

# ELDERS AND DEACONS

## ***1<sup>ST</sup> PETER 5:1-4***

***THE ELDERS WHO ARE AMONG YOU I EXHORT, I WHO AM A FELLOW ELDER AND A WITNESS OF THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST, AND ALSO A PARTAKER OF THE GLORY THAT WILL BE REVEALED: <sup>2</sup> SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD WHICH IS AMONG YOU, SERVING AS OVERSEERS, NOT BY COMPULSION BUT <sup>[A]</sup>WILLINGLY, NOT FOR DISHONEST GAIN BUT EAGERLY; <sup>3</sup> NOR AS BEING <sup>[B]</sup>LORDS OVER THOSE ENTRUSTED TO YOU, BUT BEING EXAMPLES TO THE FLOCK; <sup>4</sup> AND WHEN THE CHIEF SHEPHERD APPEARS, YOU WILL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF GLORY THAT DOES NOT FADE AWAY.***

1<sup>ST</sup> PETER CHAPTER 5 IS THE FINAL CHAPTER IN PETERS FIRST EPISTLE TO CHURCHES SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE ROMAN EMPIRE THAT WERE FACING EXTREME PERSECUTION.

HIS INTENTION WAS TO BUILD UPON THE FOUNDATION THAT THE APOSTLE PAUL MOST LIKELY LAID DURING HIS TRAVELS THROUGHOUT THAT AREA, AS WELL AS ENCOURAGE THEM THROUGH A TIME SO DIFFICULT WE CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO IMAGINE.

AS HE ENDS THIS LETTER, HE SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSES THE ELDERS OF THESE CHURCHES.

HE SAYS “***SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD WHICH IS AMONG YOU, SERVING AS OVERSEERS, NOT BY COMPULSION BUT <sup>[A]</sup>WILLINGLY***”

THIS REITERATES WHAT PAUL SAYS IN 1<sup>ST</sup> TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3.

HE WHO DESIRES THE POSITION OF BISHOP DESIRES A GOOD THING.

THIS ISN'T A POSITION THAT ANYONE SHOULD EVER ENTER INTO BEGRUDGINGLY.

I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT THAT MEN UNDERSTAND FIRST WHAT THEY ARE ACTUALLY GETTING THEMSELVES INTO AS WELL AS THE TRUE IMPORTANCE OF THIS POSITION.

**MEN THAT ARE CALLED TO BE ELDERS ARE CALLED TO SET THE EXAMPLE FOR GOD'S CHURCH.**

**AND IT'S HARD TO SET A GOOD EXAMPLE IF YOU ARE FORCING YOURSELF TO DO SOMETHING YOU REALLY DON'T WANT TO DO.**

**BECAUSE EVENTUALLY WHAT WILL HAPPEN IS YOU WILL BEGIN TO RESENT THE MINISTRY AND WORST OF ALL YOU WILL START TO RESENT THE VERY PEOPLE YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO KEEP WATCH OVER.**

**AND WHEN THAT HAPPENS EVERYTHING FALLS APART.**

**PETER GOES ONTO SAY YOU SHOULDN'T DO IT FOR DISHONEST GAIN.**

**THAT MEANS SEVERAL DIFFERENT THINGS...**

**FIRST YOUR MOTIVATION BEHIND MINISTRY SHOULD NEVER BE ABOUT FINANCIAL GAIN.**

**I'M SURE MANY OF YOU REMEMBER THE TELEVANGELISTS THAT BECAME NOT ONLY EXTREMELY POPULAR IN THE 90'S BUT MANY OF THEM BECAME VERY WEALTHY.**

**ALL I HAVE TO SAY ABOUT THAT IS WOULD HATE TO STAND BEFORE A RIGHTEOUS GOD KNOWING THAT I HAD WILLINGLY EXTORTED INNOCENT PEOPLE BY USING HIS NAME.**

**THE CONDEMNATION THAT ACCOMPANIES THAT I WOULD HAVE TO IMAGINE IS EXTREMELY PAINFUL.**

**TAKING PEOPLE'S MONEY TO BUILD A MANSION AND OWN PRIVATE JETS AND LIVE A LIFE OF LUXURY ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD IS ONE OF THE MOST DESPICABLE THINGS I CAN THINK OF.**

**WHEN YOU GIVE TO THE MINISTRY THAT'S GOOD AND PLEASING TO THE LORD.**

**WE ARE CALLED TO SUPPORT MINISTRY.**

**BUT I WOULD CAUTION EVERYONE AGAINST GIVING TO ANY MINISTRY THAT YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE THE MONEY IS GOING AND HOW THEY ARE USING IT.**

