

CHURCH DISCIPLINE – A TRAGIC NEGLECT

Wayne Jackson

It is difficult to imagine what it would be like to live in a society where citizens could flaunt the rules and absolutely no consequences would follow—no fines, no imprisonment, etc. Can you conceive of a home environment where the children are allowed to do whatever they please with utterly no discipline imposed? **Total chaos would reign in either of these instances.**

Yet, there are countless congregations belonging to Jesus Christ across our land where little, if any, discipline of the wayward is ever enacted. Is it any wonder that our brotherhood is weaker today than it has been in decades?

Exactly what is church discipline? **In its broadest sense, it involves everything from the most basic instruction that the new-born child of God receives—from the time of his conversion onward, all the way to the radical “surgery” sometimes required in the withholding of fellowship from impenitent apostates.** For the purpose of this study, we are speaking solely of that terminal act—the church’s obligation to withdraw its fellowship from those who cannot be reached with more moderate approaches.

New Testament Authority for Discipline

Every serious Bible student knows that there is ample authority for the practice of church discipline. Consider the following samples of New Testament evidence: **Jesus taught that one who has wronged his brother, and who cannot be persuaded to repent—either by the offended party, other independent witnesses, or the church in general—should be treated as “the Gentile and the publican”** (Matthew 18:17). In the context of a first-century setting, this means that the church was to have no social contact with hardened offenders.

Paul instructed the saints in Rome to be on the lookout for those “who are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling contrary to the doctrine.” He declared that the faithful should “turn away from” these self-serving egotists who were deceiving the innocent (Romans 16:17). The entire fifth chapter of 1 Corinthians deals with the matter of discipline. A fornicating church member had pursued in his immoral lifestyle relentlessly, and **the apostle rebuked the Corinthian congregation for not having disfellowshipped the man.** Paul declared that the brother should have “been taken away from among you,” delivered “unto Satan,” and “put away” (vv. 2, 5, 13). Further, with such a one, “company” was not to be kept. The fraternization of a common meal was forbidden (v. 11). This instruction is quite explicit.

The inspired Paul commanded the church in Thessalonica to “withdraw” from every brother who persists in walking disorderly, thus contrary to divinely received traditions (2 Thessalonians 3:6). Such persons, says he, are to be identified

and social company with them is to be severed. Excommunicated brethren, of course, are not to be treated harshly; rather, they are to be admonished in a brotherly fashion (vv. 14, 15; cf. Galatians 6:1).

In Titus 3:10, inspiration affirms that a factious person, after appropriate admonition, is to be “refused,” i.e., refused further association. These passages by no means exhaust the New Testament information on the subject of church discipline. They are sufficient, however, to provide ample instruction of the kingdom’s responsibility in this regard.

The Purpose of Church Discipline

What is the purpose in withdrawing fellowship from the disorderly? **It certainly is not an act of revenge toward those who have fallen from the faith.** And it must never be exercised in a haughty or malevolent manner. **The Scriptures do suggest, however, that discipline has both a corrective and a protective function.**

Obviously, **it is designed to save the erring child of God.** The Corinthian fornicator was to be disfellowshipped so that he might be motivated to destroy “the flesh,” i.e., his ungodly fleshly passion (see Thayer 1958, 443) in order that his spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 5:5). Discipline is designed to “gain” the wayward (Matthew 18:15), to make him “ashamed” (2 Thessalonians 3:14), to the end that he may be restored (Galatians 6:1).

A consideration of certain passages in 2 Corinthians leads to the conclusion that the church in Corinth finally did withdraw from the sensuous offender, and that such brought him to repentance. The apostle wrote: “This punishment which was inflicted by the majority is sufficient for such a man” (2:6).

But discipline is not merely for the welfare of the rebel. It is for the protection of the church as well. When Paul admonished the congregation at Corinth to take care of the problem of the immoral brother, he warned: “Don’t you know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?” (1 Corinthians 5:6). The apostle elsewhere declared that those who cause

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'KHRIS' SUANGPHUM, A WEEKLY BULLETIN FOR
THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST, DELHI,
ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK'

Enkaitu : Jamson Guite

BIBLE CLASS
Class : **Teacher**
Adult : James, Siamkhanmuan
Inter. : Biakmang & Jamson
Junior : Minlun & Suanlian
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THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

