

Church Discipline

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[0:00] Good morning. Today I get to joyfully share God's word with you. I want to begin with a passage, Hebrews chapter 12.

Verses 7 through 11. And we'll move around a bit, but I do want to begin with this passage. The writer says, Besides this, we've had earthly fathers who disciplined us and we respected them. Shall we not much more be subject to the Father of Spirits and live? For they disciplined us for a short time, as it seemed best to them. But he disciplines us for our good, that we may share his holiness.

For the moment, all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant. But later, it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

[1:32] Let's pray. Heavenly Father, I pray now that we would look into this concept of discipline. The way that you discipline. The way that you outline for us as a church.

To discipline. And Father, we thank you for it. We know that you love us when we are disciplined. It is for our good. And we trust that.

And Lord, I pray now that you would bless our study. As we look into these things, that you would open the eyes of our hearts. And we would understand you and see more clearly. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Well, today I want to talk about... First, I want to open with this idea of discipline. And discipline...

Discipline. So, in my life, when I was starting out, my parents disciplined me.

My teachers disciplined me. God disciplined me. And in 1995, San Diego County took a turn at me. And so, discipline is something that we walk through.

[2:41] I've had a lot of great conversations with men in this community of believers that God used in disciplined ways.

This is something that is important to us in the Christian walk. And as we are sanctified, as the Lord teaches us, discipline is a part of it.

J.C. Ryle, he's talking about parenting and discipline. He says, So, where there's not discipline and a heavenly Father that parents and guides and teaches us, A whole host of problems will exist and show up.

Godly discipline brings about holiness in those verses we just read from Hebrews. We can count on that. Discipline does not ruin our lives. It produces healthy boundaries.

Just like with our children. When you set the boundaries, that's healthy for them. And they need those. They need to know where the lines are and what not to cross and what happens when they do.

[4:06] It's very important. Discipline is not a confining sort of downer. And this is the framework that I want to remember as we talk about our topic here in just a second of church discipline.

Discipline is not a downer sort of thing. It is a method that's used to grow closer to being like Christ. And that's how God uses it. Spurgeon says, Discipline is not the enemy of freedom. It is the friend of it. There's a freedom to discipline. Discipline escalates, though, as we escalate.

Discipline is not a place to be like Christ. And that is an important piece to this that we understand that discipline matches the infraction.

Right? And that is an important part of it. And important that we understand this framework. Well, as I said, I want to talk about church discipline. Discipline. And I will say this is something that maybe in the course of your church life or where you've been and what you've seen, you may not have seen a lot of this.

[5:18] You may not have seen a lot of church discipline. But that does not take away from what God says and the importance of it.

And so today we're going to look at that. We're going to look at why it is important. Why it's a part of our church, at least in terms of the statement of faith and what we will use if needed.

Because God tells us to do that. So it's very, very important. Let me tell you, I sort of condensed the idea of church discipline into a thesis statement, if you will.

Because I'm a nerd like that. That's kind of how I operate. Okay, so listen to this. Listen to this statement, all right? Serious, unrepentant sin. And this is church discipline.

Serious, unrepentant sin that threatens the sinner or the church must be confronted using God's biblical process in order to bring glory to God, glory to his church, and prayerfully freedom to the heart of the sinner.

[6:25] So the important piece here is glory to God and glory to his church. And that's why we follow it, because he says, and it brings him glory when we're obedient.

We'll talk more about that in a second. But the first thing I want to do to unpack this idea of church discipline is the thing that unfortunately underpins the whole purpose of it, and that's sin.

So let's consider what sin is. And we'll spend a little time here, because this is the core.

This is the core of church discipline. If we weren't sinners, we wouldn't need it, right? So sin is the issue here. Our rebellious heart, basically, is what sin is.

It's where all discipline starts. Sin is a transgression. It's a broken law. It's a broken God's law, is what is broken. Romans 3.23 says, For all have sinned, all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God.

[7:36] So sin is the issue that separates me from God. That is the fundamental problem.

From the time I was born, sin is what stood between the Lord and I. And something had to be done. Romans 6.23, For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 John 1.8 says, If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

So sin is our problem. Sin leads to death, and it falls short of God's glory. And we're in deception if we say that we don't have sin.

We're in deception if we say, This little bit is okay. We're in deception if we continue on repeat, sinning unrepentantly.

[8:40] We're in deception that we're going against God in that way, not going against God in that way, when we behave that way. So what does it look like?

