

# Church Discipline and Pastoral Rule

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I. Church discipline is necessary.

1. Judgment must begin in the house of God (**1Pe 4:17**).
2. If we judge ourselves we will not be judged by the Lord (**1Co 11:31-32**).
3. The reason our society is in such a mess is because sin is not condemned, but is instead tolerated in the churches.
4. America is no longer *great* because America is no longer *good*.
5. If we are going to make America great again, it will only be by making America's churches great again.

II. Church discipline is necessary for a church of Jesus Christ to continue to be a church.

1. Jesus sent letters to the seven churches in Asia in **Rev 2-3** addressing their problems and praising their good points.
  - A. Five of those churches were condemned for their errors, and one was told that if they didn't repent Jesus would take away their candlestick which would cause them to cease to be a church (**Rev 2:5 c/w Rev 1:20**).
  - B. Another was told that Jesus would spew them out of His mouth (**Rev 3:16**).
2. The Roman Catholic Church was once a true church in Rome.
  - A. Little by little heresy and false practices crept into the church at Rome until finally it was no longer considered a church of Jesus Christ.
  - B. This has happened to countless other churches throughout history.
3. If our church is to last, it will be by maintaining truth and holiness among our members.

III. A church should be holy both in faith and conduct.

1. Upholding the truth is the duty of a church (pillar of the truth) (**1Ti 3:15**).
  - A. Brethren should proclaim the truth at every opportunity.
    - i. Christians are the light of the world and should let their light shine (**Mat 5:14-16**).
    - ii. We should always be ready to give an answer to any man who asks us for a reason of the hope that is in us (**1Pe 3:15**).
    - iii. We should earnestly contend for the faith (**Jud 1:3**).
  - B. A church must worship God *in truth* (**Joh 4:24**).
2. But a church must also be holy *in conduct*, not only in creed.
  - A. Christians must be holy (**1Pe 1:15-16; 1Th 4:7**).
  - B. A church is supposed to be composed of *holy brethren* (**Heb 3:1**).
  - C. Holiness becomes God's house (**Psa 93:5**).
  - D. Become v. - III. To agree or accord with; suit, befit, grace. 7. *trans.* To accord with, agree with, be suitable to; to befit
  - E. The apostles behaved themselves holily and justly among the brethren as an example of how they ought to live (**1Th 2:10**).
  - F. Church members must come to God's house with reverence.
    - i. God should be greatly feared and had in reverence in the assembly of the saints (**Psa 89:7**).
    - ii. God ought to be worshipped in fear in His house (**Psa 5:7**).

- iii. When saints come to worship God in His house, they should be ready to hear, not to speak (especially rashly) (**Ecc 5:1-2**).

IV. The pastor is the earthly overseer and ruler of the church who is tasked with maintaining order and holiness in the church.

1. God is the Father of His children.
  - A. The church is God's house where His children dwell (**1Ti 3:15**).
  - B. God sets the rules for His house in His word.
2. While Jesus Christ (who is the head of the church) is away He has appointed pastors to be the door-keepers and guardians of his house (**Mar 13:34**).
  - A. The pastor is the *porter* of the house of God.
    - i. Porter *n.* – 1. a. One who has charge of a door or gate, esp. at the entrance of a fortified town or of a castle or other large building, a public institution, etc.; a gate-keeper, door-keeper, janitor.
    - ii. The pastor decides by the scriptures who is qualified to enter the church through baptism (**Act 8:36-38; Mat 3:7-8**).
    - iii. The pastor decides by the scriptures who is required to be removed from the church through exclusion (**1Co 5:3-5; 1Ti 1:20**).
    - iv. Once the pastor has recommended a person for admission to the church through baptism or dismissal from the church through exclusion, the church members must give their consent (**Act 10:47; 2Co 2:6**).
  - B. The pastor is the bishop of the church (**1Ti 3:1-2; Tit 1:7**).
    - i. Bishop - 1. A spiritual superintendent or overseer in the Christian Church.
    - ii. Superintendent - 1. a. An officer or official who has the chief charge, oversight, control, or direction of some business, institution, or works; an overseer.
    - iii. Oversight - 1. a. Supervision, superintendence, inspection; charge, care, management, control.
    - iv. Control - *n.* 1. a. The fact of controlling, or of checking and directing action; the function or power of directing and regulating; domination, command, sway.
    - v. As the bishop, the pastor is a spiritual supervisor of the church who checks and directs its action.
  - C. The pastor is the overseer of the church (**Act 20:28**).
    - i. Overseer - 1. a. One who oversees or superintends, a supervisor; esp. one whose business it is to superintend a piece of work, or a body of workmen; a superintendent (of workmen, slaves, convicts, etc.).
    - ii. As the overseer, the pastor oversees and superintends the membership of the church.
  - D. The pastor is the steward of the church (**Tit 1:7; Luk 12:42; 1Co 4:1-2**).
    - i. Steward - 1. a. An official who controls the domestic affairs of a household, supervising the service of his master's table, directing the domestics, and regulating household expenditure; a major-domo.
    - ii. As the steward, the pastor has the control of the domestic affairs of the church, including a final say concerning its finances.
  - E. The pastor is the minister of the church (**1Co 4:1; 1Th 3:2; 1Ti 4:6**).

