



MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

**Church Discipline, Restoration and Reconciliation
(DRR)
Policy and Procedures**



Table of Contents

Church Discipline Overview.....	3
DRR Statement of Policy.....	3
Purpose of Church Discipline.....	4
Church Complaint Categories & Approaches.....	4-6
Types of Discipline.....	6
When Discipline is Required.....	6-8
Authority to Enact Discipline.....	8
DRR Committee Complaint of Concern Process.....	9-13
DRRC Members.....	12
Scripture Related to Church Discipline.....	12
Supplemental Resources.....	13
References.....	13
Complaint of Concern form.....	14-15

Mt Hebron Missionary Baptist Church Church Discipline, Restoration and Reconciliation (DRR) Policy and Procedures

Church Discipline Overview

Matthew 18:15-18

¹⁵ “If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 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. ¹⁸ Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed^[a] in heaven.

“Church Discipline, Reconciliation, and Restoration,” should be entered with the understanding that the Lord God we serve is a God who disciplines, reconciles, and restores. Hebrews 12:11 tells us: *No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.*

True discipline flows out of our need for relationships and accountability. The Lord designed humankind to have limits and for correction to occur when those limits are breached. We can easily see this in the Garden of Eden. Limits were both in the Garden itself and in the command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. When the limits of the command were broken, discipline occurred. Even as Christians, we have been given freedom and limits. These freedoms within their corresponding limits are there to serve us in the discipline (shaping) of our lives.

DRR Statement of Policy

Church members who exhibit a continuing, unrepentant lifestyle in sin regarding doctrine or conduct shall be dealt with according to the Biblical process of the Church discipline. This is always to be done for the ultimate goals of glorifying God, purifying the church, and the restoration of the individual

No Christian leaders or the DRR committee rejoices over the need for corrective discipline. It is a duty which must be performed when other more positive methods to cause growth and maturity have failed. Church leaders or the DRR committee enter a corrective discipline situation with compassion, understanding and an abundant supply of grace.

The DRR members or participant(s) involved in DRR process shall not disclose or divulge any Confidential Information to any third party, in any manner whatsoever, or use or reproduce any Confidential Information or any purpose other than for use during the process. DRR members and participant(s) shall take all measures reasonably necessary to protect the Confidential Information received during the process

Purpose of Church Discipline (Restoration, Reconciliation & Resolution)

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Galatians 6:1-2

When Biblical disciplinary actions become necessary and appropriate, it is important to keep in focus the purpose of church discipline is restoration and reconciliation. When initiated, Biblical discipline is for a person’s spiritual growth through repentance and restorative discipleship. The church leadership and DRR committee who oversee the rebuilding process shall adhere to the church’s established policy, process and plan.

Discipline vs Punishment

A clear distinction is to be affirmed as to the difference between *discipline* and *punishment*. Discipline is designed to encourage the restoration of the one involved in wrongdoing. It is to be instructive and corrective with the Biblical goal to engage restorative grace and personal transformation. Punishment generally focuses on retribution for the wrong done as it seeks primarily to assert justice. It seeks to reshape our lives through direct application of governmental authority and consequence.

Church Complaint Categories and Suggestive Approaches

PREFERENCES

Preferences are subjective commitments that have no moral consequence. They can be exercised with little to no impact on the rest of the congregation. Interestingly, concrete examples are very hard to find in Scripture. The closest would be what Paul calls “interests” in Philippians 2:4. It’s a general word you could probably even translate to “things.”

In short, we all have *things* that matter to us, and complaints can arise when church members insist on their things being more important than someone else’s things. There is no clear right or wrong here.

Dealing with Preferences

- If preferences are the source of the problem, remind each side that different doesn’t mean bad. If we all sang the same notes in the same way we’d have no harmony. Unison is not unity.
- Reminding someone of this should help give him or her a perspective of ministry.

- Show them how their thing fits into a big and wonderful collection of things that work together to accomplish the one thing we all should be about.
- In these situations, be careful about taking sides. Don't be the champion of any one thing. Remember, no one expects you to do everything, just their things

OPINIONS

These are reasoned conclusions that shape conscience. This informs your moral code of conduct. Believers experience the greatest degree of potential discord when it comes to opinions. Conflict most commonly occurs in a church when one side despises those who abstain or judges those who enjoy (Romans 14:3).