R.C. Sproul says, Sin is cosmic treason. Sin is treason against a perfectly pure sovereign. It is an act of supreme ingratitude toward the one to whom we owe everything, to the one who has given us life itself.

Piper, John Piper says, What makes sin sin is not first that it hurts people, on this level, on the horizontal level.

What makes sin sin is not first that it hurts people, but that it blasphemes God. This is the ultimate evil and the ultimate outrage in the universe.

God who created us. God who put us here. Who gives us breath. And then we oppose him. And we argue and go against him. The ultimate outrage.

[9:47] There's another analogy in Scripture where the clay fights back against the potter. How is that? How do we even think we can do that?

We're a lump of clay going against the potter who makes us and builds us. So what we have to have is a right view of the seriousness of sin.

Alright? We have to have that individually. Each of us individually. Because before salvation can happen, a right view of sin has to be understood to even know why Jesus went to the cross.

Why did my sin have to be nailed to the cross? Because it's serious. And it separates. When I was younger, my mom would say something like, when I would get in trouble, because I did mention that I sometimes had to be disappointed.

But she would say something like, you're making Jesus sad. You're making Jesus sad. I guess to sort of play on something in my heart. But I'm going to tell you, sin doesn't make Jesus sad.

[11:07] It makes God angry. Psalm 5, 4. For you are not a God who delights in wickedness.

Evil may not dwell with you. Romans 1, 8. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

The wrath of God is against sin. Are you feeling the weight? Are you feeling the importance of how God looks at it? Isaiah 66, 15-16.

For behold, the Lord will come in fire, and his chariots like the whirlwind, to render his anger in fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

For by fire will the Lord enter into judgment, and by his sword with all flesh. And those slain by the Lord shall be many. There's a weight.

[12:13] There is something that we have to look at, and we have to hold it rightly. And that's our sin. Your sin, my sin. So what do we do?

Where does it begin? How do we start to deal with this sin? Well, thankfully, the Lord has a plan. It begins with a godly sorrow, with the Spirit working in our lives, and a godly sorrow. Blessed are those who mourn, over their sin.

Blessed are those who mourn over their sin. Who understand the weight of it. Who understand the gravity of it. And then mourn. That that's existing between them and God.

There's a heart realization for those who are sorrowful over their sin. I am opposing my Father in heaven. In relationships, what happens when you hurt somebody that you love?

[13:25] If you're married or in families, we do this from time to time, unfortunately. We hurt somebody we love, don't we? Well, maybe when you do that, and you realize it, I happen to be sort of a voider type.

And sometimes I avoid when I hurt Stacy, for example. And I sort of hide from that a little bit. But the thing is, you know, covering up or ignoring the fact of what you did, but at some point, you have to realize that what you said or did is actually very troubling to another person.

When you hurt somebody else, it's very troubling to another person, isn't it? And so, when you realize that, sometimes you pick up on it quickly, sometimes it takes a little bit.

But when you do realize it, your heart goes out to that other person. And there's a sorrow over what you've done. Now, that's the horizontal level, isn't it?

That's between us in relationships. But that's what a relationship is. If Jesus is my Savior and my brother, and I oppose him and go against him, my sin brings about a godly sorrow as I'm convicted of that sin.

[14:56] And I understand that something must be done about that. I must confess it and then repent from it. Pretty straightforward, right?

If I treat somebody else, if my wife or a friend or something, if I treat somebody else that way, that's what I would do, is somehow I would confess that and ask for their forgiveness and repent from doing that.

This is love. This understanding and love for the other person draws us to want to mend that and make things right. Our Heavenly Father, we understand that the sin that stands between us, the sin that shows up, even as believers, we don't stop sinning.

And that is a problem. That is a problem in our relationship with the Lord. It stands in the way. It gets in the way of things that he wants to do and how he wants to use you.

And so, you confess it. Godly sorrow. What is it? 2 Corinthians 7:10. For godly grief produces a repentance. Godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret.

[16:14] Whereas, worldly grief produces death. Worldly grief is I got caught and this is no good and, yeah, I'm sorry for doing this and so or whatever.

But there is a godly grief that produces repentance where you go to God in sorrow for your sin because it's against a holy God that loves you.

Thomas Watson, this is a paraphrase, Watson writes that godly sorrow is chiefly for the trespass against God explaining that a truly penitent soul would grieve over sin even if there were no conscience to strike, no devil to accuse, no help to punish.

