

Message Discussion Guide REDEMPTIVE COMMUNITY (PART 3)

The Church at Brook Hills, Dr. David Platt May 31, 2009 Matthew 18:15-20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Galatians 6:1-5

This guide is to help you facilitate discussion with your Small Group. Use it as a resource to lead your group in discovering and owning the truths of God's Word. There may be questions you do not want to use and there may be instances where you just want to focus on a particular point or truth. Some questions may bring out emotions and cause people to dwell on their relationship with God. Your role is to facilitate this experience not to complete the discussion guide. Use this as a flexible teaching tool not a rigid teaching task list.

Connect . . .

Use one or both of the following options to introduce the discussion time to follow.

Option 1

Encourage learners to describe the difference between discipline out of love and punishment out of anger. Then ask the following question: How do the two approaches change the purpose of each?

Explain that today we're going to discuss how to approach church discipline with love.

Option 2

Encourage learners to describe a time when they went on a mission trip or participated in a ministry and ended up learning more than they taught or growing spiritually more than they helped others grow.

Explain that today we will discuss how church discipline is a process of sanctification for everyone involved.

Option 3

Ask participants if they have ever been a part of a local church that practiced church discipline. Invite them to share what they felt the church did well or what they did not do well without naming the local church.

Explain that today we're going to continue to discuss church discipline from a Biblical perspective and how it looks in action as we avoid potential abuses.

Review the Message . . .

Redemptive Community - Part 3 (Mt. 18:15-20; 1 Cor. 5:1-13; Gal. 6:1-5).

Why Not Church Discipline?

- "Church discipline is _____ legalistic _____."
- Church discipline is _____ loving _____...
- "What about Matthew _____ 7:1 _____?"

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- Keep going to Matthew _____ 7:5 _____ ...
- “People will _____ leave _____.”
 - This is God’s church to _____ grow _____, not ours...
- “We don’t _____ know how _____ to practice church discipline.”
 - Then let’s _____ learn how _____ to practice church discipline...

What is Church Discipline?

- Two Facets of Church Discipline...
 - _____ Formative _____ Church Discipline:
 - Continual training believers receive from the Word in the body of Christ as their lives are transformed into Christlikeness.
 - _____ Restorative _____ Church Discipline:
 - Corrective care taken by the body of Christ in matters of unrepentant sin in a brother or sister’s life.
- One Foundation for Church Discipline...
 - The _____ grace _____ of God.

Approaching Church Discipline...

- We need childlike _____ humility _____.
- We need a deep concern for _____ holiness _____.
- We need a passion for the _____ hurting _____.
- We need forgiving _____ hearts _____.

Applying Church Discipline...

- Step One: _____ Private _____ Correction.
- Step Two: _____ Small Group _____ Clarification.
- Step Three: Church _____ Admonition _____.
- Step Four: Church _____ Excommunication _____.
 - For the _____ purity _____ of the church.
 - Church members are _____ accountable _____ ...
 - Before _____ God _____.
 - For _____ each other _____.
 - Church members must be _____ humble _____ ...
 - Pride: _____ Toleration _____ of unrepentant sinners in the church.
 - Humility: _____ Exclusion _____ of unrepentant sinners from the church.
 - Church membership is _____ essential _____ ...
 - The church _____ defines _____ who is a member.
 - Isolation from the church reflects _____ separation _____ from Christ.

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- For the salvation of the individual.
- For the glory of God.

Discussion Questions

- Remind learners that the previous two weeks centered on discussions about church discipline. (Full discussions of the two previous weeks may be found online.)
- Enlist a learner to read Matthew 18:12-14. Explain that this passage occurs in the midst of Jesus' instruction about church discipline. How does this passage inform our understanding of the purpose of and attitude toward church discipline?
- Knowing that the instructions for discipline take place in the context of a church body, what are the implications for the intended relationships between believers?

Application . . .

- How can we see church discipline as a way to drive us to become more like Christ?
- Why do we often shy away from church discipline in our politically-correct culture?

Church Discipline in Action...

