

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
More About Elders
1 Timothy 5:17-25

Last time...the “widow” problem

- Who is a widow
- Who cares for widows

This time...further instruction regarding elders
We are in 1 Tim 5

v17-18 Elders = “presbyters”
overseers

that rule well...preside over the affairs and operations of the local church/congregation

are to be counted worthy...considered deserving

of double honor...value, respect, “money paid”

especially those who labor...toil, even to the point of exhaustion

in the Word and doctrine...studying the Word of God and teaching/instructing what God
says in His Word

Acts 6:1-4 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples *unto them*, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

2 Cor 1:24 Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for by faith ye stand.

2 Tim 2:15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

1 Peter 5:1-3 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed (John 21:15-17) the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over *God's* heritage, but being ensamples (of a Spirit-filled life governed by the Word of God) to the flock.

The Head of the Church is Jesus Christ
The Head of Calvary Ahwatukee is Jesus Christ
The flock of Calvary Ahwatukee belongs to Jesus Christ
I am part of the flock

My calling from the Lord as a pastor/teacher (Eph 4:11-14) to this flock is to

- labor in the Word and in doctrine
- help your joy
- feed you the Word of God
- be an example to you of a follower of Jesus
- point you to Jesus Christ, your Lord and mine
- serve the Lord and His people in this house of the Lord

It is a full-time labor

It is a calling, not a job or an occupation or a promotion-driven career,
for those are worldly concepts
It is a labor where not my will be done but the Lord's will be done

It is akin to the Levites in the Temple

- the Lord's servants in His house
- ministering to the spiritual needs of the people
- not given a land inheritance...the Lord was their inheritance
- material/physical needs provided for by the tithes and offerings of God's people

Num 18:20-31

For the Scripture, the Word of God, says

1. quoting Deut 25:4
2. quoting Jesus in Luke 10:7 (the laborer is deserving of his wages)

2 Tim 2:6 The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.
Jer 40:5 even seemingly "fruitless" Jeremiah, by God's instruments

I don't serve the Lord in the calling He has placed upon me for money or promotion
(greater and greater influence), I do it willingly because I love the Lord,
the Word of God, and God's people

If I were money or career motivated, I would have never embarked on this path!

I have embraced what the prophets and the Apostles embraced

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| 1 Sam 3:19 | And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. |
| Jer 42:4b | whatsoever thing the LORD shall answer you, I will declare <i>it</i> unto you; I will keep nothing back from you. |
| Acts 20:19-21 | Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews (unbelievers): <i>And</i> how I kept back nothing that was profitable <i>unto you</i> , but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. |
| Acts 20:27 | For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. |
| Gal 1:9-10 | As we said before, so say I now again, If any <i>man</i> preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. |

To not compromise the Word of God

To “Stay the course” on the “old paths” (Jer 6:16)

To preach and teach the Word of God, not my opinion or the doctrines of men and of demons

And I continue to learn some of the things which the Apostle Paul was inspired to write:

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| 2 Cor 11:26-28 | perils, weariness, painfulness/sadness, sleeplessness...
Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. |
| Phil 3:3 | radically different means, methods, motives, and metrics
than the world
no accomplishments or track record in the world matter
unlearn my collegiate education and professional training |

Phil 3:7-14

Phil 4:11-13

2 Cor 4:8-11

We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

Acts 23:11

And the night following the Lord stood by him, and said,
Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.

Discouragement from people and the world

Encouragement from the Lord (ala 1 Sam 30:6)

And I continue to learn both the heartache and the resolute steadfastness of Jeremiah

The issue is not how many people are standing with me, but am I faithfully standing with the Lord?

Ministry is not about pleasing people and popularity but being pleasing to the Lord and speaking His words

The Lord is my inheritance, He is my Provider

My calling is a full-time labor in the Church...and, in obedience to the Scripture, this Church is the vehicle whereby God provides for our material/physical needs

v19 Now, sometimes

1. when an elder, a pastor/teacher, studies the Word of God and feeds the flock what the Lord has given to him, God's words that are ear-tingling (convicting), not ear tickling,

John 16:8 *And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment*

as the Holy Spirit reveals and works out the sin in our hearts, to finish the good work He has begun in us to conform us into the image of Jesus Christ...which is the goodness of God that leads to repentance

1 Sam 3:11 And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

the calling of Samuel as God's prophet/judge

the raising up of a faithful priest that will do that which was in God's heart

the judgment upon the house of Eli the unfaithful HP

2 Kings 21:12 Therefore thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Behold, I *am* bringing *such* evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle.

for the sins of Manasseh, who was more wicked than the Amorites the shedding of innocent blood the Lord would not pardon

Jer 19:3 And say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah, and inhabitants of Jerusalem; Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Behold, I will bring evil (calamity) upon this place, the which whosoever heareth, his ears shall tingle.

thru the weeping prophet to a dying, unrepentant nation

2 Tim 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

Ear-tickling in our days, in the “beginning of sorrows”, perilous times in the Days of Noah and the Days of Lot when men are lovers of themselves and pleasures rather than lovers of God, covetous, proud, without natural affection, false accusers, despisers of those who are good (2 Tim 3:1-5)

- some feathers might get ruffled
 - a person comes to church to hear what they want to hear rather than what God says and is offended...and “strikes back” by saying something against the pastor (an accusation)
2. a younger sister comes forward against an elder with an accusation of an untoward advance or a claim of sexual harassment/offense/abuse... contrary to v2b
 3. some other circumstance/interaction such as has been true throughout the history of the Church but most certainly true in these days when
 - the Word of God is despised, compromised, diluted, discounted
 - political correctness has concealed or altered Truth
 - Woke-ness has resulted in an irrational level of hyper-sensitivity
 - lawsuits are filed at the drop of a hat (contrary to 1 Cor 6:1-8)

In such circumstances, do not receive/believe an accusation/complaint/criminal charge unless there are 2 or 3 witnesses...per God’s Law

Deut 19:15-20

The Church, the Family of God, is NOT to be like the world that is filled with gossip and slander and malice

This past Thursday, during a CBS/Paramount+ TV series "The Good Fight", a character claimed

- that he was sexually assaulted by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis
- to have DNA proof

only to confess later on in the show he was lying for political purposes.

btw...do slander laws still have any "teeth" these days?