- i. Minister - 1. a. A servant, attendant. 2. a. One who acts under the authority of another; one who carries out executive duties as the agent or representative of a superior.
    - ii. As the minister, the pastor is a servant of the church and a representative of Jesus Christ who carries out the executive duties which Christ gives him in His word.
  - F. The pastor is the watchman of the church (**Heb 13:17 c/w Eze 33:1-9**).
    - i. Watch - v. II. 9. a. To keep under surveillance (a prisoner, a besieged army) in order to prevent escape or rescue; to set an armed watch upon (a place, road, passage). b. To guard (a dead body, goods). 13. a. To exercise protecting vigilance over; to tend (a flock). 1526 Tindale Luke ii. 8 There were...shepherds... watching their flocks by nyght.
    - ii. The pastor guards the church and protects it from those who would destroy it.
  - G. The pastor has the rule over the church (**Heb 13:7, 17**).
    - i. Rule - n. I. 1. a. A principle, regulation, or maxim governing individual conduct.
    - ii. Those who have the rule over the church are those who have spoken unto them the word of God (the pastor) (**Heb 13:7**).
    - iii. The pastor is tasked with governing the conduct of the church members in accordance with the word of God.
- 3. A pastor is similar to a babysitter whom God has appointed to watch over His children in His house in His stead (**1Jo 2:1; 1Co 4:14-15; Gal 4:19**).
  - A. Like a babysitter, the pastor does not make up the rules of the house — the Father does.
  - B. Like a babysitter, the pastor has authority to enforce the rules of the Father's house upon His children.
  - C. Like a babysitter, the pastor has the authority to see to it that the Father's children are disciplined when they break the Father's rules.
  - D. As the ruler of the church, the pastor is the minister of God to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil (**Rom 13:1-4**).
  - E. The idea of "permissive parenting" is popular these days. People who subscribe that idea think the following:
    - i. It's inappropriate to discipline children.
    - ii. Children should be given multiple warnings and chances to stop breaking their father's rules before being disciplined.
    - iii. Some clear violations of the father's rules can be overlooked.
    - iv. It's okay and normal for parents to make threats and not follow through with the punishment.
  - F. These types of permissive practices make pitiful parents and pitiful pastors.
    - i. Holiness becomes God's house.
    - ii. As the pastor of this church, I will not tolerate wicked behavior in the members.
    - iii. I will not tolerate public disorderly conduct among church members.
    - iv. You may act disorderly and sinfully in your own house (and God will judge you for it), but you will NOT act disorderly and sinfully in *God's house* while I am the pastor!

- v. I will call for the exclusion of any church member who is commonly known to have committed one of the sins in the lists of excludable offenses in the Bible.
  - a. These sins cannot be *once* named among us (**Eph 5:3**).
  - b. This means that when it comes to *commonly known excludable sins*, there are no second chances.
- vi. I will *immediately* (**Psa 119:60**) call for the exclusion of every brother that behaves disorderly (**2Th 3:6**) in the assembly of this church.
- G. I will have mercy on human weakness, especially when in a private context.
  - i. I will cover a sin Biblically when I can if it is not commonly known and it is repented of.
  - ii. I will even tolerate less-than-respectful treatment of myself in private by church members who are not in their right minds....to an extent.
  - iii. I am open to correction, and I'm easy to be entreated if I am approached respectfully.
  - iv. But I will NOT tolerate willful, stubborn, foolish, or wicked behavior, *especially* in the assembly of the church.