*Na thusehte ka zil theihna diing in hih
haksat a ka om a hoih hi
- Sam 119:71*

THU TUAMTUAM

THU TUAMTUAM

BIAKNA HUNZEEK

TOUPA' NI

DATE 5.2.2023

Hun-uk thumna : Kamkhenthang
Lapi : Joseph Suantak
Thilpiak : Jangminthang
Theihgigena : Thongginlian
Thugen : Lang James
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MIDWEEK ONLINE BIBLE CLASS

DATE 8.2.2023

Thumna : Jangthang
Sinsaktu : Chuck Horner
Thumna : Tawnsianpau

KIGINNI

DATE 11.2.2023

Hun-uk thumna : Khamminthang
Lapi : Pausuanlian
Thugen : Lamsuanmung
Thumna : Mungsuan

TOUPA' NI

DATE 12.2.2023

Hun-uk thumna : Kamminthang
Lapi : Pausuanlian
Thilpiak : Kammuanlal
Theihgigena : Lang James
Thugen : Jamson
Thumna : Kamkhenthang

TUNI'N KIPANTA DIING

☛ Ina zaktak uh dungzui in tukum a diing in nipi skulte tuni apan pat hita diing hi. A pat akipan thanuamtak leh lunglutak a tel diing in i kichial thak-thak ahi. Hiai nipi skulte tuh i khristian hinkhua thununtu hoihtak ahihman in khristian ginom hihsawmte a diing in nelhsiah ngam vual diing hilou ahi. A kisit omlou a aneupen apan a lianpen tan a kilawptak a tel siausia diing in i kingen uhi.

BUSINESS MEETING OM DIING

☛ Workplan a gelkholhsa dungzui in a hongtung diing tu kiginni chiang in Saptuam business meeting om diing hi. A mun diing ahileh unaupa Nekkhothang inn diing ahi. Toupa Saptuam leh a nasep awlmohna ziak a kalsuana khat hi ahihman in unau pasalte'n ngaipoimoh in tel chiat ni.

SINSAKTUTE HANTHAWNNA IN

☛ Zan kiginni biakna zoh in preacher in a inn mun ah nipi skul sinsaktute leh a innkuante leh nipi skul enkaitu samkhawm in kahasotna hun saulou zang in nitak an nekhawmpih hi.

Pek masa sutzopna...

divisions and occasions of stumbling "by their smooth and fair speech beguile the hearts of the innocent" (Romans 16:17).

Two false teachers in the early church, Hymenaeus and Alexander, had made shipwreck of the faith, hence Paul "delivered [them] unto Satan," i.e., he dis-fellowshipped them (1 Timothy 1:19-20; cf. 1 Corinthians 5:5) for the welfare of the brethren. **False teaching, if allowed to go unchecked within the body of Christ, can eat like a cancer and cause the faith of some to be overthrown** (see 2 Tim. 2:16-18).

Discipline is also important in preserving the integrity of the church before the eyes of the world. Society has bias enough against us without having the legitimate complaint that we harbor evil within our fellowship. We should never give occasion to the adversary for reviling (1 Timothy 5:14).

It is imperative that the conduct of the church be such that "the name of God and the doctrine be not blasphemed" (1 Timothy 6:1), and that the way of truth be not "evil spoken of" (2 Peter 2:2).

THUMSAKNA HUN ZAT IN OM

☛ Kal paita Toupa Ni biakna zoh in biakkhawmna mun mah ah business chairman makaih in tukum a nipi skul sinsaktute a diing a thumsakna hun zat in om hi. Amaute mipi mai a samkhia in unaupa Nekkhothang in thumsakna hun ah hon makaih hi.

GRAPE TUI KILEITHAK

☛ Theihgigena a vanzat poimoh mahmah grape tui leisate beidekta a, duhtusam Delhi mun a akimuhlouh ziak in unaupa Jamson in Lamka apan ana thukhak hi. A thak a tun nailouh ziak in zatawm diing in Kissan-te bawl thawl 10 ana thukhak phot hi. Zat theih diing in grape tuite office assistant khut ah ana pekhiata hi.

KIPAHHUI LUA

☛ Mission Veng, Lamka, Zion Veng, New Lamka leh Shillong a unau bekhwamte'n kal teng a suak Toupa Ni, Khristian Thupawtu leh Messenger te ahunhun a hon khak gige ziak in i kipak petmah uhi. Maban a leng hong khakzom zel diing in i ngen uhi.