

The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

Immorality and Discipline in the Church

1 Corinthians 5:1-13

1. The Need for Discipline (v.1)
2. The Duty to Discipline (v.2)
3. The Method of Discipline (vs.3-5a; cf. Matt. 18:15-20)
4. The Reason for Discipline (v.5b-8)

When a local church engages in careful biblical discipline of its members, up to and including their expulsion from the fellowship, for sins which the individual has committed, it is exhibiting its faithfulness to Christ.

A. Why is the Sinner Disciplined?

I. Initial Encounter

A Christian is able to be confronted by another brother or sister in Christ on account of any sin that is committed (cf. 1 Cor. 5:11; 2 Thess 3:6-13).

II. Final Expulsion

Whether the sin which brought about the initial discipline encounter appears to be sensational or mundane, the common sin which results in a person being removed from fellowship is impenitence (cf. Matt. 18:15b).

B. Why Does the Church Discipline?

I. Obedience to God's Command (v.5b)

The local church is to be diligent in confronting and dealing with the sin within the fellowship as an act of obedience to the Lord (cf. Matt 18:17; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15)

II. Love for the Sinner (v.5b)

Rebuking a sinning brother is a sign of true care (Prov. 27:6; cf. 2 Sam. 12:7; Ps. 32:1-6). If the sinning member of the congregation refuses to repent, the loving hope in expelling him from the congregation is that he might be brought to repentance, even if that includes him having to endure the natural consequences of his continued sin.

III. Holiness of the Local Church (vs.6-8)

Leaven is almost always used with reference to sin (cf. Matt. 13:33), but it always is used to illustrate relentless permeation. The only way to prevent leaven from affecting an entire lump of dough is to utterly remove it (cf. Deut 13:5; 17:7, 12; 21:21).

5. The _____ of Discipline (vs.9-13)