

ELDERS

1/28/26

JUST TO RECAP WE WILL READ 1ST TIMOTHY 3:1-6 THEN WE WILL PICK UP WHERE PASTOR BO LEFT OFF LAST WEEK.

1ST TIMOTHY 3:1-6

IT IS A TRUSTWORTHY SAYING: IF ANY MAN ASPIRES TO THE OFFICE OF ^{1A}OVERSEER, HE DESIRES A GOOD WORK. ^{2B}AN OVERSEER, THEN, MUST BE ABOVE REPROACH, THE HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE, TEMPERATE, SENSIBLE, RESPECTABLE, HOSPITABLE, ABLE TO TEACH, ³NOT ADDICTED TO WINE ^{4C}OR PUGNACIOUS, BUT CONSIDERATE, PEACEABLE, FREE FROM THE LOVE OF MONEY; ⁴LEADING HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD WELL, HAVING HIS CHILDREN IN SUBMISSION WITH ALL DIGNITY ⁵(BUT IF A MAN DOES NOT KNOW HOW TO LEAD HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD, HOW WILL HE TAKE CARE OF THE CHURCH OF GOD?), ⁶AND NOT A NEW CONVERT, SO THAT HE WILL NOT BECOME CONCEITED AND FALL INTO THE CONDEMNATION OF THE DEVIL.

PASTOR BO ENDED ON VERSE 6 LAST WEEK SO LET'S ELABORATE ON THAT ONE JUST A LITTLE BEFORE WE MOVE ON.

1ST TIMOTHY 3:6

⁶AND NOT A NEW CONVERT, SO THAT HE WILL NOT BECOME CONCEITED AND FALL INTO THE CONDEMNATION OF THE DEVIL.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT THAT AN ELDER NOT BE A NEW CONVERT?

WELL NEW CONVERTS HAVEN'T HAD TIME FOR THEIR FAITH TO BE TESTED.

THEY HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED GREAT FAILURES AND THE PAIN THAT ACCOMPANIES THOSE FAILURES.

THE LESSONS WE REMEMBER THE MOST ARE THE ONES LEARNED IN PAIN.

GREAT FAILURES CAN PRODUCE GREAT WISDOM, NOW THAT'S NOT ALWAYS THE CASE.

BUT IF YOU SHOW ME A VERY WISE SEASONED MAN I CAN GUARANTEE YOU HE HAS EXPERIENCED SOME SIGNIFICANT FAILURES IN HIS PAST.

MEN NEED TO BE MATURE IN THEIR FAITH AND THAT COMES WITH THE TESTING OF OUR FAITH.

IF A MAN HASN'T HAD HIS FAITH TESTED, HOW CAN WE KNOW HOW HE WILL HANDLE THE TESTS THAT LIE AHEAD BECAUSE THERE ARE ABSOLUTELY GOING TO BE TESTS.

CHURCH ELDERS ARE GOING TO MAKE MISTAKES.

JAMES 3:1,2

'MY BRETHREN, LET NOT MANY OF YOU BECOME TEACHERS, KNOWING THAT WE SHALL RECEIVE A STRICTER JUDGMENT. ²FOR WE ALL STUMBLE IN MANY THINGS. IF ANYONE DOES NOT STUMBLE IN WORD, HE IS A ^{PERFECT} MAN, ABLE ALSO TO BRIDLE THE WHOLE BODY.

WE WILL STUMBLE, THE QUESTION IS WILL WE FALL?

A CHURCH ELDER MUST BE WILLING TO ACCEPT HIS FAILURES WHEN THEY ARE BROUGHT BEFORE HIM.

PROVERBS 12:15

THE WAY OF AN IGNORANT FOOL IS RIGHT IN HIS OWN EYES, BUT A WISE MAN IS HE WHO LISTENS TO COUNSEL.

THERE ARE SOME SIN'S THAT WILL DISQUALIFY A MAN FROM CHURCH LEADERSHIP AND THERE ARE SOME THAT WILL NOT IF HE CONFESSES AND REPENTS.

HOW WE HANDLE THOSE MOMENTS MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

WE ARE EXPECTED TO SET THE EXAMPLE, SO HOW CAN WE EXPECTED TO EXERCISE CHURCH DISCIPLINE IF WE OURSELVES AREN'T OPEN TO CORRECTION.

