

# Baptist Church Discipline



**James Leo Garrett, Jr.**

# **Baptist Church Discipline**



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A historical introduction to the practices of Baptist churches,  
with particular attention to the *Summary of Church Discipline*  
adopted in 1773 by the Charleston Baptist Association

James Leo Garrett, Jr.

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REVISED EDITION



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Thou hast given a *standard* to them that fear thee;  
that it may be displayed because of the truth.

-- *Psalm 60:4*

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**The WALDENSIAN EMBLEM**  
*lux lucet in tenebris*

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## PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

More than a third of a century — in fact 42 years — has transpired since Baptist Church Discipline was published by Broadman Press, and for much of that period this booklet has been out of print. The original edition had two objectives: to make available, for the first time in more than a century, a published text of the 1774 Charleston (S.C.) Baptist A Summary of Church Dicipline [sic], and to focus attention on the issue of church discipline, both its abandonment and its recovery, in the early 1960s.

These intervening years have witnessed Vatican Council II, the Civil Rights Movement, social unrest and rejection of traditional values, the Vietnam War, the breakup of the USSR and the end of the “Cold War,” radical changes in sexual morality and family life, and the advent of revolutionary new technology. American Protestantism has become more polarized into two major camps: the “mainline” or ecumenical churches and the “evangelical” churches. The Southern Baptist Convention has been engaged in divisive internal controversy for the last twenty-five years. African-American Baptists have experienced two schisms resulting in the formation of two new national conventions. Baptists in the Two-Thirds World, many of whom practice a stricter church discipline than Baptists in the United States, have become more numerous, there now being five nations — India, Brazil, Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, and South Korea — with more than half a million Baptist church members.

Concurrently there have been significant studies of Baptist church discipline even though there is little evidence of a renaissance of the intentional and consistent practice of any congregational discipline, apart from the discipling of new Christians, in churches related to the larger Baptist conventions in the United States.

Writing for American Baptists, Norman Hill Maring and Winthrop Still Hudson in their 1963 manual stated succinctly that “exclusion” was a “practice” that “has virtually disappeared from our churches.” Asserting, however, that “there are times when persons should be excluded from the fellowship,” these authors put the stress on “indifferent” and “inactive members,” with no mention of heresy, immorality, or divisiveness.<sup>1</sup> But in their 1991 revision of the same manual Maring and Hudson identified termination of church membership “because of scandalous behavior, teachings which embarrass the church of Christ, or failure to live up to covenant obligations” and then delineated a separate procedure for placement of inactive members on an “inactive membership list.”<sup>2</sup>

James Willard Bartley, Jr., in his study in the Pauline epistles, differentiated the texts which deal with corrective discipline for “social and moral problems” — “disorderly conduct” (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12; 4:11-12; 5:14; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15) and “extreme sexual immorality” (1 Corinthians 5:1-13) from the texts relative to “doctrinal problems” — “heretical preachers” (Galatians 1:6-9; 6:1), “divisive elements” (Romans 16:17-20), and “drifting from sound doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:18-20; 5:19-20; 6:3-5; 2 Timothy 4:14; Titus 1:9-16; 3:10).<sup>3</sup>

Charles William Deweese, quoting Findley B. Edge, Norman H. Maring/Winthrop S. Hudson, and J. Herbert Gilmore, Jr., noted in 1978 indications of a possible recovery among Baptists of congregational discipline that was “reformatory” as well as “formative.” His own review of the biblical materials included the Old Testament and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Baptists ought not to bypass the numerous biblical passages but should combine “discipline and forgiveness.” In his survey of the earlier Baptist

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<sup>1</sup> A Baptist Manual of Polity and Practice (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1963), p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, rev. ed., 1991, p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> “Corrective Discipline in the Pauline Epistles,” Th.M. thesis, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1965

practice Deweese noted that “Baptist church discipline has been a natural corollary of church covenants” and that the demise of discipline was at least partly “a reaction to the legalistic use of discipline and covenants” devoid of serious efforts towards reclamation and restoration. He offered nine suggestions for contemporary application.<sup>4</sup>

J. Ernest Runions of Canada identified “three major New Testament passages” that bring together discipline and the church: Matthew 16:13-20; 18:15-20; Revelation 2, 3. “Two other passages illustrate the apostolic implementation of discipline”: 1 Corinthians 5:1-13 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6-16. “Taken together,” these groups of texts “link the themes of covenant, holiness and the reign of God in Christ.”<sup>5</sup> He interpreted the binding and loosing in Matthew 16:19 as referring to excommunication and found in Matthew 18:15-20 “a disciplinary sequence which is at once the action of the church and of Christ.” Revelation 2,3 demonstrates Christ’s method of discipline by entreaty and exhortation and by chastisement and restoration after repentance. The Pauline texts reveal “the depth of christological authority committed to the Church.” Paul commands because “he is himself under the Word of Christ.” “The gathered church will make a decision that is the apostle’s decision. But the apostle acts for Christ, so the decision will be Christ’s decision.”<sup>6</sup> The “first step” in church discipline (Matthew 18:15) “is to be private,” the emphasis is to be on restoration, and ecclesial discussion “should be used only as a last resort when other attempts have failed.” The “anathema” was seemingly used only “for those who blasphemously rejected the gospel of grace and the finality

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<sup>4</sup> A Community of Believers: Making Church Membership More Meaningful (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1978), 63-80.

<sup>5</sup> “Discipline and Discernment,” in The Believers’ Church in Canada: Addresses and Papers from the Study Conference in Winnipeg, May 15-18, 1978, ed. Jarold K. Zeman and Walter Klaasen (Brantford, Ont.: Baptist Federation of Canada; Winnipeg, Man.: Mennonite Central Committee, 1979), p. 120.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 120-22.



and authority of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:8; 1 Corinthians 16:22). “Both the Reformers and the Believers’ Churches recognized the authoritative nature of church discipline and ... that it must be the action of the whole people of God in a given place.” Runions, acknowledging that abuses have led to the demise of post-baptismal corrective discipline, insisted that restoration of offenders is of higher priority than “moral purity in the church and orthodoxy of church doctrine.”<sup>7</sup>

Stephen Michael Haines in a 1984 dissertation studied the practice of church discipline in fifteen selected Southern Baptist churches, both rural and urban, located in ten states during the period from 1880 to 1939.<sup>8</sup> He identified six basic causes of the demise of church discipline among Southern Baptists: “the secularization of American society, the rise of individualism both in the culture and among Baptists, with a consequent loss of community values, the legalistic and punitive character of the earlier practice of corrective discipline, a more optimistic view respecting human beings and sin, the adoption by the churches of efficiency and quantification of goals from the business world, and the silence about or the opposition to church discipline in denominational publications.”<sup>9</sup>

Don Baker, senior pastor of Hinson Memorial Baptist Church, Portland, Oregon, narrated his congregation’s 26-month experience in corrective discipline of a ministerial staff member who was found to have had adulterous relations with ten women during thirteen years, who confessed his sin and whose wife forgave him and stayed with him, with the church’s withdrawing his ordination and insisting that he remain in its membership and under its care, and who, after a year of

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 122-26.

<sup>8</sup> “Church Discipline as Practiced by Representative Southern Baptist Churches, 1880-1939,” Ph.D. diss., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 178-99, as summarized by the present author in his Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical, vol. 2, 2d ed. (North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL Press, 2001), p. 601.

psychological counseling, was reordained and subsequently called to the pastorate of another church.<sup>10</sup>

J. Carl Laney wrote a full-length monograph on church discipline out of the conviction that the churches in the United States are “infected” with a weakening “moral blight” and that such infection “is due, at least in part, to a neglect of church discipline.” He defined church discipline in two ways: as “God’s loving plan for restoring sinning saints” and as “the confrontive and corrective measures taken by an individual, church leaders, or the congregation regarding a matter of sin in the life of a believer.” It is to be primarily restorative, not punitive.<sup>11</sup> Neglected in Corinth and in Thyatira and related to the sin of Achan (Joshua 7), church discipline finds its pattern in Hebrews 12:4-13. After noting roadblocks to initiating such discipline and sketching the history of church discipline, Laney listed four types of sin that may require discipline: “violations of Christian love [“private offenses”], unity [divisiveness], law [immorality], and truth [heresy]”<sup>12</sup> After expounding the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17 and the teaching of Paul, he found authority in the keys and restoration as the great purpose. The results when church discipline succeeds and those when it fails were identified, and special attention was given to the discipline of church leaders and to the danger of civil lawsuits.<sup>13</sup> Laney concluded with a report of his 1984 survey of Protestant pastors (439 responses out of 1,250), in which 51 percent of the cases were said to have led to restoration, and transfer of membership to another church to be a deterrent to

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<sup>10</sup> Beyond Forgiveness: The Healing Touch of Church Discipline (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press, 1984).