To be clear, opinions are not preferences. They're deeply held moral principles that are shaped by a biblically-informed conscience, and it is a sin to violate these opinions (Romans 14:14). One believer may have a different opinion than another, usually with respect to Christian liberty. There is a clear right and wrong here, but it's often relative (Romans 14:23)

Dealing with Opinions

- In Romans 14, Paul uses the example of Roman Christians eating meat, presumably sacrificed to idols. For some, it was a liberty to enjoy; for others, it was a conscience-violating offense. The answer was not to quarrel over it. In fact, Paul doesn't really side with either group.
- Help each side realize that a biblically-informed conscience is a gift from God, and that both are welcomed by him (Romans 14:3).
- You may even agree on the issue some day in the future, but until then you need to be very careful not to make your brother stumble (Romans 14:13).
- DRR committee members must be careful when it comes to protecting the conscious of a weaker person in the faith.

But what about more serious issues like one's understanding of baptism? Would the body be causing a member to stumble if they deny a request for a certain mode? Possibly. If, for example, a church member is no longer persuaded by our understanding of baptism, then letting him or her go in peace is the best option. The only other choice would force someone to violate their conscience. After all, you don't want to "destroy the one for whom Christ died" (Romans 14:15), and he must not violate his conscience. This is how we "pursue what makes peace for mutual upbuilding" (Romans 14:19).

CONVICTIONS

These are the objective facts that constitute our doctrine. We understand them to be the non-negotiable tenets of the faith (Jude 3), and the truth of God worth fighting for (1 Timothy 6:12). Convictions comprise the unifying faith that identifies a Christian. When an individual abandons these, they cease to walk in the faith (1 Timothy 4:1-3), and they become an imminent threat to the health of the body.

This problem is frequently addressed in Scripture, and it's an entirely different category than opinions or preferences. When someone causes discord in the body because of false doctrine, the response must be swift and decisive. There is a clear right and wrong.

Dealing with Convictions

This is when a shepherd calls on the other elders and eventually the congregation to render a verdict against the offender. The immediate need for rebuke is followed up with excommunication if the individual refuses to repent and return to the truth. This is probably the easiest complaint or conflict to deal with even though it's broadcast to a larger audience.

Something to remember is that convictions can wrap themselves in a disguise. For example, how does the body respond to a person who is consistently complaining because of their egalitarianism? Is that a conviction or an opinion? Could someone use Romans 14:17 and say, "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of *authority and submission*" and therefore we must allow women to serve as elders? If not, then we're dealing with a complaint that needs to be treated as a threat to the unity of the body and requires a more thoughtful response by the elders.

ATTITUDES

These are voluntary dispositions toward others. Despite having different interests, every believer must maintain a godly mind (Philippians 4:2). In the church at Philippi, there were two women called out by name because they didn't have the same *mind*, a word that carried both a visceral and cognitive aspect.

Notice, Paul does not say "Sisters, I'll tell you who's right." In fact, he acknowledges that differences are valid and even acceptable. However, what's not acceptable is the quarreling that undermines harmony in the church. This is also a clear right and wrong, but in most cases both parties need to repent.

Dealing with Attitudes

Complainers think grumbling is a form of discernment. Evidently, if you affirm that all is well, you're at risk of being swindled. So, you have those who grumble as a way of starting conversations, where an innocuous question about how they're doing is received as an invitation to air discontentment. Attitudes are hard to change, but the most important thing is that you don't let their bad attitude give you a bad attitude. Perhaps the best advice is to be a good example of what you expect in others. Listen to them, ask probing questions, and pray God will reveal the toxic nature of their complaining both to them and to those who may be inclined to follow suit.

Since the Fall, maintaining a spirit of unity in the bond of peace has been hard work. Abrasive personalities are a reality, but the way we respond will make things better or worse. Instead of escalating the hostility, or avoiding the problem, simply categorize the compliant and apply the right biblical counsel to bring a person into conformity with God's standard. And when we complain, let's be open to the same process.

Types of Discipline

If we continually do not heed the positive discipline of the Lord, we may come under the punitive discipline of the Lord at some point in time. **Punitive discipline of the Lord comes because of unbelief, rebellion, stubbornness, pride, and hard heartedness, without repentance.** It comes simply because the positive discipline of the Lord hasn't been heeded to. (Proverbs 5:12; 15:10).