**REBECCA AND I SEVERAL YEARS BACK SPONSORED A CHILD AFTER A CHRISTIAN CONCERT.**

**AT FIRST EVERYTHING SEEMED LEGIT, WE GOT A LETTER AND A PICTURE THEN A FEW MONTHS LATER WE GOT ANOTHER PICTURE.**

**THIS CONTINUED FOR A WHILE UNTIL ONE DAY WE STOPPED RECEIVING CORRESPONDENCE AND INFORMATION ABOUT OUR SPONSORED CHILD.**

**SO WE REACHED OUT, ALL OF SUDDEN WE GET A NEW PICTURE AND A LETTER, ONLY THE PICTURE WAS DIFFERENT CHILD.**

**SO WE STARTED DOING A LITTLE RESEARCH AND CAME TO FIND OUT THE ORGANIZATION THAT WE WERE SENDING MONEY TO HAD TIES TO ISIS AS WELL AS OTHER TERRORIST GROUPS.**

**I TELL YOU GUYS THIS NOT DISCOURAGE YOU FROM GIVING BUT TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS YOU ARE SUPPORTING.**

***1<sup>ST</sup> PETER 5:3***

***<sup>3</sup> NOR AS BEING [B] LORDS OVER THOSE ENTRUSTED TO YOU, BUT BEING EXAMPLES TO THE FLOCK;***

**THIS IS WHY MULTIPLE ELDERS IS SO IMPORTANT, SO THAT THE PASTOR DOESN'T HAVE ALL THE CONTROL.**

**WHEN THAT HAPPENS THERE IS NO ACCOUNTABILITY AND ULTIMATELY THAT CAN BECOME A HUGE PROBLEM.**

**I'M SURE WITH VERY LITTLE IMAGINATION YOU COULD QUICKLY THINK OF SEVERAL REASONS THAT IS AN ISSUE.**

**PETER ALSO SAYS THOSE ENTRUSTED TO YOU.**

THIS IS WHY CHURCH MEMBERSHIP IS IMPORTANT.

SO MANY PEOPLE SAY THAT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP ISN'T BIBLICAL.

IF THAT'S THE CASE WHAT DO WE DO WITH VERSES LIKE THIS?

HOW ARE PEOPLE ENTRUSTED TO US AS LEADERS IF THEY DON'T BECOME PART OF THE BODY THAT WE HAVE BEEN APPOINTED TO LEAD.

I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT WE TRULY UNDERSTAND THIS VERSE AND THE IMPLICATIONS IT HAS ON THE CHURCH.

WHILE OUTREACH IS VERY IMPORTANT ONE OF THE MAIN DUTIES OF CHURCH LEADERS IS TO MINISTER TO THEIR CHURCH.

WE EQUIP YOU GUYS WITH THE KNOWLEDGE TO GO OUT AND EVANGELIZE.

***1<sup>ST</sup> PETER 5:3***

***3 NOR AS BEING <sup>[B]</sup>LORDS OVER THOSE ENTRUSTED TO YOU, BUT BEING EXAMPLES TO THE FLOCK;***

NOT TO BE REDUNDANT BUT ELDERS MUST SET THE EXAMPLE, IN ALL THINGS.

FROM HOW WE CONDUCT OURSELVES IN PUBLIC TO HOW WE TREAT OUR FELLOW BELIEVERS.

HOW WE PARENT AND HOW WE LEAD OUR WIVES.

HOW WE SERVE AND HOW WE MINISTER TO EACH OTHER.

AGAIN PERFECTION ISN'T EXPECTED BUT THE STANDARDS ARE EXTREMELY HIGH AND THE CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILING TO MEET THOSE STANDARDS ARE SERIOUS.

NOW WE WILL MOVE ON TO DEACONS, AND THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THE DEACONS ARE SIMILAR AS THOSE FOR THE ELDERS BUT THEY AREN'T EXACTLY THE SAME.

**1<sup>ST</sup> TIMOTHY 3:8-13**

***8 DEACONS LIKEWISE MUST BE DIGNIFIED, NOT <sup>[b]</sup>DOUBLE-TONGUED, NOT INDULGING IN MUCH WINE, NOT FOND OF DISHONEST GAIN, 9 BUT HOLDING TO THE MYSTERY OF THE FAITH WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE. 10 AND THESE MEN MUST ALSO FIRST BE TESTED; THEN LET THEM SERVE AS DEACONS IF THEY ARE BEYOND REPROACH.***

***11 WOMEN MUST LIKEWISE BE DIGNIFIED, NOT MALICIOUS GOSSIPS, BUT TEMPERATE, FAITHFUL IN ALL THINGS. 12 DEACONS MUST BE HUSBANDS OF ONLY ONE WIFE, LEADING THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR OWN HOUSEHOLDS WELL. 13 FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED WELL AS DEACONS OBTAIN FOR THEMSELVES A HIGH STANDING AND GREAT BOLDNESS IN THE FAITH THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.***

FIRST LET'S TALK ABOUT THE WORD DEACON AND WHAT IT MEANS.

