

I Timothy 5, Sermon #6

Take your Bibles and let us **return** to I Timothy 5

We have some major things to get into this year – and we are going to start this morning

Theme of I Timothy is Sound Doctrine for Church Behavior

Chapter 5: Sound doctrine for special groups in the church.

1. General treatment of everyone in the church, 5:1-2 – family-oriented –
older men – father; older women – mother; younger women – sisters;
younger men – brothers
2. Widows of the church (vs. 3-16) – those in need – four sermons

We come to verse 17. We start on another group called the elders.

The instructions in this section deal primarily with how we treat our elders.

I'm not talking about old men – I'm talking about the spiritual leaders of the church.

Now what is interesting is that this is the time of the year at our church when we
nominate deacons and elders.

Pray for God's direction on our elders/deacons.

We are also sending an elder and his family from our church to pastor a local church in
Burrton in seven days.

God has given special instructions regarding our responsibility (treatment) of elders.

I've entitled this series "The Elders and the Church"

I Timothy 5:17

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

I Timothy 5:17-25

Let us pray.

You may be seated.

The Elders and the Church

Verse 17-18 – The church providing a living for elders (financial remuneration)

Verse 19-21 – We have the matter of disciplining elders. Sometimes the church has to do that.

Verse 22-25 – God discusses appointing elders and right in the middle of this section, he writes a personal note to Pastor Timothy on his illness, sickness.

So, God counseled Timothy in his relationship to the elders by discussing three topics:

- I. Providing for the Elders
- II. Disciplining Elders
- III. Selecting and Appointing Elders

Vs. 17 says, “let the elders”

What is an elder? There are three terms used in the New Testament synonymously.

1. Elder
2. Bishop
3. Shepherd

The term “shepherd” emphasizes their pastoring or feeding function; “bishop” their overseeing, authority, and leading function; and “elder” refers to their spiritual maturity.

Three Greek terms and five English terms: elder, bishop, overseer, shepherd, and pastor

Those five words refer to the same individual who is a leader in the church.

Turn to Acts 20:17, 28 – all three terms

I Peter 5:1-2 uses all three terms.

What is strange is the unbiblical forms of government found in churches today.

Elders are those men who have spiritual oversight in our assembly.

This is vitally important to the church

From your nominations, we will examine the candidates and if approved, we will post their names.

Once this is done, if you have any Biblical reason that they would not be qualified, we need to know

At MCBC we currently have six elders which include three fully paid pastors.

Are pastors, elders? Yes.

Are elders, pastors? Yes.

Pastoring is what an elder does.

Are they bishops?

That means you have six bishops at Medora – Bishop Dean

I. Is there distinction amongst our six elders? Yes there is. Three have fulltime jobs—Dean, pharmacist; Joe, finances; Travis, Dillons Warehouse
And three work fulltime here—Pastor Dan oversees children’s ministries and college & career; Pastor Ron oversees youth department and soul winning—and myself

You can also see this distinctive in vs. 17 of I Timothy 5.

God gives two qualifications that mark **elders** as **worthy of double honor**.

First, those that **rule well**.

They have the oversight of the church (I Peter 5:2), and are to care for it (3:5).

Because they are in authority

I Thessalonians 5:12, *“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you”*

They have a great responsibility

Hebrews 13:17, *“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.”*

When an elder works in, he should be compensated accordingly.

The word “well” means “with excellence.”

God further describes such men as **those who work hard at preaching and teaching.**

Vs. 17 – **Especially** means “chiefly,” or “particularly.”

The assumption is that some elders will not be able to work as hard at **preaching and teaching** as others.

Why? Some are more gifted toward that, plus, some have totally dedicated their life to it

Verse 17, the primary responsibility is to rule.

Then, out of this pool, it says especially out of this pool, who labor in the Word/doctrine, verbal/communication.

Can a man do both? Yes, he can rule and labor in the Word

Those who rule and especially those who work in the Word in feeding the sheep are worthy of what? double honor

This speaks of giving proper honor to those elders who serve faithfully in the church (I Thess. 5:12-13).