- We will obey with the love of Christ.
 - The goal of church discipline is spiritual restoration.
 - Be humble.
 - Be biblical.
 - Is there sin that is dishonoring God?
 - Is there sin that is damaging the Gospel?
 - Is there sin that is hurting the unity of the church?
 - Is there sin that is hurting the witness of the church?
 - Be pure.
 - Examine your life.
 - Examine your motives.
 - Be prayerful.
 - Be quiet.
 - Be quick.
 - Be gentle.
 - Be careful.
 - Be intentional ...
 - Private Correction
 - Small Group Clarification
 - Church Admonishment
 - The Restoration Team
 - The Elders
 - The Church

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Galatians 6:1-5

- Church Excommunication

Discussion Questions

- Enlist two learners to read Galatians 6:1 and James 5:19-20. What do these passages indicate about the attitude and approach a church must take toward church discipline?
- Invite three learners to read Proverbs 19:11, Titus 3:9 and 1 Corinthians 5:11. What is the difference in an area in a person's life that one should patiently overlook and an area that requires discipline?
- Looking at 1 Corinthians 5:1-2, how was the sin of this person offending God and the witness of the church in the community of unbelievers?
- Read 1 Timothy 1:18-19 and Romans 16:17-18. What do these passages indicate are areas of great concern in the church?
- Enlist a learner to read Matthew 7:1-5. How is church discipline beneficial to everyone involved?
- What are the preliminary steps given in Matthew 7:1-5 to church discipline as outlined in Matthew 18:15-20?
- Read Galatians 6:1-5. How does this passage describe a loving approach to church discipline?
- Considering that Jesus gave intentional instructions on dealing with church discipline, as well as Paul, did Christ intend for His church to carry out church discipline as a means of personal and corporate sanctification?

Application . . .

- How could we turn our own personal pet peeves into issues for others to receive discipline if we're not careful?
- Why is pushing our own personal agendas dangerous in church discipline?
- How should that impact who we choose to go with us to discuss a particular offence after we have gone privately and not seen any results?
- Matters of doctrine separate various denominations and even differ among members of the same church. When would a matter of doctrine become an issue that should be addressed with church discipline? When should it not be addressed?
- What are some guides or questions we can use based on 1 Corinthians 5, 1 Timothy 1:18-19 and Romans 16:17-18 that will help to delineate between a fault that should be overlooked and sin that needs attention from fellow believers?
- Why should we be humbled and comforted to know that only Christ can make a person change? How should that affect our prayer life?
- How can we guard our pride in addressing sin in others?
- How can we be intentional in church discipline, given the instructions given in Matthew 18 and 1 Corinthians 5?
- Why do we tend to skip the first steps of Matthew 18:15-20 and go to others before we go to each other? Why are we afraid of confrontation in this way?
- How does our use of multiple individuals and groups help to guard the integrity of church discipline?

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- How can a Restoration Team at Brook Hills help to bridge the distance between the small group step and the church-wide step?

- We will trust in the _____ authority _____ of Christ.
- We will pray according to the _____ promise _____ of Christ.
- We will experience the _____ presence _____ of Christ.
- We will honor the _____ cross _____ of Christ.
 - We want a Christ who pardons...
 - But do we want a Christ who _____ purifies _____?
 - When we tolerate sin in the church...
 - We _____ trample on _____ the sacrifice of Christ.
 - The death of Christ on the cross...
 - Transforms our _____ lives _____ in the church.

Discussion Questions

- Re-read Matthew 18:18-20. Explain that these verses are in response to the seriousness and challenges that come from the previous passage dealing with church discipline.
- Looking at Verse 18, how is God's authority over sin demonstrated through church discipline?
- What promises does Christ give in Verses 19 and 20? How are these promises related to church discipline?
- Enlist a learner to read 1 Corinthians 5:6-8. Remind learners that yeast represented sin and the slavery that the Jews endured in Egypt—their old lives. What does Paul indicate is the result of cleaning out the yeast in one's life?
- To allow yeast into one's life was like allowing the old life to destroy the new life. How does living this way ignore the work of Christ on the cross?

Application . . .

- Why can we have peace in the midst of church discipline?
- Sin allows impurity to enter our lives. Why do we dismiss the purification process for the sake of appearing tolerant?
- How can sanctification/purification through the discipline process transform our lives to become more like Christ?
- Why can we not continue in sin and glorify the cross of Christ?
- How can the church discipline process bring great glory to Christ?