IN THE GREEK IT IS- **DIAKONOUS** WHICH MEANS: AN ATTENDANT, I.E. A WAITER.

AND WHAT DO WE CALL WAITERS?

SERVERS...

A DEACON IS SOMEONE THAT HOLDS A POSITION IN THE CHURCH IN A SPECIFIC AREA OF SERVICE.

NOW DOES THAT MEAN THAT YOU HAVE TO BE A DEACON TO SERVE?

OF COURSE NOT, WE ARE CALLED TO SERVE THE CHURCH AND EACH OTHER.

BUT A DEACON LIKE AN ELDER IS SOMEONE WHOSE BEHAVIOR OR FAILURE TO MEET THE QUALIFICATIONS SET FORTH BY THE WORD OF GOD CAN BE REMOVED FROM THEIR POSITION AS DEACON.

WE HAVE MANY MEN THAT SERVE IN MANY DIFFERENT CAPACITIES WITHIN OUR CHURCH BUT IN ORDER FOR THEM TO BE CONSIDERED A DEACON WE MUST EVALUATE THEIR LIFE AND MAKE SURE THEY MEET THE QUALIFICATIONS WE SEE HERE.

THERE WILL BE AN EXPECTATION THAT DEACONS WILL SERVE IN SOME AREA OF THE CHURCH.

FOR A CHURCH TO TRULY THRIVE IT TAKES EVERY MEMBER OF THE BODY WORKING TOGETHER.

WE DON'T NEED ONE PERSON DOING EVERYTHING.

THAT LEADS TO BURNOUT WHICH LEADS TO RESENTMENT.

AS WE CONTINUE ON IN VS 8 PAUL SAYS “***<sup>8</sup> DEACONS LIKEWISE MUST BE DIGNIFIED***”

THE WORD USED IN THE GREEK FOR DIGNIFIED IS: **SEMNOUS**

WHICH MEANS: VENERABLE, HONORABLE, GRAVE, SERIOUS, DIGNIFIED.

THIS IS SOMEONE THAT UNDERSTANDS THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE POSITION AS WELL AS THE EXPECTATION ON THEIR LIFE.

THIS MEANS THIS IS NOT A SILLY MAN, SOMEONE THAT DOESN'T MAKE LIGHT OR JOKE AROUND ABOUT VERY SERIOUS MATTERS.

THERE IS A TIME AND PLACE FOR HUMOR AND THE MEN THAT ARE CALLED TO BE DEACONS AND ELDERS UNDERSTAND THAT AND KNOW WHEN IT IS APPROPRIATE.

PAUL GOES ON TO SAY , “***NOT <sup>9</sup>DOUBLE-TONGUED***”

THIS IS THE ONLY TIME IN SCRIPTURE THAT THIS WORD OR PHASE IS USED.

AT FIRST GLANCE IT SEEMS AS IF IT MAY MEAN GOSSIP OR A HYPOCRITE.

WHICH CAN BE TRUE BUT IT LITERALLY MEANS SOMEONE THAT SAYS SOMETHING TO ONE PERSON AND SOMETHING ELSE TO ANOTHER.

THIS WOULD BE A MANIPULATIVE PERSON.

**THIS TYPE OF BEHAVIOR IS USUALLY FOUND IN A SOMEONE THAT IS TRYING TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM SOMETHING THEY HAVE DONE OR SAID.**

**WE CANNOT HAVE PEOPLE THAT ARE IN A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP THAT BEHAVE IN THIS WAY.**

**THE NEXT QUALIFICATION IS “*NOT INDULGING IN MUCH WINE*”**

**AGAIN, SCRIPTURE DOES NOT PROHIBIT ALCOHOL BUT THERE IS DEFINITELY STIPULATIONS AS FAR AS THE AMOUNT CONSUMED.**

**THIS IS SOMEONE THAT IS NOT ADDICTED TO ALCOHOL OR OVERINDULGES IN ALCOHOL.**

**AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT WE AS CHRISTIANS AREN'T ADDICTED TO OR OVERINDULGE IN ALCOHOL.**

