

Discipline, Delight, and the Distinction of the Church
Paul responds to a favorable outcome at Corinth

Accountability: Let's hold ourselves accountable!

- Last time we discussed tribulations, and specifically, our need to be Spirit led in our lives...especially in times of trial or tribulation. We learned that tribulation often puts us in situations where we more greatly depend on the Lord. As you reflected on last week's discussions, were there lessons that God showed you this week about either dealing with tribulation, or walking in the Spirit?
- What were your initial thoughts and reactions to this week's message? Was there anything that was a breakthrough moment? Anything that you strongly agreed or disagreed with, and why?

Exploration: Questions to guide our group discussion.

- This week we discussed Paul's disciplinary action at Corinth. Not only did Paul call the entire church to repent from their rebellion and division, but he also called the church to discipline an unruly and rebellious brother who was causing trouble in the church. What did we learn from Paul about handling a situation like this, and how would this text inform our experience as members of the Lord's church?
- The Corinthian letter shows us Paul's anxiety over the matter at Corinth, his difficult and sorrowful approach to addressing it, and his earnest hope that the situation would be resolved with a positive outcome for everyone involved. He even left Troas early to make sure that he could quickly resolve the issue at Corinth. Whenever conflict arises, what Christian attributes should we bring to a difficult and undesired conversation for ourselves, for others, and for the offender? How is the gospel of grace demonstrated when we address conflict this way?
- After Paul addressed the issue at Corinth, he went to great lengths to call for the restoration of the offending brother. He stated that the offense wasn't personal, but that his concern was the rift that the offender had caused in the church. Why is it important to note that Paul was intent on restoration of the offender? Let's read 3 John 9-12 and contrast the way that Paul handled detractors, V/S the way that wicked Diotrephes treated those who disagreed with him.
- We finished up the teaching this week by talking about the importance of the church in God's program. What did you learn from that discussion, and what can you add to the

discussion? What can we learn about the relationship between Christ and His church from our focal text, and from these Jesus parables:

- The parable of the wedding feast: Luke 14:15-24
- The parable of the ten virgins Matthew 25:1-13
- The parable of the faithful and the evil servant Luke 12:35-48

Additional Scriptures for Deeper Study:

- Matthew 18 - What is the Lord's command for handling interpersonal conflict?
- Revelation 19:4-10 - The marriage supper of the lamb...who attends? Why is it treated like a marriage feast? Hint: There are three parts of a Jewish wedding: Covenant (cross), Consummation (ingathering), & Celebration (wedding feast).
- Luke 10:25-37 The parable of the good samaritan.
- Luke 6:27-36 Love your enemies.
- Ephesians 4:26-27 Don't let the sun set on your anger.

Application: How can I apply this to my life this week?

- The Church works best, and God's people have tremendous joy, when people do right and live in brotherly fellowship with one another. Let's get real with ourselves. What are the areas where we consistently have rebellion, rub, and issues with others? What issues do we need to bring into repentance and conformity to God's reign and rule as the Lord over our lives?
- If someone has offended you in the past, have you been able to find a heart for restoration? Life is too short to hold a grudge. Is there a specific person or situation that comes to mind when we read about Paul's example of setting things right with his detractor? Is there business to do with God about this, and then with your enemy?