V. The local church is the kingdom of God (which will become very important in the next sections).

1. The kingdom of God/heaven was prophesied to come in the days of the Roman Empire which was the fourth kingdom in Daniel's interpretation of king Nebuchadnezzar's dream (**Dan 2:37-40, 44**).
2. The kingdom of God/heaven came in the first century AD in the days of the Roman Empire, just as was prophesied (**Mar 1:14-15**).
3. The kingdom of God is the local church that Jesus built (**Mat 16:18-19**).
4. The local church is the kingdom of God/heaven that will never be destroyed, but will last until the end of the world (**Dan 2:44; Mat 16:18; Heb 12:28; Eph 3:21**).
5. The local church is the kingdom of God which is entered by baptism (**Luk 16:16; Luk 7:29-30 c/w Mat 21:31-32; Act 2:41-42, 47**).
6. The local church is the kingdom of God where we eat and drink with Jesus at His table (**Luk 22:29-30 c/w 1Co 10:16, 21 c/w 1Co 11:23-25**).

VI. Common report

1. In order to be disciplined by the church, a man must have committed an excludable offense (see Section VIII) which is *commonly known* among the church (**1Co 5:1**).
2. Commonly - 1. After a fashion or in a way common to all; in common; generally, universally.
3. Depending on the size of the church, if the sin is only known by one, or possibly a few people, the brother doesn't have to be put out of the church but can be dealt with privately.

VII. Method of church discipline

1. It is not right or acceptable for a church to cover or ignore a sin that is commonly known among them (**1Co 5:2**).

2. Judgment of a sinner can be executed based on credible testimony from multiple witnesses, even if the pastor is not present at the time but instructs the church to act in his absence **(1Co 5:3)**.
3. The man that has committed an excludable and commonly known sin must be put out of the church and delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh **(1Co 5:4-5)**.
  - A. The punishment that Satan will inflict on the sinner is only *of the flesh*; that is, temporal punishment.
  - B. If he is a child of God, the man will not, and cannot, lose his eternal life **(Joh 10:28-29)**, for the purpose of the punishment is that *the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*.
4. The reason why a commonly known sinner needs put out of the church is because he will infect the rest of the church: a little leaven leavens the whole lump **(1Co 5:6)**.
  - A. Those who sin publicly need rebuked before all that others may fear and not follow them in their ungodliness **(1Ti 5:20)**.
  - B. A scorner needs smitten so that others will beware and be wise **(Pro 19:25; Pro 21:11)**.
5. The leaven (sinner) needs purged out of the church, for the church must be unleavened **(1Co 5:7)**.
  - A. Purge v. - 1. a. *trans.* To make physically pure or clean; to cleanse; to rid of whatever is impure or extraneous; to clear or free of, from. 2. a. To make figuratively or ideally pure or clean, to free from moral or spiritual defilement; to rid of or free from sin, guilt, fault, error, or evil of any kind; to rid of objectionable, alien, or extraneous elements or members. In recent use, to rid of persons regarded as politically undesirable; = purify 2, 4.
  - B. The reason for purging sinners from the church is because "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us" **(1Co 5:7)**.
  - C. Just as there was to be no leaven found in Israel during the passover, neither should there be any commonly known sinners found the church.
6. The local church keeps the feast of the passover in a reformed manner which is the ordinance of communion **(1Co 5:8)**.
  - A. The communion feast is to be kept without leaven, as was the passover feast **(1Co 5:8)**.
  - B. The communion bread also represents the spiritual body of Christ, the church **(1Co 10:16-17 c/w 1Co 12:27)**.
    - i. The church are collectively *partakers* of that one bread which represents the body of Christ **(1Co 10:17)**.
    - ii. The church, *who being many are one bread* **(1Co 10:17)**, must keep the feast of communion as an *unleavened* loaf **(1Co 5:8)**.
    - iii. Commonly known sinners in the church are leaven with whom the church is not to be partakers **(Eph 5:3-7)**.
7. In the next verse, Paul explains practically what he had just taught metaphorically **(1Co 5:9)**.
  - A. Paul had told the church at Corinth in a previous letter that they were not to *company* with fornicators **(1Co 5:9)**.
    - i. Company v. - 1. *trans.* To go in company with, to accompany; to keep company with, have society with.