**BECAUSE WE ARE CALLED TO BE ALERT, SOBER MINDED AND CLEAR HEADED.**

**THOSE THINGS CANNOT COEXIST IN THE LIFE OF SOMEONE THAT OVERINDULGES IN ALCOHOL.**

**AND SOMEONE MAY SAY WELL WHAT DOES IT MATTER IF I'M AT HOME WITH NO ONE ELSE AROUND AND I HAVE TOO MUCH TO DRINK?**

**WELL, WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET A PHONE CALL AND SOMEONE IN THE CHURCH NEEDS YOU, MAYBE THEY BROKE DOWN ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD.**

**MAYBE THERE WAS A DEATH IN THEIR FAMILY.**

**MAYBE THEY JUST REALLY NEED SOMEONE TO PRAY FOR THEM.**

**THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE MANY COUNTLESS REASONS WE SHOULD BE VERY CAREFUL WHEN IT COMES TO PARTAKING IN ANYTHING THAT MAY LIMIT OUR FACULTIES.**

NEXT WE HAVE “***NOT FOND OF DISHONEST GAIN,***”

I THINK THE BEST TRANSLATION IS “NOT GREEDY FOR MONEY”

***1<sup>ST</sup> TIMOTHY 6:10, 11***

***1<sup>0</sup>FOR THE LOVE OF MONEY IS A ROOT OF ALL KINDS OF EVIL, FOR WHICH SOME HAVE STRAYED FROM THE FAITH IN THEIR GREEDINESS, AND PIERCED THEMSELVES THROUGH WITH MANY SORROWS.11 BUT YOU, O MAN OF GOD, FLEE THESE THINGS AND PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS, GODLINESS, FAITH, LOVE, PATIENCE, GENTLENESS.***

SO HOW CAN WE AS ELDERS DETERMINE IF A MAN IS GREEDY FOR MONEY?

WELL WE CAN LOOK AT THEIR LIFE AND BUSINESS PRACTICES FOR ONE.

WE CAN ASK SOME QUESTIONS SUCH AS..

ARE THEY LIVING OUTSIDE THEIR MEANS?

DO THEY LEAD AN EXORBITANT LAVISH LIFESTYLE?

BUT THERE MUST BE A WAY WITHIN THE CHURCH THAT WE CAN GAUGE IF MONEY IS MORE IMPORTANT TO THEM THAN THE LORD...

AND WHAT I’M ABOUT TO SAY MAY UPSET SOME OF YOU BUT IT MUST BE SAID....

IN ORDER FOR YOU TO BE AN ELDER OR A DEACON YOU WILL HAVE TO ALLOW US TO LOOK AT YOUR GIVING AND SEE IF YOU ARE FAITHFUL IN THAT AREA.

NOW MAKE NO MISTAKE THIS IS NOT A SERMON ON MONEY BUT WHEN WE HAVE QUALIFICATIONS THAT HAVE TO DO WITH MONEY IT MUST BE ADDRESSED.

SO WHY DO WE GIVE?

**WHY MUST SOMEONE BE A FAITHFUL GIVER IN ORDER TO BE CONSIDERED FOR ELDER OR DEACON?**

**BECAUSE WHEN YOU GIVE TO THE CHURCH IT SHOWS THAT MONEY IS NOT YOUR GOD.**

**WE ARE CALLED TO USE OUR FINANCES TO ADVANCE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.**

**ALL THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE GOD COMMANDS HIS PEOPLE TO BRING OFFERINGS.**

**AND SO WHAT DOES THAT MONEY DO FOR THE CHURCH?**

**IT PAYS OUR RENT, POWER BILL, INTERNET BILL, SALARIES, WE USE IT TO HELP FAMILIES WITHIN THE CHURCH THAT ARE IN NEED.**

**WE DO OUR ABSOLUTE BEST TO STEWARD THE RESOURCES GOD HAS GIVEN US RESPONSIBLY.**

**WE TAKE IT VERY SERIOUSLY AND UNDERSTAND THAT YOU AS A BODY HAVE ENTRUSTED US TO BE GOOD AND WISE MANAGERS OF YOUR OFFERINGS.**

**SO IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR THE POSITION OF ELDER OR DEACON YOU MUST BE A FAITHFUL GIVER.**

**ANOTHER REASON THIS IS IMPORTANT IS THIS...**

**WHY WOULD WE ALLOW SOMEONE THAT ISN'T CONTRIBUTING FINANCIALLY TO HAVE ANY SAY IN WHAT WE DO WITH MONEY THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN.**