PROVERBS 27:17

IRON SHARPENS IRON, SO ONE MAN SHARPENS ANOTHER.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN IRON STRIKES IRON?

SPARKS!

WHAT CAUSES THOSE SPARKS?

FRiction!

SOMETIMES WHEN WE MUST SPEAK TRUTH INTO A BROTHER OR SISTERS' LIFE THERE WILL BE FRiction.

BUT THAT IS WHAT SEPARATES US FROM THE WORLD.

FROM THAT FRiction CAN EITHER COME DIVISION OR GROWTH.

BEING OPEN TO CORRECTION IS WHAT SEPARATES THE MATURE BELIEVER FROM THE IMMATURE OR EVEN NON-BELIEVER.

1ST TIMOTHY 3:6

6 AND NOT A NEW CONVERT, SO THAT HE WILL NOT BECOME CONCEITED AND FALL INTO THE CONDEMNATION OF THE DEVIL.

VERSE 6 ENDS BY SAYING THAT HE WILL NOT FALL INTO THE CONDEMNATION OF THE DEVIL....

WHY WAS LUCIFER REMOVED FROM HIS POSITION AND CAST DOWN?

PRIDE!

AND WHAT WAS HIS CONDEMNATION?

HE WAS REMOVED FROM HIS POSITION.

DOES THIS MEAN THAT IF A CHURCH ELDER IS ENGAGED IN PRIDE THAT HE WILL BE CONDEMNED TO HELL?

NO BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT HE WILL LOSE HIS POSITION AND BE CAST OUT OF MINISTRY.

PRIDE IS DANGEROUS IN FACT IT IS THE MOST DANGEROUS BECAUSE IT LEADS TO ALL OTHER SIN.

EVERY SIN WE COMMIT IS ROOTED IN SELFISHNESS WHICH STEMS FROM PRIDE.

EVERYTHING IN THESE VERSES HAS A DIRECT CORRELATION TO THE NEXT VERSE.

IF A MAN IS GUILTY OF ANY OF THE ABOVE IT WILL BE APPARENT IN HIS LIFE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH.

IT WILL AFFECT HIS REPUTATION.

1ST TIMOTHY 3:7

7 AND HE MUST HAVE A GOOD REPUTATION WITH THOSE OUTSIDE THE CHURCH, SO THAT HE WILL NOT FALL INTO REPROACH AND THE SNARE OF THE DEVIL.

THIS IS ONE OF THOSE WE HAVE LOOK AT CLOSELY.

WHAT ARE WE GUARANTEED AS CHRISTIANS?

PERSECUTION!

WHICH CAN VERY OFTEN COME IN THE FORM OF RUMORS AND GOSSIP.

MATTHEW 5:11

11 “BLESSED ARE YOU WHEN PEOPLE INSULT YOU AND PERSECUTE YOU, AND FALSELY SAY ALL KINDS OF EVIL AGAINST YOU BECAUSE OF ME.

THIS IS ONE REASON WE HAVE MULTIPLE ELDERS.

IF SOMETHING HAPPENS AND ONE OF THEM IS CALLED INTO QUESTION THE OTHERS CAN LOOK INTO IT AND SEE EXACTLY WHAT'S GOING ON.

PEOPLE SAY THINGS THAT ARE UNTRUE OR BLOW THINGS OUT OF PROPORTION AND THE NEXT THING YOU KNOW A GOOD MAN IS HAVING HIS CHARACTER CALLED INTO QUESTION.

THAT'S WHY PAUL GAVE INSTRUCTION ON HOW TO HANDLE SOMEONE SAYING SOMETHING ABOUT AN ELDER.

1ST TIMOTHY 5:19

1⁹ Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

IN ORDER TO BRING A CHARGE AGAINST AN ELDER YOU MUST HAVE AT LEAST TWO OR EVEN THREE WITNESSES.

BUT AN ELDER'S REPUTATION OUTSIDE THE CHURCH MATTERS.

THAT MEANS WHAT DO THE PEOPLE THAT SPEND THE MOST TIME WITH HIM THINK ABOUT HIM...

WHAT TYPE OF AN IS HE AT HOME?

WHAT TYPE OF MAN IS HE AT WORK?

WHAT TYPE OF MAN IS HE AT RESTAURANTS?