<sup>11</sup> A Guide to Church Discipline (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1985), pp. 12-14.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 18-47.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 48-139. Especially the 1984 case of Marian Guinn and the Collinsville, OK, Church of Christ.

effective church discipline, and with eighteen crucial questions respecting church discipline.<sup>14</sup>

In a British context David Coffey affirmed that “the discipline of believers” is “emphasized” in the Bible, “has always been the practice of the church,” and “is the church exercising its divine authority.” When authority smothers freedom, authoritarianism will likely result, but when freedom reigns over authority, there will likely follow that individualism in which “the biblical doctrine of ‘the priesthood of all believers’ has been distorted into ‘the papacy of each believer.’” Although there surely have been abuses, church discipline is intended to preserve “the purity of the church,” protect “the reputation of the church,” prevent “the erosion of moral standards,” and restore “the offender to full fellowship.” Discipline is needed when there is “a threat to the unity of a fellowship,” “to the truth of the gospel,” or to “the moral beauty of the fellowship.” We are to preach the word of God in love “to censure those who are careless,” to “excommunicate the impenitent” with a view to restoration, and to make and live out the church covenant.<sup>15</sup>

In his 1987 article George B. Davis first elaborated on seven reasons for the modern neglect of church discipline: the “denial of the biblical mandate” (Matthew 18:15-18), church discipline as unrealistic since perfection is not attainable, “the wrong interpretation of some passages of Scripture” (Matthew 7:1-6; 13:24-30, 36-43, 47-50), past abuses of church discipline, the appearance of discipline as being marked by “an unloving spirit,” the lack of present-day models, and practical difficulties in its implementation.<sup>16</sup> Then Davis argued for the “necessity” of church discipline by articulating seven objectives of church discipline: the glorifying and honoring of God by holiness and

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., pp. 139-63.

<sup>15</sup> Build That Bridge (Eastbourne, U.K.: Kingsway Publications, 1986), pp. 103-26. Coffey’s chapter is entitled “Discipline Is Discipleship.”

<sup>16</sup> “Whatever Happened to Church Discipline?” Criswell Theological Review 1 (Spring 1987): 345-52.

obedience, the reclamation of “the wayward member,” the protection of the remainder of the church from heresy, immorality, or divisiveness, the maintenance of the church’s reputation, the deterring of others from sin, the preventing of judgment by God, and helping to “maintain a regenerate church membership.”<sup>17</sup>

Writing in the United Kingdom, Michael John Collis gave detailed attention to the history of Baptist church discipline. First, the biblical materials, including the Dead Sea Scrolls and the Didache, were reviewed. Second, the English Baptist doctrine of the church was traced, primarily through early confessions of faith and recent monographs. Third, what was identified as the “theology of church discipline amongst Baptists” was actually a treatment of the views of John Calvin, of John Owen, and of the Baptist, Andrew Fuller. Fourth, the English Baptist practice of church discipline was traced historically. Fifth, the import for church discipline of English Baptist church covenants was explored. Sixth, Collis treated the contemporary practice of discipline among Baptists in the United Kingdom on three levels: (1) “the local church,”<sup>18</sup> (2) the association,<sup>19</sup> and (3) the Baptist Union of Great Britain.<sup>20</sup> Finally he offered suggestions for contemporary renewal of church discipline.<sup>21</sup>

John William MacGorman addressed the issue of contemporary church discipline by means of an exegesis of 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, from which he drew five conclusions: discipline in this case

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<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 352-61.

<sup>18</sup> Including cases involving Freemasonry.

<sup>19</sup> Including the case of Jesus Fellowship Church (Baptist) and the Northamptonshire Baptist Association.

<sup>20</sup> Including the discipline of ordained ministers, the theology of Michael Taylor, and the removal from membership in the Baptist Union of Jesus Fellowship Church.

<sup>21</sup> “The Theology and Practice of Church Discipline amongst Baptists with Particular Reference to Baptists in the United Kingdom,” Th.M. thesis, Heythrop College, University of London, July 1988.

“was not exercised over trivialities” (rather over incest), “was exercised by the whole church,” “was redemptive rather than punitive,” “was realistic about the contagiousness of evil,” and “generally called for exclusion from the church.” In conclusion he listed six reasons for the contemporary failure to practice corrective church discipline.<sup>22</sup>

Wayne Grudem in his systematic theology, after treating “the purity and unity of the church” and prior to his lengthy chapter on “church government,” dealt with “the power of the church.” After asserting the reality of spiritual warfare, interpreting binding and loosing in both Matthew 18:18 and 16:19 as referring to church discipline, and arguing that church discipline should be exercised by the church and not by civil government, Grudem explicated three purposes of corrective church discipline: “restoration and reconciliation” of the straying believer, keeping “the sin from spreading to others,” and protecting “the purity of the church and the honor of Christ.”<sup>23</sup>

The present author in his systematic theology treated “excommunication of members” in a chapter pertaining to “membership of churches.” The Old Testament, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Babylonian Talmud were explored for pertinent teaching and practice, and the New Testament materials were reviewed. Under the postbiblical history major attention was given to Anabaptists and to Baptists, and the contemporary problem was only briefly treated.<sup>24</sup>

In his revision of Edward T. Hiscox’s nineteenth-century manual, Everett C. Goodwin noted that “exclusion” from church membership may occur “for several reasons, but never

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<sup>22</sup> “The Discipline of the Church,” in The People of God: Essays on the Believers’ Church ed. Paul A. Basden and David S. Dockery (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1991), pp. 74-84.

<sup>23</sup> Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine (Leicester, U.K.: InterVarsity Press; Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), pp. 887-903.

<sup>24</sup> Garrett, Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical, 2:596-602.

without reflection and prayer. Most often it would follow the determination of the church that the member was not worthy to continue in relationship because of failure to exercise appropriate membership responsibilities or because the life of the person indicated a consistent manner of living in defiance of the spirit of the gospel.”<sup>25</sup> Goodwin retained some of Hiscox’s extensive treatment of church discipline, including the “Three Laws of Christ’s House” (“for every disciple, the law of love”; “for the offender, the law of confession”; and “for the offended, the law of forgiveness”), procedures for dealing with “private offenses” and with “public offenses,” and positive church discipline (or discipleship).<sup>26</sup>

Gregory A. Wills has produced an intensive, well-researched study of the practice of corrective church discipline by and among Baptist churches in Georgia between 1785 and 1900 and its demise by the early twentieth century. Wills delineated the use of the Saturday church conference and discipline committees, the adherence to Matthew 18:15-17, church trials that involved either voluntary confession or properly authorized accusation, the goal of repentance, forgiveness, and restoration, and the application to women and to Negro slaves and later freedmen and in independent Negro churches. Wills contended that this democratically administered Baptist church discipline was antithetical to that individualism and quest for freedom that would allow individual Baptists to determine their own beliefs and set their own moral standards apart from the congregation.<sup>27</sup>

At the beginning of the twenty-first century and the new millennium Baptist churches face awesome challenges, not the

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<sup>25</sup> The New Hiscox Guide for Baptist Churches (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1995), p. 44.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 195-205.

<sup>27</sup> Democratic Religion: Freedom, Authority, and Church Discipline in the Baptist South, 1785-1900 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997). No attempt has been made to include in this survey numerous D.Min. theses which relate to church discipline in specific Baptist congregations.

least of which is the integrity of their own memberships. I am grateful to Pastor Bill W. Lee and Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc., for authorizing and publishing this new edition of Baptist Church Discipline .

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February 2004

## PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

The Charleston Baptist "*Summary of Church Discipline*" is the oldest document pertaining to church discipline framed by Baptists in the South. Yet for more than a century there has been no reprint of this document. Not only have several generations of Baptist pastors and laymen been unfamiliar with it but also until the recent advent of microfilm it has been relatively inaccessible to those who would subject it to scholarly investigation.

The editor wishes to express gratitude for helpful counsel and assistance from the following: Rev. H. Claude Simmons, Fort Worth, Texas, in whose company and with whose cooperation the idea for this edition was conceived; Drs. W. J. Fallis and J. F. Green, Jr., of Broadman Press; Dr. Leo T. Crismon, Miss Betty McCoy, Mrs. Ronald Deering, Dr. Clayton Sullivan, and the staff of Boyce Centennial Library, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Kentucky; Rev. and Mrs. W. David May, Bloomington, Indiana; his colleagues of the faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, especially Drs. Henlee H. Barnette, Findley B. Edge, Dale Moody, E. C. Rust, E. J. Vardaman, and Wayne E. Ward; Dr. W. L. Lumpkin, Norfolk, Virginia; the editorial board of the *Southwestern Journal of Theology* for permission for quotation, and Drs. Robert A. Baker and W. P. Greenlee, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth; Dr. Davis C. Woolley, executive-secretary, the Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention, and Miss Helen Conger, librarian, Dargan Carver Library, Nashville, Tennessee; Rev. Glendon Grober, Rev. Aubrey Leon Morris, Rev. Harold Wahking, Dr. John R. Claypool, and Mr. Wayne O. Craig, Louisville; Dr. Sam S. Hill, Jr., Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Rev. W. C. Smith, Raleigh, North Carolina; Mrs. E. Glenn Hinson, efficient typist of the manuscript; Mrs. Dennis Kissinger and Mrs. Jimmie W. Capel;



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JAMES LEO GARRETT, JR.

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## INTRODUCTION

Baptists in the United States, and Southern Baptists in particular, are giving meager evidence of having today an ordered, disciplined churchmanship. This appears to be true whether one considers ethics, theology, or church order. Moral failures, which often are crimes as well as sins, increasingly occur among church members — Baptists and otherwise — and are reported in the public press. Even ordained ministers and other church leaders may experience such failures and no action by the congregation or by denominational bodies be taken. Many church members seem quite insensitive to the religious and moral dimensions of contemporary social issues such as race relations, church and state, war and peace.

