

XXI. WHY A CHURCH MUST NOT BE HASTY IN APPOINTING ELDERS: 1 Timothy 5:23-25

CONTEXT. **1 Timothy 5:17-22** lays out the truths that *elders of Christ's church must be I) honored, II) protected, III) rebuked when necessary, IV) treated impartially, V) appointed with patience, and VI) they must keep themselves pure.*

DOCTRINE. A church must not be hasty in appointing elders because many sins, as well as good works, take time to appear.

OUTLINE. Three points that need to be made from this text, the first of which is a sort of excursus from Paul's main thought and flow in this portion of his letter to Timothy.

I. ELDERS SHOULD SEEK THEIR OWN HEALTH, SO THAT THEY MAY BE MOST USEFUL FOR THE LORD'S GLORY (1 Tim. 5:23).

1 Timothy 5:23 "(No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.)"

- **THOMAS WATSON, on the Sixth Commandment, says,** "The second thing forbidden in this commandment is, injuring OURSELVES. . .

A person may be guilty of his own death, in some sense, by neglecting the use of means for preserving life. If sick, and he uses no remedy; if he has received a wound, and will not apply a cure—he hastens his own death. God commanded, "Make an ointment from figs and spread it over the boil, and Hezekiah will recover" (Is. 38:21). If he had not done so, he would have been the cause of his own death. . .

[A person may be guilty of his own death,] By intemperance or excess in diet. Glutting shortens life. "More perish by drink—than by the sword." Many dig their grave with their teeth. Too much oil chokes the lamp. The cup kills more than the cannon. Excessive drinking causes untimely death. "

Now, God has just previously said, through Paul, "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands," and to this he returns, after the brief excursus wherein he told Timothy to seek his own health.

II. ELDERS MUST BE APPOINTED WITH PATIENCE BECAUSE OBVIOUS SINS ARE SEEN BY ALL, BUT SECRET

SINS TAKE TIME TO APPEAR (1 Tim. 5:24a).

1 Timothy 5:24 "The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later."

Take these as general truths as well, not just when it comes to examining and appointing Elders.

I) Some sins are seen by all.

II) Secret sins take time to appear.

- **You can hide the rotten flesh of leprosy under a cloak of self-righteousness, but eventually it will begin to stink.**
 - **Numbers 32:23** "be sure your sin will find you out."

EXAMINE AND SOBER YOURSELF

- **Q1.** Do you harbor secret sins? EXAMINE.
- **Q2.** Are their sins you think are going to remain hidden? SOBER.
- **Do not hesitate to confess your sins,**
plead the blood of Christ, and
both ask and labor to break off your sins by repentance.
 - **1 John 1:9** "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

NOW COMFORT YOURSELF WITH THE GOSPEL, BELIEVER.

There is no sin that is a match for the justifying blood of Christ and the sanctifying power of the Spirit!

There is no sin in your life that will repel the electing and adopting love of God!

III. ELDERS MUST BE APPOINTED WITH PATIENCE BECAUSE OBVIOUS GOOD WORKS ARE SEEN BY ALL, BUT SECRET GOOD WORKS TAKE TIME TO APPEAR (1 Tim. 5:25a).

1 Timothy 5:25 "So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden."

Take these also as general truths, not just when it comes to examining and appointing Elders.

I) Some good works are seen by all.

- (i) You should not labor to be seen by others (Matt. 6:1).**
 - **Matthew 6:1** "Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from

your Father who is in heaven."

(ii) However, it is being seen by others, though you are not seeking it, which glorifies God **(Matt. 5:16)**.

- **Matthew 5:16** "let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven."

II) Secret good works cannot remain hidden.

(i) God sees all things, even your hidden good works. Do not worry about what others see **(Matthew 6:2-4)**.

- **Matthew 6:2-4** "2 Thus, when you give to the needy, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

(ii) God will reward you both on earth and in heaven for all that is done in sincerity for His glory **(1 Timothy 6:18-19)**.

- **1 Timothy 6:18-19** "18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life."

1 Timothy 5:23-25

[23] (No longer drink ~~only~~ water, but **use** a little wine

adverb

lit. "drink water"

conj.

make use of a thing

adj.

matt. 9:17 (fermentation)
 Matt 27:34 (wine w/ gall)
 Luke 1:15 (John the Baptist, no wine or liquor)
 Luke 2:33-34 (John no. Jesus was)
 John 3 (Calceol)
 Eph. 5:18 (cannot get drunk)
 1 Tim 3:8 (not addicted to much wine)
 infirmities
 weakness

"stomachos"

"pyknos"

for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.)

prep.

conj.

adj.

[24] The sins of some people are conspicuous,

"hamartia"

"anthropos"

"leimi"

"prodeōlos"

def. Any lack of conformity to or transgression of the Law of God

adjective
 evident
 known to all
 manifest

going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later.

Unbeliever = "storing up wrath" (Rom. 2)
 We must all appear before the judgement seat of Christ (1 Cor. 5)

indefinite pronoun

Follow after

[25] So also good works are conspicuous,

likewise

adj.

deeds

adu.

Moral

"echo"

"dynamai"

"kryto"

and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

conj.

def.

that are not conspicuous

are not able

be concealed
 be kept secret