- ii. Company *n.* - 1. a. Companionship, fellowship, society; also *transf.* of things. *in company*: in the society of others, amidst other people, as opposed to alone; c. *to keep company (with)*: to associate with, frequent the society of;
      - iii. Society - 1. a. Association with one's fellow men, *esp.* in a friendly or intimate manner; companionship or fellowship.
    - B. This means that church members are not to maintain companionship and fellowship, nor to be friendly and intimate, with fornicators and other commonly known sinners *in the church* which Paul clarifies in the next verse.
- 8. The church is not supposed to avoid all sinners altogether, but only those commonly known sinners who are members of the church (**1Co 5:10**).
  - A. If Christians were forbidden to keep company with *all* fornicators, covetous men, extortioners, idolaters, etc., they would have to go live on another planet because such people are everywhere.
  - B. We are permitted to have a certain amount of companionship and fellowship with the sinners of this world which is necessary to live in this world.
- 9. Paul specifies which sinners must be separated from: brothers in the church (**1Co 5:11**).
  - A. If a brother in the church is commonly known (**1Co 5:1**) to have committed one of the sins in **1Co 5:11**, or in the other lists of excludable offences (see Section VIII), then the church must not keep company with him.
  - B. Specifically, the company that is not to be kept with such a man is eating with him at the Lord's table: *with such an one no not to eat* (**1Co 5:11**).
    - i. The eating is not eating in general, such as at a business lunch or a family dinner.
    - ii. The eating is the feast of the communion table (**1Co 5:7-8 c/w 1Co 10:16-17 c/w 1Co 11:20**).
  - C. Therefore, the primary means of church discipline is withholding participation in the communion ordinance from a brother.
- 10. The church doesn't judge them that are without the church, but it should and must judge them that are within it (**1Co 5:12**).
- 11. God, not the church, judges those outside of the church, but the church must discipline its members when necessary (**1Co 5:13**).
  - A. Paul concludes his instruction by telling the church to put away from among themselves that wicked person.
  - B. When a man is put away from the church, he is:
    - i. delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh (**1Co 5:5**).
    - ii. purged as leaven from the church membership (**1Co 5:7**).
    - iii. not to be companied with (**1Co 5:9, 11**).
    - iv. banned from the Lord's table (**1Co 5:11**).
  - C. Such a person can still attend a church service and participate in public acts of worship such as singing and listening to the sermon, but he must have no part in things which are exclusive to church membership such as communion, feetwashing, church decisions, and the fellowship that is peculiar to the saints.

### VIII. Sins that merit church discipline

1. The sins listed in **1Co 5:11** call for church exclusion (see Section VI).

- A. These sins include: fornication, covetousness, idolatry, railing, drunkenness, extortion.
  - B. Therefore, a man that is commonly known to have committed a sin listed in this verse will be put out of the local church.
2. The sinners listed in **1Co 6:9-10** "shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
- A. These sinners include: fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, effeminate (men who act like women, transgenders, cross-dressers), abusers of themselves with mankind (sodomites), thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners.
  - B. The kingdom of God is the local church (see Section V).
  - C. Therefore, a man that is commonly known to be such a sinner listed in these verses will lose his inheritance in the kingdom of God by being put out of the local church.
3. Those that commit sins listed in **Gal 5:19-21** "shall not inherit the kingdom of God."
- A. These sins include: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulation, wrath, strife, sedition, heresy, envy, murder, drunkenness, and reveling.
  - B. The kingdom of God is the local church (see Section V).
  - C. Therefore, a man that is commonly known to have committed a sin listed in these verses will lose his inheritance in the kingdom of God by being put out of the local church.
4. None of those that commit sins listed in **Eph 5:3-5** "hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."
- A. These sins include: fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking, jesting, whoremongering, and idolatry.
  - B. The kingdom of God is the local church (see Section V).
  - C. Therefore, those who commit such sins have no place in the church and will be put out of it.
  - D. The use of the word "hath" in **Eph 5:5** shows that God has already disinherited these sinners of His kingdom.
    - i. Such sinners *hath* (present tense) no inheritance in the kingdom of God.
    - ii. When the church excludes a sinner from their number they are simply *reacting* to what God has already done.
    - iii. Those that go out from the church were not truly of the church before they went out (**1Jo 2:19**).
      - a. They could have been of the church at one time and then fell away prior to being excluded.
      - b. They also may never have truly been part of it, but just chaff among the wheat and goats/wolves among the sheep (**Mat 7:15; 2Co 11:13-15; Gal 2:4; Jud 1:4**).
  - E. Therefore, a man that is commonly known to have committed a sin listed in these verses will lose his inheritance in the kingdom of God by being put out of the local church.
5. Those that commit the sins listed in **Rom 1:29-31** are worthy of death (**Rom 1:32**).
- A. These sins include: unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whispering, backbiting, hating God, spitefulness, pride, boasting, inventing evil things, disobeying



