

Twelve Challenges Churches Face

A study guide for the book by Mark Dever

Chapter 4 – Sin

BEFORE READING

Read:

- Read 1 Corinthians 5-6.

Answer:

- How does the world we live in tend to characterize judging?
- Should Christians judge other people?
- Define “excommunication.” Is it Christian?

DURING READING

THREE REASONS FOR EXCOMMUNICATION

Reason #1 – pages 51-52

The unrepentant sinner is to be excommunicated for _____.

- Why does Paul rebuke the Corinthians in chapter 5? Of what were they guilty?
- What is meant by “deliver this man over to Satan?” Why would Paul want them to do this?
- What should love for God and hatred for sin produce in our relationships?
- Whose responsibility is it to see that sin is not tolerated in the church?

Reason #2 – pages 53-54

The unrepentant sinner is to be excommunicated for the sake of the _____ of the church.

- How does continued, unrepentant sin endanger the whole church?
- What happens to sin that no one deals with?
- What should the lives and actions of church members portray to the world?

Reason #3 – pages 54-56

The unrepentant sinner is to be excommunicated is the church’s _____ to do so.

- Should believers disengage from the world?
- With whom should Christians not associate?
- Is it the church’s job to reform society? What is the church’s job?
 - In terms of the above questions – do you think the contemporary church has had its priorities straight?

Implications for All Believers

- How does the need for accountability relate to the need for attendance and involvement in the lives of other church members?
- How does a failure to practice church discipline make us culpable in someone else's sin?
- How are we to relate to those who are excommunicated?

FOUR REASONS JUDGING THOSE WHO ARE INSIDE

We are to exercise godly judgment within the church...

1) ...for the sake of _____ . (pages 57-58)

- Explain.
- How should we get involved in conflict resolution with brothers and sisters?

2) ...for the sake of _____ . (pages 58-59)

- Explain.
- What should we desire to show the world more than anything else?

3) ...for the sake of _____ . (pages 59-60)

- Explain.
- Why should we be truthful about wickedness and its penalties?

4) ...for the sake of _____ . (pages 60-62)

- Explain.
- Why is it wrong to be casual about physical conduct and sin?

CONCLUSION

- What happens when a church neglects to discipline sinners?

AFTER READING

Answer:

- How has your understanding of excommunication (and church discipline) changed?
- Is there continuing sin of which you need to repent?
- Are there specific situations in the lives of fellow church members that you need to be involved?

Apply:

- What applications will you make from this chapter?

Pray:

- Write out a prayer in response to what you've learned.