt thou conceal him. Has anyone enticed you to do evil? Has anyone enticed you to just come over here? Get out from under authority.

Get away from mom and dad. Get away from the preachers. But don't tell your mom and dad.

Thou shalt not conceal him. Don't become a partaker of another man's sins. I'm so thankful we don't live under the old covenant.

I'm not sure I'd be here. Probably be stoned by now. But you know, God's heart hates sin every bit as much as he did when these words were given to Israel.

But today it's different. We're not going to pick up stones. It would be wrong.

It has been said. An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, saith Jesus.

I can't help but think of this New Testament example though. After the Holy Ghost was come and the church was filled with grace and power and people were being added to the church and the church was growing and there was great joy and fellowship and blessing and in the midst of all of that in steps Ananias and Sapphira. And they lied.

They lied in their hearts and with pretense made it look like they're bringing all their money that they got from their property sale and giving it and laying it at the apostles' feet. The Bible doesn't even tell us that they said that. But they inferred that.

But Peter said to Ananias. What has happened in your heart? Why have you done this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men. You have lied to God.

You have lied to the Holy Ghost. And we know what happened. Ananias fell down dead.

That's this side of the cross. That's this side of the outpouring of Pentecost and the Holy Ghost. My! They wound up Ananias.

Carried him out and buried him. And when they were coming back from the burial, here comes his wife. She didn't know a thing about it.

You talk about zealousness to deal with a deceitful heart. Sapphira, just a minute. Sapphira, have you sold the land for so much? She was at the crossroads.

I don't believe she knew it. But right there she was brought face to face with will I be honest before God? Or will I be a liar? And she said, yeah, for so much. They said, those that buried your husband are at the door.

They are going to carry you out also. And she fell down and died. You know, it's a very serious matter.

God doesn't judge every situation like that. I'm not sure why that was. But I believe it was partly due to the fact that the church was so fresh and young and pure.

And God wanted to give a clear example of His holiness, of His severity of dealing with sin. I mean, that was an awesome thing. It says, great fear fell on the people.

People even were afraid to join themselves to this church because it was so powerfully alive and the spirit of revelation was so present. You don't go to that church if you got sin in your life. Wow, great fear came upon them.

You know, I believe in a measure when church discipline is done according to the spirit of God and it's done in a right way, it brings a fear upon the rest of the people in the congregation. And it causes a

trembling. God is judging that individual.

And it causes others to fear. Then that sin rebuked before all that others may fear. The seriousness and the severity of which God deals with this matter of sin and how we ought to see it.

In 1 Corinthians 3, 16 and 17 it says, No ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy.

You know, as we look at this matter of church discipline, I want us to consider these scriptures in Matthew 5. I'd like for you to turn there. Turn to Matthew chapter 5 and verse 29. We should read verse 27 on to get the context.

Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and that not thy whole body should be cast into hell.

And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee, for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and that not thy whole body should be cast into hell. I think we all are very familiar with God describing the body, the church, the local church as a body. In 1 Corinthians 12 there.

Where we are looked at as a body. And having members in the body in different parts. And there he says it's like a hand, it's like a foot, it's like an eye.

And as I thought of this scripture, I thought, you know, let's just take our human body. Here he says that if your eye offend thee, pluck it out, for it's better for one of thy members to perish than thy whole body to be cast into hell and to perish. If we look at that in light of the body of Christ and the church body, it seems like we are not stretching things too hard here to make an application that if there is a hand or a foot or an eye that is in the body, that is sitting and that is going to have an influence of sin upon the whole body, that it'd be better for that eye or that hand or that foot to be cut off.

Which in 1 Corinthians, which we'll look at in a little bit, tells us to put away, to put out from among you that member of the body. I'd like to use this illustration this morning. So we look at our body, we look at our hands, we look at our feet, our eyes.

And so if my hand has been hurt and wounded and it's beginning to fester and be infected, what will we do? Will we go to the doctor and say, Cut it off! It's bothering me. Or will we say, Doctor, please, what can you do to heal my hand? Amen? So if a member of the body is wounded, is hurting, is weak, and is in need of help and healing and deliverance, we don't just say, Now that member is causing some problem to the body here, let's just lop it off, cut it off. No.