There are various types of discipline, but they all have the same purpose: to so shape our hearts and lives, that we are brought into conformity with the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. The Bible says, *Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily* (Colossians 1:28-29).

When Discipline is Required

There are several different kinds of situations calling for Church discipline to be practiced. Following are five examples. These five are not to be considered all-inclusive.

Immorality

- The Christian home is the early illustration of Christ's relationship with the Church. Therefore, unrepentant immorality by a Church member is grounds for disciplinary action (1 Corinthians 5:13).

Doctrinal Error

- The teaching of doctrine contrary to scripture or the Church statement of faith must be addressed to maintain doctrinal purity (Galatians 1:9; John 11).

Causing Divisiveness

- Disrupting the harmony of the Church body through gossip, slander, complaining, murmuring, criticism, or willfully creating factions and dissension within the Church body (Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 3:3; Titus 3:10).

Sin Against Another Believer

- The Church may become involved in situations where one member has allegedly wronged another. The Church will become involved only after the individual has

exhausted all attempts to resolve the grievance. (1 Corinthians 6:1-8; Matthew 18:15)

Sin of Omission

Failure by a member who, for an extended period, does not participate in Church activities such as worship services, communion, or financial support (James 4:17)

Additional Applications - Matters covered under this policy shall include, but are not limited to, allegations regarding:

Adultery – The willful violation of the marriage contract by either party. (**Rom. 1:18-32, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, Col. 3:5-10**)

Child abuse – The improper use or mistreatment of a child or children. (**Eph. 6:4**)

Desertion - physically leaving one's family or non-support. (**I Cor. 7:10-24**)

Divorce and Family conflict. (**I Cor. 7:10-24**)

Drug Abuse - improper and or illegal use and or handling of drugs. (**Eph. 5:3,18**)

False Teaching - teaching doctrine not approved by church leadership. (**Matt. 15:9; I Tim. 1:10; 4:13,16;4:14; II Tim 3:16;4:6; Heb. 6:13; II John 10; Eph. 5:3**)

Fornication - illicit sexual intercourse. (**Rom. 1:18-32, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, Col. 3:5-10**)

Heresy - strife or faction, not necessarily doctrinal in origin, religious opinions contrary to the doctrines of the Bible and Church. (**2 Pet. 2: 1; Ga. 5:20**)

Sexual violation - any act that sexually or morally violates the biblical standards of the body of Christ; i.e. rape, incest, homosexuality etc. (**2 Sam. 13; 1 Cor. 5**), (**Rom. 1:18-32, 1 Cor. 6:9-11, Col. 3:5-10**)

Sowing Discord - being the originator or contributor of dissension. (**Prov. 16:28**)
Publicly speaking against the leadership and/or teachings of the church. (**2 Pet. 2:1-9**)

Spousal Abuse – Physical and/or emotional abuse of one's spouse. (**Eph. 5:22-33**)

Swindling - getting money or property from another under false pretenses; to cheat or defraud. (**Ex. 20:15**)

Theft - act of stealing. (**Exodus 20:15**)

Offenses that constitute sins against the Body of Christ. (**Titus 3:1-11**)

Authority for Enacting Discipline

As Christians, we all have been given power and authority in and through Christ Jesus (John 1:12). Church Leadership Senior Pastor, Joint Board and DRR Committee have been vested with the power and authority of Christ Jesus for the building up of the kingdom of God, and to provide protection, direction, and correction for the saints within their circle of responsibility. This power comes with an entrusted right of use, called authority. It is a trust that church leadership will be and are indeed, held accountable.

As is true of parenting, that children will most often reflect the parents, so it is true of ministries and churches. Proper church discipline should cause us to seek the face of the Lord for insight into what He is saying to us in and through each discipline circumstance. Some discipline issues may result in policy changes and give an opportunity to discover weaknesses within our teaching, training, or church dynamics. We should not be so consumed with the discipline issues and so narrow in our focus that we miss the gift of growth and change the Lord has presented us through all discipline circumstances.

