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Lesson 19, Part 1 Church Discipline

I. Foundational Principles of Church Discipline:

A. Discipline within the church is based on the _____ of Christ.

Hebrews 12:5–11 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, “My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reprov’d by Him; 6 For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives.” 7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. 11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

II. Examples of church discipline

1. King David for adultery (2 Sam. 12:1-25)

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2 Samuel 12:1–13 Then the Lord sent Nathan to David. And he came to him and said, “There were two men in one city, the one rich and the other poor. 2 “The rich man had a great many flocks and herds. 3 “But the poor man had nothing except one little ewe lamb Which he bought and nourished; And it grew up together with him and his children. It would eat of his bread and drink of his cup and lie in his bosom, And was like a daughter to him.

4 “Now a traveler came to the rich man, And he was unwilling to take from his own flock or his own herd, To prepare for the wayfarer who had come to him; Rather he took the poor man’s ewe lamb and prepared it for the man who had come to him.” 5 Then David’s anger burned greatly against the man, and he said to Nathan, “As the Lord lives, surely the man who has done this deserves to die. 6 “He must make restitution for the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and had no compassion.”

7 Nathan then said to David, “You are the man! Thus says the Lord God of Israel, ‘It is I who anointed you king over Israel and it is I who delivered you from the hand of Saul. 8 ‘I also gave you your master’s house and your master’s wives into your care, and I gave you the house of Israel and Judah; and if that had been too little, I would have added to you many more things like these! 9 ‘Why have you despised the word of the Lord by doing evil in His sight? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword, have taken his wife to be your wife, and have killed him with the sword of the sons of Ammon.

10 ‘Now therefore, the sword shall never depart from your house, because you have despised Me and have taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your wife.’ 11 “Thus says the Lord, ‘Behold, I will raise up evil against you from your own household; I will even take your wives before your eyes and give them to your companion, and he will lie with your wives in

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broad daylight. 12 ‘Indeed you did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and under the sun.’ ”

13 Then David said to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” And Nathan said to David, “The Lord also has taken away your sin; you shall not die.

2. Ananias and Sapphira for lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11)

3. Diotrephes disciplined for gossip and unruly behavior
(3 John 9-10)

3 John 9-10 I wrote something to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be first among them, does not accept what we say. 10 For this reason, if I come, I will call attention to his deeds which he does, unjustly accusing us with wicked words; and not satisfied with this, he himself does not receive the brethren, either, and he forbids those who desire to do so and puts them out of the church.

4. A young man in incest (1 Cor. 5:1-13)

5. Peter for compromising the gospel. (Gal. 2:11-14)

III. The Principles of Church Discipline.

A. The goal of church discipline is _____.

B. When church discipline is necessary, it should have three specific purposes.

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1. To _____ and _____
the honor of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

2. To protect the _____ of the
**church and to guard other Christians from being
tempted, mislead, or otherwise harmed.**

Romans 16:17 Now I urge you, brethren, **keep your eye on** those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

Proverbs 6:16–19 There are six things which the Lord hates, Yes, seven which are an abomination to Him: 17 Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood, 18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that run rapidly to evil, 19 A false witness who utters lies, And one who spreads strife among brothers.

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3. To _____ fallen Christians from further discipline.

James 5:19-20 My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

C. God views discipline as a blessing and a sign of genuine _____ .

Revelation 3:19 'Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.

Psalm 94:12 Blessed is the man whom You chasten, O LORD, And whom You teach out of Your law;

D. Conversely, God views a failure to discipline as being _____ and _____ .

Leviticus 19:17 'You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart; you may surely reprove your neighbor, but shall not incur sin because of him.

E. Those who won't repent and continue to be _____ are to be expelled from the local assembly.

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Titus 3:9-11 9 But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. 10 Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, 11 knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

“factious” KJ “heretic” – one who is divisive, following false doctrine

F. God will hold church leaders accountable if they

_____ **to exercise godly discipline or if they _____ their authority in the exercise of church discipline.**

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

1. Typical misuses leaders must guard against:

- a. Using discipline as a substitute for biblical counseling.
- b. Using discipline as a tool for personal retaliation. (get rid of embarrassment).
- c. Using discipline to enforce narrow behavioral conformity beyond what God requires.

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- d. Exercising discipline in a negative, impersonal, or non-redemptive manner

Elders are not beyond being disciplined themselves.

1 Timothy 5:17-20 The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.¹⁸ For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”¹⁹ Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.²⁰ Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning.

An elder who has been found guilty and continues to harm the testimony of the church should be publicly rebuked.

Conclusion

The purpose of excommunicating a believer from a local church is not to drive them away, but to bring _____ to the _____ of their sin in order to restore them to a right relationship with God.

ANSWERS: Lordship, Restoration, guard, preserve, purity, rescue, love, unloving, hateful, divisive, neglect, misuse, attention, seriousness

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