

Recap of 7/22/18 (1 Timothy 5:19-25)

1. First Timothy 5:19-25 is one of numerous passages in the New Testament which call for the Church to exercise discipline over sinning members. Three things stand out concerning church discipline:

-**First**, church discipline is for blatant sin within the church. The church is to discipline its members, not those outside the church (1 Corinthians 5:9-13). It is for believers not unbelievers.

-“Paul’s instructions are specifically for dealing with blatant sin by a person who claims to be a Christian. Paul does not support disciplining or even judging those who are not believers. And not every sin deserves church discipline. Paul does not expect anyone to be sinless—every believer struggles with sin daily. Rather, Paul is instructing the church regarding people who deliberately sin, feel no guilt, and refuse to repent. Such obvious sins, left uncorrected, confuse and divide the congregation because the church is not practicing what it preaches.” (NLT One-Year Study Bible)

-**Second**, the goal of church discipline is restoration. (Galatians 6:1ff; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-16). An erring church member is corrected so that they might be useful once again to God, restored to Him, restored to other believers.

-**Third**, Matthew 18:15-17 lays out a pattern for restoring relationships within the Body of Christ.

“Jesus’ words [in Matthew 18:15-17] do not give us the freedom to attack any person who hurts or insults us. They are not a license to gossip or to call for church intervention. They are designed to reconcile believers who disagree so that the church can live in harmony.” (NLT One-Year Study Bible)

2. Paul advises Timothy to take it slow when selecting a man to Eldership. In this way they will avoid being blindsided by hidden sin in their lives and avoid the spectacle of having to discipline an Elder. What is needed is a time of observation to identify problems or sin in the lives of those considered for leadership. Some sins are obvious in a person’s life but some sins are hidden. They “trail behind” but will eventually be exposed. Likewise the good some people do is evident while the good works of many is hidden and only comes to light later. Since they don’t “advertise” their good deeds, it takes time to recognize them, thus, again, the need for a time of observation.