

Lesson 5

THE LOCAL CHURCH

INTRODUCTION:

Purposes of study:

- To understand what is the local church
- To analyze church leadership
- To study the marks of an effective Church

LESSON OUTLINE

- I. INTRODUCTION
 - A. Definition

- II. THE CHURCH
 - A. What the Church is not
 - B. What the Church is
 - C. What the Church is to be
 - D. The importance of the Church

- III. CHURCH LEADERSHIP
 - A. Qualifications
 - B. Foundational ministries

- IV. THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH AND MEMBERS
 - A. The role of the church
 - B. The role of church members

- V. MARKS OF AN EFFECTIVE CHURCH
 - A. Godly leaders
 - B. Church discipline
 - C. The church in scripture

I. INTRODUCTION

Matthew 16:18-19; Ephesians 2:20-22.

A. *Definition*

1. In Greek '*ekklesia*' means 'called out ones'.

Called out of their homes and places of business to consider matters of business.

Hebrew background: God's people called together in order to listen to God, or to act for God. Called out of tents to come together.

Exodus 12:3,6

a) **Abraham** called out of Ur of the Chaldees
Genesis 12:1; Hebrews 11:8

b) **Israel** called out of Egypt
Ecclesiastes 12:5; Acts 7:38

c) **Church** called out of the world
2 Corinthians 6:17; Revelation 18:4

2. The Church is made up of those who have had their sins **forgiven** because of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. **Revelation 7:14.**

3. **Universal** Church

Build MY Church, not churches **Matthew 16:18**

All believers in the world who believe in Jesus for salvation.

Every tribe, language, people and nation. **Revelation 5:9**

4. **Local** Church in different localities

But part of universal church. From Book of Acts, '*churches*',

Example: Paul - Galatia, Ephesus and Philippi. **Matt 18:15-20**

Based on geographical location, but one in Spirit.
In NT to change church meant to change city!

5. **House** church - where two or three are gathered together in Jesus' Name. **Matthew 18:20.**

- a) **Early Church:** Daily occasion **Acts 2:2,46**
- b) **Restricted Access Nation:** Necessity because of political situation.
- c) **Urban Cities:** Large churches have cell groups led by recognized leaders: closer fellowship, more care, more leaders can be trained, church can continue in an emergency.

6. Foundation:

The wise and foolish builders. **Matthew 7:24-27.**

Moses struck the rock and water came out - **Exodus 17:6**, cf. **Numbers 20:7-12** and **1 Corinthians 10:3.**

Rock was Christ, and was to be struck once only! **Psalms 18:31.**

- a) **Matthew 16:18-19**
The church is built on Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ. Peter means 'a small stone', and rock means 'huge rock'.
- b) **Ephesians 2:20**
Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, with the apostles and prophets as the foundation. Cornerstone laid first.

Builders aligned walls from it. Gave stability. Much time spent laying it.
- c) **Acts 2:42**
Apostles' doctrines laid. All other ministries built on that foundation.

II. THE CHURCH

A. *What the Church is Not!*

1. Not a **building**.

- Acts 2:47 - Lord added daily to the Church
- Acts 5:11 - Great fear seized the whole Church
- Acts 8:1-3 - Persecution against Church. Saul tried to destroy.
- Acts 18:22 - Paul greeted Church

Could not be a building!

When Jesus said *"I will build my Church"* He didn't mean He would build buildings. The Gates of Hell will not prevail against the Church of God - not a building. Some leaders give too much emphasis on a building and not on building people.

2. Not a **denomination**.

The Bible does not speak of the Baptist Church, the AOG Church, the CMA Church etc. Denominations are usually formed around the following:

- a) A doctrinal emphasis or some truth of Scripture, ie. Holiness Church, Pentecostal, Grace Church
- b) An experience, ie. Baptist-baptism; Pentecostal-baptism in the Holy Spirit; Holiness-Pentecostal Holiness etc.
- c) A personality God has used in revival, Oral Roberts Assocn.

Denominations are usually formed by a revival, or restoration of some truth. As people gather around this truth, very often the denomination they are already in doesn't accept them and they are forced to come out and another denomination is formed.