Despite some indications of a renewed theological concern there is among Baptists widespread indifference toward the great Christian affirmations. While claiming to revere the Bible and to adhere to the New Testament as the basis of religious authority, Southern Baptists have been too little involved in the renewal of biblical theology.

The inroad of secularism and materialism into Baptist lives and Baptist churches is more real than acknowledged. Inactive and nonparticipating church members and the problem of nonresident membership have become major Southern Baptist difficulties.<sup>28</sup> The increasing number of Baptist church members seeking “rebaptism” on the basis of having been converted to Christ after initial “baptism” in Baptist churches is largely a twentieth-century phenomenon. Friction between

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<sup>28</sup> Allen W. Graves, “How Can We Prevent the Non-Resident Problem?” *Baptist Messenger*, XLI (March 6, 1952), 9; “How Can We Solve the Non-Resident Problem?” *ibid.*, XLI (Feb. 21, 1952), 11; Charles F. Leek, “Nonresident Church Members,” *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), II, 981f.; Ralph H. Langley, “Move Those Letters,” *The Baptist Program* (Jan., 1961), p. 7.

pastor and deacons, pastor and congregation, pastor and church staff, and deacons and congregation abounds and sometimes erupts into major congregational schisms.

Southern Baptists are affording some leadership and example in the fields of evangelism, religious education, church administration, religious radio and television, and pastoral care. Yet, in the practice of an ordered, disciplined congregational life — that which Littell calls the central concern of the “free church” tradition in its beginnings<sup>29</sup> — Southern Baptists are providing neither leadership nor example.<sup>30</sup>

Nevertheless, a slowly growing awareness of the need for some kind of renewal of personal and congregational spiritual discipline among Southern Baptists is in evidence. “Voices from within the Southern Baptist Convention increasingly are raised in diagnosis of the malady of Southern Baptist churchmanship which is contemporaneous with the mild vitality” of the post-World War II “Southern Baptist advance.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Franklin H. Littell, *The Free Church* (Boston: Starr King Press, 1957), p. 1. Littell affirms that the free church tradition centers in the committed, disciplined church more than in the church’s separation from the state.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. James Leo Garrett, “Seeking a Regenerate Church Membership,” *Southwestern Journal of Theology*, III (April, 1961), 25.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* Cf. L. C. Craig, “Maintaining Church Discipline,” *Baptist Standard*, LXI (June 30, 1949), 6; H. W. Schafer, “Church Discipline: a Lost Doctrine,” *Western Recorder*, CXXIV (February 9, 1950), 9, 25; Max Stanfield, “Church Disturbers,” *Baptist Messenger*, XL (April 19, 1951), 5; L.C. Quarles “Church Discipline and Infallibility,” *Religious Herald*, CXXIV (August 10, 1951), 4; “Leaving Off the Varnish,” *Baptist New Mexican*, XL (March 27, 1952), 1; J. Edgar Mobley, “Church Discipline Needed,” *Baptist Courier*, LXXXIV (October 30, 1952), 8; Morgan Kizer, “More About Discipline,” *Baptist Courier*, LXXXIV (November 20, 1952), 9; Carl Loy, “Church Discipline,” *Western Recorder*, CXXVII (September 24, 1953), 5, 8; W. C. Taylor, “Church Discipline,” *Western Recorder*, CXXVII (October 8, 1953), 5; J. W. MacGorman, “A Vanishing Baptist Distinctive,” *Christian Index*, CXXXVI (July 18, 1957), 6; Theron D. Price, “Discipline in the Church,” in Duke K. McCall, ed., *What Is the Church?* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1958), pp. 164-85; Erwin L. McDonald, “Revival of Church Discipline?” *Arkansas Baptist*, LVIII (July 16, 1959), 4; James Leo Garrett, “Church Discipline: Lost, But Recoverable,” *Western*

Prior to an examination of the Charleston *Summary of Church Discipline* itself, it is fitting that inquiry be made concerning the history of church discipline.

The Old Testament records instances of divinely ordained acts of discipline within the community of Israel, sometimes by divine intervention through nature, as in the Korah-Dathan-Abiram rebellion (Numbers 16, esp. vv. 31-35) and in the Nadab-Abihu incident (Leviticus 10:1 ff. ), and sometimes through human instrumentality, as in the idolatry of the golden calf or bull (Exodus 32, esp. vv. 25- 29,35). The law prohibited or delayed admission to the assembly of Israel of those who had committed certain sexual offenses or were from among Israel's enemies (Deuteronomy 23:1-8). Specific instruction in the law (Deuteronomy 6:1-9) and the rediscovery and public reading of the law (Joshua 8:34f.; 2 Kings 23:1-3), as well as the many exhortations of Israel's leaders, were indicative of positive discipline. Failure to attend promptly Ezra's reform assembly, thus subjecting the offender to forfeiture of all his property and separation "from the assembly of the captivity," is an example of postexilic discipline designed to effect separation from foreign wives (Ezra 9:1 ff.; 10, esp. v. 8, ASV).

The Babylonian Talmud contains references to the practice of the *shammetha* or ban with three degrees in Judaism. First, there was a "reprimand" (*neziphah*) for a period of seven days. This was to be followed by a "separation" or exclusion (*niddui*), which in Babylon lasted for seven more days but in Palestine for thirty days. A third and most decisive action was "full excommunication" (*cherem*) of indefinite duration.<sup>32</sup> There is

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*Recorder*, CXXXIII (July 23, 1959), 3f.; Bill G. West, "Where Do Southern Baptists Stand with Reference to Church Discipline?" *Baptist Standard*, LXXII (January 6, 1960), 10f.; Bill G. West, "Front Door Discipline," *The Baptist Program* (January, 1961), 22; Charles Chaney, "A Case for Backdoor Discipline," *The Baptist Program* (September, 1961), p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> Mo'ed Katan 14b, 15a, 15b, 16a, 16b, 17a, *The Babylonian Talmud*, Seder Mo'ed, trans. and ed. by I. Epstein (London: Soncino Press, 1938), Megillah, VIII, 85-109; cf. fn. 5, p. 90; fn. 12, pp. 97f. The power of excommunication was exercised by the

also evidence of Judaism's recognition of three cardinal sins (heathenism, incest and related acts, and homicide).<sup>33</sup> The Jewish practice of excommunication serves to clarify the reluctance of the parents of the man blind from birth whom Jesus healed to precipitate their excommunication from the synagogue (John 9:22).<sup>34</sup>

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls has revealed the nature of the discipline within the Qumran community. Initiation into the community was conditioned upon a covenant or pledge and included a rehearsal by priests of "the bounteous acts of God" toward Israel and one by Levites of the iniquities of Israel.<sup>35</sup> An initiate was examined "concerning his temper in human relations and his understanding and performance in matters of doctrine" and thereby was assigned to a rank within the community.<sup>36</sup> Those were to be excluded from the community for life who cursed God, who slandered or complained against the community, and who, after at least ten years within the community, lapsed.<sup>37</sup> One passage in the *Manual of Discipline* is similar to Matthew 18:15f.<sup>38</sup>

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high court at Jamnia. Cf. George Foot Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), II, 183. A prayer for "the extirpation of heretics," including "Nazarenes" or Jewish Christians, was introduced in the time of Gamaliel II, *ibid.*, I, 292; III, 97, n. 68.

<sup>33</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, II, 58, 267.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1953), II, 183f.

<sup>35</sup> *Manual of Discipline* 1:1 to 2:18, in *The Dead Sea Scriptures*, trans. and ed. by Theodor H. Gaster (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1956).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 5:20-24, as trans. by Gaster.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 6:27; 7:16f., 22-25.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 5:26 to 6:1. Cf. W. H. Brownlee, trans. *The Dead Sea Manual of Discipline* (Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research, Supplemental Studies, 10-12, 1951), p. 23, fn. 3. There is evidence that Essene discipline went to extremes, involving death or near death because of adherence to Essene food regulations by those expelled. Cf. *Zadokite Fragment*, ed. by Chaim Rabin (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. ix, 17-x, 2; Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, II, 8f., cited by Jerry

In the New Testament there is a significant, though not too obvious, connection between discipline and discipleship. Particularly is this manifested in the Gospels. The word “discipline,” which is derived from the Latin *disciplina*, and the word “discipleship,” derived from the Latin *discipulus*, have a common rootage in the Latin verb *discere*, “to learn.”<sup>39</sup> The teaching of Jesus about discipleship had a direct bearing upon the order and ethics of the New Testament churches, and likewise any contemporary renewal of congregational discipline should be consistent with the nature of Christian discipleship.

Christian discipleship, according to the teaching of Jesus, is denial of one’s self and taking of one’s cross (Mark 8:34), taking the yoke of Jesus (Matthew 11:28-30), and becoming as little children (Matthew 18:3). Christians are to be “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:13-15). They are those who “hunger and thirst after righteousness” and whose righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 5:6,20). Like a wise tower builder or prudent king about to go to war, one should reckon the cost of discipleship, for a disciple’s relation to Jesus is to his relation to his family as love is to hate (Luke 14:25-33). Discipleship is marked by love of one’s fellow disciples (John 15:12-13) and by hatred by the world (John 15:17-20), for the disciples of Jesus are “not of the world” yet are sent “into the world” (John 17:14,18). Greatness in discipleship is measured by ministering servanthood (Mark 10:43f.), and being a disciple of Jesus means involvement in the making and teaching of other disciples (Mark 1:17; Matthew 28:19f.).