**THAT'S JUST NOT RIGHT.**

***1<sup>ST</sup> TIMOTHY 3:9***

***<sup>9</sup> BUT HOLDING TO THE MYSTERY OF THE FAITH WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE.***

**THE WORD MYSTERY HERE DOESN'T MEAN A MYSTERY IN THE SENSE OF SOMETHING THAT WE DO NOT KNOW.**

**IT MEANS SOMETHING THAT HAS BEEN REVEALED.**

**SO WHAT WAS UNKNOWN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT HAS NOW BEEN MADE CLEAR.**

**THERE ARE MANY THINGS THE PROPHETS FORETOLD THAT WE CAN LOOK BACK ON NOW AND SEE THAT WHAT THEY SAID WAS GOING TO HAPPEN CERTAINLY HAPPENED.**

**BUT AT THE TIME IT WAS PROPHESED MANY ASPECTS REMAINED A MYSTERY TO THE PEOPLE.**

**THAT WAS WHERE THEIR FAITH BECAME NECESSARY.**

**THEIR FAITH WAS FOR WHAT LIE AHEAD WHEREAS OUR FAITH IS IN WHAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED.**

**PAUL SAYS HOLDING TO THE FAITH WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE.**

**MEANING THESE MEN THAT ARE APPOINTED TO BE DEACONS AS WELL AS ELDERS HAVE A CLEAR CONSCIENCE KNOWING THAT THEIR HEARTS ARE RIGHT BEFORE THE LORD.**

***1<sup>ST</sup> TIMOTHY 3:10***

***10 AND THESE MEN MUST ALSO FIRST BE TESTED; THEN LET THEM SERVE AS DEACONS IF THEY ARE BEYOND REPROACH.***

**THE WORD TESTED HERE DOES NOT MEAN A ONETIME EVALUATION.**

**IT IS AN ONGOING PROCESS.**

**KNOWING THAT IF AT ANY POINT SOMEONE THAT IS A DEACON ENGAGES IN ANY OF THE BEHAVIOR THAT IS FORBIDDEN OR FAILS TO MEET THE CRITERIA SET FORTH HE WILL BE REMOVED FROM HIS POSITION AS A DEACON.**

**WE COVERED VS 11 LAST WEEK AS IT PERTAINS TO THE WOMEN OR WIVES OF ELDERS AND DEACONS.**

**BUT WOULD LIKE TO BRIEFLY TOUCH ON THAT AGAIN.**

**ROMANS 16:1,2**

***I COMMEND TO YOU PHOEBE OUR SISTER, WHO IS A SERVANT OF THE CHURCH IN CENCHREA, <sup>2</sup> THAT YOU MAY RECEIVE HER IN THE LORD IN A MANNER WORTHY OF THE SAINTS, AND ASSIST HER IN WHATEVER BUSINESS SHE HAS NEED OF YOU; FOR INDEED SHE HAS BEEN A HELPER OF MANY AND OF MYSELF ALSO.***

DOES ANYONE KNOW THE WORD IN THE GREEK USED FOR SERVANT IN THIS VERSE?

DIAKONON...

THE SAME WORD USED IN 1<sup>ST</sup> TIMOTHY 3 WHERE WE SEE THE WORD DEACON.

THERE IS NO WORD FOR DEACONESS SO SHE IS REFERRED TO AS A SERVANT BUT THE WORD IS THE SAME.

WE WILL HAVE WOMEN THAT WILL FILL THIS ROLE.

THEY TOO WILL HAVE TO MEET ALL THE REQUIREMENTS THAT HAVE BEEN SET FORTH.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE WOMEN TO LEAD, YOUNG WOMEN NEED AN EXAMPLE AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IS EXPECTED OF THE WOMEN THAT WILL FILL THIS ROLE.

**TITUS 2:3-5**

***<sup>3</sup> THE OLDER WOMEN LIKEWISE, THAT THEY BE REVERENT IN BEHAVIOR, NOT SLANDERERS, NOT GIVEN TO MUCH WINE, TEACHERS OF GOOD THINGS— <sup>4</sup> THAT THEY ADMONISH THE YOUNG WOMEN TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS, TO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN, <sup>5</sup> TO BE DISCREET, CHASTE, HOMEMAKERS, GOOD, OBEDIENT TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS, THAT THE WORD OF GOD MAY NOT BE BLASPHEMED.***

SO YES WE WILL HAVE WOMEN THAT WILL BE DEACONS.

THE MAIN DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DEACON AND ELDERS IS DEACONS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO TEACH AND THEIR DUTY IS NOT ONE OF AN OVERSEER OF THE CHURCH.