Step 1: Member Engagement Responsibility

Fervent, continual prayer to be made on behalf of the sinning member by the one who has knowledge of the sin (James 5:16-20). It shall also be the responsibility of any member of the body who has knowledge of a sinning member's heresy or misconduct to reprove and seek correction and restore the sinning member in private (Matthew 18:15-18 and Galatians 6:1)

Matthew 18:15-18

If Your Brother Sins Against You

¹⁵“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. ¹⁶But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If 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. ¹⁸Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed^[a] in heaven.

If step one is not successful and church discipline is warranted, the following actions will become a part of the restoration process:

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Step 2: Discovery

- DRR Committee will oversee the specific concern(s) and restoration process for the individual(s) involved.
- DRR committee becomes aware of the issue(s) potentially needing disciplinary attention via complaint form, phone call, email, social media, or text message.
- Assigned Committee members respond to concerns no later than 72 hrs.
- Request member to provide complaint in writing on designated form or narrative to include Who, What, When, Where, How and Why and sign the document.
- Committee will request from the accuser and accused a written version of the incident or concerns.
- Determine the category of the compliant and discuss possible approaches.
- Senior Pastor, Legal, Chairperson of Deacon and Joint Board will be consulted for approval to review any legal entanglements before engaging the process.
- Within 5-10 days of receipt of the written allegations, the committee will set up appointments with the person(s) bringing the allegations, person(s) against whom the allegations are lodged and any witnesses. If all parties cannot be notified, and appointments set within this time, the complainant will be notified.
- Begin written documentation of all that has and continues to occur throughout this whole process, from beginning to end. Be sure to keep thorough and accurate notes of each meeting, discussion, agreements, and disagreements. This will help to remember and provide a timeline of events if needed for future reference. Be sure to date each meeting and note attendees.
- Keep lines of communication open with all parties concerned.
- There must be a commitment to openness, honesty, transparency, and genuine vulnerability by the committee leading this process.

Step 3: Assessment/Collection of Supportive Information

- The offending individual(s) will be given the opportunity to submit to the restoration plan and process. 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.
- Request any supportive information from the complainant and offender such as email, text message(s), social media postings, voice mail and names of witnesses.
- Documentation of additional supportive information; the restoration plan will be recorded on the attached complaint form and maintained as a private/confidential document.

- Committee will meet with all involved members or non-members and review all documentation and supportive information.

Step 4: Judgment

- A documented restoration process will be formally agreed upon with appropriate boundaries and actions identified for the individual in relation to their sin.
- As part of the restoration plan, an accountability partner will be identified to be the “point person” for follow up growth and transformation. Accountability Partner is a member of good standing and actively engaged in church ministries.
- Committee shall confer with Chairs and Co-Chairs of Deacon, Deaconess and Joint Board and request the names of accountability partners.
- The accountability partner will report to the committee for on-going responsibility to the plan for discipline, discipleship and/or counseling.

Step 5: Consequence

- The offending individual will be released from all ministry responsibilities until the committee and mentor (accountability partner) agree on the time to re-engage ministry. A specific boundary of time will be recommended before ministry involvement is approved.

One Year Probationary period church member will be allowed to:

- Attend church services and participate in a small group, but that is all.
- The goal for this entire year to is rebuild their relationship with God and rebuild trust within the church.
- Various books and resources will be recommended to the church member.
- There will be a face-to-face meeting with the member, Accountability Partner and DRR Committee after six months and then again at twelve months

Five Year Volunteer Ministry Leadership – after one year is completed.

- Before taking on any volunteer leadership position or role with one of the church ministries
- After successful completion a face-to-face meeting with the member, Accountability Partner and DRR Committee.
- Member permitted resume serving in a volunteer leadership role or position in one of the church ministries.

Step 6: Reconciliation with Full Restoration

- If the Biblical authority of the church leaders and DRR Committee restoration plan is not agreed upon or is defied by the offending person, then the individual will be given

appropriate private and/or public communication that Biblically aligns with the consequences of an unrepentant person.

- Repentance to All Parties Effected – The church member will personally ask for forgiveness from everyone he/she has affected with their behavior.