WHAT TYPE OF MAN IS HE AT WALMART?

AN ELDER IN THE CHURCH MUST HAVE GOOD REPUTATION AMONG THE UNBELIEVING COMMUNITY.

THEY MAY NOT AGREE WITH HIS BELIEFS.

THEY MAY NOT EVEN LIKE HIM...

BUT THEY RESPECT HIM.

WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT?

THAT UNBELIEVERS AT LEAST RESPECT HIM?

BECAUSE HOW HE CAN BE A WITNESS TO THE LOST IF PEOPLE DON'T RESPECT HIM?

HE CAN'T.

IF HE IS MEAN, HATEFUL, PROUD, ARROGANT, SELFISH, UNRULY, IMPATIENT AND DISHONEST WHY WOULD THE NONBELIEVER WANT ANY PART OF THIS CHRISTIANITY THING?

SO IT IS IMPORTANT HOW ELDERS CONDUCT THEMSELVES AT ALL TIMES.

PHILIPPIANS 2:14, 15

'14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing, '15 so that you will be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as ^{blue}lights in the world,

ALL OF US HAVE BEEN CALLED TO THIS, THE DIFFERENCE IS THAT AN ELDER THAT FAILS TO MEET THE QUALIFICATIONS MUST BE REMOVED FROM HIS POSITION.

2ND CORINTHIANS 5:20

'20 So then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as God is pleading through us. We beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

WHAT IS AN AMBASSADOR?

A REPRESENTATIVE.

WE ARE CALLED TO REPRESENT CHRIST IN THIS DARK AND EVIL WORLD.

WHO WE ARE WHEN WE THINK NO ONE IS WATCHING IS WHO WE REALLY ARE.

AND IF THAT PERSON IS DIFFERENT THAN THE PERSON YOU ARE WHEN OTHERS ARE AROUND IT WILL EVENTUALLY BE EXPOSED.

EPHESIANS 5:11-13

11 AND DO NOT PARTICIPATE IN THE UNFRUITFUL WORKS OF DARKNESS, BUT INSTEAD EVEN ^[F]EXPOSE THEM. 12 FOR IT IS DISGRACEFUL EVEN TO SPEAK OF THE THINGS WHICH ARE DONE BY THEM IN SECRET. 13 BUT ALL THINGS BECOME VISIBLE WHEN THEY ARE ^[G]EXPOSED BY THE LIGHT, FOR EVERYTHING THAT BECOMES VISIBLE IS LIGHT.

LUKE 8:17

17 FOR NOTHING IS HIDDEN THAT WILL NOT BECOME EVIDENT, NOR ANYTHING SECRET THAT WILL NOT BE KNOWN AND COME TO LIGHT.

IF YOU CHOOSE TO WALK IN DISOBEDIENCE TO WHAT GOD HAS CALLED YOU TO IT WILL EVENTUALLY COME OUT WHO YOU TRULY ARE.

SO WE'RE GOING TO DROP DOWN TO 1ST TIMOTHY 3:11

VERY OFTEN WHEN MEN ARE BEING CHOSEN FOR THE ROLE OF CHURCH ELDER THEIR LIVES ARE SCRUTINIZED IN EVERY ASPECT.

UNFORTUNATELY, WHAT HAPPENS ALL TOO FREQUENTLY IS THEIR WIVES ARE NOT SCRUTINIZED TO THE SAME DEGREE.

AS PAUL LAYS OUT THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR CHURCH ELDER AND DEACONS, HE ENDS THIS SECTION IN 1ST TIMOTHY WITH THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR THEIR WIVES OR WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP.

WE SAW IN THE VERY BEGINNING OF THIS SECTION THAT ONE OF THE VERY FIRST REQUIREMENTS IS THAT A MAN DESIRE THE POSITION OF ELDER.

THIS IS A POSITION THAT SHOULD BE DESIRED, IT IS A CALLING, IT IS SOMETHING THAT SOME MEN WERE CREATED TO DO.

IF THEY ARE MARRIED THEIR WIFE MUST BE WILLING TO SUPPORT THAT CALLING.

I DON'T KNOW HOW I COULD EVER BEGIN TO IMAGINE HOW I COULD POSSIBLY DO WHAT I DO WITHOUT REBECCA.