The Gospels also give evidence of failure in discipleship. Since its design is fruit-bearing, detachment from Jesus the vine (John

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Vardaman, “Significant Developments in Scroll Research,” *Review and Expositor*, LXIII (Apr., 1961), 199.

<sup>39</sup> *Discipuli* is the Vulgate rendering of *mathetai* the Greek New Testament word for “disciples,” while *disciplina* is used in the Vulgate, for example, to translate *paideia* or “chastening” (cf. Hebrews 12:5,7f.).



15:1-8) and the absence of fruit (Mark 4:3-9,13-20) point to nondiscipleship. Indeed “many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him” (John 6:66, KJV). “No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” (Luke 9:62, KJV ). Judas the betrayer, the “son of perdition,” went the way of remorse and suicide (John 13:21-30; 17:12; Matthew 27:3-10), while Peter the denier repentantly returned to the allegiance of love (John 13:36- 38; 18:15-18,25-27; 21:15-17). Forgiveness of one’s brother is to be until “seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:21f.). Matthew records a very specific saying concerning how to deal with an offending brother:

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. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 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 (Matthew 18:15-17).

Discipleship and non-discipleship stand as two clear alternatives like two distinct gates, two trees, or two builders (Matthew 7:13-27).

In the Acts of the Apostles the most specific example of discipline is not by action of the apostles or the Christian community but by divine or providential action in the sudden deaths of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11). Yet Peter did rebuke Simon the magician (Acts 8:18-24). However, decisions respecting church order predominate in the Acts. These include the selection of Matthias (Acts 1:21-26), the addition of new believers to the church in Jerusalem (Acts 2:41-47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:1,7), the commonality of possessions in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 2:44f.; 4:32-35), the choice of the seven (Acts 6:3-6), the reception of Saul of Tarsus by the “pillars” of the church in Jerusalem on recommendation of Barnabas (Acts 9:26-30; cf. Galatians 2:1-10), the setting apart of Barnabas and

Saul to the Gentile mission by the church at Antioch (Acts 13:1-3), the appointment<sup>40</sup> of elders by Barnabas and Paul in the new churches established on the first missionary journey (Acts 14:23), and the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:1-33).

The Pauline Epistles contain various instances of the negative aspects of church discipline together with numerous exhortations — ethical, unificatory, and doctrinal — basic to nurture and discipline. The specific references to disciplinary action include the withdrawal “from any brother who is living in idleness” and admonition of him as a “brother,” not as an “enemy” (2 Thessalonians 3:6f., 14f.) and the restoration of a brother “overtaken in a fault” (Galatians 6:1f., KJV.). Of significance is Paul’s apostolic insistence that an incestuous member of the church at Corinth be delivered “to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” (1 Corinthians 5:1-8). The principle is that the Christian fellowship is to “judge” those inside the church and to “drive out” the wicked person — “fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner” from among them (1 Corinthians 5:9-13, KJV ).

Paul’s rebuke of the practice of Christians’ taking their disputes to pagan courts was based on the idea that a wise member of the church should decide in such matters, for “the saints will judge the world” and even “angels” (1 Corinthians 6:1-8). Second Corinthians indicates that the Corinthian congregation by majority action had punished a brother who had led resistance to Paul’s ministry. Paul calls for forgiveness, comfort, and love of the brother (2 Corinthians 2:5-11; 7:12). He claims to “have delivered to Satan” Hymenaeus and Alexander, who, “rejecting conscience ... have made shipwreck of their faith” (1 Timothy 1:19f.). Likewise, Paul counsels: “As for a man who is

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<sup>40</sup> Calvin argued that *cheirotonesantes* indicated a vote, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, 3, 15, yet the word in this context may have lost its strict classical meaning and mean “appoint.”

factions,<sup>41</sup> after admonishing him once or twice, have nothing more to do with him” (Titus 3:10).

Paul’s ethical admonitions show the relationship of the Christian life to church discipline. Sanctification is defined in terms of abstaining from fornication (1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 18-20). Christians as sons of light are to walk in the light rather than in the darkness (1 Thessalonians 5:4-8; Romans 13:12 ff.; Ephesians 5:7-14). Christian liberty is not to be used “as an opportunity for the flesh”; the Christian is to be characterized by “the fruit of the Spirit” instead of “the works of the flesh” (Galatians 5:13-26). Those who persist in unrighteousness shall not be inheritors of God’s kingdom (1 Corinthians 6:9f.; Ephesians 5:5). The problem concerning meat which had been sacrificed to idols led Paul to the principle, “‘all things are lawful,’ but not all things are helpful” (1 Corinthians 10:23). Responsible Christian liberty puts no stumbling block before weaker brethren (1 Corinthians 8:9-13; Romans 14:13-23). They who have been baptized into the death of Jesus Christ have been raised to “walk in newness of life,” counting themselves “dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus”; “free from sin,” they have “become slaves of righteousness” (Romans 6:3f., 11, 18). A Christian is one who has “put off the old man” and “put on the new man” (Colossians 3:9f.; Ephesians 4:22-24, KJV). Yet Paul regretfully reported that many live as “enemies of the cross of Christ,” but the “manner of life” of Christians ought to be “worthy of the gospel of Christ” (Philippians 3:18f.; 1:27).

Paul admonished the Corinthians to overcome schisms or factionalism (1 Corinthians 1:10f.). Such a condition is indicative of “babes in Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:1). Both Jew and Gentile have been reconciled “to God in one body through the cross,” for Christ creates “in himself one new man in place of the two” (Ephesians 2:16, 15). Christians are to seek “to

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<sup>41</sup> The Greek is *hairetikon*. “Heresy” was originally synonymous with schism and only later acquired the connotation of heterodoxy.

maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” and to “attain to ... mature manhood” (Ephesians 4:3,13).

Doctrinal problems evoked warnings by Paul. Chief of these was the snare of incipient, and possibly Judaizing, gnosticism (Colossians 1:16; 2:8-10,16-23; 1 Timothy 4:1-4,7) which had both speculative and ethical aspects. False teachers of various kinds ought to be rejected (2 Timothy 3:4f.; Titus 1:10-14; 3:9; 2 Timothy 2:16-18; 4:3f.).

The non-Pauline epistles reveal similar emphases. God engages in a direct, divine discipline or chastening which indicates the sonship of those disciplined (Hebrews 12:5-11). Some “antichrists ... went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out, that it might be plain that they all are not of us” (1 John 2:18f.). The turning back of a sinful brother from error to truth is greatly to be desired (James 5:19f.). Christians must beware of “an evil, unbelieving heart” and of being “hardened by the deceitfulness of sin” and must hold their “first confidence firm to the end” (Hebrews 3:12-14). They are to “be holy” even as God is “holy” and to “live as free men, yet without using ... freedom as a pretext for evil” (1 Peter 1:15f.; 2:16). Yet “there is sin which is mortal” (1 John 5:16). Unity and maturity are stressed. Christians are to “consider how to stir up one another to love and good works” and not to neglect “to meet together, as is the habit of some” (Hebrews 10:24f.). Some who are now “dull of hearing” and who take “milk, not solid food,” ought to grow to maturity with its “solid food” (Hebrews 5:11-14). False teachers — docetist (1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 7-10), antinomian (Jude 4,8; 2 Peter 2:2,12-19), and speculative (2 Peter 2:1,10f.) — are to be avoided.

Similar warnings against false teachers were given to the churches of Asia — against Nicolaitans (Revelation 2:6,15), Balaamites (Revelation 2:14), the cult of Jezebel the prophetess (Revelation 2:20-23), and other false “apostles” (Revelation 2:2).

The motif of responsible discipline in the Christian community has been repeatedly emphasized during Christian history. The strict discipline<sup>42</sup> of the second and early third centuries, under pressure of growing laxity within and of imperial persecution from without, yielded to a public penitential discipline. Under such discipline there came to be no sin for which there could not be ultimate ecclesiastical remission.

Reaction to the prevailing leniency toward those who had denied the Christian faith during persecutions took the forms of Novatianism and Donatism. Admission to the Catholic Church at first involved a prebaptismal catechumenate, but this was eventually supplanted by infant baptism and subsequent confirmation. Pagan infiltration and state support accelerated the decline in the Church's standards.

Then came another reaction, monasticism. The monastic communities, whether under Pachomian, Basilian, or Benedictine rule, had a definite discipline, predicated on the dualism of those inside seeking perfection and those outside accommodating themselves to the world. The Irish monasteries led in inaugurating private penance. Hildebrandine reforms and the rise of orders of friars were efforts to renew discipline. Calvin's Geneva is a prime example of the pattern of discipline in the Protestant establishments of the major Reformers.<sup>43</sup> The free church tradition within Protestantism or what has been recently denominated as the "radical" wing of the Reformation, particularly in its formative period, magnified church discipline.