The grief comes from the wrong done to God himself, not fear of what sin might cost. We look at God and we love him and then we confess that and repent and there's godly sorrow for fighting him and going against him.

Well that godly grief and sorrow produces repentance. Going to God, confessing the sin, repenting from it or turning from it is repenting, leaving the sin, crucifying the flesh.

[17:38] All those things are when we go to God. Coming to him in humility and thankfulness because there's no regretting. There's no futility in repentance.

That's what that verse said in 2 Corinthians. He says, For godly grief produces repentance that leads to salvation without regret. There is no regret. There is no futility in going to him and being honest and confessing all your sins to him because that's salvation.

confession. Confessing that equals life. It equals life. So there's grace and forgiveness that he gives.

Ephesians 2.8 By grace you are saved, not of yourself. 1 John 1.9 Confess your sins. He's faithful and just to forgive you of all your sins. Again, that's why Jesus went to the cross.

All the sins that we've committed ever, past, present, future, were nailed to the cross. God thought our sin was that big of a deal to put his son on the cross by our sin.

[18:53] Our sin, it's weighty. It has gravity. It has gravity. It's not something to simplify or make small. Our sin is a problem.

A huge problem. The good news. Yes, we've sinned against God. Yes, he has a wrath stored up for those who do not repent of their sin.

Yes, he offers a full party to those who believe. He offers a full party to those who believe in him.

Confess your sins against him to him.

Confess them to him. Repent from your sin that continues to oppose your heavenly father because you cannot cleanse yourself.

You can't, he has, he has a law that it was brought up earlier, right before our time of communion.

[19:59] And that law is broken. That law is something we cannot fix. We can't cleanse ourself. We can't be good enough.

We can't be righteous enough or any of that. So, we take that right view of sin and how to deal with it and that salvation which many in this room if not all of us have prayerfully have at some point come to the Lord and given that sin confessed it to him and let him take it and then he gives us his righteousness.

Not our own. It's not our own. God saves through Jesus. He alone is the way, the truth, and the life. So, let me talk a little bit about the next problems that occur.

So, the sin exists. It's there. We understand and hopefully there's a bit of gravity that we're holding now to it. Well, Romans 6, 1 and 2, Paul asks a rhetorical question.

He's talking about grace and if grace is present and the more we sin, the grace meets that sin and then he says should I sin all the more so grace is more?

[21:16] Well, the answer is no. We don't sin more just so there's more grace. But, the thing is as believers we have died to sin.

We've died to this. So, this is not a part of the believer's life anymore to continue in that walk of sin. It's not that we don't sin. We do.

But, it's not a feature of the believer's life. There's repentance and confession and those things that we just talked about that must happen when we're opposing God. So, but it does not rule us anymore.

Sin does not rule us anymore. We are free. But where it shows up, it must be dealt with. And, and I'm going to say this, this is I think what maybe culturally, even how it has got into the church, is that there are certain pet sins and there are certain things that are allowed in our mind.

So, in other words, what has happened is the gravity and the weight of the way that God looks at transgressions has gone out and been replaced with a freedom to pick and choose what God says or doesn't say or what I like or what I don't like in His Word.

[22:37] and we can't do that. That His, His Word is truth. It is the law. That is what, what constitutes sin.

What He says constitutes sin. Not what we say or don't say. And so, what has happened there is there's been sort of a, a watering down of this problem of sin.

Now it's not, it doesn't hold quite the weight that it used to. What happens then? People turn a blind eye. The culture allows or ignores or provides for sin of all types and continues without being confronted on it.

Well, over time, I think most of us can say, oh yeah, I've seen even other churches that have sort of moved away from what God says.

I think we could, we would all say that, right? Why did they move away? Because they decided that the, the sin wasn't important enough to call sin and so now we're going to just kind of go our way and we just slowly move from what God says and everything gets watered down.

[23:57] A low view of the weight of sin leads to death. a low view of this problem of sin leads to death.

True repentance sees sin as a problem. One who doesn't see sin as separating them from God will never be reconciled to God or be able to have a relationship with Him.

If, if they're, the, the thing that separates us, if we don't look at that and truthfully say, that's what stands in my way. If I never acknowledge that, then death is the result.

Unfortunately, this low view of sin can, and as I mentioned, has crept into the church, into churches. And, so, what do you do?