SHE IS AND HAS BEEN FROM THE BEGINNING OF OUR RELATIONSHIP MY BIGGEST SUPPORTER.

I USED TO JOKE AND SAY "I COULD TELL HER I GOT JOB BUILDING SWIMMING POOLS ON MARS"

AND HER RESPONSE WOULD BE "WELL WHEN ARE WE LEAVING"

THERE IS NO WAY I COULD BE A PASTOR IF SHE DIDN'T SUPPORT ME.

DOING IT ALONE WOULD BE DIFFICULT BUT TRYING TO DO IT WITH A SPOUSE THAT DIDN'T WANT ANY PART OF IT WOULD BE NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE.

1ST TIMOTHY 3:11.

"LIKEWISE THEIR WIVES MUST BE REVERENT, NOT SLANDERERS, TEMPERATE, FAITHFUL IN ALL THINGS."

NOW SOME OF YOUR TRANSLATIONS SIMPLY SAYS WOMEN..

THE WORD IN USED IN THE GREEK IS : Gynaikas.

AND WITH VERY LITTLE IMAGINATION YOU CAN SEE THAT WE HAVE SERVAL WORDS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE DERIVED FROM THIS WORD.

BUT IN THE GREEK IT MEANS: A WOMAN, WIFE, MY LADY. PROBABLY FROM THE BASE OF GINOMAI; A WOMAN; SPECIALLY, A WIFE.

EITHER WAY WHETHER YOU READ IT AS WOMEN OR THEIR WIVES, THE SAME QUALIFICATIONS APPLY.

SOME EVEN SAY THAT THIS IS SPECIFIC TO ONLY DEACONS WIVES BECAUSE PAUL IS SPEAKING SPECIFICALLY ON DEACON IN THIS SECTION,

BUT THAT WOULDN'T MAKE ANY SENSE TO HOLD A DEACONS WIFE TO A HIGHER EXPECTATION AND NOT THE ELDERS OR PASTORS.

ALL CHRISTIAN WIVES SHOULD SEEK TO ACHIEVE THESE ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS, BUT PAUL SAID THE WIVES OF ELDERS AND DEACONS ARE REQUIRED TO POSSESS THEM.

THEREFORE, INDIRECTLY, THEIR BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDE CONSTITUTE YET ANOTHER QUALIFICATION FOR A MAN WHO WOULD SERVE IN EITHER CAPACITY.

THE EXAMPLE SET BY AN ELDER AND HIS FAMILY RELATIONSHIP IS ALL THE MORE CRUCIAL IN LEADING, CORRECTING, AND OVERSEEING GOD'S LOCAL FLOCK.

BECAUSE CORRECTION IS PART OF LEADERSHIP, IF A MAN CAN'T CORRECT HIS WIFE IN A LOVING AND GENTLE MANNER HOW COULD WE EXPECT HIM TO CORRECT ANYONE ELSE IN THAT WAY?

EARLIER PAUL MADE A SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO HOW A MAN'S CHILDREN BEHAVE, WHICH HAS A DIRECT CORRELATION TO HIS ABILITY TO LEAD.

THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR THE WIFE OF AN ELDER.

DISCIPLINING CHILDREN IS ONE THING BUT IT IS ALL TOGETHER AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT MATTER TO LOOK AT HOW A MAN HAS PERFORMED WHEN IT HAS DO WITH HIS SPOUSE.

DOES HE LOVINGLY LEAD HER, DOES HE CULTIVATE AN ENVIRONMENT OF GODLINESS WITHIN HIS MARRIAGE?

AS IT WILL BE IN LEADING A CONGREGATION, SO IT IS IN LEADING A WIFE.

WHICH ISN'T ACCOMPLISHED BY SIMPLY DEMANDING HER TO BEHAVE A CERTAIN WAY OR COMMANDING HER TO DO AS YOU WISH.

IF A MAN EXPECTS HIS WIFE TO SUBMIT TO HIM THE WAY GOD INTENDED, HE MUST FIRST SUBMIT TO CHRIST.

MEN IF YOU WANT YOUR WIFE TO FOLLOW YOU THEN YOU MUST FOLLOW JESUS.

THAT MEANS SHE MUST SEE YOU LIVING OUT LOUD EVERY SINGLE DAY THE EXPECTATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN PLACED ON US.

THAT MEANS ACCEPTING OUR FAILURES AND ASKING FOR FORGIVENESS.

THAT MEANS ADDRESSING THE FAILURES OF OUR WIVES AND CHILDREN IN SUCH A WAY THAT GLORIFIES OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.

THE WIFE OF THE ELDER MUST BE A TRUE HELPER WHEN IT COMES TO THE MINISTRY GOD HAS ENTRUSTED TO THE ELDER.

THIS DOESN'T MEAN THAT SHE IS INVOLVED IN EVERY MINISTRY, IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT SHE HAS TO LEAD WOMEN'S GROUPS BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT SHE SUPPORTS HER HUSBAND IN WAYS THAT ONLY A WIFE CAN.

SHE MUST BE UNDERSTANDING OF HIS OBLIGATIONS AND HIS DUTIES AND SHE MUST RESPECT THAT.

NOW THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT SHE IS A SECONDARY PRIORITY TO THE MINISTRY BUT IT DOES MEAN THAT SHE UNDERSTANDS THAT THERE WILL BE TIMES THAT HER HUSBAND MUST TAKE CARE OF THE FLOCK.

JUST TO BE CLEAR TO ALL THE MEN, OUR FIRST MINISTRY WHETHER CHURCH OR ELDER OR NOT IS TO OUR FAMILIES, OUR WIVES FIRST AND THEN OUR CHILDREN.

THE WOMEN WILL NOT BE EXPECTED TO PERFORM THE SAME DUTIES AS THEIR HUSBANDS BUT WILL BE EXPECTED TO KNOW AND UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS CALLING.

THE ELDER'S WORK IS SOMETIMES ENORMOUS.

HE NEEDS A COMPANION WHO IS AS DEDICATED TO THE CAUSE OF THE LORD AS HE IS.

SHE CAN'T BE INDIFFERENT TO HER DUTIES

SHE IS TO BE "GRAVE" (KJV), "REVERENT" (NKJV), OR "SERIOUS" (NRSV). THESE WORDS SUGGEST A PERSON WHO IS PRUDENT, DIGNIFIED, QUIET, OF SOUND JUDGMENT, AND NOT GIDDY.

THE JOBS OF WIFE, MOTHER, AND CHRISTIAN ALL REQUIRE A CERTAIN SERIOUSNESS.

THIS DOESN'T MEAN THAT SHE CAN'T HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR, IF THAT WERE THE CASE I'D BE OUT.

BUT IT DOES MEAN SHE CAN'T BE FOOLISH OR INDIFFERENT TO TOWARDS HER RESPONSIBILITIES.

THE WAY WE GAUGE THIS QUALIFICATION IS BY HOW SHE DRESSES, HOW SHE SPEAKS AND TREATS PEOPLE AND HOW WELL SHE HANDLES THE RESPONSIBILITIES ENTRUSTED TO HER.

SHE MUST CONTROL HER TONGUE

AN ELDER'S WIFE CAN'T BE A WOMAN WHO IS A "SLANDERER." *W.E. VINE'S EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF NEW TESTAMENT WORDS* SAYS OF THE WORD USED HERE, "ACCUSING FALSELY ... IN *1 TIMOTHY 3:11*, WHERE THE REFERENCE IS TO THOSE WHO ARE GIVEN TO FINDING FAULT WITH THE DEMEANOR AND CONDUCT OF OTHERS, AND SPREADING THEIR INNUENDOS AND CRITICISMS IN THE CHURCH."

SO WHAT IS THE WORD WE USE TO DESCRIBE THIS TYPE OF BEHAVIOR?

GOSSIP!

WOMEN OR MEN THAT HAVE A TENDENCY TOWARDS THIS TYPE OF BEHAVIOR CAN ABSOLUTELY DESTROY A CHURCH.

ESPECIALLY THE WIFE OF SOMEONE THAT IS IN LEADERSHIP.

SHE IS TO SET THE EXAMPLE TO THE OTHER WOMEN AS WELL AS HER CHILDREN.

SO GOSSIP CAN NOT ONLY HURT THE INDIVIDUAL BUT IT CAN DAMAGE THE ENTIRE CHURCH.

SO LET'S TALK ABOUT THAT FOR A MOMENT.

WHAT IS GOSSIP AND WHAT'S NOT?