A list will be generated at the initial meeting of such people to contact. The accountability partner and DRR Committee will follow up with the parties the church member agreed to contact to ensure this has happened

- *In accordance with Scripture, this individual will then be prohibited from continued church fellowship. According to 1 Corinthians 5:1-5 the impenitent individual is to be removed from the church’s fellowship or support that he or she might come to repentance through the consequences of separation from the body of Christ. The church body should appropriately mourn this person’s dismissal and should disassociate with the individual. If the person repents later and seeks restoration (e.g. Prodigal Son), the church should joyfully embrace the individual with forgiveness and love as the plan of restoration is re-engaged.*

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DRR Committee Members

Joyce Guthrie	Rev. Frederick Johnson	Ad Hoc Members
Larry Brooks	Daryl Miller	Rev. Robert Duckworth
Felicia Yankson		Millicent Albert

Step 7: Scripture Related to Church Discipline

DRR Committee study the following passages and determine what each teaches about

Mt. 18:15-17	Rom. 15:14	I Cor. 5	Rom. 16:17,18
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I Cor.	II Cor. 2:5-11	II Cor. 7:8-12	Gal. 6:1
Col. 3:16	I Thes. 5:14	II Thes. 3:6-15	I Tim. 1:20 (Compare II
I Tim. 5:1,2	I Tim. 5:19,20	II Tim. 2:24-26	II Tim.
Titus 1:13	Titus 3:10	III Jn. 9,10	Rev. 2:2, 14-

Step 8: Supplemental Discipline Training Resources and Initiatives

Video recommendations from RightNow Media listed below as well as the speakers and length of their videos.

DRR Committee will proactively educate church ministries and members of the church regarding the policy, videos and sermons from the pastor.

All three initiatives should thwart DRR Committee from hosting meetings.

- When People Fall (Fred Luter, Jr. Senior Pastor of New Orleans’ Franklin Avenue Baptist
- Church and President of Southern Baptist Convention) [2:50](#)
- Forgiveness & Grace (Phyllis Hendy - President/CEO of Lead Like Jesus) [5:50](#)
- Doing Habits (Phyllis Hendy - President/CEO of Lead Like Jesus) [3:09](#)
- Small Group Conflict (Jason Holleman - Group Pastor of The Village Church) [4:15](#)
- Pursue Mutual Accountability (Jared Musgeove - Group Pastor of The Village Church) [4:44](#)
- God Uses Broken People (Max Lucado - Pastor of Oak Hills Church) [3:44](#)

References and Resources

- *Jonathan Rourke is the senior pastor of Tri-City Bible Church in Vista, California.*
- Bible (specific verses noted in document)
- *Mt Hebron Missionary Baptist Church, Inc. Policies and Procedures*
- *Guidelines for Church Discipline and Restoration for Partner Church Members* from <http://www.hillconsultinggroup.org> (Accessed: 1/18)??
- Unpublished draft document - *Concord Church Discipline Restoration*
- *Church Discipline Policy - Executive Pastor Online 2/[11/11/2018 7:14:58 PM]*



Mt. Hebron Baptist Church Incident of Concern/Statement

CONFIDENTIAL

Meeting Address or Venue

City, State and Zip

Date and Time

This form should be used to report matters for review by the DRR committee. The goal of the DRR committee is to glorify God through the restoration of the individual.

I, Members Name, voluntarily provide the following information to DRR Committee members names _____ and _____

The information is given in accordance with scripture Matthew 18:15-18 and it is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

My full name is First, Middle, Last Name and my home in . I joined the Mount __ _ months or years ago. I have been a member of the Mount _____ years and serving the Lord.

WHO? _____

Who committed the alleged misconduct/wrongdoing?

WHAT? _____

What exactly did the member(s) do that was wrong or perceived as inappropriate? (Please provide specific and relevant details concerning the alleged misconduct/wrongdoing).

WHEN? _____

When did the misconduct/wrongdoing occur? (Please provide dates and times, if known).

WHERE? _____

Where did the misconduct/wrongdoing occur?

HOW? _____

How was the misconduct/wrongdoing committed? (e.g. falsifying records/church documents, teaching of doctrine contrary to scripture or the Church's statement, continuous disruption, etc.)

Additional Questions:

Do you have firsthand knowledge of the misconduct/wrongdoing? Please explain:

Where can we obtain additional information concerning this misconduct/wrongdoing? (i.e. documents, video, photos, social media, etc.) *If you attach supporting documents to this form, please provide source.*

Who else might be aware of this misconduct/wrongdoing? (Please provide names, email addresses and telephone numbers)

How would this individual know about this?

Complainant Signature and Date:

DRR Member Signatures and Date:
