

Freedom Fellowship Church

Discipline Process

1. Goals

- a) To create a culture where resistance to repentance is not accepted as a normal response.
- b) To see unrepentant church members of Freedom Fellowship Church confess their sin, turn from their sin, and experience the good fruit of their repentance. - Rest and restoration.
- c) To provide a structure for exposing, discipline, and restoring unrepentant church members.

* "No Discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it." (Heb. 12:11)

Step One: Discovery

- a) You become aware of the issue(s) potentially needing disciplinary attention.
- b) Begin to seek the face of the Lord for his wisdom and his discernment, praying also for a full disclosure of the truth concerning all that is going on.
- c) Begin writing documentation of all that has and continues to occur throughout this whole process from beginning to end.
- d) Keep lines of communication open with all parties concerned at all times.
- e) There must be a commitment to openness, honesty, transparency, and genuine vulnerability by the oversight team (church leadership) leading this process.
- f) On the church eldership level, there should be a commitment to openness, honesty, transparency, and genuine vulnerability by the oversight team (Apostolic Councilor individual(s) designated to lead the process).

Step Two: Assessment

- a) Engage the process discovering the truth concerning the issue. Remember: you are not only looking at the truth of specific actions and behavior but a clear discernment of the heart conditions of those involved. This will be important to your judgment process. This is information and fact-finding process.
- b) Look for the truth and accurate facts, not senses or suspicions, or emotions and accusations. This is where you speak to all those involved in the process, if need be.

Step Three: Judgment

- a) Make a judgment based upon all that has been weighed and assessed. This includes the heart issues as well as the specific nature of the event involved.

- b) Seek outside counsel concerning these issues as to your legal options.
- c) Consider Resources available to you to deal with these issues receptively as you prepare for the discipline process.
- d) Render a clear decision at this point, if your decision is such that discipline must essentially follow, then move to the next step.

Step Five: Reconciliation with full restoration

2. How do we know when the person being disciplined is ready to be restored?

- a) The restoration is to be initiated by the one being discipline. A time will be set up for the person to meet with two or more of the Elders. The elders will at this meeting determine if there is sufficient evidence of humility, obedience, and teach ability for the person to be restored to fellowship. If it remains unclear, the Eldership team representatives will determine a good plan for restoration fitting the person requesting to be restored. Once restoration is approved by Eldership team, the church will be encouraged to celebrate the person's return to fellowship and receive them graciously and generously.

Additional Guidelines

- a) Warning: If at any time in the process of church discipline, a member resigns leaves the church; all church disciplinary action must be considered ended. (Right to Privacy Law)
- b) Soaking this process with prayer. When considering how to handle a given issue, be sure that you are soaking this process with prayer, and receiving outside Godly counsel from wise men and women of God. It is important to fast and pray to hear clearly from the Lord.
- c) Accurate discernment of the heart conditions of those you are working with is critical to a Godly and just strategy of church discipline and restoration. All church discipline strategies must be truly redemptive in focus and objective with a strong biblical foundation and with a New Testament focus upon Christ Jesus and not on the law. This is why prayer and fasting are so important, so we keep our focus on Christ.
- d) There also must be absolute agreement to the discipline process by all the leadership involved.

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