LETS SAY THAN BOB AND JILL WEREN'T AT CHURCH THIS PAST SUNDAY AND NOW THEY AREN'T HERE TONIGHT...

IS IT GOSSIP FOR SOMEONE TO SAY "MAN I DIDN'T SEE BOB AND JILL ON SUNDAY, HAS ANYONE TALKED TO THEM? ARE THEY OK?"

THAT IS NOT GOSSIP, IN FACT I HOPE WE NOTICE WHEN PEOPLE AREN'T HERE AND HAVE A GENUINE CONCERN.

BUT LET'S SAY THE QUESTION IS POSED LIKE THIS...

"BOB AND JILL WEREN'T HERE ON SUNDAY, I HOPE HE'S NOT DRINKING AGAIN, YOU KNOW HE USED TO HAVE A REAL PROBLEM WITH THAT"

THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE SOMEONE THAT IS CONCERNED WITH WHERE BOB AND JILL ARE AT ALL.

ALL OF US MUST BE VERY CAREFUL IN THIS AREA BUT ESPECIALLY THE SPOUSES OF CHURCH ELDERS AND DEACONS.

WIVES NEED TO USE SELF-CONTROL

THE KING JAMES VERSION USES THE WORD "SOBER," AND THE NEW KING JAMES THE WORD "TEMPERATE" TO DESCRIBE AN APPROACH TO LIFE THAT IS DISCREET, CHASTE, MODERATE, IN CONTROL OF ONESELF, AND ABLE TO CURB ONE'S DESIRES AND IMPULSES.

INTERESTINGLY, THIS IS THE EXACT SAME QUALIFICATION REQUIRED OF THEIR HUSBANDS, WHO SERVE AS ELDERS (*1 TIMOTHY 3:2; TITUS 1:8*).

ELDERS, BY REASON OF AGE, LIKELY WILL HAVE WIVES WHO ARE *OLDER* AS WELL. SO, THIS MAKES PAUL'S ADMONITION IN

TITUS 2:3-5,

"THE OLDER WOMEN LIKEWISE, THAT THEY BE REVERENT IN BEHAVIOR, NOT SLANDERERS, NOT GIVEN TO MUCH WINE, TEACHERS OF GOOD THINGS-THAT THEY ADMONISH THE YOUNG WOMEN TO LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS, TO LOVE THEIR CHILDREN, TO BE DISCREET, CHASTE, HOMEMAKERS, GOOD, OBEDIENT TO THEIR OWN HUSBANDS, THAT THE WORD OF GOD MAY NOT BE BLASPHEMED."

JUST BECAUSE WOMEN ARE NOT CALLED TO BE PASTORS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THEY AREN'T CALLED TO BE LEADERS.

THE IMPACT THAT WOMEN HAVE IS WIDE AND EFFECTS THE ENTIRE CHURCH.

THEY ARE HELD TO THE SAME STANDARDS AS THE MEN ARE AND IF THE WIFE OF AN ELDER FAILS TO MEET THOSE STANDARDS THEN SHE DISQUALIFIES HIM FROM THE ROLE OF ELDER.

SHE MUST BE FAITHFUL IN ALL THINGS

THIS, OF A CERTAINTY, IS A BROAD-RANGING QUALIFICATION. IT COVERS:

- 1. FAITHFULNESS TO THE LORD IN BEHAVIOR, WORSHIP, AND TEACHING; AND**
- 2. FAITHFULNESS TO HER HUSBAND, MORALLY, AS A SUITABLE HELPER, IN OBEDIENCE, AND SOMETIMES IN THE CARE OF CHILDREN STILL AT HOME.**

SO AS WE CONTINUE TO DISCUSS ELDERS AND PREPARE TO ADD TO OUR CHURCH ELDERS I THINK WE SHOULD DISCUSS THINGS THAT ELDER CAN VERY EASILY STRUGGLE WITH.

THE FIRST IS DISCOURAGEMENT, HUMAN BEINGS TEND TO HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR THEIR FELLOW MAN.

THE SAME CAN BE SAID FOR CHURCH LEADERS, WE EXPECT PEOPLE TO LISTEN TO SERMONS AND IMMEDIATELY APPLY WHAT THEY'VE LEARNED TO THEIR LIFE.

WE WANT PEOPLE TO GROW AND MATURE IN THEIR FAITH.