What, what do we do? About a year and a half ago, I had skin cancer. And, many of you remember when I had that, it was on my ear up here and I had a big thing on my ear and on my back.

[25:16] But, it was melanoma. which is not the one you want, by the way. If you end up having skin cancer, that's not the one. It's the one that spreads more easily, right?

So, they did their work and they cut those pieces out and everything they said was good after that. Well, what if when I sat there in the office and he's looking at it and he says, the dermatologist, he says, hey, I think this is skin cancer.

And, I said, hey, you know what? I'm not going to worry about that. I'm not going to worry about what's going on on my ear or what you're looking at. That's not going to bother me.

It's kind of like a freckle or a mole, which I do have a few of those. But, I'm just going to treat it like that and not worry about it. What's going to happen with a melanoma in particular?

It's going to spread. It's going to spread. And, to the point to where probably death would, if I let it go, it would, it would kill me.

[26:29] You know? sin doesn't belong. It doesn't belong in our hearts, in our lives, and sin doesn't belong in the bride of Christ, our church.

It doesn't belong. There is a cancerous aspect to it. When left unchecked, when left to its own devices, what's going to happen?

Death. Death is going to result. Well, let's look at the process. Let's look at the process. So, that's what I want to build on, is the foundation of understanding the weight of sin.

We must remember that to look through the rest of what God asks us to do about it. Right? Okay, so the process, a couple of notes on that.

God gives this process of church discipline, and we'll unpack this, but basically it starts from a simple conversation, step one, but it can escalate if needed.

[27:46] But it's the type of thing that really, we should engage with what he says in Matthew 18. We should engage with it frequently because do I ever sin against you?

Do you ever sin against me? Yes, it happens. What do we do? We should speak in love to one another about it. We should talk to one another about it.

We should gain a brother when we bring it up and we speak of it. So, at that level, it's important to use.

But we must lovingly confront our brothers and sisters. We must speak the truth in love, and we must desire relationships that are based on Christ. There's the foundation for how any of this would get implemented.

And we must not let sin get a foothold and grow in our lives. And we do this together. together. In church discipline, it's done together. And in our church, much of this is done together to begin with, which is a good place.

[28:59] So, what types of sin are we talking about? Who goes into this process? Who's going to go through church discipline? Well, all sin is opposition of God.

There's not a sin, anything that God says is a sin that is not in opposition of him. But not all sin is treated the same way.

Not all sin do we deal with the same way. So, for example, there are sins that should be lovingly overlooked. Love covers a multitude of sins.

Right? So, when someone says something to me, or my family member something has a word for me that I lack for some reason, you know what?

Love can really cover that. It can send that out and be gone in the thing. So, there's those type of sins. There's ordinary struggles where repentance is a part of the process and evident.

[30:07] So, there's the things that we all sin every day. this is all who we are, humans. We go against each other.

Whatever the sin is, this happens every day. Now, in a believer's life, what do we do? As those sins happen, as we recognize those things, there is a spirit of love and confession and repentance.

And those things work themselves out on a regular basis. So, there's those type. Now, there's also, as I mentioned in the very beginning, there's the serious, ongoing, outward, unrepentant sin that threatens the sinner or the church.

Those are different. There's things that are more like that melanoma as it starts to get involved with the church and then move and become something that it shouldn't.

So, that's more of the danger that would be in the church or the serious types of sin. But really, when church discipline is involved, even from the very beginning, the question is not what type of sins are we looking at, what fits into the category of this or that or the other, it's how we deal with our sin.

[31 : 35] That really makes the difference. are we confessing it? Are we tenderhearted? Are we repentant? Or are we fighting and going against and choosing our own way?

So, it's how we deal with the sins there. So, turn to Matthew 18 with me. Turn to Matthew 18. Let me get there. there. there. there. And we'll start with verses 15.

Really, it's just... There's a lot of good stuff, 15 through 20, but we're just going to read 15, 16, 17, just to look at this kind of process, where we get a lot of the idea of...

This is not the only place, but this is kind of the main text. So, the first thing, let's read that. If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone.

If he listens to you, you've gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

[32 : 56] If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

So, the first thing, go and tell him. This is the part that I'm saying, this is something we should be living, we should be walking this out. If someone sins against, go tell him, talk to them.

It's important. Or, maybe something happens, but you can move past in love. And that's fine too.

But if you can't, and you find yourself needing to discuss that and be open with another, then go talk to him.