“Double honor”, vs. 17 – honor (5:3) – it means “respect” but it also can be translated “generous pay.”

The word honor is used as in “honorarium.”

Proverbs 3:9 says, *“Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase”*

This is more than just respect and encouraging words – financial payment

The Apostle Paul himself gladly received support from churches
 In response to the generosity of the Philippians, he wrote Philippians 4:10-20

While all **elders** are to be honored, God points out some as being **worthy of double honor**.

God is not saying they should receive twice the pay
 Rather, they should receive ample, generous remuneration and respect beyond that of
 other elders whose labors are not as significant.

Now, verse 18 pictures this for us – vs. 18

Verse 18 makes it clear that it is referring to financial living.

Deuteronomy 25:4, “Don’t muzzle the ox that treads out the corn.”

This referred to the farmer who had an ox who was pulling one of the sleds that went
 round and round and ground up the corn

Now when the ox is working, don’t muzzle the ox.
 If he was muzzled, he couldn’t what? Eat.
 And God was saying / let him eat while he works.
 God required / that animals who worked / were to be fed.

How much more would He want faithful pastors, who provide spiritual food to their
 flocks, to be provided for?

When God says this, He is not referring so much to an ox. I Corinthians 9:9 – No
 The ox was not the major principle.
 It was written for us, I Corinthians 9:10-11, 13-14

I Corinthians 9:13 is the most extensive passage in the New Testament on the churches
 financial responsibilities to its ministers.

The point is that when a man labors in any realm, he ought to be able to benefit/partake of some of his labor.

Look back to I Timothy 5, verse 18

Then God quotes Luke. By the way, Luke is quoted on the same par as Deuteronomy. What does that teach us? Luke is recognized as scripture on the same level as Deuteronomy.

Here is a case of one New Testament writer affirming the inspiration of another Peter spoke of Paul's writings like this in II Peter 3:15-16

The early church recognized the authority of the New Testament Scriptures even before their writer had died.

This verse and I Corinthians 11:24 are the only times Paul quotes from the gospels. And it says the laborer is worthy of his reward – pay, hire, wages – Luke 10:7.

Now listen, men who work in the ministry ought to always be ready and willing to give the Gospel/ministry without charge.

The responsibility of being concerned for the financing of leaders belongs to the church.

The man of God should be willing to do and go anywhere and stay irregardless to finances.

Now, some of today's preachers are unbalanced.

They want to know first of all what their salary is going to be, what the benefits are, and what is required of me

A pastor for God does not concern himself with these things only with what God is calling him to do.

Men, if God wants you in a place, He will provide your needs and sometimes that means you will work outside the church.

If I didn't believe God called me to Medora, I would have left a long time ago.
And after I became Pastor here, I worked another five years as a Bible teacher for
Central Christian and seven years for T.S.W.

I told the Board at MCBC that I would preach for nothing. – I just wanted an opportunity
to get into the ministry.

God's man will preach and work for nothing. He will.

★Those whose ministry demands all their attention should be freed from any need to
earn a living and be cared for and even rewarded for their singular devotion to
the flock

Keep that balance.

I. Providing for the Elder

II. In verse 19-21, instruction is given here about disciplining elders.

Church discipline usually goes to one of two extremes.

Either there is no discipline at all, and the church languishes because of disobedience
and sin, or the pastors are run out of churches for false accusations or minor
failures

It is sad when a church member must be disciplined, but it is even sadder when a
spiritual leader fails and must be disciplined; for leaders, when they fall, have a
way of affecting others.

Elders are subject to all human temptation just like any other people.

Now there are three matters that must be taken into consideration.

First, elders must be protected from accusation, in vs. 19a.

There are always people eager to falsely accuse a man of God.

They may do so because they reject his teaching, resist Biblical authority, or are jealous.

Such false accusations are one of Satan's greatest tools in dividing and destroying churches

Throughout the Bible, we see Godly men falsely accused—Joseph, Moses, David, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, Paul

There are plenty of hateful people whose aim is to hurt.

Let's say in our church someone accused one of our elders of sin.

Our first responsibility should be, are there any other witnesses to this?

