



Pursuing the Pattern for Church Discipline Pt 2: What is the Church Pt 2

CRCC Summer Bible Study, July 13, 2017

Foundational Text: Matthew 16:13-19

- Last week, we started to work through the process of understanding and eventually implementing the biblical *Pattern for Church Discipline*.
- We began with an overview of the Doctrine of the Church, also called *Ecclesiology*. The purpose of presenting this overview is to frame our discussions in light of who Christ has called His Church to be and what He has commanded us to do. May God shift and change us through this study according to His Word.

What is the Church?

- Last week, we said that it would be hard to grasp the need for Church Discipline without knowing the definition and mission of the church!
- In Matthew 16:18 we read the first use of the Greek word *ekklesia* in the NT, which is translated *church*. It literally means “a *calling out*.” (Strong’s)
- **In our Text, we see both the nature of the church (called out, which includes separate, holy living apart from the world) and mission of the church (to advance on and push back the kingdom of darkness), which includes preaching the Gospel, making disciples, battling devils, and upholding and making great the Name of Jesus the Christ, the Son of the living God!**

By way of review...

- Last week, we covered the Lord’s statement that the church is built upon “this rock.”
- It’s also interesting that Jesus describes His Church in a “war, authority, and discipline” context.
- The church, through the apostles and the Scriptures, has been given real authority. Although leaders subsequent to the apostles should be wary of assuming commensurate jurisdiction, *real* authority has in fact been given to those following apostolic doctrine in a duly formed and called out body of believers.
- Bottom line: there is true, divine authority granted to the LORD’s church and that authority is delegated to and humbly administered by its duly qualified leaders.
- We looked at several metaphors used in the Scriptures to define the Church (a body, and building, an army), and we discussed that each metaphor shows the need for loving discipline.

Ephesians 2:19-22 sums up much of NT theology concerning the church:

- ***Eph 2:19-22*** *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.*
- **Together we are citizens of God’s household (His family!), following Christ and His apostles; we are to grow into a holy temple, together being indwelt by the Holy Spirit.**

Then we ran out of time. :) Tonight, I'd like to continue by looking at a few key verses that help to give us our working definition of the church:

Working definition:

The (local) Church is a group of born-again, Spirit-filled, baptized believers in Jesus Christ who gather on the Lord's Day for biblical worship and who are committed to obeying Scripture and personal holiness. It is led by specific elders and deacons and, collectively, is passionate about covenant love one to another, advancing the Gospel, making disciples, and being a light in the midst of the culture.

Peter wrote:

1Pe 2:5 *Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

1Pe 2:9-11 *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light: **10** Which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy. **11** Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;*

- The Church is to be a lively (or living) group of stones (which suggests stability and steadfastness); a spiritual (not carnal), holy house filled with priests designed to show forth God's praises to a lost world!
- There is NOTHING about being a chosen group of holy priests that suggests a lack of discipline. In fact, the opposite is true. Everything about the priesthood requires discipline.
- Indeed, the church constitutes "the people of God!!"

The Great Commission

Mat 28:18-20 *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. **19** Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **20** Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

- The church is characterized by "going," "teaching," and "baptizing."
- The Church carries the responsibility to administer baptism, one of the sacraments.
- In the Great Commission, our LORD emphasizes the "teaching" nature of the church...teaching not just some things He said but all, AND being doers (observe) not just hearers only.
- This all requires discipline.

The Lord's Table:

1Co 11:23-25 *For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: **24** And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, *Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.* **25** After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, *This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.**

- The church carries the responsibility to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Table.
- Should this be taken lightly?

Filled with Spirit

Act 1:8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*

- The Church, by her very nature, must be filled with Spirit...the HOLY Spirit.
- When the Church (and members of it) acts in ways contrary to the ways of the Spirit, and does so in a casual, unrepentant manner, what should be done? Anything?
- Keep mind what we've learned: The Church is called out, carriers of the Gospel, administers the sacraments, and is a kingdom of priests.

Love for One Another

Joh 13:34-35 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.*

- The church should be characterized by love.
- Love defined from an ecclesiological perspective is this: **Rom 13:8-10** *Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.*
- Should anything be done when there is a continual lack of biblical love within the church?

Led by Qualified Men

1Ti 3:1-13 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; 3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; 4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; 5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) 6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. 11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

- The Church is to be led by godly, courageous, loving men. Elders (Overseers) are charged with the administration of discipline. The cost is high when they fail:

Tit 1:5-11 *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee: 6 If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. 7 For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; 8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy,*

*temperate; **9** Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. **10** For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: **11** Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.*

Assembling Together

Heb 10:24-25 *And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: **25** Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

- The Church gathers together on the Lord's Day.
- **Act 20:7** *And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.*
- This is a command...and a joy.

I submit that based on the very nature of the Church, loving discipline is at time required. The Church is loving, but called to be holy. She is to be a demonstration to the whole world of submission to Christ. When she is consistently unrepentant and rebellious, something must be done.