

WORTHY OF DOUBLE HONOR

1 Timothy 5:17-6:2

When we visit SLC, sometimes they ask me to speak on a passage others prefer to pass to someone else.

Today we're considering a passage *I'd* prefer to assign to a guest speaker. It sounds better coming from somebody else!

This week we attended a Lakeland C. E. Ministries pastors' breakfast.

Speaker reminded us of God's word to Jeremiah (26:2):

*"Tell them everything I command you; **do not omit a word.**"*

So, I'm stuck!

I'm obligated to proclaim *everything* God includes in this passage. I can't leave out a word!

This IS an important message.

I just don't enjoy being the one to talk about it.

I'd rather let somebody else do it!

Paul instructs Timothy, his young co-worker, how to carry out ministry as a faithful minister of Christ.

OUR DUTY TOWARD OTHERS 5:1-6:2

RESPECT FOR OTHERS IN GENERAL 5:1-2

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD WIDOWS 5:3-16

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD ELDERS 5:17-25

Kent Hughes reflects on visit to **cemetery** where numerous great leaders are buried. Grave of Greek scholar A. T. Robertson deliberately buried in the shadow of John Broadus. "What I will remember more than the juxtaposition of tombstones is how crucial *leadership* is to the Christian enterprise. Careful examination of any Christian institution or church will bear this out, regardless of its size or prominence."

You don't have to know a lot about the history of PVBC to know that's true. Ivan French and Les Lofquist have left their mark!

As have other leaders of the past. Not just pastors!

Leaders make a difference!

That's why God is concerned about WHO is named to lead His church!

And He's concerned how the church treats those HE places in authority.

Elders are chosen by God

and should be treated with appropriate respect.

Entry prerequisites are high.

Elders must be affirmed by godly testimony to qualify.

=> They ought to receive appropriate respect and submission.

PAYMENT OF ELDERS 5:17-18 *The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.*¹⁸ *For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."*

Last week we considered the church's care for widows.

We're told to "*honor*" them—Several thoughts combined in one:

=> to value, respect, care for, support materially

All these ideas are included in the word "*honor*."

Same word is used in reference to elders.

Elders who rule well are worthy of double honor.

Ironside: “Those qualified to lead the people of God... who have the responsibility of shepherding the flock of Christ should never be treated rudely or looked on with contempt.... Those God honors should be honored by us.”

“Where God’s servants are recognized as His representatives, and their ministry properly valued... blessing will result for the whole church. Where a spirit of independence and insubordination prevails, and believers look with indifference or even contempt on those appointed by God to have the rule over them... the results are likely to be most disastrous.... Where a spirit of individualism prevails, we’re inclined to undervalue God’s servants and treat them somewhat as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram sought to treat Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.... They failed to recognize that God Himself appoints and qualifies leaders or shepherds over His flock. ”

Idea of “double honor” is probably derived

from the “double” portion of the family inheritance.

Oldest son receives a special portion of the inheritance.

He assumes position of respect as leader of the family.

Those who lead God’s people receive recognition from God’s people.

v. 17 is clarified by v. 18

Two biblical precedents:

Evidence from nature –O.T. Law–

Deut. 25:4

Ox must eat from fruit of field it’s working.

1 Co. 9:7-12: *“Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and doesn’t eat of its grapes? Who tends a flock and doesn’t drink of the milk? Do I say this merely from a human*

point of view? Doesn't the Law say the same? For it's written in the Law of Moses: "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain." Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely He says this for us, doesn't He? Yes, it was written for us, because when the plowman plows and the thresher threshes, they ought to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you?

2nd biblical precedent:

Evidence from labor –N.T. –Jesus– Luke 10:7

Jesus instructs followers to take food the people provide as they travel representing Him, because . . .

A worker deserves to be paid.

Principle: those who work for God deserve to be paid by God's people.

When people provide for their needs, they acknowledge: Jesus' followers are sent by God.