The Bible says in verse 19 – against an elder receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses.

Don't ever make an accusation against an elder unless it is before two or three witnesses.

Deuteronomy 19:15, Matthew 18:16, and II Corinthians 13:1 – In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established

What if there are no witnesses and the accuser insists he is right?

What would be the Scriptural thing for us to tell him to do? You go to the elder himself.

What if there are two or three witnesses?

Then that is something the officials of the church would have to investigate.

Then give proper discipline.

But, an elder is to be shielded from false accusations.

How many churches are ruined or at least stunted because of people who make –
speak regarding an elder, pastor, preacher with no regard to what they're saying
or passing along?

I'm going to tell you something.

We need to be very careful in our speech when it comes to God's leaders.

Idle words are dangerous and they are especially dangerous – when they are against
God's spiritual leaders.

Elisha, the man of God, was traveling to Bethel

There came forth youths out of the city and mocked him and they called him "Baldy,
Baldy" – irreverence

Two bears came out of the woods and tore up 42 kids.

It is sad when churches disobey the Word and listen to rumors, lies, and gossip.

Many a Godly pastor has been defeated in his life and ministry in this way, and some
have even resigned from the ministry.

If this procedure were observed it would cut down a great deal on the gossip and
misunderstanding and the strife that goes on in our churches today.

God says that the pastor and every member of the church should refuse to let anyone
whisper into his ear any gossip about the elders.

People should be able to prove their accusations before witnesses.

The important thing is that we should have the facts before we talk.

And if we have the facts, rather than scatter the scandal abroad, we should seek to
correct the problem by going to the proper authorities.

Why is God concerned to shield the elders?

There is a reason. As a spiritual leader, he is in a position of putting pressure on
people.

Sometimes people don't like authority.

Rebuke, censure, admonish – they decide to run him out of town

God wants to shield his man from that abuse within the walls of the church.

Elders are constant objects and targets of Satan's attacks

It's hot and there is a lot of heat where the cooking is going on.

It is that way in the ministry.

Leaders are subject to scrutiny and rocks being thrown at them

The elder needs to be protected from false allegations.

So, first of all, unsubstantiated allegations are to be rejected.

Vs. 19 – **Receive not** an accusation means “to entertain,” or “to consider in your mind.”

Such allegations are not to be entertained

The simple act of turning a deaf ear to them is one of the best ways of protecting elders.

Reasonable protection from accusation does not imply immunity

Second, Paul gives the conditions under which an accusation against an elder is to be taken seriously.

The church is not to do so **except on the basis of two or three** witnesses.

The accusation may yet prove false, but it must at least be investigated.

The intent of having **two or three witnesses** is to provide confirmation.

Now what if the elder is found guilty of sin?

How should an elder be treated if an accusation of sin is found to be true?

When God affords special privileges – ruling, preaching/teaching, leading – and protection, at the same time, God always see to it special jeopardy, if the privileges are transgressed.

Come back next Sunday, and we will see what should happen when the allegations are true and then how we should handle them as a church

Pray for our church leadership. They are a target.

Let us stand for closing invitation – every head bowed, eyes closed

I. Calvin said – for what could be more unkind than to have no care for those who have the care of the whole church?

II. In our sinful hearts, we all love to hear rumors and scandals.

We should silence them whenever we hear them, because they are destructive and harmful to individual people and to the life of a community

Good people have been ruined by unfounded accusations, and we should never allow this to happen in the Christian community

Proverbs says, *“The words of a talebearer are as wounds and they go down into the innermost parts”* Proverbs 18:8.

Are we shielding false accusations?

Or, are we entertaining rumors and slander?

III. Are you part of the flock of God? Church?

There is only one door a person can enter that allows them to be a part of God’s Church

That door, that entrance way, is Jesus Christ

Jesus said, “I am the door, by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.”

See, Jesus gave His life for His flock – He is a good shepherd and a good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

He did that on the Cross – shedding His own blood to pay the wages of our sin and wickedness

He died and rose again and now is the door

Will you enter into God’s Kingdom this morning?