

Respect the Authority and Discipline of the Church

30 March 2014

What We Promise, part 4

Matthew 22:1-14; Hebrews 12:1-2

In case you should need correction in doctrine or life, do you promise to respect the authority and discipline of the church? (from the Covenant of Communicant Membership, Question 4)

I. Church Discipline: What?

- A. A part of the church's fight against sin (James 5:16; Ephesians 4:32; Galatians 6:1-2; Matthew 18:15-20)
- B. The whole church, led by the elders
- C. Publicly judges sin in its members (Matthew 7:1-5; John 7:24; 20:21-23; Matthew 16:16-19; 18:15-20)
- D. By means of Word, Sacrament, and Prayer (1 Corinthians 11:27-32)

II. Church Discipline: How?

- A. Admonition
- B. Rebuke
- C. Suspension
- D. Deposition
- E. Excommunication (1 Corinthians 5:4-5)
- F. Special case: outrageous sin (see 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 6:15-20)
- G. Special case: sin in elders (1 Timothy 5:19-22)
- H. Restoration

III. Church Discipline: Why?

- A. Our life must preach the same gospel as our lips. (Isaiah 29:13; James 2:18)
- B. "If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off!" (Matthew 18:8)
- C. We take sin deadly seriously - because God does.