As early as 1524, Conrad Grebel and others of the Swiss Brethren admonished Thomas Müntzer, revolutionary Spiritualist in Saxony, "Go forward with the Word and establish

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<sup>42</sup> Cf. Hermas' one post-baptismal repentance (*Shepherd*, II, 4, 3); Tertullian's "seven deadly sins," i.e., "idolatry, blasphemy, murder, adultery, fornication, false-witness, and fraud" (*Against Marcion*, IV, 9); and the three unforgivable or cardinal sins, i.e., idolatry or apostasy, murder, and adultery (cf. Tertullian, *Modesty*, 19).

<sup>43</sup> Cf. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, xi, 1-4; xii, 1-13; xx, 1-7.

a Christian church with the help of Christ and his rule, as we find it instituted in Matthew 18:15-18 and applied in the Epistles.”<sup>44</sup> What seems to be the oldest Anabaptist confession, the Schleithem Confession (Feb., 1527), probably fashioned under the leadership of Michael Sattler, deals with the nature of the church as a disciplined community of Christian brethren.<sup>45</sup> Article two refers to the use of the “ban” after two secret admonitions have failed.<sup>46</sup> Article three interprets participation in the Lord’s Supper as being for “those who shall be united beforehand by baptism in one body of Christ” and who have no “fellowship with the dead works of darkness.” Article four calls for evangelical separation “from the evil ... in the world.” Article five defines the pastoral office, including disciplinary and edificatory functions. Article six teaches that the sword is not to be used to enforce church discipline. Recent scholarship has extracted from the Hutterite chronicle<sup>47</sup> another early Anabaptist document on church order, probably drawn up by Hans Schlaffer in 1527, “Church Discipline: How a Christian Ought to Live.” These twelve brief articles include the practices of admonition, punishment of the disorderly, contribution for the poor, decent conduct, instruction of would-be members, and nonpublication of church decisions to nonmembers.<sup>48</sup>

Balthasar Hubmaier in 1527 argued that brotherly punishment is necessary for the well-being of the visible church, for even if

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<sup>44</sup> “Letters to Thomas Muntzer by Conrad Grebel and Friends” (1524), *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, ed. by George H. Williams and Angel M. Mergal (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), p. 79.

<sup>45</sup> See English translation in W. L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1959), pp. 22-31.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Matthew 18:15-17.

<sup>47</sup> I.e., *Geschicht-Buch der Hutterischen Brüder*, ed. by Rudolf Wolkan (MacLeod, Alberta, and Vienna: Carl Fromme, 1923), pp. 60f. The document has also been found in an extant Hutterian codex in Canada. Cf. Robert Friedmann, “The Oldest Church Discipline of the Anabaptists,” *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XXIX (April, 1955), (Goshen, Indiana: Mennonite Historical Society), 162-66.

<sup>48</sup> For English translation, cf. Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-35.

baptism and the Lord's Supper are rightly practiced, such ordinances are vain apart from brotherly punishment. Such punishment counteracts the antinomian opposition of "the old Adam." To refuse to engage in brotherly rebuke on the ground that one is a sinner is to destroy all brotherly admonition. Such rebuke follows from one's baptismal oath, by which one subjects himself to Christ and to the church.<sup>49</sup>

Excommunication is to be only for "scandalous sin or public blasphemy" and is designed to prevent "eternal excommunication." It is based on the power of the keys which is given to the church by Christ and is to be surrendered to Christ at his *parousia*. Toward the excommunicated there should be an attitude of non-fellowship but without hate, use of force, or reckoning him an enemy. Such persons should, upon repentance, be received with joy and forgiveness even "seventy times seven."<sup>50</sup>

Ulrich Stadler of the Hutterites defended the right of "deacons of the Word" to administer discipline, including exclusion.<sup>51</sup> Pilgram Marpeck, elder among the South German Anabaptists, interpreted the "ban" in terms of "brotherly discipline" "conducive to betterment and repentance" and did not practice the more rigid "shunning" of the Mennonites.<sup>52</sup> Peter Ridemann, another Hutterite, taught immediate exclusion "without admonition" for the "gross and deadly sins" (cf. 1 Corinthians 5:11). Yet he recognized two kinds of exclusion,

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<sup>49</sup> "Of Fraternal Punishment" (1527), *The Writings of Balthasar Hübmaier*, collected and photog. by W. O. Lewis and trans. by G. D. Davidson (Liberty, Mo.: Typescript, 1939), I, 328-45.

<sup>50</sup> "Of Christian Excommunication" (1527), *ibid.*, II, 581-602.

<sup>51</sup> "Cherished Instructions on Sin, Excommunication, and the Community of Goods" (c. 1537), *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, pp. 276f. Such exclusion was economic and social as well as religious. Cf. *ibid.*, p. 274, fn. 4.

<sup>52</sup> John C. Wenger, "The Theology of Pilgram Marpeck," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, XII (October 1938), pp. 251f., based on *Taufbüchlein* or *Vermahnung*, p. 263.

one complete and the other more moderate, and taught readmission through the laying on of hands.<sup>53</sup>

Menno Simons wrote frequently on the ban, or excommunication, and shunning, or social avoidance of the excommunicated.<sup>54</sup> Although teaching that shunning should apply to husbands and wives and to parents and children, he did not follow the more rigorist Flemish Mennonites by insisting that such included “bed and board.”<sup>55</sup> Menno early insisted upon threefold admonition without repentance prior to the ban, and the Waterlanders took this position.<sup>56</sup> But later he, like Ridemann, called for the use of the ban without admonition with regard to “openly offensive, carnal sinners.” In this he was supported by Frisian and German Mennonites.<sup>57</sup>

“Evangelical separation” is one of the seven “ordinances” of the true church, according to Dietrich Philips.<sup>58</sup> The Waterland Confession of Rys and Gerritsz teaches that excommunication presupposes an antecedent divine judgment and that shunning should not necessitate withdrawal from marital privileges.<sup>59</sup> According to the unificatory Dordrecht Confession (1632),

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<sup>53</sup> *Account of Our Religion, Doctrine and Faith*, trans. by Kathleen E. Hasenberg (Salop, England: Plough Publishing House, 1950), pp. 131-33.

<sup>54</sup> “A Kind Admonition on Church Discipline” (1541), “A Clear Account of Excommunication” together with “Some Questions and Answers on Church Discipline” (1550), “Reply to Gellius Faber” (1554), and “Instruction on Excommunication” (1558) in *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons*, trans. Leonard Verduin and ed. John C. Wenger (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald Press, 1956), pp. 407-18, 455-85, 723-34, 959-98.

<sup>55</sup> “A Clear Account of Excommunication,” pp. 472, 478f.; cf. Williams in *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, pp. 261f. Yet “Instruction on Excommunication,” pp. 970-73, could be interpreted to include “bed and board.”

<sup>56</sup> “The Waterland Confession” (1580), Art. 35, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

<sup>57</sup> “A Kind Admonition on Church Discipline” and “Instruction on Excommunication,” pp. 411-13, 974-78. Cf. Lumpkin *op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>58</sup> “The Church of God” (c. 1560), in *Spiritual and Anabaptist Writers*, pp. 246-48.

<sup>59</sup> Arts. 35, 36, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.



shunning should never prevent a ministry to the needs or afflictions of those banned.<sup>60</sup>

The English Separatist and early English Baptist confessions of faith usually contained specific articles on church discipline as well as on the nature of the church and of the ministry. “A True Confession” (1596), the product of the Separatist refugee congregation in Amsterdam, specifies that each congregation shall admit and exclude members and shall, if necessary, depose and exclude ministers and that members, although being subject to censure, should not separate themselves for minor causes.<sup>61</sup> Mennonite influence on John Smyth and Thomas Helwys in respect to discipline seems very likely. Excommunication after the threefold admonition was adopted, and yet shunning was not to include “worldly business” or “civil societie.”<sup>62</sup> Nor was it to prevent instruction, relief, or restoration of the excommunicated.<sup>63</sup> The last confession of the Smyth party, prior to union with the Waterlander Mennonites, mentions regeneration, the regenerates, or the new creation in twenty-one of its one hundred articles.<sup>64</sup>

The confessions of faith of English Baptist churches and associations, both General and Particular, reflect a concern for order and discipline. The practice of shunning was never fully accepted, and congregational polity became a concern, especially among Particular Baptists. The London Confession of 1644 identifies Christ’s spiritual kingdom with the Church

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<sup>60</sup> Art. 17, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>61</sup> Arts. 24, 23, 25, 36, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 89f., 94.

<sup>62</sup> “Short Confession of Faith in XX Articles of John Smyth” (1609), Arts. 17, 18; “A Short Confession of Faith” (1610), Arts. 33, 34; “A Declaration of Faith of English People Remaining at Amsterdam in Holland” (1611), Arts. 17, 18, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 101, 110f., 121.

