



CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Section 1.

Any member consistently neglectful of his or her duties or guilty of conduct by which the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be dishonored, and so opposing the welfare of the church, shall be subject to the admonition of the Elders and the discipline of the church, according to the instructions of our Lord in Matthew 18: 15–17 and the example of scripture.

- a) Church discipline, then, should ordinarily be contemplated after individual private admonition has failed. Church discipline can include admonition by the Elders or congregation, suspension from communion for a definite period, deposition from office, and excommunication (see Matthew 18: 15–17; 2 Thessalonians 3: 14–15; 1 Timothy 5: 19–20; 1 Corinthians 5: 4–5).
 - i. The purpose of such discipline should be for the repentance, reconciliation, and spiritual growth of the individual disciplined (see Proverbs 15: 5; 29: 15; I Corinthians 4: 14; Ephesians 6: 4; I Timothy 3: 4–5; Hebrews 12: 1–11; Psalm 119: 115; 141: 5; Proverbs 17: 10; 25: 12; 27: 5; Ecclesiastes 7: 5; Matthew 7: 26–27; 18: 15–17; Luke 17: 3; Acts 2: 40; I Corinthians 5: 5; Galatians 6: 1–5; II Thessalonians 3: 6, 14–15; I Timothy 1: 20; Titus 1:13–14; James 1: 22);
 - ii. For the instruction in righteousness and good of other Christians, as an example to them (see Proverbs 13: 20; Romans 15: 14; I Corinthians 5: 11; 15: 33; Colossians 3: 16; I Thessalonians 5: 14 [note this is written to the whole church, not just to leaders]; I Timothy 5: 20; Titus 1: 11; Hebrews 10: 24–25);
 - iii. For the purity of the church as a whole (see I Corinthians 5: 6–7; II Corinthians 13: 10; Ephesians 5: 27; II John 10; Jude 24; Revelation 21: 2);
 - iv. For the good of our corporate witness to non-Christians (see Proverbs 28: 7; Matthew 5: 13–16; John 13: 35; Acts 5: 1–14; Ephesians 5: 11; I Timothy 3: 7; II Peter 2: 2; I John 3: 10); and
 - v. Supremely for the glory of God by reflecting His holy character (see Deuteronomy 5: 11; I Kings 11: 2; II Chronicles 19: 2; Ezra 6: 21; Nehemiah 9: 2; Isaiah 52: 11; Ezekiel 36: 20; Matthew 5: 16; John 15: 8; 18: 17, 25; Romans 2: 24; 15: 5–6; II Corinthians 6: 14–7: 1; Ephesians 1:4; 5: 27; I Peter 2: 12).

Section 2. Disciplinary Removal from Membership

A person may be dropped from the membership for any of the following reasons under an action of Church Discipline:

- a) Inactivity/Inappropriate Absenteeism
 - i. It is the responsibility of each church member to be faithful in attendance and participation in the meetings and ministries of the congregation, unless hindered by illness or other providential circumstances. To be lax or indifferent toward faithful participation in church life will indicate a need for admonition (Hebrews 10:24-25).
 - ii. It is the responsibility of the Elders to oversee member's regularity of participation and to examine the possible reasons for inactivity. If inactivity is consistent without adequate reason, the Elders shall seek to reclaim to fellowship those who have absented themselves. The other members of the church will also seek to restore the inactive one to active participation in the church. If there is not an appropriate

response from the individual, then the Elders, after prayer and counsel, will ultimately remove that person from official membership

- iii. A member of this church who, willfully and without plausible reason, demonstrates a lack of commitment to the attendance of the services of CFC for a period of three months shall be removed from the membership. Notice will be given to the individual and to the church of such action. The Elders will give oversight to this process and determine what constitutes lack of faithfulness regarding church membership. If there is renewed commitment to faithful church attendance then, after counsel, the former member shall be returned to active membership in accordance with the membership guidelines.

b) Continuous Sinful Conduct and/or Erroneous Teaching When a member continues to knowingly ignore the doctrines of Scripture in daily walk or teaching, so that his/her life or erroneous teaching hinders the peace of the church or its testimony, the Elders may recommend the withdrawal of fellowship and/or termination of membership of the offending member. This shall be done following the guidelines in Matthew 18:15-20; I Corinthians 5:3-5,13, and other relevant passages of Scripture. The Elders will communicate such a decision to the congregation.

Section 3. Restoration to Church Membership

The goal of all discipline is a holy walk under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and obedience to His Word. The right to exclude persons or the withdrawal of fellowship is in harmony with the teachings of the Bible and is balanced by the call to restore such persons who have given satisfactory evidence of repentance (II Corinthians 2:6-11). When a person gives such evidence, the Elders shall notify the congregation that the person has been restored to full fellowship.