

# WHERE and WHEN Should a Church Practice Church Discipline?

November 10- Wayne Wallace

## Matthew 18:15-17 (NIV)

<sup>15</sup> If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. <sup>16</sup> But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' <sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

### 1. WHERE do we Practice Discipline / Discipleship?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ – (“*just between the two of you*”)
  - *in* close personal relationships with other Christians (“*brother*”)
  - *in* Christian community – *in* everyday life with one another
  
- b. In \_\_\_\_\_ – (“*take one or two others along*”)
  - *with* a small number of committed Christians to warn, instruct and correct
  
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ within the Church fellowship – (“*tell it to the church*”)
  - *among* the Local Fellowship of Committed Believers
  - make it known to the Rest of the Church that the person is not responding to discipline
  
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ in the World outside the church – (“*pagan or a tax collector*”)
  - *in* our lack of association with the unrepentant
  - **1 Corinthians 5:11** – “you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.”
  - “Excommunication” tells the World...
    - This Person no longer represents Christ
    - They are Behaving as a Non-Christian (“pagan”)
    - This Person no longer Represents this Church Fellowship
    - They are behaving corruptly even though claiming to be Christian (“tax collector”)

## 2. WHEN do we Practice Discipline / Discipleship?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ – (“brother”)
- *when* we become aware that a Christian friend fails to represent Christ appropriately
  - *before* it becomes public knowledge
  - but always remembering Galatians 6:1, “watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.”
- b. with \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ – “one or two others”
- *when* the person refuses to repent, then involve a few other Christians as witnesses
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ – (“tell it to the church”)
- *when* the sin becomes public knowledge
  - and/or the person fails to repent and change behavior following individual and small group correction and instruction

## 3. In every case the Goal is...

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ *to* \_\_\_\_\_ (public humiliation)
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ *to* \_\_\_\_\_ (private instruction)

### 1 Corinthians 4:14 NIV

I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children.

- c. \_\_\_\_\_ *to* \_\_\_\_\_

### Galatians 6:1 NIV

Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.