<sup>63</sup> “Propositions and Conclusions Concerning True Christian Religion” (1612-14), Art. 80, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, p. 139.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, Arts. 41, 42, 44, 47, 49, 51-53, 56-63, 65, 73, 75, 81, 98, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-39, 142.

and affirms that this “Church, as it is visible to us, is a company of visible Saints, called & separated from the world, . . . and joyned to the Lord, and each other, by mutuall agreement.” Such saints are to live in Christ’s “walled sheepfold and watered garden.” To “every particular Congregation” and to the entirety of such a congregation is given the power of admission and exclusion. Every member is subject to censure by the congregation, but such power should be exercised “with great care and tendernesse.”<sup>65</sup> General Baptists gave stress to the care of the poor and the material support of their ministers.<sup>66</sup> Excommunications should be reported to sister churches, and controversies not easily settled may be taken to them for assistance.<sup>67</sup> “The right and only way, of gathering Churches” is to be maintained, but profession of faith must be beautified “with a holy and wise conversation.”<sup>68</sup> Particular Baptists warned churches and ministers not to receive members without “evident demonstration of the new birth, and the work of faith with power,”<sup>69</sup> yet acknowledged that “the purest Churches under heaven are subject to mixture, and error.”<sup>70</sup> Particular Baptists taught that churches should submit problems of doctrine or administration to the association of churches for advice but denied that associations have “Church power” or “jurisdiction over the Churches.”<sup>71</sup> General Baptists regarded their “general councils or assemblies” as having “lawful power

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<sup>65</sup> Arts. 33, 34, 42, 43, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 165f., 168.

<sup>66</sup> “The Faith and Practise of Thirty Congregations” (1651), Arts. 57, 64, 65; “The True Gospel-Faith Declared According to the Scriptures” (1654), Arts. 19, 24; “The Standard Confession” (1660), Arts. 19, 16, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 184f., 194f., 230f.

<sup>67</sup> “The Faith and Practise of Thirty Congregations,” Arts. 72, 70, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 186f.

<sup>68</sup> “The Standard Confession,” Arts. 11, 14, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 228f.

<sup>69</sup> “The Somerset Confession” (1656), Art. 25, subd. 21, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, p. 211.

<sup>70</sup> “The Assembly or Second London Confession” (1677, 1688), Art. 26, subd. 3, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, p. 285.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, Art. 26, subd. 15, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

to hear, and determine” cases of appeal and “also to excommunicate.” A threefold ministry was recognized, i.e., messengers, pastors, and deacons, and to such ministers was given the execution of threefold discipline, i.e., admonition, withdrawal, and excommunication.<sup>72</sup>

At the end of the seventeenth century Baptists began to do what had been done in the early years of the Anabaptist movement; namely, to formulate statements of church order or church discipline which were distinct from, though supplemental to, their general doctrinal confessions.

In 1697 Benjamin Keach, minister of the Horsleydown (Particular Baptist) Church, London, with the collaboration of his son Elias Keach, published a condensed version of the Second London Confession with additional articles on laying on of hands and on psalm and hymn singing, to which was attached “The Glory and Ornament of a True Gospel-constituted Church,”<sup>73</sup> a treatise on discipline largely anti- paedobaptist in emphasis.

After adopting in 1742 the Second London Confession with the addition of two articles, the Philadelphia Baptist Association authorized Jenkin Jones and Benjamin Griffith to compose “an abstract, or brief treatise concerning ... Discipline”<sup>74</sup> to be annexed to the confession. The work was done by Griffith, who reported that he used

a small tract published by Mr. Elias Keach,<sup>75</sup> ... a manuscript left by ... Abel Morgan<sup>76</sup> ...deceased, ... in some cases

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<sup>72</sup> “The Orthodox Creed” (1678), Arts. 39, 31, 34, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 327, 319f., 322f.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Lumpkin, *op. cit.* , pp. 239-40. Brown University does not presently have a copy of this work by Elias Keach, although such is claimed by W. T. Whitley, ed., *A Baptist Bibliography* (London: The Kingsgate Press, 1916), I, 131.

<sup>74</sup> *A Confession of Faith* ... adopted by the Baptist Association, met at Philadelphia, September 25, 1742, ... [and] *A Short Treatise, etc.* (Philadelphia: S. C. Ustick, 1810), *Treatise*, p. 1. Hereafter cited as ST (Philadelphia).

<sup>75</sup> Possibly “The Glory and Ornament of a True Gospel-constituted Church.”

consulted Dr. Owen<sup>77</sup> and Dr. Goodwin,<sup>78</sup> and in some things ... followed the agreement that our Association came to some years ago, especially concerning the admission and dismissal of Members.<sup>79</sup>

The Philadelphia Association adopted this *Short Treatise* in 1743. A half century later a need for revision was in evidence. In 1795 the association appointed Samuel Jones to undertake the revision, and in 1797 a new treatise was approved.<sup>80</sup>

The Charleston Baptist Association, the oldest in the South,<sup>81</sup> adopted in 1767 the Philadelphia Confession of Faith with

<sup>76</sup> Probably Abel Morgan, Sr. (1673-1722), who seems only to have published a Bible concordance and a confession of faith, both in Welch. Cf. David Spencer, *The Early Baptists of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: William Syckelmoore, 1877), pp. 48, 55.

<sup>77</sup> John Owen (1616-1683), Puritan theologian and Independent pastor, whose writings included “Eshcol, a Cluster of the Fruit of Canaan; Rules of Walking in Fellowship, with Reference to the Pastor or Minister That Watcheth for Our Souls,” “A Brief Instruction in the Worship of God, and Discipline of the Churches of the New Testament,” “An Inquiry into the Original Nature, Institution, Power, Order, and Communion of Evangelical Churches,” and “The True Nature of a Gospel Church and Its Government,” *The Works of John Owen*, ed. by Thomas Russell (London: Richard Baynes, 1826), XIX, 69-108, 463-568; XX, 65-250, 337-601.

<sup>78</sup> Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680), also a Puritan theologian and Independent pastor, the author of “The Government of the Churches of Christ” and “The Government and Discipline of the Churches of Christ,” *The Works of Thomas Goodwin* (Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1865), XI, 1-484, 485-525.

<sup>79</sup> *ST*, p. 2.

<sup>80</sup> *A Confession of Faith ... [and] A Short Treatise of Church Discipline* adopted by the Sansom Street Baptist Church, Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Anderson and Meehan, 1818), p. 3. This 1818 printing resulted from the adoption in 1817 of Samuel Jones’ discipline by Sansom Street Church with omission of the chapter on ruling elders. Citable as *TCD* (Philadelphia). For a comparison of *ST* and *TCD*, cf. Robert T. Handy, “The Philadelphia Tradition,” in Winthrop Still Hudson, ed., *Baptist Concepts of the Church* (Philadelphia: Judson Press, 1959), pp. 30-52. For excerpts from *ST* and *TCD* on associations of churches, cf. Hudson, comp., “Documents on the Association of Churches,” *Foundations*, IV (Oct., 1961), 332-39.

<sup>81</sup> Organization began on October 21, 1751, less than two years after the arrival in Charleston of Oliver Hart, formerly of Pennsylvania. Wood Furman, *A History of the Charleston Association of Baptist Churches in the State of South Carolina* (Charleston, S.C.: J. Hoff, 1811), pp. 7-9.

omission of the article on laying on of hands. The same year it appointed Oliver Hart<sup>82</sup> and Francis Pelot “to draw up a system of Discipline agreeable to Scripture, to be used by the Churches.” These presented a draft of a discipline in 1772, and the association requested Morgan Edwards and David Williams to “assist the compilers in revising it.” The resultant treatise was “examined” and “adopted” in 1773,<sup>83</sup> and together with the confession *A Summary of Church-Discipline*<sup>84</sup> was published in 1774. The *Summary* was published separately in 1783<sup>85</sup> in Wilmington, North Carolina, and in 1794<sup>86</sup> in Richmond, Virginia. Two thousand additional copies of this work were evidently printed in Charleston in 1794.<sup>87</sup> It was published

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<sup>82</sup> Hart had been baptized by Jenkin Jones. Cf. Basil Manly, “A History of the First Baptist Church” in H. A. Tupper, ed., *Two Centuries of the First Baptist Church of South Carolina, 1683-1883* (Baltimore: R. H. Woodward & Co., 1889), pp. 102f.

<sup>83</sup> Furman, *op. cit.*, pp. 12f.

<sup>84</sup> *A Confession of Faith ... [and] A Summary of Church-Dicipline [sic]* Shewing the Qualifications and Duties of the Officers and Members of a Gospel-Church by the Baptist-Association in Charleston, S.C. (Charleston, S.C.: David Bruce, 1774). Hereafter cited as *SCD*, 1774.

<sup>85</sup> *A Summary of Church Discipline ...* (Wilmington, N.C.: James Adams, 1783). The editor has not been able to examine this printing, copies of which are in the Library of Congress and in the Samuel Colgate Collection, Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rochester, New York.

<sup>86</sup> *A Summary of Church Discipline [sic] ...* (Richmond, Va.: John Dixon, 1794). This printing seems to be verbally identical with the original (1774) edition and does not contain the alterations found in the 1794 Charleston printing. Cf. fn. 60.

<sup>87</sup> *A Summary of Church-Discipline ...* 2nd edition (Charleston: Markland, McIver & Co., 1794). Hereafter cited as *SCD*, 1794 (Charleston). Only a few minor verbal alterations distinguish this edition from *SCD*, 1774. Cf. Furman, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

along with the Charleston Confession of Faith in 1813,<sup>88</sup> 1831,<sup>89</sup> and in 1850.<sup>90</sup> Subsequent Baptist confessions of faith in the United States have contained few explicit references to church discipline.<sup>91</sup> Several noteworthy books on church order and discipline by Baptists in the United States were written during the nineteenth century.<sup>92</sup>

The Charleston *Summary of Church Discipline* is the product of the Calvinistic Baptist tradition in which it was formulated.