B. What the Church is

1. The **Temple** of God - **Ephesians 2:19-22, 1 Corinthians 3:16-17.**

God wants to build people together where God can live by His Holy Spirit. We are living stones built together into a spiritual house, so we can offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:4-5

2. The **Family** of God

Fellow citizens with the saints and of the Household of God.

Ephesians 2:19

Power to become the sons of God.

John 1:12-13

The Church is not a club that we join, but a family. It's a way of life.

We have to be born into the family.

We have the one Father.

We have many brothers and sisters.

We accept responsibility as a member of the family.

We have love and care for the different members of the family.

We accept the discipline of our Heavenly Father.

We are to reproduce children - evangelism.

3. The **Body** of Christ - **1 Corinthians 12:27**

Christ is the Head

Ephesians 1:22-23

Every Christian is a member of Christ's Body. Each one is important.

1 Corinthians 12:18-20.

Body can't do without eye, ear, little toe, if one member suffers, all suffer! **v. 26**

EVERY joint supplies, proper working of each individual part causes the body to grow. (Find your role!) vs.25 - no division, but unity.

Ephesians 4:16

4. The **Bride** of Christ - **Ephesians 5:25-32**

The oneness that Christ and His church are to experience together in personal relationship and commitment together.

- a) Loved by Christ **vs. 25**
- b) Christ gave Himself for the church **vs. 25**
- c) Cleansed the Church **vs. 26**
- d) They will be united **vs. 31-32**
- e) Wedding supper of the Lamb **Revelation 19:7-9**

5. A **flock** - **John 10:11-14, 27-28**

- a) Jesus is the Good Shepherd who lay down His life for the sheep **vs. 11**
- b) Wolf snatches sheep and scatters them - Satan **vs. 12**
- c) Shepherd knows who are His, and they know Him **vs. 14**
- d) His sheep hear His voice and follow Him **vs. 27**
- e) Like a shepherd He will tend His flock, and carry the lambs in His arms. **Isaiah 40:11**
- f) The role of the Shepherd. **Psalms 23**

C. *What the Church is to be*

1. **Victorious** - **Matthew 16:15-20**

- a) Having the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Keys open and shut doors. They let people in or out. They lock or unlock what is closed. **vs.19**
- b) A binding ministry. Power to bind those who oppose - not people, but principalities and powers, evil spirits.
- c) Bind strong man, then take the spoils from his house. **Matthew 12:29**
- d) Satan will finally be bound for 1000 years. **Revelation 20:2**
(Word of God cannot be bound) **2 Timothy 2:9**
- e) A loosing ministry. Satan binds his captives. The Church is called to loose them, and bind the powers that bound.

- f) Lazarus had to be loosed from the grave clothes of death.
John 11:44
- g) *“Ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound, be loosed?”*
Luke 13:16
- h) Church on earth connected with heaven. Whatever is bound on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever is loosed on earth will be loosed in heaven. Church needs mind of Christ, the Head of the Body.

2. **United - John 17:20-23**

Jesus' prayer that we may be one - so the world will believe that God sent Jesus!

- a) He foresaw there would be divisions. **v. 21**
- b) Given us His glory that we may be one. **v. 22**
- c) May be perfected in unity, that the world may know that God sent Jesus! **v. 23**
- d) Unity in the Name of God - not of denomination. It is the family name - the family of God. **v. 11-12**
- e) Unity in the Word of God - the Word is truth. Not Word divided by doctrinal issues. **v. 14,17,20**
- f) Unity in the Glory of God. Not the glory of men, or of a denomination or organization. **v. 22,24**
- g) Unity in the Love of God. God is love. **John 3:16** -love is giving!
v. 26

Early Church:

Acts 1:14 - with one mind continually devoted to prayer

Acts 2:46 - continuing with one mind in the temple

Acts 4:32 - of one heart and soul

Acts 5:12 - all with one accord

Acts 8:6 - multitudes with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip

Psalm 133 - when brethren dwell together in unity, there the Lord commands the blessing.

Do we see this in the Church today?