parents, being without understanding, covenant breaking, being without natural affection, implacability, and unmercifulness.

- B. A sinner will not be physically put to death by the church (**2Co 10:3-5**).
  - C. But a brother will experience a death to fellowship in the church if he commits such sins (**1Co 5:5; 1Jo 5:16; Luk 15:24; Rom 11:17 c/w Rom 11:15; Rev 3:1; Jam 5:19-20**).
6. The sinners in **1Ti 6:3-5** are to be withdrawn from (**1Ti 6:5**).
- A. Those sins include: pride, envy, strife, railing, evil surmising, perverse disputing, and supposing that gain is godliness.
  - B. The church must withdraw fellowship from such people who are commonly known to have committed these sins.
7. The sinners in **2Ti 3:1-5** are to be turned away from (**2Ti 3:5**).
- A. These sinners include those who are lovers of their own selves and are covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, and have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.
  - B. The church must turn away from such people who are commonly known to have committed these sins.
  - C. As we draw toward the end of time, such sinners will become more commonplace (**2Ti 3:1**).
8. Such like things (**Gal 5:21**).
- A. Such-like - A. *adj.* Of such a kind; of the like or a similar kind; of the before-mentioned sort or character.
  - B. Any sin that is similar to any of the sins in the lists of excludable offences will be met with church discipline.
  - C. Therefore, getting high by smoking marijuana or other mind-altering drugs is an excludable offence because it is a sin "such like" *drunkenness*.
  - D. Therefore, for women to dress, wear their hair, or act like men is an excludable offence because these are sins "such like" *effeminacy*.
  - E. Therefore, bestiality, necrophilia, pedophilia, etc. are excludable offences because they are sexual sins "such like" *fornication* and *sodomy*.
9. Not providing for oneself or one's family
- A. If a man provides not for himself, he has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel (**1Ti 5:8**).
    - i. Infidel *n.* - 1. One who does not believe in (what the speaker holds to be) the true religion; an 'unbeliever'.
    - ii. The church must not be yoked with unbelievers (**2Co 6:14**).
    - iii. Therefore, the church must not be yoked with those who don't provide for their own.
  - B. The church must withdraw from a brother who doesn't work when he can and should (**2Th 3:6-14**).
    - i. If a person will not work when he can, he should not eat (**2Th 3:10**).
    - ii. The church must withdraw from such a man and have no company with him (**2Th 3:6, 14**).

