



Working it Out wk5: Why Church Discipline?

Introduction: The question of who we can and should associate with has long been a problem for the church. How can we minister or introduce people to Jesus if we don't spend time with people who don't know him? When do we give space for Jesus and the Holy Spirit to convict a fellow believer of sin? Where do we draw the lines and what is the purpose for them are some of the biggest challenges we face.

Discussion Questions

1. Why you hear the term "Church Discipline" what comes to mind? How have you seen or heard this concept misused?
2. What is the purpose of church discipline? Can you think of a time when you or someone you know experienced church discipline, and how it brought reconciliation or restoration?
3. Read **1 Corinthians 5:1-5** What is it about this sin that seems so egregious to Paul that he suggests putting this man out of fellowship? How do we know what sins arise to that level or should we address everything?
4. Read **1 Corinthians 5:9-13** Here Paul makes a distinction between associating with believers who are willfully engaging in sin and non-believers. Does Paul expect them to correct or confront non-believers? Why do we sometimes get caught up in trying to make non-believers follow our moral convictions?
5. Paul mentions sexual immorality, greed, swindlers, idolatry, and drunkards as sins that if a believer is wrapped up in, we shouldn't even eat with them. Is that an exhaustive list? What is it about those sins that are especially destructive to a church? Who should handle those decisions or how public should they be?
6. How can we strike a balance between transparency and not creating a culture of hiding sin, while still practicing church discipline? What steps can we take as a small group to create an environment where people feel safe to confess and confront sin without fear of unnecessary exposure or judgment?

Shaping Your Mind – *Do not be misled: Bad company corrupts good character. 1 Corinthians 15:33*

Moving Forward – *Stop expecting non-Christians to act like Christians, expect that of other believers*