3. **Glorious** - Ephesians 5:23-32

The revelation given to Paul concerning the Church as the Bride of Christ, shows God's intention for His Church:

- a) Sanctified - holy, separated unto the Lord. v. 26
- b) Cleansed - by the washing of the water with the Word. v. 26
- c) Glorious - clothed with glory and bringing glory to Christ. v. 27
- d) Without spot or wrinkle - same as OT sacrifices. v. 27
- e) Holy and blameless - separated from sin. v. 27

A Church like Christ so He can be united to her and not be unequally yoked in the marriage of the Lamb.

D. The importance of the Church

1. Christ's vehicle of **expression** - Ephesians 3:10

"The wisdom of God might be made known THROUGH THE CHURCH to the rulers and authorities in heavenly places."

Christ has committed Himself to the Church, "As the Father has sent Me, so send I you." **John 20:21**

2. Christ's means of **glorifying** the Father - Ephesians 3:21

"Unto Him (Father) be glory IN THE CHURCH by Christ Jesus throughout all ages."

Privilege given to Church that, in her, Christ gives praise to the Father and reveals His glorious character and power.

3. Christ's object of love - **Ephesians 5:25**

"Husbands, love your wives even as CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH and gave Himself for it." Love is expressed in actions, not in words, eg. loved ... and gave, cf. John 3:16.

4. The Church belongs to Christ - **Ephesians 5:27**

"That He might present it (the Church) TO HIMSELF a glorious Church."

"... for thou hast created all things, and for THY PLEASURE they are created." **Revelation 4:11**

When we look at the ~~poor~~ history of the Church, and our ~~weak~~ efforts to represent Christ here on earth, let us realize God's purposes will be accomplished through the church:

He **PLANNED** it

He laid the **FOUNDATION** - Jesus, the Chief Cornerstone, Apostles

He **ESTABLISHED** it - Day of Pentecost and His ministries

He will **COMPLETE** it - through the power of His Holy Spirit

III. THE CHURCH LEADERSHIP - 1 TIMOTHY 3:2-7

A. Qualifications

1. **Called** by God.

Bible School can equip you. A Church can give opportunity for ministry, but only God can call. If not called, have nothing to hang on to when things get difficult. Maybe just a job! Leadership is a CALLING.

2. Above reproach - unquestionable **character**. **1Timothy 3:2**

Of course not perfect, but be an example of godliness for his congregation to follow.

Daniel 6:4 - could find no grounds for accusation.

3. ***'Husband of one wife'*** - sexually pure. **v. 3:2**

Devoted solely to his wife. If single, not a ladies' man.

4. **'Temperate'** - not given to excess. **v. 3:2**

Clear thinking, sound judgment. Can also refer to over-eating, over-indulgence in pleasure.
5. **'Prudent', 'sober-minded'** - self-disciplined. **v. 3:2**

Spends time in God's presence, in God's Word etc.
6. **'Respectable', 'good behaviour'** - well organized. **v. 3:2**

Not chaotic and in confusion.
7. **'Hospitable'** - likes the company of people; showing kindness to strangers. **v. 3:2**
8. **'Able to teach'** - this qualification sets the elder apart from the deacon. **v. 3:2**

Not required of a deacon. A teacher must practice what he teaches!

1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul said, "*Be followers of me, as I am a follower of Christ.*" Need to spend time in prayer and studying the Word of God to receive new revelation from God to share with the congregation. A teacher is always a learner!!
9. **'Not addicted to wine'** - not known as a drinker. **v. 3:3**

Doesn't visit bars and hotels.
10. **'Not violent'** - not a fighter! Not quick-tempered. **v. 3:3**
11. **'Gentle', 'patient'** **v. 3:3**

Considerate of others, easily forgives human failures, doesn't keep a record of wrongs people have committed against him. Doesn't talk, or even think of wrongs done against him.
12. **'Uncontentious', 'not a brawler'** - not arguing, but a peacemaker. **v. 3:3**
13. **'Free from the love of money'** - does not accept a church position because it pays good money! **v. 3:3**

The love of money is the root of all evil.