It's important that that happens. It's just between the two of you. He says, no need to broadcast the other person's sin. Right? This isn't something that we're sharing with everybody and all these other people and whatever.

I'm going to him and we're talking about what he did to me. Right? Now, if he wants to talk about it, say in his MC or with the guys or whatever, and he wants to confess or something like that, go for it.

[34 : 09] That's great. Be, you know, conversate about that, be open about that. But from my standpoint, point, I don't go talk to everybody else. I don't talk to my MC about him.

You know, I talk to him and just together. If he listens, if he softens his heart, if he repents, what does it say?

You gained your brother. Man, isn't that awesome verse right there? This is what we hope for. This is what you long for.

Like, if someone does something and you go to them and you share that, and immediately, I did, I'm sorry, I confess that to you. And is that soft way with you?

Man, you guys have just gotten that much closer, didn't you? It's a beautiful thing. Okay, but, verse 16, but if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

[35 : 23] So, if he doesn't listen, if he's not repentant, not tenderhearted, and, and, one thing you probably hear, not even tenderhearted toward God, because, really, the sin is against God, right?

And if he's not tenderhearted toward the things of God, then what's next? then, bring witnesses, bring two or three witnesses, and then they will share the truth, then they will encourage, then they will speak the truth in love with you to gain your brother, which is still what you want, that's still what you want to see happen there, if you have to go that far.

The next one, verse 17, if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. If he continues to refuse to listen, holding sinful ground, having a sinful argumentative position, that does not take into account the things of God, unfortunately, if that's his place, unrepentant, unloving, un-Christ-like, the weight of sin has been substantiated by witnesses, and now the church speaks into it.

And then the church meets with that person, talks to that person, shares the same truth and love with that person to gain a brother.

You want to gain that brother back? Second part of 17, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

[37:21] So once you tell the church, and then the church speaks into it, along with everybody else, elders are involved, the brothers are involved, like it it's intentional, it's a very intentional thing.

But if he refused to listen to the church, and look at what he says there, there's one word that's added, that's really interesting, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, the whole group, it speaks to a he's out there, he's out there a ways, even when the whole body says come back, he doesn't, even to the church.

Well, this is all the church can do to present itself holy. at that point, he becomes like a Gentile or a tax collector.

Basically, what he's saying is he's not a part of the body. The body that just said come back to the things of God, which is why we're here as a body.

We are the bride of Christ, and they all said come back. and he said no, I'm not. Then that's when it results in okay, then he has made his decision at that point, unfortunately.

[39:05] Why would a church member go this far? Why would somebody go that far? That's really a very good question, number one. There's a lot of different things.

I'll share just a couple of ideas. Number one, they love their sin and the world, 1 John 2, 15-17, and the love of the Father is not in him.

That would be one possibility. The world is more important. The things of the world, not what the Father has for him.

Another one is a completely wrong view of sin. In other words, what we discussed earlier, there's no weight to it. He doesn't see it as wrong. The brother doesn't see it as wrong.

Or, if he does, not offensive to God. So that weight of what actually is offensive to God is not treated in that way.

[40:09] And so, unrepent, it can continue. Three, there's no belief in consequences. God's wrath on sin.

If you don't believe in a heaven and a hell, if you don't believe that God is a wrathful God, and says, I'm not going to live with sin, if you don't believe that, then, kind of go back to the world and do things the way that you choose to do things.

another one is maybe there's deep demonic sort of deception that's blinding the heart and a person falls into a place and is just blinded to the things of God.

Well, ultimately, there's probably other things. There's just a few things that could possibly be going on there, but it could be as different as people. But, in general, ultimately, these potentials with a person who has gone through all these steps, it brings about questions in our minds.

And so, ultimately, these potentials point to, at a minimum, a very disrupted relationship with God. Very disrupted. And, of course, at worst, it would be a person who does not know Jesus at all.

[41:35] And so, then, that same church, that same group, who said, listen, you need to be outside of the body, is the ones that preach the gospel.

So, how do we do that? What do we do? Doug Wilson, he says, the offender must not be denied kindness, courtesy, opportunity to hear the word preached, the practical duties owed to him by others, or anything else do him, according to the law of love.

Fundamentally, he is being denied only one thing, the right to define the authority of Christian faith for himself. In other words, the sinner cannot say what is right and wrong.

God says what's right and wrong. We love the sinner, we love the person who is struggling. We go all the way through this process and love them all the way.

