

# CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE

Church discipline is a very difficult area of doctrine and one that is hard to practice.



Nevertheless, church discipline rests upon the divine authority of Scripture and is vital to the purity, power, progress, and purpose of the church. If the local church obeys the Word of God, the responsibility and necessity for discipline is not an option for the church. However, a church must be equally concerned that Scripture is carefully followed in the practice of church discipline.

## **The Principle of Discipline Defined:**

R.C. Sproul writes, "The church is called not only to a ministry of reconciliation, but a ministry of nurture to those within her gates. Part of that nurture includes church discipline..."

The idea of church discipline is totally consistent with the basic purposes of the church - evangelism and edification. There might be some to believe that these two basic purposes ought to be broken down to subtitles within the two basic purposes; but, Scripture tells us that the church of Jesus Christ should build on, stress, and promote these two basic purposes.

- Evangelism ministers to those without the church who are in bondage to sin to bring them to faith in Christ where the transformation process begins.
- The edification process is designed to build up believers so they can be conformed to the image and character of Christ. Church discipline as a part of the edification process ministers to those within the body of Christ who are dominated by some area of sin so they can experience liberation from its power through fellowship with Christ.

**How then do we define church discipline?** Carl Laney states, “Church discipline may be broadly defined as the confrontive and corrective measures taken by an individual, church leaders, or the congregation regarding a matter of sin in the life of a believer.”

**Discipline in the church is not punishment. It is discipline and discipline is designed to train and restore.**