- C. Those that are commonly known to not work and provide for themselves when they can and should will be put out of the church.
10. Not keeping apostolic traditions given in the word of God (**2Th 3:6, 14**)
- A. The church must withdraw from those who don't walk after the traditions that were given in the scriptures by the apostles.
  - B. Tradition *n.* - 1. The action of handing over (something material) to another; delivery, transfer. 3. a. Delivery, *esp.* oral delivery, of information or instruction.
  - C. Apostolic traditions and instructions that were delivered to the churches in the scriptures include:
    - i. Assembling with the church
      - a. Assembling as a church for worship is an apostolic tradition.
      - b. Church members must not forsake assembling with the church for worship (**Heb 10:25**).
      - c. Forsake *v.* - 1. *trans.* To deny (an accusation, an alleged fact, etc.). *Obs.* c. To deny, renounce, or repudiate allegiance to (God, a lord, etc.). 4. To abandon, leave entirely, withdraw from; *esp.* to withdraw one's presence and help or companionship from; to desert.
      - d. A church member is free to move his membership to another church.
        - (i) This is not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together.
        - (ii) It would only become an excludable offense if the member stopped attending church and did not join another true church.
      - e. Those that are commonly known to forsake assembling with the church will be put out of the church.
    - ii. Keeping the ordinance of communion
      - a. Observing communion is an apostolic tradition that Paul *delivered* to the churches (**1Co 11:23-26 c/w 1Co 4:17**).
      - b. Church members are commanded ("this do") to partake of communion with the church (**Luk 22:19**).
      - c. Those that are commonly known to refuse to partake of communion with the church will be put out of the church.
    - iii. Keeping the ordinance of feetwashing
      - a. Feetwashing is an apostolic tradition.
        - (i) Jesus commanded the church to wash each other's feet (**Joh 13:14-17**).
        - (ii) Washing the saints' feet is an ordinance that is to be kept in the church (**1Ti 5:10**).
      - b. Those that are commonly known to refuse to wash the saints' feet will be put out of the church.
11. Disorderly conduct (**2Th 3:6**)
- A. Those who are commonly known to act disorderly, whether in the church assembly or outside of it, must be withdrawn from by the church.
  - B. Disorderly *adv.* - 1. Without order or regular arrangement; confusedly, irregularly; in disorder or confusion. 2. Not according to order or rule; in a lawless or unruly way; tumultuously, riotously. (The OED cites 2Th 3:6 for definition #2.)
  - C. Church members who act lawlessly, unruly, tumultuously, or riotously will be excluded from the church.

12. Not accepting the church's judgment in a case of offense (**Mat 18:15-17**)

- A. In **Mat 18:15-17**, Jesus gave instruction on the Biblical way to deal with an offence that is private in nature between two brethren and which is not an excludable offence.
- i. Note: If the offence was an excludable offence (ex.: a brother suspects another brother of committing adultery with his wife), the Matthew 18 procedure would have to stop short of being taken before the church because if the church would determine that he was guilty, he could not then choose to hear the church and be reconciled to his brother, but would have to be excluded.
  - ii. Though an offence that is dealt with in the "Matthew 18" manner is not an excludable offence in itself, it can end up in church exclusion if carried out in its entirety.
- B. The method of Mat 18:15-17
- i. Step 1 (**Mat 18:15**)
    - a. Brother A is offended by Brother B.
    - b. Brother A goes to Brother B privately and tells him that he was offended by him.
    - c. If Brother B hears Brother A and repents and apologizes, the problem is resolved and no further action needs to, nor should be, taken.
    - d. If Brother B doesn't hear Brother A, then Brother A has two choices:
      - (i) Drop the matter and forget about it.
      - (ii) Proceed to Step 2.
  - ii. Step 2 (**Mat 18:16**)
    - a. Brother A brings one or two witnesses to be impartial judges of the matter and once again confronts Brother B.
    - b. If the witnesses agree that Brother A is in right, then Brother A and they tell Brother B that he is at fault.
    - c. If Brother B hears them and repents and apologizes, the problem is resolved and no further action needs to, nor should be, taken.
    - d. If Brother B doesn't hear them, then Brother A has two choices:
      - (i) Drop the matter and forget about it.
      - (ii) Proceed to Step 3.
  - iii. Step 3 (**Mat 18:17**)
    - a. Brother A brings the matter before the church and once again confronts Brother B.
    - b. If the church agrees that Brother A is in right, then they tell Brother B that he is at fault.
    - c. If Brother B hears the church and repents and apologizes, the problem is resolved and no further action needs to, nor should be, taken.
    - d. If Brother B doesn't hear the church, then he must be excluded from the church for being *implacable* (**Rom 1:31**) and for being at *variance* (**Gal 5:20**) with the church and be unto the church as a heathen man and a publican (a sinner outside the church).

- e. If the church determines that the Brother B is not guilty of Brother A's accusation, then Brother A will be excluded from the church for being a false accuser (**2Ti 3:3**).