So, in the church, those who serve God's people deserve to be paid by God's people.

They should be recompensed appropriately.

ACCUSATIONS AGAINST ELDERS 19-21

The greater one's responsibility, the more careful he should be as to his personal character and behavior.

Not all leaders are characterized by hard work and integrity.

Some lack integrity.

5:19-21 *Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it's brought by 2 or 3 witnesses.²⁰ Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that others may take warning.²¹ I charge you, in the*

sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and do nothing out of favoritism.

Accusations against recognized elders should not even be heard, unless there are 2 or 3 witnesses.

This requirement also is established in O.T. law (Deut. 19:15); reconfirmed in N.T. by Jesus (Matt. 18:15-17) to His followers

Entry prerequisites are high.

Elders must be affirmed by godly testimony to qualify.

Established testimony shouldn't be questioned without clear basis.

They must be men of respect to qualify.

Their position shouldn't be damaged by rumors.

Mere suggestion of a rumor can poison ministry of a godly leader.

We should never allow rumors to get started!

Moody: "A lie gets half way around the world before truth gets its boots on to pursue it."

Calvin: "As soon as any charge is made against ministers of the Word, it is believed as surely and firmly as if it had been proved.... Satan makes people... overcredulous so that... they condemn their pastors whose good name they ought to be defending."

Ironside: "It's sad when people thoughtlessly and often willfully spread evil stories about a servant of Christ without ever making any investigation and when others give heed to these without seeking corroboration. It's sadder still if anyone brings a charge

of misconduct against an elder unless the charge is substantiated by other witnesses.”

Wiersbe: “Many a godly pastor has been defeated by rumors, lies, and gossip.... ‘Where there’s smoke, there’s fire’ may be a good slogan for a volunteer fire department, but it doesn’t apply to churches. ‘Where there’s smoke, there’s fire’ could mean that somebody’s tongue has been ‘set on fire of hell!’ (James 3:6).” The remedy? Never listen to gossip or any accusation, if it’s only based on the word of one person, unless it’s substantiated by 2 or 3 responsible people.

Even then accusations must be supported by evidence.

When sin is discovered,
there should be severe disciplinary action
as warning to others about consequences of sin.

This isn’t talking about anytime a leader commits a sin.

Otherwise everyone would have to confess publicly daily.

Paul’s words refer to a person characterized by sin.

It becomes a continual mark on their life.

That person’s sin should be exposed before all.

Scripture presents **two main reasons for discipline:**

To RESTORE the person who has fallen away.

To WARN others about the consequences of sin.

When a person repents and is restored, they’re to be forgiven.

Their sin is to be mentioned no more.

It will continue to affect credibility as a leader, perhaps for years.

But the church should forgive them and move on!

Nothing should be done out of deference to favored few.

It doesn't matter how popular the leader may be,
Or how wealthy, influential, or dynamic he may be,
flagrant, continual sin must be dealt with!

We must handle it faithfully for God's approval,
and for the blessing of the entire church.

Our response is observed by ...

... God, the Judge of all the earth

... Christ, the coming Judge

... Angels, who carry out the righteous judgments of God.

*Are we faithful in representing the righteousness of God,
to faithfully carry out His judgment, without partiality?*

*Do we deal with sin in a way that faithfully balances God's
judgment with His grace and forgiveness?*

ORDINATION OF ELDERS 5:22-25 *Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.²³ Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.²⁴ The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them.²⁵ In the same way, good deeds are obvious; even those that aren't can't be hidden.*

Distasteful task of disciplining leaders gone astray,
should motivate us to exercise care in selecting leaders.

**Because of the high standards required of elders,
they should NOT be chosen quickly. **22a****

Sometimes, pressed by the urgency of finding somebody,
we're inclined to accept the first willing candidate;

we're tempted to accept successful leaders, dynamic businessmen.

It's better to leave a position vacant than grab the wrong person.

It's better to give it time—be sure what you're getting,
than to move quickly and later find out
someone's not marked by godly character.

