

Westview Statement on Church Discipline

The three-goal purpose of church discipline is to glorify God by maintaining purity in the local church (1 Cor. 5:6), to edify believers by deterring sin and promoting purity (1 Tim. 5:20), and to promote the spiritual welfare of the offending believer by calling him or her to return to a biblical standard of doctrine and conduct (Gal. 6:1).

The Lord Jesus Christ has entrusted the local church with the authority and responsibility to discipline members for flagrant sin or serious doctrinal error, with the goal of restoration of the offender. This discipline is entrusted to the Elder Council and is to follow the biblical pattern as set forth in Matthew 18: 15-20; 1 Corinthians 5; 2 Corinthians 2:7-8; Galatians 6:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; Titus 3:10-11; and 2 John 7-11. Any member of this church who practices or affirms a doctrine of conduct that contradicts or is opposed to the teaching of the Word of God, or is threatening to the testimony of this church, or is divisive to the body, shall be subject to church discipline.

Discipline will follow the biblical pattern as above cited in an effort to bring the individual to repentance and protect the church from unrepentant sin. Discipline may involve exclusion from participation in ministry and communion, as well as dismissal from the fellowship of this church. An individual may be disciplined by the Pastor and Board of Elders short of dismissal from the fellowship, as they deem appropriate for the specific circumstances. The Pastor and Board of Elders, as is required by Scripture, may report to the congregation the names of those who have lost membership by reason of church discipline, and the reason for this discipline, as described in Matthew 18:15-20.