Truth is established by 2 or 3 witnesses, not by 1 lone witness

If there is but one witness, set the accusation aside, not acted upon

Holding to God's Law will filter out nearly all false accusations and protect the innocent from slander, vengeance, and wicked malice

If there are 2 or 3 witnesses, the matter must be thoroughly investigated

If found to be a true accusation, it is NOT to be swept under the rug

If a civil crime has been committed, law enforcement authorities must be contacted and involved

- child abuse
- sexual offense
- murder (as in case in a megachurch last week)

If the accusation is found to be true OR if the accusation is found to be false, the sin by the offender or false accuser must be confronted in the Church so no evil be among the congregation

v20 Them...elders
that sin...been rightly, truthfully accused by 2 or 3 witnesses upon a thorough investigation
rebuke...admonish
before all...publicly in the congregation, as a deterrence to sin

Luke 12:48 and James 3:1

But the congregation is to labor and pray it never gets this far!

There is a Biblical process for confession and repentance of wrongs/sin

Matt 18:15-17

Luke 17:3 **Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.**

Matt 6:14-15 **For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

There is that in which we are to grow...grace

2 Peter 3:18

John 8:7 **He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.**

Deut 17:6-7 At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death (character assassination, reputation and ministry destroyed). The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So thou shalt put the evil away from among you.

Are elders/pastors perfect people?

Heaven's no!

They are works-in-progress just like everyone else

The legendary cellist Pablo Casals, regarded as the pre-eminent cellist in the 1st half of the 20th Century, was asked why he continued to practice at age 90.

He replied: "Because I think I'm making progress."

Prayerfully, so am I and each of us!

The Church is to be very slow and deliberate in investigating accusations in order to

- keep the congregation from malicious harm
- protect and preserve unity and peace in the Body

But to be slow and deliberate in investigating accusations, finding them to be truthful and NOT doing anything about also causes harm to the church

One of the reasons I stopped going to post-Chuck Smith pastors conferences was because a big name Calvary Chapel pastor was guilty of many and long-standing sinful relationships...and his buddies in leadership...my elders...just swept it under the rug, not even so much as publicly acknowledging it, much less publicly rebuking their friend

They protected their friend and not me and the rest of us pastors

I lost respect for and confidence in those men because...

- v21 I charge/exhort you before
1. God
 2. the Lord Jesus Christ
 3. the elect angels...ministering spirits sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation
- (this is VERY serious!!)

that you observe/do these things...relating to the elders (v17-20)

without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality...

- not giving preferential treatment
- not showing prejudice against anyone
- not playing favorites
- not violating the Royal Law (Love your neighbor as yourself) by having respect to persons and thereby committing sin (James 2:8-9)
- not misrepresenting God and thereby not being a good minister of Jesus Christ

Again...James 3:1

Therefore...

- v22 A. Lay hands suddenly on no man – do not anoint someone to quickly!
Ch 3:6, 10

The calling of leadership in the Church is NOT for

- spiritually immature
- rookies
- novices

no matter how worldly capable or famous they are

Church leadership have “targets” on them!

“Ruling well” requires spiritual maturity, which comes only by seasoning in times of trials, tribulations, and spiritual growth

- B. neither be a partaker of other men’s sins: keep yourself pure

Do not give in to or swayed by

- peer pressure
- the carnal inclination to play favorites
- “social media influencers”
- the American business model of church growth
- making a name or a brand for yourself
- “Coexist” ecumenicalism
- striving to be popular, seeking the praises, applause, and honor of men

v23 Some practical help/advice from a father in the faith to his son in the faith
 You frequently have stomach problems...it is because of the water
 Use a little wine medicinally to kill the bugs in the water

Practical advice

A little common sense

Oh, how this nation needs some common sense!

v24-25 Finally: let God be the judge

 We know a minute fraction of what God knows, so

1. trust God Who knows everything
2. walk with God by faith vs knowledge
3. leave the judging to the all-knowing God Who alone is qualified to judge..."stay in your lane, bro"

Heb 4:13 Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.

Jer 17:10 I the LORD search the heart, *I* try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and* according to the fruit of his doings.

Known beforehand:

- Some people's sins...they are obvious to all
- Some people's good works...also obvious to all

Known only by God and revealed later by Him at the time of judgment:

- All sins of all people
- All the good works of all people

Jesus said

Matt 10:26 there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Scripture says

Gal 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap...flesh/corruption or Spirit/life

The Law of sowing and reaping

- Reap what you sow
- Reap more than you sow
- Reap after your sow

1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Heb 6:10 For God *is* not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

Therefore, is the judgment of God better now or later?

If judgment is now: we have time to repent

1 Cor 11:31 if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.

2 Cor 13:5a Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves.

If judgment is later, it is the end of the matter...
it is too late for sin to be “undone”

Exhortation

As it relates to

- elders laboring in their calling in the Church
- the Church handling issues regarding elders
- walking in love with each other

v21

Knowing, believing, understanding, doing what God has said is VERY serious!!!

Reading the Word is VERY important

Studying the Word is VERY important

Rightly dividing the Word is VERY important!

Gathering for the teaching of sound doctrine is VERY important

Obeing the Word is VERY important!