

## Communion Meditation – Table Manners

2 Thess 3.10-15

*“Suspension from Lord’s Table”*

Apr 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017

### Church Government

- Jesus is the only Head of the Church (**Eph 1.22**)
  - “He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church.”
- Jesus has set up Church government with authority (**Mat 16.19**)
  - “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”
- Jesus has appointed officers in His government (**Eph 4.11-12**)
  - “He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry...”

### Church Officers Have Authority & Responsibility

- Responsible for administration of Christ’s Church (**1 Pet 5.1-4** – “charge”)
- Many duties
  - “Elders lead the church .. teach and preach the Word .. protect the church from false teachers .. exhort and admonish the saints in sound doctrine .. visit the sick and pray .. judge doctrinal issues .. maintain discipline.”

### Suspension from Sacraments a lesser form of Excommunication

- Elders have responsibility to maintain purity of the Church
  - Duty to individuals / Duty to body
- Examples of discipline
  - “preach .. teach .. reprove .. rebuke .. correct .. suspend .. excommunicate”
  - Discipline of excommunication
    - Read **1 Cor 5.1-2** ~ “It is actually .. from among you.”
  - Discipline of shunning
    - Read **2 Thes 3.14** ~ “And if anyone .. as a brother.”

### Example of Church Discipline

- **III: “Some Phases of Sexual Morality & Church Discipline in Colonial New England”** by Charles Francis Adams (son of JQA)
  - Read excerpt from next page

**God has established His Church with a government**

**The exercise of that government rests with the elders**

**Elders must exercise many duties of which discipline is one**

**The goals of discipline are always purity and unity of the fellowship**

*"Some Phases of Sexual Morality & Church Discipline in Colonial New England"*

by Charles Francis Adams (son of JQA)

January 26, 1723 ~ Lord's Day. In the afternoon, after a sermon on 1 Cor 5.5. James Penniman persisting in a course of idleness, drunkenness, and in neglect of the public worship, had the fearful sentence of excommunication pronounced upon him.

February 2, 1723 ~ Lord's Day. After the public service the Church being desired to stay voted – that Benjamin Neal, David Bass, and Joseph Neal Jr., members in full communion have discovered such a perverse spirit and been guilty of such disorderly behavior in the House and Worship of God that they deserve to be suspended from communion with us at the Lord's Table.

February 9, 1723 ~ Lord's Day evening. David Bass acknowledgeing his offensive behavior and promising to be more watchful for time to come, the brethren signified their consent that he be restored to the liberty of full communion.

March 1, 1723 ~ This day (being Sacrament day) Benjamin Neal and Joseph Neal, confessing their offensive behavior in the presence of the Brethren, were restored to the liberty of full communion.