WE WANT PEOPLE TO PRAY AND READ THEIR BIBLES.

BUT IF WE'RE BEING COMPLETELY HONEST WE KNOW THAT WE CAN'T CONTROL WHETHER OR NOT THE PEOPLE WE ARE LEADING DO THOSE THINGS.

SO WHEN WE SEE FAILURES, SOMETIMES GREAT FAILURES IT CAN BE DISCOURAGING BECAUSE WE HAVE SUCH HIGH HOPES.

THAT'S WHY PATIENCE AND GRACE ARE SO IMPORTANT IN MINISTRY.

WE MUST BE WILLING TO SHOW THE SAME PATIENCE AND GRACE THAT OUR HEAVENLY FATHER HAS SHOWN US.

ANOTHER THING THAT CREEP IN IS WHAT JOHN MACARTHUR DESCRIBES AS BUSY LAZINESS.

WHICH MEANS STAYING BUSY DOING ALL THE THINGS YOU WANT TO DO WHILE NEGLECTING THE THINGS THAT NEED TO BE DONE.

SO BY ALL APPEARANCES YOU ARE BUSY DOING THE LORDS WORK BUT IN REALITY YOU KNOW DEEP DOWN YOU ARE NEGLECTING THE THINGS THAT MUST BE DONE.

THIS WOULD BE SOMETHING LIKE SPENDING ALL YOUR TIME READING YOUR BIBLE WHILE NEGLECTING THE SICK PEOPLE IN YOUR CHURCH.

AS LEADER WE SHOULD NEVER USE THE THINGS WE WANT TO DO AS EXCUSES TO NEGLECT THE THINGS WE MUST DO.

ANOTHER THING THAT CREEP IN IS AN INDIFFERENCE TO THE THINGS THAT TRULY MATTER.

WE KNOW THAT NOT EVERY SERMON WE PREACH IS GOING TO BE OUR BEST.

SO WHEN WE FEEL AS IF WE FAIL INSTEAD OF MAKING EXCUSES WE SHOULD ASK GOD TO SHOW US WHAT WE NEED TO DIFFERENT.

IT IS ALSO EASY TO DEVELOP AN INDIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE.

ESPECIALLY THE ONES THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH OR ALWAYS SEEM TO BE CAUSING YOU THE MOST GRIEF.

OUR HUMAN NATURE IS TO PUSH THEM ASIDE AND FOCUS ON THE PEOPLE WE LIKE, THE ONES THAT ACTUALLY LISTEN.

WHEN IN REALITY THE ONES THAT ARE FAILING CONTINUALLY AND ARE THE MOST DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH NEED US MOST.

ANOTHER THING THAT MANY PASTORS FALL VICTIM TO IS PRIDE.

THIS IS AS WE DISCUSSED EARLIER THE MOST DANGEROUS OF SINS BECAUSE IT LEADS TO ALL OTHER SINS.

PRIDE WILL CAUSE YOU TO BECOME SPIRITUALLY ABUSIVE.

PLACING LOFTY EXPECTATIONS ON YOUR FLOCK THAT ARE UNACHIEVABLE.

ANOTHER THING THAT IS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE IS THAT THERE BE MULTIPLE ELDERS.

THIS PREVENTS A DICTATORSHIP WHERE THE PASTOR BECOMES A KING AND LORDS OVER HIS PEOPLE. PETER SPEAKS ABOUT THIS VERY THING IN:

1ST 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: ² SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD WHICH IS AMONG YOU, SERVING AS OVERSEERS, NOT BY COMPULSION BUT ^AWILLINGLY, NOT FOR DISHONEST GAIN BUT EAGERLY; ³ NOR AS BEING ^BLORDS OVER THOSE ENTRUSTED TO YOU, BUT BEING EXAMPLES TO THE FLOCK; ⁴ AND WHEN THE CHIEF SHEPHERD APPEARS, YOU WILL RECEIVE THE CROWN OF GLORY THAT DOES NOT FADE AWAY.

1ST 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 COMPELATION BUT ^{WILLINGLY}*”

THIS REITERATES WHAT PAUL SAYS IN 1ST 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.

IF YOU WANT TO 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 COME 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.

1ST PETER 5:3

3 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.

1ST PETER 5:3

3 NOR AS BEING ¹⁰LORDS 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 MINSTER 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.