No, that's not our heart. If there is a wounded, weak, hurting member, what can we do to heal it? But let's carry that a little farther. So, you are diagnosed with a severe case of diabetes, and that foot is turning blue and purple.

And you've been to the doctor, and he's been working on that foot. And finally the doctor says, My friend, I have some grave news for you. We must amputate that foot, or it's going to take your life.

Then what do you say? Yes, doctor, please remove that foot and spare my life. May that be our heart as a body, that we're not so quick to look for the tools of amputation. And let's just amputate that thing.

Let's just get it out of here. No. We need that hand, because you know what? The rest of your life, you're going to be without a foot.

Once they amputate it, sure you can get a wooden leg. It's not the same, is it? You know, so really, when there is reckless, careless amputation and excommunications, the body will suffer for it. Amen? We'll be lame, we'll be walking around with a wooden leg.

No feeling in it. Falling down. I couldn't feel it, I couldn't tell.

I couldn't see that it was rough there and uneven. But you know what on the other side of the thing? If you let that gangrene infested foot there, it's going to keep coming on up the leg, farther and farther. And if nothing is done, the whole body is going to die.

And I say this very carefully. But it's their bodies that have died. But they yet have a profession that they live.

They yet look like they live. They are yet walking around on their wooden legs. But there's no power there.

Oh Lord, have mercy upon us. That we do not neglect or abuse. Let me read one more verse to you here.

It says in Matthew 18, Woe unto the world because of offenses, for it must need to be that offenses come, but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh. Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off and cast them from thee. It is better for thee to enter into life, halt or maim, rather than having two hands and two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

If thy eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee. For it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. You know, this is no game.

This is serious business. Let's look now very quickly at steps to be taken before church discipline. Steps to be taken before church discipline.

Brethren, Galatians 6 verse 1. Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, and that definition of a fault is misconduct or sin of any sort. If a man be overtaken in sin or misconduct of any sort, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

So, in a healthy body, if there is a member that is wounded and hurting, the other member will come to its aid. The other members will come to the aid of the one that is wounded and hurting. The one that has missed the mark.

The one who has fallen. He says, brethren, ye that are spiritual. Are you spiritual? Are you responsive to and controlled by the Holy Spirit? Oh, if you see your brother be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual, restore such an one.

Oh, glory, restore him. It never has to come to a matter of church discipline and everybody know about it. Brethren and sisters, let's be spiritual about these things.

You see a brother or a sister overtaken in a fault, ye that are spiritual, restore such an one. Bring them back and restore them into right relationship and fellowship with God. And once again they have an open heaven and life is free and pure and holy and a blessing and a joy.

You know? But remember, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness without any sense of superiority or I'm better than thou and look down your nose at them. How could they ever get caught in such a sin? You know, when you look narrowly at them and accusing, that won't work. Won't work.

Ye that are spiritual, ye that are clothed, aproned with humility and grace and spiritual blessings, you come alongside. But for the grace of God, there go I. It could be me. And so we come alongside and restore such an one in the spirit of meekness and gentleness.

Bear ye one another's burdens. Endure, carry one another's burdens. Bear along with steps to be taken before church discipline.

I believe we need to be spiritual. We need to be filled with the spirit that we can do these things. Turn over to Matthew 18.

This is a bit along a different line. I acknowledge that, but we do want to look at it. Matthew 18.

It applies to us. It applies to this subject. Matthew 18, verse 15.

Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church. But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. Now, I know that the context here is speaking of a trespass or a sin from one brother against another brother or a sister against a sister or in the family of God.

But I do believe that this is a very important one that we understand and look at and practice among us. If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. Doesn't need much expounding, does it? It's simple plain English.

It's not necessary to go tell another brother. Is it? No, actually it's wrong to go tell another brother. If thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault.

Tell him what he did. He may not even realize it. He may not even know.

Maybe I was too sensitive and I got too easily hurt. Because I wasn't walking in the spirit like I should have been and so I took offense and I didn't like that very good. That hurt.

He trespassed against me. So, I'm just going to tell my best trusted friend about it. No.

No, unless it's Jesus. Yes. Tell your best trusted friend, Jesus, should I be heard about this? I mean, is this something I need to go talk to my brother about? Or should I throw it in the cornfield? As we say sometimes, you know.

They didn't mean it that way. It wasn't intentional. Just forgiven.