#### IX. Sins that don't merit church exclusion

1. The following sins don't merit church exclusion:
  - A. Sins that are not in the lists of excludable offences.
    - i. We must do all things according to God's word (**Mat 28:20; Joh 14:15**).
    - ii. If there is not a verse telling us to exclude a man for something, then we must not act outside of the scriptural commands.
  - B. Sins that are excludable offences, but were committed prior to baptism.
    - i. All sins that a man committed prior to his conversion are washed away at baptism (**1Co 6:11**).
    - ii. No church member should be judged for sins that he committed in his unconverted past.
  - C. Sins that are excludable offences but are not commonly known.
    - i. Paul's instructions regarding church discipline are prefaced upon the sin under consideration being commonly reported among the church (**1Co 5:1**).
    - ii. Excludable sins that are not commonly known should be dealt with privately before they become commonly known.
2. How to deal with excludable sins that are not commonly known
  - A. If a brother errs from the truth, either in faith or conduct, a brother who learns of it should try to convert him from the error of his way (**Jam 5:19-20**).
  - B. If the brother is successful in converting him, he will have saved the erring brother from death to church fellowship (**Jam 5:20**).
  - C. This can only be done when the offense was private ("one convert him") and not publicly known.
  - D. If the brother is converted from the error of his way, his sin should be hidden from others because it is forgiven (**Jam 5:20**).
    - i. The matter should be covered and not told to others (**Pro 17:9**).
    - ii. The loving thing to do is to cover a sin that is private and can be covered (**Pro 10:12; 1Pe 4:8; Pro 19:11**).
    - iii. "Only love truly covers; anything else is but a cover up." (Jay Adams, *Competent to Counsel*, p. 228)
  - E. If the sin is not commonly known, and it is therefore not a sin unto death (to church fellowship), the brother should be prayed for to be forgiven (**1Jo 5:16-17**).

#### X. Restoration of church membership after exclusion

1. A church member who has been disciplined by the church should be restored to the church after he has been penitent and faithful for a period of one year.
  - A. The church in Corinth excluded a fornicator from their membership (**1Co 5**).
  - B. Paul wrote to the same church in **2Co 2:6-8** and told them to restore him.
    - i. They inflicted sufficient punishment on him (**2Co 2:6**).
    - ii. He was sorrowful for his sin (**2Co 2:7**).
    - iii. They were therefore told to forgive him and confirm their love for him (**2Co 6:8**).

- C. There was a period of one year between Paul's writing of 1&2 Corinthians (**1Co 16:1-2 c/w 2Co 8:10-14 c/w 2Co 9:1-2**).
- i. Therefore, there was a period of one year between the exclusion of the fornicator and his restoration to the church.
  - ii. The church in Corinth acted zealously in response to Paul's first epistle to them (**2Co 7:8-12**), and therefore, it can be assumed that they acted quickly and excluded the brother immediately upon receiving the letter.
  - iii. In that the punishment was inflicted immediately, it must be assumed that the sorrow which came as a result of the punishment began immediately (**2Co 2:6-7**).
  - iv. Therefore, the man was repentant while under church discipline for a period of one year.
  - v. Therefore, the probation period for an excluded brother should begin when he first repents and shows sorrow for his sin and should last for one year.
  - vi. Since the only example that we have in the Bible is a one year probationary period for church restoration, we will follow that pattern.
- D. An excluded member's probationary period will not begin until he shows sincere sorrow and repentance for what he has done (**2Co 2:7**).
- i. Simply saying, "I'm sorry," or "I messed up," or "I shouldn't have done that" in front of the church is not a display of sorrow and remorse for sin.
  - ii. The sin that caused his exclusion should be confessed in front of the church and called what it is: *sin and wickedness*.
  - iii. The following are examples of godly sorrow for sin:
    - a. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah." (**Psa 32:5**)
    - b. "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. <sup>4</sup> For mine iniquities are gone over mine head: as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me. <sup>5</sup> My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness. <sup>6</sup> I am troubled; I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. <sup>7</sup> For my loins are filled with a loathsome disease: and there is no soundness in my flesh. <sup>8</sup> I am feeble and sore broken: I have roared by reason of the disquietness of my heart. <sup>9</sup> Lord, all my desire is before thee; and my groaning is not hid from thee. <sup>10</sup> My heart panteth, my strength faileth me: as for the light of mine eyes, it also is gone from me." (**Psa 38:3-10**)
    - c. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup> Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. <sup>3</sup> For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. <sup>4</sup> Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." (**Psa 51:1-4**)

- d. "And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." (**Luk 15:21**)
- iv. Until I see this attitude in an excluded brother, his probation and restoration process will not begin.
- 2. The church should restore an excluded brother to church membership in the spirit of meekness, lest we be tempted like he was (**Gal 6:1**).