**SO, AS WE MOVE INTO THE FUTURE AND ADD ELDERS, DEACONS AND DEACONESSES IT'S IMPORTANT WE REMEMBER THAT WE ARE STILL ONE BODY.**

**EACH ONE OF US CONTRIBUTING IN OUR OWN WAY.**

**NOT EVERYONE IS CALLED TO BE AN ELDER OR A DEACON.**

**BUT WE ARE ALL CALLED HOWEVER TO USE OUR GIFTS TO HELP STRENGTHEN THE BODY AND TO LIFT EACH OTHER UP. WE NEED TO BE READY TO BE WHAT WE HAVE BEEN CALLED TO BE FOR ONE ANOTHER.**

***1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 12:20***

***20 BUT NOW INDEED THERE ARE MANY MEMBERS, YET ONE BODY.***

**IT IS SO IMPORTANT WE REMEMBER THIS.**

**THERE ARE MANY MEMBERS THAT MAKE UP OUR CHURCH.**

**SOME OF THEM WILL BE CALLED TO BE ELDERS, DEACONS AND DEACONESSES...**

**BUT WE STILL MAKE UP ONE BODY OF BELIEVERS.**

**NO ONE BEING MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE OTHER AS WE WILL SEE.**

**THESE POSITIONS REQUIRE MORE COMMITMENT AND MORE SACRIFICE.**

**SOME OF YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO GIVE THE TIME NEEDED TO FILL THESE ROLES, AND JUST BECAUSE YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO NOW DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU WON'T IN THE FUTURE.**

***1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 12:21***

***21 AND THE EYE CANNOT SAY TO THE HAND, "I HAVE NO NEED OF YOU"; NOR AGAIN THE HEAD TO THE FEET, "I HAVE NO NEED OF YOU."***

WHAT DOES PAUL MEAN BY THIS?

WE NEED EACH OTHER, THAT'S WHY GOD CREATE THE CHURCH.

IT WASN'T FOR HIMSELF IT WAS FOR OUR BENEFIT.

***1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 12:22-24***

***22 NO, MUCH RATHER, THOSE MEMBERS OF THE BODY WHICH SEEM TO BE WEAKER ARE NECESSARY. 23 AND THOSE MEMBERS OF THE BODY WHICH WE THINK TO BE LESS HONORABLE, ON THESE WE BESTOW GREATER HONOR; AND OUR UNPRESENTABLE PARTS HAVE GREATER MODESTY, 24 BUT OUR PRESENTABLE PARTS HAVE NO NEED. BUT GOD COMPOSED THE BODY, HAVING GIVEN GREATER HONOR TO THAT PART WHICH LACKS IT,***

WHAT PARTS OF OUR BODY ARE UNSEEN?

AND I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT THE PARTS COVERED BY CLOTHES?

OUR BRAIN, HEART, LUNGS, ALL OF OUR INTERNAL ORGANS THAT ARE NECESSARY FOR LIFE.

JUST BECAUSE YOU AREN'T STANDING IN FRONT OF THE ROOM TEACHING OR SERVING AS AN ELDER OR DEACON DOESN'T MEAN THAT YOU AREN'T VITAL TO THE CHURCH.

AND THAT'S WHAT I WANT EVERYONE TO REMEMBER.

DON'T BE DISCOURAGED OR FEEL AS IF YOU DON'T MATTER IF YOU'RE NOT CALLED TO ONE OF THESE ROLES.

THERE ARE STILL PLENTY OF WAYS TO SERVE AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE BODY.

YOU ARE STILL CALLED TO USE THE GIFTS GOD HAS GIVEN YOU.

***1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 12:25***

***25 THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO [H]SCHISM IN THE BODY, BUT THAT THE MEMBERS SHOULD HAVE THE SAME CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER.***