But, you know, if you can't do that, God has an answer. If it just keeps bothering me and I just can't get over it. Okay, go talk to your brother.

Between thee and him alone. You know, it's so simple. How many struggles and problems would that avoid or cure in a church if we would follow just this one? It never happened.

Because it was just done between thee and him alone and you're restored and everything is clear and we're going on with God and guess what? Nobody else knew about it. Glory. See, now that other person doesn't have to look at him too and say, hmm, can't believe he did that to him or said that.

See how it multiplies? You know. Did you hear what he said? Did you know what she actually did? Well, I find that hard to believe, but must be true. Got it straight from her.

Hey. One of the devil's tools to tear down and destroy churches is gossip. Oh, if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

Glory. But if he will not hear thee, hey, now, now we can let her loose. Let's call this person and that person and Oh, no.

No. I'm gonna just bring it up as a prayer request when there's ten other people present. Oh, no.

No, you're not. If you're spiritual, you're not. Now you take with thee one or two more.

That's all. It's all the permission that's given here. One or two more and go tell him his fault between thee.

I'm sorry. One or two more that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And this is really important.

It'll avoid. It'll avoid misunderstandings. It'll avoid assuming things and building upon, you know, just sort of figuring out, you know, filling in the blanks in the story, all that sort of stuff, reading between the lines, they say sometimes, you know, well, I could just tell by the way they said it or whatever, you know, there's a lot more underneath there than what they said.

No, no. Let's be men. Let's be mature.

Let's get it out on the table between two or three and let every word be established. Let it be clear. And I believe it's very important that you take with you unbiased people.

Don't take somebody who would be biased. And see, the bias won't be there if you've never talked about it. If the thing has already gotten rolling a bit, now who's not biased? You know, starts taking sides and all those sorts of things, all kinds of awful things start happening.

But if you will take witnesses everywhere it may be established, don't just go on hearsay. It's a very sad thing if somebody is publicly reproved but the details are not even clear. It's hearsay in there.

This person said that, that person said that and I believe this is what happened. Let us be spiritual. Let us not do those things.

Let every word be established. And then verse 17, if you neglect to hear them, tell it to the church. But you still don't have to get on the telephone and you don't have to gossip about it.

Now you tell it to the church. Bring it to the brothers. And I would say from the way we have our church government here, it would be to probably bring it to a brother's meeting.

That's how that would be most scripturally handled. But you know all of this is in desire for restoration. It's in desire for restoring that individual.

But finally in verse 17, he says, if you neglect to hear them, tell it to the church. And if you neglect to hear the church, let it be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. So steps to take before church discipline.

Restore reception. One in the spirit of maintenance. Galatians 6.1 Go to him one on one.

Take another brother along. Then I like to look real quickly at the attitude of how this is to be carried out. And we see that in 1 Corinthians 5 where he says, in 1 Corinthians 5 verse 1 he says, He's purported coming there is fornication among you and such fornication that is not named among the Gentiles.

That one should have his father's wife. And ye are puffed up and have not rather mourned that he that has done this deed might be taken away from you. He says ye are puffed up.

Ye have not mourned. You know the attitude in which an excommunication is to be carried out is to be one in mourning, in sorrow, in shame. Jeremiah said, Oh that my head were waters and my eyes were a fountain of tears that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people.

Psalms 119 says, Rivers of water run down my eyes because they keep not thy law. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12 verse 20 For I fear that lest when I come I shall not find you such as I would and that I should be found unto you such as ye would not, lest there be debates and envying and writhes and strifes and backbiting and whisperings and swellings and tumults. And lest when I come again my God will humble me among you and I shall bewail many which have sinned already and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

You know when it's time for church discipline, for excommunication, it should be done with mourning, it should be done with weeping, with crying out to God, Lord, save this soul from destruction. Save this soul from eternal damnation. Another thing that's very important, in 1 Timothy he tells us in verse 5 and verse 21, I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that thou have served these things without preferring one before another and doing nothing by partiality.

And the context there is them that sin rebuke before all. That is 1 Timothy 5 verse 20 and verse 21. Them that sin rebuke before all.

But then he goes on in verse 21 and he gives a very serious charge. In 1 Timothy 5 verse 21 he says, I charge thee before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels. My, what a witness.

