

WHERE and WHEN Should a Church Practice Church Discipline?

November 10- Wayne Wallace

Matthew 18:15-17 (NIV)

¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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.' ¹⁷ 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 - This Person no longer represents Christ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 - This Person no longer Represents this Church Fellowship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.