#### XI. How to relate to excluded members

- 1. Mark and avoid them (**Rom 16:17**).
  - A. Mark v. - I. To put a mark upon. 8. In immaterial sense: a. To make perceptible or recognizable, by some sign or indication. b. To manifest, 'testify' (one's approval, displeasure, etc.) by some significant act, or by reward or punishment. III. To notice or observe. 13. To notice or keep the eye upon (a person or material object); to observe; to watch.
  - B. Avoid v. - III. To keep away from, keep from, keep off. 8. (the usual current sense—a natural extension of 7): To leave alone, keep clear of or away from, shun; to have nothing to do with, refrain from: a. a person or place.
  - C. Those who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine should be noted, left along, and kept away from.
  - D. Let them come to us; we should not go to them (**Jer 15:19**).
- 2. Note them and have no company with them (**2Th 3:14-15**).
  - A. Brethren who have been withdrawn from (**2Th 3:6**) should be noted.
    - i. Note v. - I. 1. a. *trans.* To observe or mark carefully; to give heed or attention to; to notice closely.
    - ii. We should be aware of who has been excluded from this church and not forget.
  - B. The church is not to *company* with commonly known sinners (**2Th 3:14 c/w 1Co 5:9-11**).
    - i. Company v. - 1. *trans.* To go in company with, to accompany; to keep company with, have society with.
    - ii. Company n. - 1. a. Companionship, fellowship, society; also *transf.* of things. *in company*: in the society of others, amidst other people, as opposed to alone; c. *to keep company (with)*: to associate with, frequent the society of;
    - iii. Society - 1. a. Association with one's fellow men, *esp.* in a friendly or intimate manner; companionship or fellowship.
  - C. This means that we should not maintain companionship and fellowship, nor be friendly and intimate with excluded members.
  - D. We can be civil with them, but not warm and friendly like we were before they were put under discipline.
  - E. This may be hard for you to do.
    - i. God's thoughts and ways are not ours and are higher than ours (**Isa 55:7-9**).
    - ii. The more you start to think and act like God does, the easier church discipline will be for you to implement.
- 3. Admonish them as brethren, not enemies (**2Th 3:15**).

- A. Admonish *v.* - 1. *gen.* To put (a person) in mind of duties; to counsel against wrong practices; to give authoritative or warning advice; to exhort, to warn.
  - B. Our communication with excluded brethren should be limited to telling them that they should repent and seek restoration in the church, and warning them of the chastisement they will face if they do not.
  - C. The admonition should be done in love, not in hatred.
  - D. If the excluded person has previously refused admonition, don't bother admonishing him or her any longer (**Pro 23:9; Pro 9:7-8**).
4. Do not bid a heretic Godspeed (**2Jo 1:9-10**).
- A. Godspeed - 1. *to bid (wish) one God-speed*, to utter the words 'God speed (you)'; *esp.* to express a wish for the success of one who is setting out on some journey or enterprise.
  - B. Do not wish success to heretics or other excluded, unrepentant sinners.
  - C. Do not tell them that you hope that everything goes well for them.
  - D. To do so is to show approval of their sin and rebellion and be a partaker of their evil deeds (**2Jo 1:11**).
5. How to deal with excluded members who are family members or business associates who cannot be completely avoided.
- A. We will not always be able to entirely avoid excluded church members.
  - B. They could be our wives, husbands, children, business associates, etc. and therefore existing relationships will have to be maintained in some cases (especially marriage).
  - C. In the case of immediate family members who have been excluded and are unrepentant — fulfill your duty to them as family members.
  - D. In the case of extended family members, avoid them when possible.
  - E. In the case of business associates, treat them as other business associates with whom you are not friends.
  - F. Always make sure they know that you do not approve of their unrepentant lifestyle.