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<sup>88</sup> *A Confession of Faith ... Second Charleston Edition ... A Summary of Church-Discipline ... [and] The Baptist Catechism ...* (Charleston, S.C.: Printed for the Charleston Baptist Association by J. Hoff, 1813). This edition adopted the slight verbal alterations of *SCD*, 1794 (Charleston), and corrected two of its four errors. This edition seems to have been the result of the decision of the Charleston Association in 1810 to “patronize the publication of the Confession of Faith, System of Discipline, and Catechism, in one volume; and to address the other Baptist associations in the State with a view of obtaining their concurrence,” Furman, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>89</sup> *Baptist Confession of Faith and A Summary of Church Discipline*, to which is added an appendix. (Charleston: Printed by W. Riley for Daniel Sheppard, 1831). This edition of the *Summary* seems to be identical with that of 1813.

<sup>90</sup> *A Confession of Faith ... Fourth Charleston Edition ... A Summary of Church-Discipline ... [and] The Baptist Catechism ...* (Raleigh, N.C.: Printed by B. Temple at the Primitive Baptist Office, 1850). This edition, evidently based on the 1813 and 1831 editions, has a few printing errors peculiar to itself.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. “Articles of Faith, Kehukee (Primitive) Baptist Association” (1777), Arts. 12, 13, 16, 17; “Principles of Faith of the Sandy Creek Association” (1816), Arts. 6, 7; “Terms of Union Between the Elkhorn and South Kentucky, or Separate, Associations” (1801), Arts. 10, 11; “New Hampshire Confession” (1833), Arts. 13, 14; “Articles of Faith of the Baptist Bible Union of America” (1923), Arts. 13, 14, in Lumpkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 356f., 358, 359, 365f., 388.

<sup>92</sup> E.g., William Crowell, *The Church Member’s Hand-Book* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1858); John Leadley Dagg, *A Treatise on Church Order* (Charleston, S.C.: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1859); Edward Thurston Hiscox, *The Baptist Directory* (New York: Sheldon & Co., 1859; rev. ed., 1890); Patrick Hughes Mell, *Corrective Church Discipline* (Charleston, S.C.: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1860); James Madison Pendleton, *Church Manual* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1867); Williams Rutherford, *Church Members’ Guide for Baptist Churches* (Atlanta: James P. Harrison & Co., 1885); William Wallace Everts, *Baptist Layman’s Book* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1887); and Hiscox, *The Standard Manual for Baptist Churches* (Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1890).

This is revealed in the theological overtones of the document as well as by its quotations from John Gill, the well-known English Particular Baptist theologian.

While it belongs to the Calvinistic Baptist heritage, whose major fountain in America was Philadelphia, the *Summary* is to be differentiated from the *Short Treatise* at certain points. W. D. May<sup>93</sup> has found nine pertinent differences between the two documents.

“The *Summary* contains a more systematically thought out and applied theology than does the *Treatise*,” says May. Use of the *Treatise* itself, dependence on Gill, a plurality of authors and revisers, and the greater length of time employed may help to explain this difference.

In constituting a church the *Treatise* emphasizes that candidates are “first orderly baptized,” while the *Summary* calls for subscription to a written covenant and observance of the Lord’s Supper.

The *Summary* alone specifically declares that women are not to share in the government of the congregation.

The *Summary* states that “ministers” are to lay on hands in the ordination of a minister, while the *Treatise* refers to “the hands of the presbytery of that church, or of neighbouring elders called and authorised by that church.”<sup>94</sup>

The *Treatise* contains an article on ruling elders, while the *Summary* makes no mention of such.

The *Treatise* prescribes that elders should lay hands on candidates after the act of baptism, but on this the *Summary* does not speak.

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<sup>93</sup> William David May, “The Philadelphia and Charleston Baptist Church Disciplines: A Theological Analysis” (Unpublished Th.M. Thesis, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., 1961), pp. 59-62.

<sup>94</sup> ST (Philadelphia), p. 6.

While both teach ministerial support, the *Treatise* admits of the possibility that ministers may find it necessary to “betake to other secular employments to support themselves and families.”<sup>95</sup>

The *Treatise* alone provides that, if and when a congregation “is informed that a member hath acted amiss, either in matters of faith or practice,” and investigation of the same is in process by the elders, the member should be immediately suspended “from communion at the Lord’s table.”<sup>96</sup>

The *Summary*, following Gill, interprets the Pauline expression, deliverance “unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh” (1 Corinthians 5:5), as not applying to the modern practice of excommunication, while the *Treatise* interprets contemporary excommunications in terms of this expression.

The *Summary* is, to be precise, a document on church order and church discipline. Beginning with the distinction between the “universal Church” and “particular” churches (I, 1), the *Summary* defines the membership of particular churches (I, 2); the constitution of particular churches, including the procedure in constituting such (I, 3); and the government of particular churches (I, 4).

Then church officers, ministers and deacons, are discussed. Ministers are treated in respect to their appointment by Christ, qualifications, trial, ordination, authority, and duties (II, 1). The qualifications, choice, and duties of deacons follow (II, 2).

The reception of members is the third principal subject in the *Summary*. The qualifications of members include an experience of grace, a knowledge of divine things, becoming conduct, and baptism by immersion on profession of faith (III, 1). The discussion of admission of members embraces the majority vote of the congregation, instruction by the minister, the right hand

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<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.



of fellowship, and union and communion. Also mentioned are “occasional communion” (a type of associate membership), removal of membership with the removal of residence, letters of commendation, and the reception of those suspended or excommunicated (III, 2).

The duties of church members are presented according to a fourfold division: toward ministers (IV, 1), toward deacons (IV, 2), toward fellow members (IV, 3), and toward the congregation (IV, 4).

The censures of the church are three: rebuke or admonition (V, 1), suspension (V, 2), and excommunication (V, 3). The nature of each censure and the types of offenses likely to warrant each censure are discussed. Excommunication is treated in greater detail: the importance of impenitence as a condition, excommunication as not self-inflictible, procedure, and ends or purposes.

Associations of churches are desirable and proper, are to be formed of “representatives” or “messengers” from the churches, and are advisory councils rather than superior judicatures. They are responsible for the admission of churches, are to follow proper procedures in transacting business, and should produce distinct benefits (VI).

A precise appraisal of the usage of the *Summary* by the churches comprising the Charleston Association is difficult to obtain. Evidences of the practice of church discipline by these and other South Carolina Baptist churches in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries are numerous.<sup>97</sup> It is not clear whether the *Summary per se* influenced the practice of the churches and associations or whether the *Summary* merely reflects the practice which existed.

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. Leah Townsend, *South Carolina Baptists, 1670-1805* (Florence, S.C.: Florence Printing Company, 1935), pp. 64, 90, 92, 93, 103, 112, 135, 164, 181, 186, 187, 192, 201, 206, 215, 224, 241, 249, 254, 291, 292, 293, 299.

The minutes of the Charleston Association from 1775 to 1825 indicate numerous instances of discipline in respect to ministers, baptism and the Lord's Supper, schism, ethical issues, and miscellaneous questions.<sup>98</sup> The circular letters of the Charleston Association from 1792 to 1810, though evidencing almost no direct dependence on the *Summary*, often dealt with subjects common to the *Summary*.<sup>99</sup>

During the pastorate of Richard Furman, Sr. (1787-1825) the First Church of Charleston practiced a quarterly public catechizing of the children of its members.<sup>100</sup> "The greatest care was exercised in guarding against premature professions of piety, and church discipline was ministered with conscientious faithfulness."<sup>101</sup>

The *Summary's* frequent citation of biblical passages makes relevant the question whether such passages were properly interpreted and applied to the subject matter of the *Summary*. Some of the citations are dubious in the light of contemporary biblical scholarship. The *Summary* is predicated on an allegorical interpretation of the Song of Solomon which affords proof-texts about Christ and his church.<sup>102</sup> Amos 3:3, which refers to Israel's walking with God, is cited in reference to Christian marriage within the church fellowship (IV, 3). Reference is made to Zechariah 11:10,14, which refers to the

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<sup>98</sup> May, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-83.

<sup>99</sup> Furman, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-238.

<sup>100</sup> Oliver F. Gregory, "History of the Sunday-Schools of the Church," in H. A. Tupper, ed., *Two Centuries of the First Baptist Church of South Carolina, 1683-1883* (Baltimore: R. H. Woodward & Co., 1889), pp. 237f. The Sunday school was begun in 1816 (p. 236).

<sup>101</sup> Anonymous, "Biography of Richard Furman, Sr.," in *ibid.*, p. 146. This biography of 1883 was probably composed by J. C. Furman on the basis of written sources. Cf. Harvey T. Cook, *A Biography of Richard Furman* (Greenville, S.C.: Baptist Courier Job Rooms, 1913), preface.