14. *'Manages his own household well', 'children kept under control'* - his own family must be in good order. v. 3:4-5

If own family not in order how can he manage the house of God? His family needs to be an example to the believers. Includes managing finances of home, providing for family. If he has children, they must be respectful to their father, obedient and believe what he teaches.

15. *'Not a new convert'* - must be more mature spiritually than the people he leads. v. 3:6

Congregation will only reach the same level as their leader. Reason: pride may trip him up.

Satan fell because of pride. If new church planted may be led by fairly new Christian but would need to be more mature than rest of believers.

16. *'Good report with those outside the church'* - non Christians can see he is a man of integrity, of love, of kindness, a peacemaker etc. v. 3:7

May not agree with what he preaches, but cannot find fault with his lifestyle.

These qualifications cover his:

Spiritual life

Personal life

Home life

Ministry life

17. In NT God has put two offices in to the Church: **Elders** and **Deacons**. An Elder means someone who rules, and a Deacon is someone who serves.

a) **Elders**

In OT an elder was an older person. In NT there are two words: Elder and Bishop. Elder is a senior person and a Bishop is an overseer, to have spiritual care of the Church and to exercise oversight over it.

You could say, Elder is the man, and Bishop is the position he holds.

His role is to:

- (i) Give **leadership** in the church
 - (ii) Give **direction**
 - (iii) **Care** for the people
 - (iv) **Teach** the people
 - (v) Protect his people from **false** teachings
- b) **Deacons** means '*servants of the people*'.

Usually serve in a particular ministry, ie. Visitation, children, youth, administration. He is under the authority of the elder. His role is not to hire and fire the pastor! Not called to rule in the church - role of elder. Not called to preach, but possible.

B. Foundational ministries

1. Apostles - '*a sent one*' Ephesians 4:11

- a) **Servant** heart.
- b) Spiritual **authority** recognized by the people.
- c) Spiritual **father**.
- d) Has **insight**, understanding and wisdom of the Word of God.
- e) **Humble**, cf. Paul's thorn in the flesh.
- f) **Patient** - 2 Corinthians 12:12.
- g) A leader others want to **follow**.
- h) Shows **love**.

Ministry:

- (i) **Establishes** churches - pioneer
- (ii) **Preaches** and **teaches** the Word of God
- (iii) **Gifts** of the Spirit operate through him
- (iv) **Ordains** and appoints ministries
- (v) Trains potential **leaders**
- (vi) Has **vision** for universal church, not just local church
- (vii) **Cares** for the churches he establishes
- (viii) Should be identified with a **local** church

Paul, an excellent example.

2. **Prophets** - '*one who sees*', '*one who announces*' - speaks on God's behalf. **Ephesians 4:11**

E.g. Jeremiah ... **1 Corinthians 12:28**

- a) **Predicts** what is to happen.
- b) **Speaks** God's mind to the people in exhortation, comfort, building them up, sometimes warning. Many may prophesy, but not necessarily a Prophet. It is a ministry given by God.

3. **Evangelists** - '*messenger of good news*'. **Ephesians 4:11**

PUBLIC EVANGELISM: Philip

Preached Jesus, multitudes listened, signs and wonders followed preaching. **Acts 8:5-7**

PERSONAL EVANGELISM: Philip

Acts 8:35-38

Sensitive to voice of Lord, and obeyed
 Not afraid to minister to man of authority
 Willing to minister to one man
 Knew Scriptures and able to preach them
 Preached Christ, not doctrine
 Baptized new believer in water

All called to evangelize, but not all have the gift of Evangelist.

4. **Pastors** - '*a shepherd*'. **Ephesians 4:11**

Must have the heart of a shepherd to care for the sheep - **John 10**

- a) The sheep will recognize his **voice** - voice of Spirit
- b) Will be **sensitive** to sheep and identify with them
- c) Will call his sheep by **name** - personal contact
- d) Will lead his sheep into fresh **pastures** of the Word which he is always searching out
- e) Will lead his sheep and they will be happy to follow him because he leads by **example**

- f) Will have **love** and compassion for the sheep
 - g) Willing to lay down his **life** for the sheep
 - h) Will **care** for the sheep
 - i) Will **minister** healing to the sheep, look for the lost
 - j) Will not **rule** over them by force, but with love
 - k) Will **protect** sheep from their enemies
 - l) Will not say things to **scatter** them
5. **Teachers – ‘to instruct, inform’ Ephesians 4:11**
- a) Should be a good **student** of the Word
 - b) Should **meditate** on the Word, which brings illumination
 - c) Should be **teachable** - always wanting to learn
 - d) Should know how to **study** the Word
 - e) Should be **creative** in his teaching - Jesus used stories, taught in the open, walking along the road etc.
 - f) Should **live** what he teaches

IV. THE ROLE OF THE CHURCH AND CHURCH MEMBERS

A. The role of the church

- 1. Praise and Worship
 - 2. Prayer and Fasting
- } Ministry to the **Lord**

3. Preaching of the Word
 4. Discipling of believers
 5. Teaching the Word
- } Ministry to the **believers**
6. Evangelism
 7. Mission - **Matt 28:18-20**
- } Ministry to **non-believers**
8. Visitation - of sick, in hospital etc.
 9. Ordinances: commands
 - a) **Water Baptism** - 'to immerse'
 - (i) Obedience to Jesus' command **Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:16-20**
 - (ii) Jesus set the example
 - (iii) For believers - does not make you a Christian!
 - (iv) Identify with Jesus' death, burial, resurrection
 - (v) Point where old life is cut off and rise in to new life
 - (vi) Baptized in name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Trinity present at Jesus' baptism - Father spoke, Spirit came in form of dove **Matthew 28:18-20**
 - (vii) When they believed they were baptised Philip and Ethiopian eunuch - when believed **Acts 8:12**
 - b) **Communion** - The Lord's Table
 - (i) Jesus commanded to do this in remembrance of Him **Matthews 26:26-27; 1 Corinthians 11:23-3**
 - (ii) Bread represents His body, wine His blood We receive His life
 - (iii) Represents whole Body of Christ sharing fellow-ship together
 - (iv) Can be taken in a home fellowship, in a family, between friends, as well as in the worship service
 - (v) "As often as you eat it, do it in remembrance"- doesn't say how often. Depends on church.
 - c) **Weddings** and **funerals**

B. The role of church members

1. Rightly **related** to other members
 - a) Must **accept** one another as Christ accepted us. **Romans 15:7**
 - b) Bear with one another **forgive** one another. Some people are easier to 'bear' than others! **Colossians 3:12-14**
 - c) God will provide '***sandpaper***' ministry
 - d) We need each other. Members of the body need to work **together.**
 - e) A lot of our growth and development as a Christian will come through **relationships** with other believers.
 - f) Need to **encourage** each other and build each other up - not tearing down! **1 Thessalonians 5:11**
 - g) Consider how to provoke one another to **love and good deeds** - not just provoke! **Hebrews 10:24**
 - h) Regard others more important than yourself, look to **the interest of others,** not just yourself **Philippians 2:3-4**

2. **Submit** to authority of leadership - **Hebrews 13:17**
 - a) Humbly **submit** to their leadership and advice, eg. marriage
 - b) **Respect** them
 - c) In submitting to them we are submitting to God, because He has **appointed** them
 - d) Submission is an **attitude** of heart, not slavery
 - e) They have **responsibility** for our spiritual wellbeing, and want to joy in us and not find us a burden

3. Have a **definite** part to play
 - a) God has placed the members in the body. **1 Corinthians 12:18**

- b) Each part of the body has an important part to play – heart pumps life, lungs breathe air, kidneys eliminate toxins, ears to hear, eyes to see, mouth to speak etc. Each part must function in its role. So every member needs to find their role in the church.
- c) Find out your **gifting** - music, youth, children, visiting, evangelism, praying for sick. What you love doing is usually your gifting
- d) Get **involved**, stick with it, develop your gifting
- e) Don't just sit in the body and do nothing!

4. **Commitment**

- a) Committed to gathering time of believers **Hebrews 10:25**
- b) *"What can I give", rather than "What can I receive"*
- c) **Commitment:** Husband to wife, employee to employer
- d) *"As for me and my house we will serve the Lord."* **Joshua 24:15**
- e) **Ruth** to Naomi, - *"Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live; your people will be my people, and your God my God."*
Ruth 1:16
- f) Be committed to the **leadership**, to the members, to the vision and calling of the local church
- g) To say you are committed to the **universal church**, but do not identify with a **local church** is to live carelessly and open yourself to deception.

5. **Service**

- a) *"Whoever wishes to become great must be your servant ... Jesus came to serve, not to be served."* **Matthew 20:26-28**
- b) *"Through love serve one another"* Let love be your motivation- love for God, love for His people - rather than seeking to get something. **Galatians 5:13c**
- c) *"Serve the Lord with gladness"* **Psalm 100:2**
- d) *"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might"* - not

half-heartedly.

Ecclesiastes 9:10a

- e) Even if your part to play in the church is small, it is essential for the smooth running of things
- f) No division or disunity - have same care for one another
1 Corinthians 12:25
- g) *"It is required in stewards that a man be found faithful"*
1 Corinthians 4:2

V. MARKS OF AN EFFECTIVE CHURCH

A. Godly leaders

1. Not chosen because he/she is successful in business or supports church financially - can't 'buy' church - or can speak well, but because are godly men - qualities of Elder/ Deacon

Cannot run church with non-Christians, or lukewarm Christians, in leadership

2. Sets **goals** for its ministry
 - a) Sets direction for ministry, otherwise like shooting darts and hitting nothing!
 - b) people can identify with common purpose
 - c) Basic goal is winning people to Christ, and discipling them, but how many, when, how etc.
 - d) Ministry Planning!
3. Is involved in **discipleship**
 - a) Church needs to grow into **maturity** - not remaining babies.
 - b) Teach truths from the **Word of God**.
 - c) Help disciples to **apply truths** from the Word to their daily

lives.

- d) Help disciples to **solve problems** through the Word of God. When faced with a crisis situation can then work through the situation Biblically.
4. Has an emphasis to penetrate the **community**
- a) You have to go out in to the community. The community will not come to you!
 - b) The most effective evangelism is one on one in the area in which you live.
 - c) Your family should be your first objective. In some groups, when the head of the family comes to the Lord the whole family. In some villages when village chief comes to the Lord the whole the village will follow. Target your evangelism.
 - d) Which would you rather have? A one week evangelistic program with a foreign speaker once a year, or a church that evangelizes 365 days a year?
 - e) Need to reproduce not from dropouts from other churches, but new growth.
 - (i) **Acts 16:5** - churches increased in number daily
 - (ii) **Acts 13:44** - almost the whole city came together to hear the Word of God - hallelujah!
5. Has a **concern** for one another
- a) Need to be involved in the lives of the members. Can't just walk in to a service, sit down, walk out and say you're involved in the church.
 - b) "... *exhorting one another.*" Battery alone has no power. When joined to terminal point, and other batteries - wah!
Hebrews 10:24-25
 - c) "*Bear one another's burdens*" **Galatians 6:2**
 - d) "*Pray for one another*" **J ames 5:16**
 - e) Take time to **listen** to each other, and care for each other.

- f) Church must be a **loving** community that shares with one another, cf. early Church - all things in common.
6. Is devoted to the **family**
- a) *"Honor your father and mother, that your days may be long upon the earth."* **Exodus 20:12**
 - b) *"Children, obey your parents."* **Ephesian 6:1**
 - c) *"Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the church."* **Ephesian 5:25**
 - d) *"Wives, submit to your husbands."* **Ephesian 5:22**
 - e) *"Wives, submit to your husbands" "Parents, don't exasperate your children."* **Ephesian 6:4**
 - f) These truths need to be taught.
 - g) Your people need to understand that their first **priority**, after God, is their family. Often too busy doing things!
 - h) Eli, the OT prophet, took care of everyone else's spiritual needs while his sons turned in to wicked men. God judged him.
7. Bible **teaching** and **preaching**
- a) Preach what the **Word of God** says, not on latest current events, or what you think people want to hear.
 - b) It is the Word of God that changes lives
8. Willingness to **change**
- a) God is a creative God. He loves to do new things in our midst.
 - b) Tradition can be our security - Isaiah's walls of salvation and gates of praise!
 - c) Be prepared to break the mold sometimes - change order of service.
 - d) Don't be fenced in with structure. Structure is good, but don't

let it strangle life!

- e) Be sensitive to Holy Spirit.
- f) Adapt to meet the needs of the people.

B. Church discipline

Definition: Discipline by teaching, correcting.
Can involve punishment
A system of rules to govern conduct

1. The **necessity** for discipline:
 - a) To make order and happiness possible.
 - b) Introduces the principle of submission - submitting our will to God and His Word
 - c) Exercised in love, gives a sense of security - knowing what the boundaries are can prevent a person from backsliding.
2. The **purpose** of discipline:
 - a) Bring **conviction** of wrong-doing leading to repentance Not to condemn, embarrass, humiliate person.
 - b) It is **correction** of an error, not rejection of the person.
 - c) Bring person back in to right **relationship** with God and the people in the fellowship.
 - d) **Restore** the person - Galatians 6:1 - means 'repair' or 'mend', mend dislocated bones.
 - e) There is a wound that needs to be **healed**.
3. **Examples** of discipline
 - a) **Adam** and **Eve** - expelled from the Garden.
 - b) **Cain** - "went out from the presence of God". **Genesis. 4:16**
 - c) **Miriam** had leprosy for rebellion against leadership.

- d) **Achan** punished by death for disobeying God. **Joshua 7**
 - e) **Noah** and the Ark.
 - f) **Sodom** and **Gomorrah's** judgment.
 - g) The **Tower of Babel**, because of pride.
 - h) **Ananias** and **Sapphira**, for lying to the Holy Spirit.
4. Scriptural Procedures in Discipline - **Matthew 18:15-20**
- a) **Private** discipline
Go to your brother - not to everyone else! **vs. 15**
 - b) **Public** discipline
 - (i) **First step:** *"Go to him in private ... if listens you've won your brother."* **vs. 15**

Involves: **right attitude and manner**
right words said in right spirit
desire to be reconciled
acceptance of the person
 - (ii) **Second step:** *"If he doesn't listen, take one or two with you as witnesses."* **vs. 16**

Could be: Some of the person's close friends.
Someone they have confidence in and trust.
Spiritually mature persons, with discernment.
The two witnesses can hear the case, and weigh it up.

This helps the person see the seriousness of their error and the need to correct it.

Show the person the third step if they do not respond to the first two steps.
 - (iii) **Third step:** *"If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the whole church."* **v. 17**

The purpose still is to restore the person and that members in the church might be able to plead with that person to repent and turn away from their sin.

- (iv) **Fourth step:** *"If he refuses to listen even to the church"* - put out of the church! The church would have to be in unity concerning this action. **v. 17**

(The person then becomes bound.)

- (v) **Fifth step:** Loosed - when comes to repentance. **v. 18**

Small differences of opinion, or of personality, would not be brought to step 3 and beyond. Moral sins, dishonesty etc. are examples of sins to be brought before whole congregation.

5. **Restoring** a sinning brother - **Galatians 6:1**

- a) Bringing something back to its former condition.
- b) Restore in a spirit of gentleness, or meekness
- c) recognizing that you yourself could fall
- d) *'Bear one another's burdens'* - **hold him up.** **Galatians 6:2**
- e) If someone has fallen under a load too heavy to carry, we should stoop down to help them carry the load.
- f) Person may have repented many times of the same thing and he needs help to overcome that sin.
- g) *"Let he who is taught share with he who teaches"*. **Build him up.**
Encourage the fallen brother. **Galatians 6:6**
- h) Forgiveness should always accompany restoration.
- i) If brother is restored, cannot keep reminding him his sin.

Reference:

1. Kevin J. Conner, *The Church In The New Testament*, (Oregon: Bible Temple Publishing House), 1989