



## **HONORING GOD IN LEADERSHIP, PART 1**

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- We honor God when we honor what God says to honor.
- We dishonor God when we dishonor what God says to honor.
- We especially dishonor God when we dishonor what he says to give double-honor.

## 1. We honor God when we honor the pastors/elders in our church as taught in Scripture, 5:17-19.

- (1 Timothy 5:17–18 ESV) Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.”
- A. The pastor/elder who rules well is to be considered worthy of double honor.
  - B. This double-honor means he is to be paid well and highly respected, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.
  - C. Those who obey this teaching honor God and those who disobey this teaching dishonor God.
  - D. The qualifier is those who rule or lead well.

### **WE MUST UNDERSTAND WHAT IT MEANS TO “RULE WELL”**

When we study the phrase “who rule well,” we learn that “rule well” speaks of men diligently leading with the authority that God has given by virtue of the office of pastor/elder. They rule by the standard and in a manner that is consistent with Scripture. The pastor who rules well leads his sheep by the authority of the word of God.

- (Romans 12:8b ESV) ... the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.
- E. The one who rules well is concerned first and foremost with pleasing Christ.
  - F. He knows that biblical imperatives—*not social norms, local culture, leadership style, church traditions or popular opinion*—are what matters.
  - G. Women are forbidden to rule/lead—neither by office nor by proxy through their husband.
- (1 Timothy 2:11–14 ESV) Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve; 14 and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.
  - (Genesis 3:17a ESV) And to Adam he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you.”
  - (1 Timothy 3:11a ESV) [*Leaders*] wives

likewise must be dignified, not slanderers.

- (Titus 2:3a ESV) Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine.

**Slanderer** – characterized by attacking the reputation of another. The Gk *διάβολος* [*diabolos*] means to be prone to slander, a false accuser. It is the same basic word used throughout the New Testament for devil. This person, by opposing the cause of God, may be said to act the part of the devil or to side with him.

## 2. The pastor/elder who leads well does so as a faithful undershepherd to Jesus Christ.

- (Ephesians 4:11 ESV) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers.
- A. The faithful undershepherd submits to the authority of Jesus Christ in leading his Church.
  - B. Jesus speaks to his Church through the faithful word preached by the pastor/teacher.
  - C. The corrective nature of biblical preaching and teaching often causes friction within the group.
- (2 Timothy 3:16, 4:2 ESV) All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. ... Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.
- D. The person who does not submit to the corrective nature of this teaching often attacks the honor of the preacher/teacher in an attempt to excuse or rationalize unbiblical, sinful behavior.
  - E. Obeying the instruction to give double honor is a matter of reverence for God, choosing to obey or disobey, honor or dishonor.

## 3. We honor God when we maintain and protect the honor of the pastor/elder leadership in the church as taught in Scripture, 5:19-21.

- (1 Timothy 5:19–22 ESV) Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. 20 As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. 21 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality. 22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.

## ■ THIS SECTION ACCOMPLISHES TWO PURPOSES:

By obeying these instructions we, as the body of Christ, the local church fellowship, are able to ...

**1) Maintain** honor in pastor/elder leadership by holding leaders accountable if they sin, and ...

**2) Protect** those in pastor/elder leadership by holding their accusers accountable.

## ■ BASIC INSTRUCTIONS FROM THIS TEXT ...

A. Any charge against a pastor/elder is to be rejected except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

**General Observation:** You will note here and the other Scriptures that the emphasis is on **evidence** and **witnesses**. Hearsay is **never** legitimate and **always** unbiblical, reckless and sinful in these matters.

B. The pastor/elder is to then be confronted with the evidence of the witnesses and given a chance to repent and confess sin. (*This is deduced from the statement "those who persist in sin" implying that the pastor/elder is been given the opportunity to change course and not continue in sin.*)

C. If a pastor/elder persists in sin, then he is to be rebuked in the presence of all with the purpose of bringing an attitude of reverence into the fellowship.

D. This pattern is to be followed without prejudging or partiality.

4. Here are more lessons we should learn from similar teaching in the Bible about the care we are to take before bringing charges against anyone.

A. Those who use "who rule well" as a loophole to justify their disobedience to the clear instruction of Scripture need to be warned of the possible dire consequences of their sin.

B. We need to stop rationalizing and justifying our sinful relational behavior and face the great damage done when we tell lies about others.