Before God, before the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that thou have served these things without preferring one before another. Doing nothing by partiality. No personal prejudice.

No favor. No bias. You know, one of the complaints you hear sometimes is that, well, you know, they're in the elite of the church and you can't touch them because they're untouchable.

Maybe they're the elder. Maybe they're one of the upper. You know, upper brothers or whatever.

The preferred ones. Oh, God forbid. That we should have any such thing among us.

This must be done without preferring one before another. Without any bias. And I want us to look at these few verses here.

I know our time is moving on. I'll try to keep moving rapidly here. I want to look at a few verses here that I believe speak to different measures of church discipline.

You know, isn't there some other measures? Don't we take some other measures to try to heal this hand before we just amputate it? You know? And I give you these Scriptures and I know we talked about them a bit in brother's meeting, but let's turn to Romans chapter 16. Romans chapter 16 and verse 17. Romans chapter 16 and verse 17.

He says, Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ but their own belly and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. And I believe here the Scripture is speaking to a marking of one who is divisive.

One who is causing offenses. You know, one who is just a stirrer of contentions and divisions. And Romans 16, 17 says, I beseech you, brethren.

And again, that word beseech is a pretty strong word. He says, I appeal to you, brethren. I beg of you, brethren, to be on your guard for such people.

God hates those that sow discord. And I believe this is something that can be applied and practiced not only in just a local assembly, but I believe this is something that we see Paul doing in the Scriptures where he says of Philetus, of Hymenus, you know, and he mentions names of those who were not walking rightly with their God any longer. He says, I appeal to you, brethren.

Mark them which cause divisions. And he says, avoid them. And avoid them means to just simply turn aside from them.

I believe a broader sense of the application of this Scripture would perhaps be of someone who is perhaps just an individualistic person who is proud in his pet doctrines, perhaps, and maybe just sort of floating around, trying to gather up a disciple here or a disciple there, and will not bow their hearts and come under the submission of the Lord Jesus Christ and submit themselves in a spiritual body of believers. I believe that could be an application. Of course, I believe it also would need to be applied in a local assembly if that's the case.

But I don't see this quite as strong as excommunication in 1 Corinthians 5. But he says, rather to mark such a one. Now, in 2 Thessalonians, we have another one which we had also looked at a bit in our brother's meeting here the other month. But in 2 Thessalonians 3, we have these verses here that speak to a withdrawing from a brother who walketh disorderly.

And we just want to look at these different scriptures. 2 Thessalonians. It's interesting how it begins here.

In chapter 3, he says, beginning in verse 1, Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith. And I thought it's good maybe to just back up and get that context here. You know, he's saying, you know, not all men have faith.

And, you know, some men are unreasonable and they're wicked. Now, we jump down to verse 6. He says, 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. For ye yourselves know how that you ought to follow us, for we behave not ourselves disorderly among you.

Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught, but wrought with labor and travail night and day that we might not be chargeable to any of you, not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy bodies.

Now them that are such, we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ that with quietness they work and eat their own bread. But ye brethren, be not weary in well-doing. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him that he may be ashamed.

Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.

The salutation of Paul. You know when I look at that and I myself don't see excommunication in there. I don't know if you do.

I don't see excommunication here. I see rather, he's saying that there needs to be a separating, a withdrawing from every brother that walketh disorderly and not after the tradition which you received of us. And in verse 14 he says if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him that he may be ashamed.

And verse 15 says, yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Now, how that is all carried out, what applications are made to this, it doesn't give us, it doesn't give us more than this. But I believe there has to be an application of some sort.

And as I studied on this, I did look into some other, I looked into some commentaries just to see what are they saying about these verses. Because we want to understand, not that we just take these people's word for it, but you know, if you're searching Scripture and you say, well, what does this mean? How did the church apply this? You know, let there be a separating, but yet, count him as a brother. I mean, it's, like I say for me, I don't see excommunication there.

But I see, I see a step before excommunication, if I may say that, where the church has been given some directives of how to deal with one who is disorderly, who is out of line. And this, this is interesting as we look at these words. He says, one who walks disorderly, that is in any conduct, in any way contrary to the doctrine of Christ.

You know, we say, well, it applies here to one who doesn't work. You know, one who's a busybody and doesn't work. Well, that's the context of it here.