**A BETTER WAY TO SAY THIS IS THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO DIVISION IN THE BODY.**

**EVERYONE SHOULD BE TREATED WITH THE SAME LOVE AND CARE.**

**THERE IS ONE THING I KNOW ABOUT THIS PRECIOUS CHURCH THAT GOD HAS BLESSED US WITH....**

**IT DOESN'T MATTER WHO YOU ARE IF YOU ASK FOR PRAYERS, YOU WILL GET THEM.**

**IF YOU NEED A MEAL, IT WILL BE PROVIDED.**

**AND THIS IS SOMETHING THAT WE MUST PROTECT AS WE GROW.**

**JUST BECAUSE WE GROW IN NUMBERS SHOULD NEVER MEAN THAT ANYONE FEELS DISCONNECTED OR OUT OF TOUCH.**

**THAT'S ONE REASON WE ARE ADDING TO OUR ELDERS.**

**SO THAT WE HAVE MANY MEN THAT ARE SHEPHERDING THE FLOCK.**

**THE LARGER THE FLOCK THE MORE DIFFICULT IT IS TO KEEP UP WITH EVERYONE.**

**SO EVERY ELDER WILL HAVE 5-7 FAMILIES THAT WILL LOOK AFTER.**

**NOW THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT THE PASTORS AREN'T AVAILABLE IT JUST MEANS THAT WE ARE ADDING TO OUR ABILITY TO MAKE SURE ALL NEEDS WITHIN THE CHURCH ARE MET.**

***1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 12:26***

***26 AND IF ONE MEMBER SUFFERS, ALL THE MEMBERS SUFFER WITH IT; OR IF ONE MEMBER IS HONORED, ALL THE MEMBERS REJOICE WITH IT.***

**AS CHURCH WE WILL MOURN TOGETHER AND WE WILL CELEBRATE TOGETHER.**

**WE HAVE BEEN VERY FORTUNATE OVER THE PAST THREE YEARS THAT WE HAVE NOT SEEN A LOT OF DEATH WITHIN OUR CHURCH, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT IT'S NOT COMING.**

**AND WHEN THOSE MOMENTS COME, I HAVE NO DOUBT THAT THEY WILL BE MET WITH A SUPPORTIVE UNIFIED BODY OF CHRIST.**

***1<sup>ST</sup> TIMOTHY 3:12***

***1<sup>2</sup> LET DEACONS BE THE HUSBANDS OF ONE WIFE, RULING THEIR CHILDREN AND THEIR OWN HOUSES WELL.***

**WE SEE THE SAME QUALIFICATIONS AS WE SAW EARLIER FOR THE ELDERS.**

**THIS TELLS US THAT THESE THINGS ARE IMPORTANT.**

**AS WE DISCUSSED THIS MEANS A ONE-WOMAN MAN.**

**I DO WANT TO TAKE A MINUTE TO TALK ABOUT THE SECOND PART OF THIS VERSE.**

**I THINK EVERYONE HERE KNOWS HOW SERIOUS WE TAKE THE MAN'S ROLE IN THE HOME.**

**I TRULY BELIEVE THAT THE STATE OF OUR COUNTRY AND EVEN THE WORLD IS DUE TO A BREAKDOWN OF THE FAMILY UNIT.**

**FOR DECADES MEN HAVE BEEN CONTENT WITH SITTING THE RECLINER WATCHING TV LETTING THEIR WIVES BE THE SPIRITUAL LEADERS OF THE HOME.**

**MEN THE ONLY WAY WE CAN HAVE IMPACT ON OUR FAMILIES IS IF WE SPEND TIME WITH THEM.**

**WE MUST SET THE EXAMPLE IN EVERY WAY.**

**IN WORD AND DEED.**

**HOW WE ACT, HOW WE SPEAK, HOW WE TREAT OTHERS AND MOST IMPORTANTLY HOW WE TREAT OUR SPOUSE.**

**YOU HAVE TO BE INVOLVED IN YOUR KIDS LIVES.**

**YOU NEED TO SUPPORT THEM AND BUILD INTO THEM.**

**START LOOKING FOR THEIR GIFTS NOW SO YOU CAN HELP CULTIVATE THEM FROM AN EARLY AGE.**

**THAT DOESN'T MEAN BE THEIR BEST FRIEND.**

**IT MEANS DISCIPLINE THEM WHEN THEY NEED AND IT AND ENCOURAGE THEM WHEN THEY'RE DOWN.**

**YOUR CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW THAT YOU HAVE THEIR BACK.**

**THAT DOESN'T MEAN SUPPORTING BAD BEHAVIOR OR DEFENDING THEM WHEN THEY ARE WRONG.**

**IT DOESN'T MEAN IF YOU MADE MISTAKE EARLY ON IN THEIR CHILDHOOD TO TRY TO OVERCOMPENSATE BY GIVING THEM EVERYTHING THEY WANT.**