- (Proverbs 25:18 NLT) Telling lies about others is as harmful as **hitting them with an ax, wounding them with a sword, or shooting them with a sharp arrow.**

C. Accusing a person of wrongdoing is a very serious action in the eyes of God resulting in dire consequences for the malicious witness.

- (Deuteronomy 19:15–20 ESV) **A single witness shall not suffice** against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. **Only on the evidence of two**

**witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established.** 16 **If a malicious witness arises** to accuse a person of wrongdoing, 17 then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. 18 **The judges shall inquire diligently,** and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, 19 **then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.** 20 **And the rest shall hear and fear,** and shall **never again commit any such evil** among you.

## ■ BASIC INSTRUCTIONS FROM THIS TEXT ...

- A single witness is not enough.
- The charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.
- Both parties are to appear before the LORD.
- The judges are to inquire diligently.
- If someone accuses another falsely, then the accuser is to be deemed evil that needs to be purged from the group.
- As earlier we again have the example of establishing an attitude of reverence in the group.

## ■ GENERAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE SELF-DESTRUCTIVE NATURE OF MISHANDLING DISAGREEMENTS ...

- Accusations are often merely a pretext for vengeance and always sinful ignoring the teaching of Scripture.
- The person who accuses in defiance of biblical instruction is self-deceived and so darkened in his reasoning as to believe that he/she has a righteous cause and convinced his actions are just.
- This person has been overcome by evil.
  - (Romans 12:21 ESV) **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

5. We have very clear instructions as to what to do when someone sins against us.

- (Matthew 18:15–17 ESV) **If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone.** If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, **that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.** 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

## ■ BASIC INSTRUCTIONS FROM THIS TEXT ...

- You first need to approach the person one on one.
- You are to tell him his fault.
- If he listens, then you have restored the relationship.
- If he does not listen, then you are to take one or two others with you with the purpose of establishing the charge by the evidence of two or three witnesses.
- If he still refuses to listen, then you are to tell it to the church.
- If he refuses to listen to the church, then you are to regard him as an unbeliever.

## 6. We honor God as God when we trust him to do his part regarding sin and good works, 5:23-25.

- (1 Timothy 5:23–25 ESV) (No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.) 24 **The sins of some people** are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but **the sins of others** appear later. 25 **So also good works** are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

*(Paul advises Timothy to take wine for the sake of his health.)*

- A. God is the judge—some sins are obvious, other sins will become evident.
- B. The same for good works—some are obvious, all will eventually be revealed.

## 7. The Holy Spirit of God will produce **self-control** in our lives as we trust and obey him in our relationships within the body of Christ.

- **But the fruit of the Spirit is ... peace ... patience ... faithfulness ... self-control ...** (Galatians 5:22-23).

- A. We will overcome our desire for vengeance.
- B. We will be still and wait patiently for him, refraining from anger and avoiding evil.
  - (Psalm 37:6–8 ESV) He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday. 7 **Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; fret not yourself over the one who prospers in his way,** over the man who carries out evil devices! 8 **Refrain from anger,** and forsake wrath! **Fret not yourself; it tends only to evil.**

## C. We will not wage war like the world.

- (2 Corinthians 10:3–4 NIV) For though we live in the world, **we do not wage war as the world does.** 4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

## D. We will wait for the LORD and trust in his holy name.

- (Psalm 33:20–21 ESV) **Our soul waits for the LORD;** he is our help and our shield. 21 **For our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name.**

## E. We will wait patiently for the LORD and pray.

- (Psalm 40:1 ESV) **I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry.**

## F. We will wait in silence and understand that he alone is our rock and our salvation.

- (Psalm 62:1–2 ESV) **For God alone my soul waits in silence;** from him comes my salvation. 2 **He alone is my rock and my salvation,** my fortress; I shall not be greatly shaken.

## G. We will wait for the LORD and hope in his word.

- (Psalm 130:5–6 ESV) **I wait for the LORD,** my soul waits, **and in his word I hope;** 6 my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning.

## H. If we have sinned, we will repent and find rest.

- (Isaiah 30:15 ESV) For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, **“In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.” But you were unwilling.**

## I. We will not become noisemakers like those in the world but wait quietly and alone in silence for God to show himself as God.

- (Lamentations 3:26, 28 ESV) **It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.** 28 **Let him sit alone in silence when it is laid on him.**

## J. We will look to the LORD and wait on him knowing our God will hear us.

- (Micah 7:7 ESV) But as for me, **I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.**