And then even if it reaches that last point, then we love them in that way. But we keep saying, you cannot choose what is right and wrong.

[42:50] God chooses. He is the one that tells us what is sin, what is sin, we share the gospel. We share the gospel. We preach to them and treat them like a person outside the church, the Gentile and the tax collector and love them.

So that's the process. That's the process. A couple of thoughts here. So why?

Why do we do this process? Why is this important? Number one, to bring God glory. To bring God glory. Our obedience and discipline and following His word brings God glory.

And that's why we're here. And that's why we do this. It's not in our name that we discipline. It's not in what we think and those kind of things.

Now granted, we do imperfectly carry out the discipline. Is this ever going to be right? Is it ever going to be exactly perfect? No, because we are not. We are not perfect.

[44:08] right. But we follow and we listen to the Holy Spirit and the Spirit works between us and we carry this out for God's glory.

The second thing is the glory of His church and presenting it as holy. We as the church are the bride of Christ. A couple weeks ago, Seth mentioned God has chosen the church as the essential vehicle for sanctification.

This is one of the tools that we use for sanctification. This is incumbent on the church to follow through with this for the benefit and the care of people who are struggling and finding themselves at an unrepentant place.

God Himself disciplines us on a regular basis because He loves us. the process of church discipline gives us the framework for dealing with discipline that goes further, using the church intentionally. God uses the church intentionally to carry this out. We become a part of it and grow in reverence and respect for God.

[45:28] Another important point on the church and its holiness is that we as a church do not identify with sin. If there is sin that is going on in the church and we know it and we turn that blind eye and the weight of sinfulness is something that we push off to the side and we ignore it and pretend like it's not going on, we have identified with sin and allowed it.

And the church doesn't do that. This is the spotless bride of Christ. We don't allow that. We don't identify with sin.

This isn't a place where you come in and say hey, anything goes. That's not right. That's not our identity. It's not who we are. If unrepentant serious sin is in the church and we do nothing, we're wrong.

We are wrong. we have a choice to either distance from the sin or address it and not allow it.

Prayerfully, the glory of God in a sinner's heart is what we see. That's what we want to see.

[46:51] Restoration of the sinner. That's our prayer. That's the church's prayer, is restoration of that sinner. And we lovingly and earnestly pray for this. We meet the individual where they're at, preach the gospel to them, care for them in that way, and the sinner should find comfort in discipline, care in love.

Not judgment and anger or repulsion, but love. Okay? I'm going to preach God's word to you because I love you.

So I'm going to continue that. So the last thing is the person who has been fixed bill.

So here's the important piece. We cannot, outcomes are not the indicator of success. Success is not a person who has gone through the whole process and been asked to leave the church, been sent out of the church, and then they repent and come back.

Now that would be awesome. That's beautiful. but by the same if that person didn't come back. Both are success.

[48:13] Both are success when we follow God and bring him glory by looking at his word and following what he says. That's success. He's the one.

He's the one that draws the center. He's the one that the spirit quickens and brings that person back. We water and follow and are obedient.

So what is success following God? We trust in his word. We trust in what he says. Is some of this difficult? Absolutely it's difficult. Especially when we're in those step three and four.

It's super difficult because we love this person. What is success confronting sin? Not identifying with sin but distancing from it.

If this is sin right here we want to go that way and distance ourselves from it. Success is loving people, speaking truth and gospel good news to those who need it.

[49:20] Success is bringing God glory, being obedient, disciplining, and loving in his name. And success is presenting a spotless bride, protecting the church as the bride of Christ.

So I want to close with a couple of thoughts here. And I find this is very, very important for each of us in the moment.

Number one, if you are left after this discussion with the idea, why does it have to be church discipline though? That's so harsh and judgmental and it's awful.

If that is your thought, your view of a holy God is low. If that is your thought, you don't hold sin as being a weight that must be dealt with.

If you look at this process and you say, why does it have to be, it doesn't have to be, that's so judgmental, that's a fool, then you're not looking at what God intends to do with sinners.

[50 : 34] Here's the second part of that. If that is you and you don't see the need for a repentant church, I would surmise that you don't see that need in your own life.

And that's confess, I would encourage you to confess if you don't feel the weight of sin in your life, you must confess.

It's against God. If we can look at the church as not being worth eradicating unrepentant sin, I dare say it's in your life too.

Why you stay with me? Thank you.