That can happen after waiting a long time also, but at least
then we've fulfilled our obligation to check it out.

When we identify with someone unworthy of confidence, we identify with them in their failure.

Learn from the warning: Keep yourself pure. 22b

Parenthesis: Take care of your health. 23

Seems to flow from warning to keep yourself pure.

In that desire, Timothy is reluctant to drink anything but water.

Appears to derive from legalistic response, pressured by
false teachers who forbid certain food and drink.

So Timothy sticks to water => and suffers dysentery.

Parenthetical encouragement to drink a bit of medicinal wine
for digestive disturbances—*NOT* an encouragement to
drinking!

Certainly contains an implied warning against legalism.

“Keep yourself pure, but don't adopt the asceticism of
legalists.”

Then he **picks up previous theme**: Selection of leaders

Sin can be hidden long time before it comes to light

=> 24-25

A godly man who mentored me years ago used to say:

“Only difference between drunk lying in gutter and me: his sin shows!”

Some people’s sin is immediately visible.

Other people are clever enough to keep it well hidden.

It may take a long time before we see it.

We must be discerning in selecting leaders!

Allow adequate time for people to prove themselves before placing them in a position of authority.

We might not observe their sin immediately;

We might not observe their good deeds immediately,
but eventually they DO become apparent.

Eventually people will find out.

If we rush to install leaders,

when people discover bad fruit, they’ll be disillusioned.

WAIT! Give it time. Let a leader prove himself first.

When the nature of a person’s work becomes evident,

then we identify with him; call him to lead God’s people

OUR RESPONSIBILITY TOWARD SLAVES 6:1-2

Timothy is also to instruct slaves.

It’s estimated that ½ the population was slaves.

The culture of slavery affected everyone.

Many of God’s people were slaves; some were slave owners.

Paul instructs those who serve as slaves.

3rd group identified as worthy of “HONOR” . . .

Slaves instructed to “value” their masters:

Honor them. Respect them. Give them their due.

Respect for masters 6:1 *All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God’s name and our teaching may not be slandered.*

**We maintain a good testimony
by our respect for our masters.**

Paul leads no movement to campaign against slavery.

He accepts reality that they live within that system.

Those subject to slavery are to respect their masters.

**If God’s people don’t respect their master,
it gives God a bad reputation.**

He’s known on earth by the way His people act.

If God’s people are lazy, or

“so heavenly minded they’re no earthly good,”

God gets a bad reputation!

God’s people ought to be the best workers out there!

If God’s people are critical of their *pagan* boss

and fail to respect him or her,

God gets a bad reputation!

Paul tells Christian employees to “adorn the gospel”

by their attitude and work ethic before their pagan boss.

Value them; treat them with respect; give them what they deserve.

God’s people demonstrate submission to *His* authority by submitting to people He gives authority over them.

That’s true in our relationship to Christian owners also.

Respect due to Christian masters 6:2 *Those who have believing masters aren't to show less respect for them because they're brothers. Instead, they're to serve them even better, because those who benefit from their service are believers, and dear to them. These are the things you're to teach and urge on them.*

If we should value an *unbelieving* master,
we should value a *believing* master even more!

God's work in our life should be even more evident

in our relationship with a Christian master.

God's work should be evident in owner's treatment of his servant.

It should also be evident in a servant's treatment of his owner.

Christian bosses who won't hire Christian employees.

Employees want to be treated like Christians; don't want to act like it!

They don't want to be responsible to the boss.

"What're you going to do? Fire me? Take me to court? You can't do that!"

We should respect and serve a Christian master better, because he's a brother in Christ.

While our circumstances are different,
we're still called to be faithful to those over us.

In our work, Christians should have a reputation for excellence. That's no less true when our boss is our brother!

IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR LIVES:

Respect leaders.

Refuse to accuse leaders.

Keep yourself pure.

Serve your boss faithfully and wholeheartedly.