<sup>102</sup> Song of Solomon 6:9 (I,1); 8:8 (II,1); 4:12 (IV,4); 8:8 (VI).

breaking of the two staffs, “Beauty” and “Bands” (KJV),<sup>103</sup> probably the annulling of the covenant with Israel and the deliverance to internal strife, in order to support the distinction between suspension and excommunication (V, 2). Psalm 22:22 appears rather than a New Testament text related to the forgiveness of Peter (V, 3). Psalm 122:6-9 and Psalm 84:4,10, which refer to Jerusalem and its temple, are cited in reference to prayer for and attendance upon the meetings of Christian congregations (IV, 4).

In the same vein, a minister’s obligation to join a particular church before being called as pastor is based on Acts 1:21, which refers to the companions of the apostles and eyewitnesses of Jesus’ resurrection (II, 1). The assembling of “the multitude of disciples” by the twelve apostles for the selection of the “seven” (Acts 6:2) is cited in support of obligatory attendance of church meetings (V, 1). A Pauline reference to the Roman legal practice of confronting the accused with his accusers and affording him opportunity for self-defense (Acts 25:16) is used in support of the Christian’s obligation not to take up an evil report against another (IV, 3). Many exegetes interpret 1 Corinthians 5:5 to refer to church discipline, but the *Summary*, following John Gill, affirms that this was an apostolic act, not performed by churches (V, 3). First Corinthians 5:12, which distinguishes Christians from non-Christians, is hardly a valid proof-text for congregational polity (I, 4). The *Summary* cites Ephesians 6:18-20, in which Paul asks fellow Christians to pray for him that he might speak boldly, in connection with the duty of church members to submit themselves to their ministers (IV, 1). Divine instruction of Moses in respect to the building of the tabernacle (Hebrews 8:5) is cited in support of the minister’s obligation to administer the gospel ordinances biblically (II, 1). Revelation 3:17, a reference to material wealth leading to self-sufficiency, is related to a church’s independence from a Baptist association which indicates self-sufficiency (VI).

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<sup>103</sup> “Grace” and “Union” in RSV.

The beginning of what appears to be a renewal of a committed, disciplined churchmanship is one of the facts of contemporary Christianity. Those who stand in the heritage of “free church” Protestantism are being challenged to recover their classic covenant or consensus and its corollary, a committed, disciplined church.<sup>104</sup> Freedom, it must be realized, was only half the free church platform, for order or discipline was the other half. Some who stand in the heritage of “state church” or right-wing Protestantism likewise are calling for a renewal of discipline.<sup>105</sup> Reflection upon church history makes evident the fact that small committed, disciplined groups of Christians have often been instruments of religious and moral renewal, whether Roman Catholic monastic communities and religious orders or Protestant separatist fellowships.<sup>106</sup>

What can and should be the manner of such renewal of disciplined discipleship? Some have found the answer in newly structured Christian cell groups. Some of these, such as Scotland’s Iona Community, combine summertime participation in a separated community with wintertime involvement in the social order.<sup>107</sup> Others have constituted new congregations on a strict standard of membership. An example of this is the Church of the Saviour, Washington, D.C.

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<sup>104</sup> Elton Trueblood, *Alternative to Futility* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), pp. 82-103; Franklin Hamlin Littell, *The Free Church* (Boston: Starr King Press, 1957), esp. pp. 113-31; Trueblood, *The Yoke of Christ and Other Sermons* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958).

<sup>105</sup> Geddes MacGregor, *The Coming Reformation* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1960), esp. pp. 63-84; cf. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, trans. R. H. Fuller (2d ed.; New York: The Macmillan Co., 1959).

<sup>106</sup> Trueblood, *Alternative to Futility*, pp. 44-57; Chad Walsh, *Early Christians of the 21st Century* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1950), p. 173.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Alexander Miller, “The Iona Community: An Experiment in Catholicity and Contemporaneity,” *Theology Today*, VI (July, 1949), 224-34. On the Taizé Community in France, cf. Malcolm Boyd, “The Taizé Community,” *Theology Today*, XV (Jan., 1959), 488-506.

Most Christians concerned about such renewal will find their best channel to be the congregation of which they are now members.<sup>108</sup> Some congregations are writing new church covenants and giving to the covenant major emphasis.<sup>109</sup> Trueblood calls for “orders” or groups of the “New Seventy” who will participate in the “abolition of the laity” and reformation of the church from within.<sup>110</sup> Robert A. Raines has described the combination of a sixfold congregational discipline (corporate worship, daily prayer, Bible reading and study, giving of money, service, and witness) with *koinonia* groups within the Aldersgate Methodist Church, Cleveland, Ohio.<sup>111</sup>

Professing Christians who are wary of a renewal of discipline should recall the role of discipline in the history of Communism. At the Second Congress of the Social Democratic Party in Russia in 1903, a split occurred between the Bolsheviks led by Lenin and the Mensheviks.

The main difference concerned the organization of the party. In Lenin’s view the party must be the “vanguard of the proletariat.” It must lead the working class, as the working class must lead other classes into revolution.... The party must be a band of “professional revolutionaries,” bound by an iron discipline. Quality must come before quantity. No one must be admitted to the party who would not completely subject himself to its leaders and put the claims of the party on his time and efforts before all others.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Trueblood, *The Yoke of Christ*, pp. 125f.

<sup>109</sup> For example, the Watts Street Baptist Church, Durham, N.C., and the University Baptist and Olin T. Binkley Memorial Baptist churches, Chapel Hill, N.C. Cf. William L. Hendricks, “The Church Covenant: Is It Accurate? Is It Adequate?” *The Baptist Program* (Feb., 1961), 24, 27, 29.

<sup>110</sup> *The Yoke of Christ*, pp. 118-27, 138-49.

<sup>111</sup> Robert A. Raines, *New Life in the Church* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), esp. pp. 59-64, 78-87.

<sup>112</sup> Hugh Seton-Watson, *From Lenin to Malenkov* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1953), p. 24.

A frank appraisal of the contemporary Christian situation leads to the recognition of numerous problems connected with the renewal of church discipline. Some object on the ground that our Lord said "Judge not, that you be not judged" (Matthew 7:1). Others, while acknowledging that discipline is inherent in the New Testament, doubt the propriety of its present-day recovery. Still others point to the abuses of church discipline in its era of decline and abandonment.

Those who would lead in the renewal of discipline must be thoroughly convinced of its terrible urgency. Both positive nurture and negative censures, both "front door" and "back door" discipline are needed. The reluctance of the majority in many congregations will continue to be a reality, and discipline initiated and administered solely by the minister would be a travesty of congregationalism. The indifference of other churches and the continuation of "free and easy" church membership should not be deterrents.

Probably the greatest problem in the recovery is the avoidance of a neo-Pharisaic legalism. There must be no code of sins externally conceived, and sin must be viewed in its depth and its manifold expressions. Stated affirmatively, church discipline must be redemptive in purpose and not merely punitive. Grace and forgiveness must always be operative. The restoration of the offending brother must be of equal importance with the purity of the church. Anything less cannot be squared with our Lord and the New Testament.

The republication of the Charleston Baptist *Summary of Church Discipline* has as its major purpose the encouragement of the renewal of a proper church discipline through study of an important document in the history of Baptist church discipline. This, however, is by no means to imply that the *Summary*, as it is, should be adopted by twentieth-century Baptist churches. Its restriction of participation in congregational business to male members and insistence upon the silence of women in church

meetings is one obvious aspect of the *Summary* to which contemporary objections would be raised.

The *Summary*, an eighteenth-century document of theological and historical but not literary importance, is at times not easily perceptible to the twentieth-century reader. Hence the editor has sought to make the document more readable either by slight alterations of the text such as dividing long sentences and altering archaic uses of pronouns and other words or by explanatory footnotes. Faithfulness to the meaning of the original has been the objective in making editorial alterations. Although the Revised Standard Version has been used in this introduction except where otherwise indicated, in the text itself the biblical quotations from the King James Version are retained.

A  
S U M M A R Y  
O F  
C H U R C H - D I C I P L I N E .

S H E W I N G T H E  
Q U A L I F I C A T I O N S a n d D U T I E S , o f t h e O f f i -  
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C H A R L E S T O W N , S O U T H - C A R O L I N A .

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*For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst jet in order  
the Things that are wanting. Tit. i. 5.  
See that thou make all Things according to the Pattern showed to  
thee in the Mount, Heb. viii. 5.*

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C H A R L E S T O W N ,  
P R I N T E D B Y D A V I D B R U C E .  
M D C C L X X I V .

(Facsimile of original title page)





A  
SUMMARY  
OF  
CHURCH-DICIPLINE.

*SHEWING THE QUALIFICATIONS and DUTIES, of the  
Officers and Members, of a Gospel-Church.*

BY

THE BAPTIST-ASSOCIATION,  
IN CHARLESTOWN, SOUTH-CAROLINA.

*For this Cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set  
in Order the Things that are wanting. Titus 1:5.*

*See that thou make all Things according to the Pattern  
shewed to thee in the Mount, Hebrews 8:5.*

CHARLESTOWN,  
PRINTED BY DAVID BRUCE. MDCCLXXIV.

This is a brief history of discipline among Baptists, together with an edited text of the *Summary of Church Discipline* adopted by the Charleston Baptist Association in 1773.

*Baptist Church Discipline* relates the origins of church discipline, emphasizing that it was both redemptive and punitive, and points up its relevance to Baptists today. Its publication, including the Charleston Summary in today's language, seeks to encourage the renewal of a proper church discipline by providing important theological and historical background.

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