

Scripture: Matthew 18

CoF 32 (1)

Singing: 227:1-3 – 223:1-3 – 206:1-5 – 143:1-4

A. “Church Discipline” is the nerve of the church (Calvin)

1. our Lord teaches us on the importance of *Church discipline* in Matt 18

B. “Church Discipline” begin and ends with the *whole* church in action

1. Matt 18:5, 10, 12, 15, 35 - Heb. 13:13; 10:24-25 - James 5:19-20

C. “Church Discipline” does not override civil authority (Church Order art. 71)

The Purposes & the Process of Church Discipline

I. The Purposes of Church Discipline

A. Church Discipline is about upholding God’s glory – purity of His holiness

1. God personally *disciplined* to exalt His glory in Scripture

- a. His example: *Lev. 10; Josh 7; 2 Sam. 6, Acts 5*

- b. His order to imitate Him: Micah 6:8

2. As God’s representatives, we are to be *counter-cultural* in dealing with sin

B. Church Discipline is maintaining purity & power of the whole church: Joshua 7

1. As a Christian, you are *never* an individual (1 Cor. 5:6-7; 11)

C. Church Discipline is to promote the peace of the church family: Rom. 16:17-20

1. CoF: *nourish and preserve concord and unity* (CoF 32)

2. To promote this: Matt. 18:17; Titus 3:10-11; 2 John 10-11

D. Church Discipline is for the **training** of believers (Heb. 12:3-11)

II. The Process of Discipline

A. First steps are with you as brother/sister: Luke 17:3a!

1. cultivate your “1 Cor. 12:26-27” thinking
2. cultivate the Heb. 10:24-25 attitude vs the Gen. 4:9 attitude
3. cultivate the mindset of Matt. 7:1-5; Gal. 6:1; Matt. 18:23-33

B. Next is to follow Jesus’ footsteps with Peter: Matt. 18:15; Luke 24:34 (22:61a!)

1. First is private ministry
2. If private ministry fails, Jesus calls to *increase hands of love*: Matt. 18:16
(see our Church Order Art. 72-73)

C. If this love-pressure fails to save the erring brother, Jesus calls for an extended ministry that may lead to *banishment* from the Kingdom : Matt. 18:17-18

D. The greatest exercise of love: restore the repentant sinner: Matt. 18:21-22

Reflection: *Take time to read the Forms of Excommunication and Readmitting the Excommunicated in the back of Psalter*

It is no inconsiderable security that, as believers, we shall stand before no other tribunal than that of our Redeemer. (Calvin; HCat, q. 52)

Those who will not deliver themselves into the hand of God’s mercy cannot be delivered out of the hand of His justice. (M. Henry)

You will face an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory
or an exceeding weight of wrath.
Which would you face today if it would be your last?

The Lord has a golden scepter and iron rod. Those who will not bow to the first shall be broken by the second. Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish from the way His wrath is kindled but a little. (Watson; Ps. 2:12)