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Church Membership | Minimalism Review

The minimalist argument: Biblical exhortations and expectations that require an organized, corporate body to fulfill imply that Christians should be a part of such a body in order to fulfill them.

- Are to regularly gather with a group of believers in the name of Christ for Gospel exhortation and encouragement
- Are to be known and accountable to such a regular gathering and are perceived by others as belonging to the regular gathering
- Are to be under the authority of church leaders and submit to that authority
- Are to be the potential object of redemptive church discipline

2

Church Discipline | Two Kinds

Formative Discipline—being disciplined for godliness (1 Tim. 4:7)

- Submission to elders (1 Pet. 5:5) and as appropriate, to one another (Eph. 5:21)
- Building others up and being built-up in Christ (Eph. 4:11-16)
- Receiving teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
 - Formative discipline is the “discipleship” ministry of the church, broadly conceived.

3

Church Discipline | Two Kinds

Corrective/Redemptive Church Discipline—protecting the purity of the church by restoration-aimed shaming

- Matt. 18:15-17
- 1 Cor. 5:1-5, 13
- 1 Tim. 1:20
- 2 Cor. 2:5-7
- Titus 3:10-11
- 2 Thess. 3:14-15
 - Church discipline is administered in cases of characteristic unrepentance that undercut the legitimacy of one’s profession of faith in light of Scripture.

4

Corrective/Redemptive Church Discipline

Church Discipline on the Embassy Model

- With an embassy understanding of church membership, church discipline is an act that authoritatively revokes one's passport for the Kingdom. Importantly, ***it does not require or even involve individuals' speculation about someone's objective status before God.*** Rather, it is a public declaration by the embassy that one's public fruit cannot be squared with their public profession to represent and follow Jesus in light of Scripture.
 - An inconsistent triad
 - Deep or personal familiarity with an individual being considered for church discipline is not required.

5

Corrective/Redemptive Church Discipline

- Church discipline seeks the repentance and redemption of the person under it while preserving regenerate church membership.
 - Practicing redemptive church discipline without regenerate church membership is nearly, if not certainly, impossible. After all, what are we to make of a key-wielding declaration made jointly by believers and unbelievers?
 - One subtle technicality
 - Unrepentant sin that ***does not*** undercut one's claim to legitimate citizenship.

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