But does it go farther than that? I think it does. Because if we can only apply Scripture directly where it's, where it's given in its context there, in that way only, and not the principle applied to other areas, I think we would find ourselves not be able to really use the Word of God rightly, and rightly divided. And that's my concern here this morning in desire, that we wouldn't go adding things or taking things away, but just allow the Word of God to speak into our hearts and speak into situations.

He says, that you withdraw yourselves. And this is what was given in Barnes notes. He says, this is a true example of Christian discipline.

It's not primarily that of cutting a man off or denouncing him, or excommunicating him. It is that of withdrawing from him. We cease to have fellowship with him and we separate from him.

That he may be ashamed, as the Scripture says. It's not a denouncing or a marking, as was over in Romans 16, or an excommunication, but it's a ceasing to have fellowship, it's a withdrawing and a separation. He says, from every brother that walketh disorderly.

And that walking of disorderliness has this word picture. It is that of soldiers who do not keep the ranks. So here's the line of soldiers marching along, walking along, and here's one who's not keeping rank.

He's walking disorderly. You know? And when the soldiers aren't keeping rank, that causes problems. It causes difficulties.

And so it does in the body of Christ. And there's those who are walking disorderly and they're, you know, stirring things up here or there and not walking in rank, in unity, with Christ Jesus ahead and in the body. You know? And having the same mind, the same heart, walking together.

See? If there's one like that who won't walk in rank, that needs to be addressed. No, don't go get out the pruning shears and lop it off, but let's address it. Let's look at it.

And let's deal with it. If any man obeys not our word by this epistle, note that man and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

Measures of discipline. There's many different ones. In Titus, it tells us about an heretic.

It tells us an heretic in Titus 3, for those who are taking notes, maybe to do later study. Titus 3, verse 10 and 11, says the man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject. So there again, there should be an admonition, there should be an appeal for one who is a heretic, which a heretic is a man who is factious and he is a secretarian and he's causing divisions, he's just off maybe on some doctrinal areas and he's just bent on that and he won't let it rest and he's just stirring it up all the time.

Well, he says, admonish him, but after the second admonition, reject. And that is a strong word. That means to reject him from your fellowship and have nothing more to do with him.

Put him out. Because an heretic, he will stir up trouble. He will cause that the soldiers who are on a marching rank and in tune with their saviour, he's going to be making trouble there.

And then in 2 John, I see my time is just getting away, in 2 John it tells us, if there come unto you, into your fellowship or among your fellowship there and bring not this doctrine, again for taking notes here, 2 John, verse 10 and 11, he says, do not receive him or welcome him. He says, receive him not into your house. So, if there come unto you one and brings not the doctrine of Jesus Christ and is not loyal to the doctrine of Jesus Christ, he says, disloyal to what Jesus taught, receive him not into your house.

Neither bid him God's speed. And that bidding him God's speed would be like to give him encouragement. Oh, God bless you.

You're doing alright. You know, just keep on going. No, don't do that.

If there come any among you and bring not this doctrine and is disloyal to what Jesus taught, receive him not into your house, do not give him a welcome. You know, because if you do that, you are a partaker. He says in verse 11 there, that he that bid him God's speed is a partaker of his evil deeds.

So, it seems like there's quite a few different scriptures that speak to the matter of how we walk with those that are walking disorderly, not walking according to the commandments and doctrine of Christ. But then we have a clear mandate of excommunication taught in 1 Corinthians chapter 5 and we want to look at that for a few moments here yet. And then we'll need to close.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 5, here he lays it out very clear, very black and white. It doesn't leave us much room for having to try to figure it out or guess. But in 1 Corinthians 5, beginning in verse 1, he says, it's reported commonly that there is fornication among you and such fornication that is not so much named among the Gentiles that one should have his father's wife.

And ye are puffed up and have not rather mourned that he that has done this deed might be taken away from among you. For I verily absent in body yet present in spirit have judged already as though I were present concerning him that has so done this deed. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ when you are gathered together and by my spirit and with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such and one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Your glory is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven that ye may be a new lump as ye are unleavened for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast not with the old leaven neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world or the covetous or extortioners or with idolaters for then must ye needs go out of the world but now I have written unto you not to keep company if a man that is called a brother be a fornicator or covetous or an idolater or a railer or a drunkard or an extortioner with such and one know not to eat for what have I to do to judge them also that are without? Do not ye judge them that are within but them that are without God judges therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person. I believe this is speaking clearly to excommunication he says deliver such and one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is that type of thing that is eleven that if it's left in the body and will not be purged out it will eventually sap the life out of the body and it will grow like a cancer.

