



"The Kind of Church God Calls Us to Be"

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I. _____ Faithfully

1 Timothy 5:17-18 "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,' and, 'The laborer deserves his wages.'"

2 Timothy 4:2 "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching."

II. _____ Wisely

1 Timothy 5:19 "Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses."

A. When Criticism Comes _____ You

1. Distinguish Between Different Kinds of Criticism

a. Some Voices Are _____

Proverbs 27:6a "Faithful are the wounds of a friend"

b. Some Voices Are _____

c. Some Voices Are _____

2. Don't Think Too _____ of Yourself

2 Corinthians 12:6 "though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me."

"Most of the time, we go through life fearful that people will think too little of us. But Paul goes through life fearful that people will think too much of him." (Dr. Don Carson).

3. Respond to Criticism With _____

"The biggest danger of receiving criticism is not to your reputation, but to your heart. You feel the injustice of it and feel sorry for yourself, and it tempts you to despise the critic" (Tim Keller).

4. Remember That Your Flaws Are More _____ Than Your Critic Even Realize

"Brother, if any man thinks ill of you, do not be angry with him. For you are worse than he thinks you to be. If he charges you falsely on some point, yet be satisfied, for if he knew you better he might change the accusation and you would be no gainer by the correction. If you have a moral portrait painted and it is ugly, be satisfied. For it only needs a few blacker touches and it would be still nearer the truth" (Charles Haddon Spurgeon).

5. Learn to _____ Criticism

"that you have so many eyes to watch over you, and so many ready to tell you of your faults, and so have greater helps than others, at least for the restraining of your sin. Though they may do it with a malicious mind, yet you have the advantage by it" (Puritan Richard Baxter).

B. When Criticism Comes _____ You

1 Timothy 5:19 "Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses."

III. _____ Courageously

1 Timothy 5:20 "As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear."

IV. Lead _____

1 Timothy 5:21 "In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality."

2 Chronicles 19:7b "for there is no injustice with the Lord our God, or partiality or taking bribes."

Philippians 2:10b-11 "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

1 Timothy 5:22 "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure."

V. Live _____

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

VI. Trust God _____

1 Timothy 5:24-25 "The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later. So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden."



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BACKGROUND:

As we see in Paul's instructions to Timothy, disciples are to care for others with integrity (*1 Timothy 5:17-6:2*). As disciples, our motive should be to glorify and honor God. This is accomplished when we reflect God's character and follow the example Jesus set for us. To do that, one must be faithful, humble, obedient, selfless, full of the Spirit, and a servant to all. Our Good Shepherd provided an example of how we should in turn shepherd others – with integrity.

DIGGING DEEPER:

In 1 Timothy 5:17 Paul instructs to pay double honor to those who serve in a worthy manner. Double honor can be understood as paying someone respect or compensation two-fold. People serve the Lord in many ways according to their spiritual giftedness. Those who serve well should be encouraged, appreciated, and valued.

1. What standard do you use when determining if someone is serving well or not?
2. What might it look like to pay double honor?
3. We all would like to hear *“Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master”* (*Matthew 25:21*). What are some key characteristics Jesus displayed in His ministry to serve others and how should these be modeled when serving others?

Paul warns that the role of a church leader is a vulnerable one and should be guarded. Spiritual warfare, the schemes of Satan, and sinful intentions are a fact of church life. Disciples should shepherd cautiously and not entertain a charge against a church leader without evidence presented by two or three witnesses. Prejudging a person or situation, partiality or favoritism has no place in shepherding God's flock. Paul further states that we shouldn't be hasty in the “laying of hands”.

4. Why would God decree that an accusation against an elder or leader requires two or three witnesses before action is taken? (*Deuteronomy 19:15; John 8:17; Matthew 18:16; 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19*)

5. *James 2:9* tells us that we sin when we show partiality. How can prejudging, favoritism, or partiality be contrary to God's pattern of justice?

6. A common application of “laying of hands” is to accept someone and commission them into ministry. Why might Paul warn Timothy not to be hasty in doing so? What experiences have you had when others have been commissioned for ministry “too soon”?

Paul tells Timothy that good works are conspicuous, which means they stand out and are visible. He goes on to assure us that even those that are not observable, such as our prayers or things we do anonymously, will not remain hidden.

7. How are our good works a testimony of God's grace?

8. Read *John 13:34-45*. What is our motive for shepherding with integrity?

TAKING IT HOME:

A proof of our integrity is how we respect and honor others, especially those in authority. We interact with many types of authority daily. We encounter authority figures in our family, school, work, institutions, communities, and government. We honor God by honoring those He placed over us to protect us and provide for us (*Romans 13:1-2*).

9. What can a church do to show double honor to its leaders, especially those who serve well?

10. How does showing respect and honor to others glorify God and help others grow closer in their relationship with the Lord?