

Tell it to the Church

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I. Introduction. Text: Matthew 18.

II. The process of discipline.

A. We must help one another when we do not see or recognize that what we are doing is wrong.

B. We are to bear with one another's sins. (Ephesians 4)

C. We are to address others in sin with a spirit of meekness to restore.

D. Steps:

1. One must be approached individually.

2. If this does not work, a person must be approached with witnesses.

3. If the believer still refuses, the believer must tell it to the church.

D. If someone comes to the last stage, one should...

1. Pray for the offender that he or she might recover, as well as those affected might.

2. Express concern for the individual involved.

3. Share one's own victories with the individual.

E. The final step: if the believer has not responded he is to be declared an unbeliever by his deeds—the individual is to be looked upon differently.

1. They are to be treated with courtesy.

2. They are also to be treated with sorrow and hope.

3. They are to be denied any leadership position within the church.

F. God will discipline as a loving Father those who refuse to turn from evil. (Hebrews 12-13)

1. This discipline can be ruthless.

2. Paul speaks of this as being delivered unto Satan.

3. Whatever occurs, it is now in God's hands.

Application questions:

1. What are the steps of church discipline?

2. Have you ever seen these steps carried out? What was your experience like? If not, was there a time that this would have been appropriate?

3. What fears do you have about this process? How can one find strength in addressing a believer who is involved in serious sin?
