

(BG 2023)

***The Church Order on Discipline (#1)***  
***The participation of all the members***

\*\* Briefly:

Essence of discipline: God's act of cutting off impenitent sinners from His Son

Effect of discipline: Kingdom is closed to them

Power of discipline: Only God's Word

God's agent in discipline: The church—both her elders *and all her members*.

\*\* Proof: Confessions...

Scripture...

\*\* Three doctrines underlying the call for all members to participate. The doctrine...

\*That gives the right:

\*That gives the desire:

\*That gives the obligation:

\*\* How, specifically? members participate in discipline in at least 7 ways:

1. **Initiate:** *Often, discipline begins with members (Matt. 18; Deut 21:18f)*

2. **Pray:** *Each announcement of discipline calls the members to pray.*

3. **Admonish** personally:

a) *After the second announcement: Art 77: "speak to him..."*

b) *Form for Excomm refers to 'frequent admonitions... in private ...*

4. **Approbate:** That is, members must approve all the work of discipline

*Art 77: "with the tacit approval of the congregation"; 78: "no one can mention anything against him to the contrary" \*\*\*Implied in approbation is the opportunity to *object*, to show that the discipline exercised is improper.*

5. **Excommunicate:** *the entire congregation performs this act (ICor 5:3-5, Deut 21)*

6. **Maintain:** *members are to withhold intimate fellowship (I Cor 5; II Thess 3:14,15)*

7. **Seek restoration and reconciliation:** (see forms for Excomm. & Readmit.)

\*\* Three conditions of the church, without which this is not possible. All the members:

1. Self-discipline

2. Mutual care and love for other members

3. Spirituality