And the sins that are listed here if any man that is called a brother or bears the name Christian if he is guilty of fornication and the word fornication if he be a fornicator it goes beyond just a definition of fornication it's immorality it's one who is a whoremonger it's one who is immoral it's one who would be a prostitute if there be anyone that be called a brother bears the name Christian and is in those types of sins there must be an excommunication there must be a severing of that cancer from the body if there be any that is covetous and that is greedy of gain one who is a grasping for gain he is covetous he is a lover of money he lives for money he is greedy of gain and covetous eager wanting to have more and especially what belongs to others covetous covet not thy neighbor's

house covet not thy neighbor's things you know covet not your brother's things covetousness if there be any that bears the name Christian I have written unto you not to keep company if any man that is called a brother is greedy of gain and is covetous and is filled with materialistic mindset and pursuits I have written

unto you not to keep company if any man that be called a brother and bears the name Christian is an idolater is a worshiper of false gods you say well brother Aaron we don't have any problem with that here but you know we need to define that a little bit a worshiper of false gods no we don't have a Buddha set up out here but a false god is any object or any thing or any person that usurps the place of God in your life didn't we hear that this morning my life became wrapped

up in running it was what I lived for and my spiritual life just drained away an idolater whose soul is devoted to any object that usurps the place of God is God on the throne of your heart in your life are you a worshiper of other gods and there's many other gods the world is just flashing its billboards its advertisements at us do this and you'll be happy buy this you know things can't make us happy contentment oh it comes from God godliness with contentment oh it is a great gain idolatry they post their pictures all over the place their sports team and that's a big one there every sport you can imagine seems they're inventing new ones bringing them in from other countries worldwide Olympics and people are just wrapped up in it but that doesn't excuse us older ones maybe we're not sport

maybe that's not our temptation what about materialism what about possessions here upon the earth I've written unto you not to keep company if any man that is called a brother bears the name Christian is a railer a railer a person with a foul tongue he's a slanderer a reviler abusive language don't keep company with such in one do not keep company if any man that is called a brother bears the name Christian who's a drunkard he's addicted to alcohol he's a drunkard we don't have to worry about that around here don't be too sure sometimes things come out of the closet and people are shocked started out with social drinking just to be accepted a high place of position at work we all went out to dinner together with the other executives and they all drank a little I can too, I'm not under

bondage I have Christian liberty reasoning it out I believe drunkenness has taken many to hell it's a very deceiving, divisive wicked work of the devil don't keep company with one who's a drunkard don't keep company with one who is an extortioner know with such a one not to eat those that are such in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ when ye are gathered together in my spirit with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ to deliver such in one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus remember it's redemptive and if God says this is the prescribed way to deal with these things we must overcome our own natural loves speaking a word of blessing to one who should rather be admonished can be harmful bidding one Godspeed is doing damage to

Satan's kingdom you become a partaker with them so these are serious matters but let us remember God's heart in church discipline is redemptive may our hearts be like God's heart in any church discipline that our hearts are redemptive let us kneel for prayer Father in heaven we just do commit this word to you we ask you Father in Jesus name please Lord enlighten our hearts our understanding Father that we may be like you and in all that we do our hearts are right our hearts are free from partiality our hearts are free from any bitterness or biases or any such thing Lord but that our hearts are filled with compassion and love for the sinner who would be in such a place to require such an action as church discipline or excommunication to that degree oh God let it break our hearts and let us

pray and weep for the salvation of the souls of any such dear Lord and God if there is anyone here today Father who is in a place of lying, deceit cover up oh Lord any of these sins idolatry, fornication oh God if there be any such please speak to their heart and bring them and draw them to repentance Lord before such a measure should be needed oh God have mercy upon us Lord and Father grant us that we may be spiritual help us that we can be spiritual and restore one who is failing or struggling before it should ever

come to such a place Father we just do commit this word to you and pray lead us on oh King eternal in righteousness and in true holiness in Jesus name, Amen

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