



Outward Group Discussion Guide

August 16, 2026

SUMMARY

Drawing from 1 Timothy 5:17-25, Pastor Matt walks through the biblical principles governing how elders and church leaders should be treated, compensated, and held accountable. He frames the passage as providential, given recent disruptions in church leadership, and emphasizes that healthy church leadership is foundational to the mission of connecting lost people with the love of Jesus. The sermon addresses three core areas: the honor owed to elders both in respect and financial compensation, the proper process for bringing and handling charges against leaders, and the importance of careful, unhurried selection of leaders. Throughout, Pastor Matt applies these principles not only to church governance but to the everyday lives of believers, calling the congregation to servant-hearted unity, honest confession, and commitment to the church's outward mission.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The sermon describes Satan's strategy as getting into 'every single area of life' to distract the church from its mission — where do you see this distraction most clearly in your own life, and what practical steps can you take to refocus on what matters most?
2. Paul's instruction that elders who rule well deserve 'double honor' in both respect and compensation challenges many common assumptions about ministry — how does your attitude toward church leadership reflect or contradict this biblical principle?
3. The sermon draws a sharp contrast between worldly leadership that 'lords it over' others and servant leadership modeled by Jesus — in what areas of your own life are you tempted to seek position or power rather than to serve?
4. Matthew 18 lays out a clear, direct process for addressing conflict, yet the sermon acknowledges that most people avoid going directly to the person they have an issue with — what fears or habits prevent you from following this biblical pattern, and what would it take to change that?

5. The sermon warns against 'admitting a charge' based on gossip or unverified accusations, noting that Calvin believed Satan's chief trick is to estrange people from their ministers — how do you guard your own heart against becoming over-credulous when you hear negative things about a leader or fellow believer?
6. Paul distinguishes between 'conspicuous sinners' whose flaws are readily apparent and 'concealed sinners' whose sin is hidden beneath a respectable exterior — which type do you think poses a greater danger to the health of a local church, and why?
7. The sermon emphasizes that a culture of confession is essential to healthy church life — what barriers exist in your community or your own heart that make genuine confession difficult, and how might those barriers be broken down?
8. Paul cautions Timothy not to be 'hasty in the laying on of hands,' warning against commissioning leaders too quickly — how does this principle apply not just to church leadership selection but also to the other relationships and authorities you invite into your personal life?

9. The sermon connects the church's mission of connecting lost people with the love of Jesus to the urgency expressed in the phrase 'the tomb is empty, hell is hot, eternity is long' — how does a genuine belief in these realities change the way you live out your faith day to day?
10. Paul's aside to Timothy about wine suggests that an overly rigid, self-denying approach to life can itself become a form of spiritual pride — where in your own faith journey have you confused personal strictness with genuine holiness, and what does true purity look like in light of grace?