

Armuchee Bible Fellowship Church Discipline Process

(Matthew 18:15-17) 15 “If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. 17 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.

Step 1. An individual church member is to go to a sinner brother and confront him privately. This is done in keeping with the command of Matthew 18:15 and is to be done in a spirit of gentleness and humility. This action is to include a clear presentation of the sin and a call to repentance. If the sinning brother repents then he is immediately to be forgiven and restored.

Step 2. If the sinning brother ignores the individual confrontation, then the next step is to take one or two addition members to confront the sinning brother. This is in keeping with the command of Matthew 18:16 and establishes by the mouth of two or three witnesses not only that the sin was committed but that the sinner was confronted and was called to repentance. Again, if the sinning brother repents then he is immediately to be forgiven and restored.

Step 3. If the sinning brother refuses to repent then in keeping with Matthew 18:17 the matter is to be referred to the Elders of the church who will then communicate it at the proper time to the church body. Every effort will be made to continue to plead with and call the sinning brother to repentance. If the sinning brother does respond with repentance then he is to be forgiven and restored.

Step 4. If there is no response after step 3 then in keeping with the command of Matthew 18:17 the sinning brother is to be ostracized and removed from fellowship as outlined in Section 5 of the church by-laws. Social contact is to be avoided unless the contact is used to further call the individual to repentance. This is to not only protect the church but to demonstrate to the sinning brother the seriousness of his actions. The ultimate goal of church discipline is the restoration of the sinning brother.

Step 5. Restoration of the removed individual should consist of the follow requirements.

A. Confession (1 John 1:5-2:2; James 4:7-10)

1. Confession should be made publicly
2. Confession should be made fully

B. Repentance (Pr 28:13)

1. Repentance should demonstrate Godly sorrow (2 Corinthians 7:8-11)
2. Restitution should be made where applicable (Lk 19:1-10)
3. The individual should bear fruit as evidence of repentance (Matt. 3:7,8; Luke 3:8-14)
4. The individual must submit to Godly accountability

(This may include some or all of the following)

- a) Regular reporting on the restitution process
- b) Routine meetings with mentors or counselors
- c) Assigned study/projects