**BUT THEY NEED TO KNOW THEY CAN TRUST YOU, THEY NEED TO KNOW IF THEY DO MAKE A MISTAKE THEY CAN COME TO YOU.**

**THEY DON'T NEED TO FEAR YOU BUT THEY SHOULD ABSOLUTELY RESPECT YOU.**

**AND THE ONLY WAY THEY WILL RESPECT YOU IS IF YOU ARE CONSISTENT.**

**IF YOU LIVE WHAT YOU PREACH TO THEM.**

**DON'T EVER SAY THEM "DO AS I SAY NOT AS I DO"**

**THAT IS THE QUICKEST WAY TO LOSE THEIR RESPECT.**

**BE THE DAD THEY NEED; BE THE MAN THEY CAN DEPEND ON NO MATTER WHAT.**

**BE THE MAN THAT TEACHES THEM HOW TO LOVE AND RESPECT THEIR FUTURE WIVES, BY SETTING THAT EXAMPLE.**

**BE THE DAD THAT SHOWS THEM WHAT IT TRULY MEANS TO BE A GODLY MAN.**

**BE THE DAD THAT LEADS THEM TO CHRIST NOT AWAY FROM HIM.**

***1<sup>ST</sup> TIMOTHY 3:13***

***13 FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED WELL AS DEACONS OBTAIN FOR THEMSELVES A GOOD STANDING AND GREAT BOLDNESS IN THE FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS.***

**IT BEGINS BY SAYING THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED WELL AS DEACONS...**

**I THINK IT'S WORTH MENTIONING IN THE ORIGINAL GREEK TEXT IT SIMPLY SAYS THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED WELL.**

**THE WORDS DIAKONAI WHICH IS THE WORD FOR DEACON IS NOT IN THE ORIGINAL TRANSLATION.**

**THAT LEADS ME TO BELIEVE IT IS EITHER A: SPEAKING ABOUT ALL ELDERS AND DEACONS..**

**OR B: ALL THOSE THAT SERVE WITHIN THE CHURCH.**

**PAUL SAYS OBTAIN FOR THEMSELVES A GOOD STANDING...**

**A GOOD STANDING IN THE COMMUNITY?**

**A GOOD STANDING IN THE CHURCH?**

**IF YOU NOTICE IT SAYS GOOD STANDING AND GREAT BOLDNESS IN THE FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS...**

**SO GOOD STANDING IN THE FAITH.**

**TO MEET THE QUALIFICATIONS SET FORTH MEAN THAT YOU ARE MATURE BELIEVER.**

**SOMEONE WHOSE FAITH HAS BEEN TESTED.**

WITH THOSE TESTS AND THE MATURITY THAT COMES WITH THEM ALSO COMES A BOLDNESS KNOWING THAT GOD IS WITH YOU.

I'D LIKE TO END TONIGHT WITH

***1<sup>ST</sup> PETER 3:8-12***

***<sup>8</sup> FINALLY, ALL OF YOU BE OF ONE MIND, HAVING COMPASSION FOR ONE ANOTHER; LOVE AS BROTHERS, BE TENDERHEARTED, BE <sup>[B]</sup>COURTEOUS; <sup>9</sup> NOT RETURNING EVIL FOR EVIL OR REVILING FOR REVILING, BUT ON THE CONTRARY BLESSING, KNOWING THAT YOU WERE CALLED TO THIS, THAT YOU MAY INHERIT A BLESSING. <sup>10</sup> FOR "HE WHO WOULD LOVE LIFE AND SEE GOOD DAYS, LET HIM <sup>[C]</sup>REFRAIN HIS TONGUE FROM EVIL, AND HIS LIPS FROM SPEAKING DECEIT. <sup>11</sup> LET HIM TURN AWAY FROM EVIL AND DO GOOD; LET HIM SEEK PEACE AND PURSUE IT. <sup>12</sup> FOR THE EYES OF THE LORD ARE ON THE RIGHTEOUS, AND HIS EARS ARE OPEN TO THEIR PRAYERS; BUT THE FACE OF THE LORD IS AGAINST THOSE WHO DO EVIL."***

AGAIN, PETER IS ADDRESSING A VERY PERSECUTED CHURCH.

HE STARTS BY TELLING THEM TO BE OF ONE MIND.

HE KNEW THAT UNITY OF THE BODY IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE.

ADDING ELDERS AND DEACONS WILL HELP UNIFY US AS A BODY.

STRONG FAITHFUL MEN THAT COME TOGETHER TO SERVE THE BODY OF CHRIST.

OUR DESIRE IS TO PROVIDE EVERYONE ONE OF YOU THE RESOURCES NECESSARY TO MAKE YOU A BETTER FOLLOWER OF JESUS.

TO EQUIP YOU WITH THE TOOLS NECESSARY TO GO OUT INTO THE WORLD AND PROFESS THE SAVING GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST.

**OUR DESIRE IS TO DISCIPLE EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU SO THAT  
YOUR FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORD OF GOD MAY  
GROW.**