

I Timothy 3 Consecutive Teaching at Bristol Bible Chapel

3/12/2017

Purpose of Book: The Pastoral epistles teach us how to conduct ourselves in godliness. God has given us a pattern for the orderly conducting of ourselves in the household of God. This letter confirms advice given to Timothy of the need for godly church living.

Before you and I were born-again we lived in the physical realm with much disregard for spiritual things. When we became born-again, and entered into a new relationship with Christ and his saints, we became aware of spiritual things. In the church (or assembly of God's people), God has formally appointed 2 groups of men (Elders and Deacons) to deal with both the spiritual and physical things essential for a healthy growing church.

CHARACTER OF GOD'S CHURCH (Start with the End First – Read 1:13-16):

- Obedience to the Word – Elders Vision – “to bend the will to another in authority”
- **Key Verse is I Timothy 3:15** because I Timothy is a book about Church Order & how we ought to respond to the authority of God's Word
 - Behave (gr. Anastrepho) – instructions on how to act or conduct ourselves in an orderly manner in the house of God
 - “House of God is defined precisely as the church of the living God (for which God dwells), which is clearly no material building but a spiritual assembly.”
 - Ekklesia – suggests a local community as part of larger whole; a gathering of citizens called out from their own homes into some public place of assembly (for Christians this might be a place of worship)
 - Root derivative (Ek – “out” or “from” - could imply the world)
 - Root derivative (Kaleo or “Called out” or invited “to be so named” as among the brethren
 - Thus a “called out company” of believers assembling in or to the name of the Lord!
 - Church of the living God – a place where Jesus Christ is pleased to dwell! (Read Eph. 2:19-22)
 - This phrase pillar and ground of the truth (foundational to the understanding of the Holy Scriptures) has caused difficulties – mainly because it appears to give greater eminence/emphasis to the Church than to the Truth. The Church is supported by the Truth. Source of Truth is God (Author and Originator 2 Peter 1:20-21, Acts 2:42, 2 Tim. 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God Breathed)
 - “The uniform New Testament teaching is that the Church is grounded on or in the Truth not visa versa.”
 - However, The Church is fundamental to the proper handling & distribution of the truth (Bearer, Presenter, and Dispenser) in the day or age in which we live.

Let's consider a few aspects of Church History Down through the Ages:

- God established the Early church with group of men called elders which Scripture fully supports!
- As time went on, man set up their own hierarchical forms of church government and left the N.T. doctrines found in the Word of God which we will present today
- The Episcopal system of government and the Roman Catholic Church government has one man over a group of churches.
- In the Middle Ages (1500s or time they call the Great Reformation/Protestant Reformation), Martin Luther came along and set up the Presbyterian form of government which established a group of men over a group of churches. Again not going back to the Word of God to see how God intended His church to be set up.
- Later in the New World and in our Country, we find Democracy as the rule of the day and they set up the Congregational form of government where each person gets 1 vote whether you were saved 50 years or 1 day.
- It is also important to note that there is ABSOLUTELY NOTHING in scripture that speaks of one elder being in a higher rank or position presiding over others (no concept or notion of Head Pastor or Senior Pastor)
- Now against that backdrop we have Scriptural instructions in I Timothy and Titus for identifying the kind of men God qualifies for the Pastoral Leadership of the churches

GOD'S APPOINTED MEN "A Portrait of a Godly Man" – Warren Henderson

Read: I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 Qualifications of Elders

3:1 True Saying – True or Faithful saying meaning *"it stands the test of time", "it is one you can depend on"*

- Popular or Proverbial saying known to the early church that dignified the office or occupation of God's overseers
- Desire – 2 Verbs in this verse:
 - Oregamai – *"to stretch oneself out in order to grasp", "to aspire to" (Runner striving finish line)*
 - Epithumeo – expresses strong desire, *"to set one's heart upon", "to long for"*
 - "is set upon an excellent occupation" – Moffatt
- Work (gr. Ergon) – *"to be occupied with", business, employment*
 - *Outworking of the office* is primarily in view here meaning the *activities* of the office such as (to look after, to feed or care for, to protect, to watch, to warn, etc.)
 - What is an elder or overseer occupied with but with God & His People
 - One who has a *burden* for the welfare of God's flock and an earnestly *imitates* the sacrificial care of the Good Shepherd for the saints seeks or desires a good work!
- Question then arises: Who puts the desire in the heart?
- *"Take heed therefore unto yourselves (NAS "be on guard"), and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed (NAS shepherd) the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." – Acts 20:28*
- It is the prerogative of the **Owner of the Flock** to choose His under shepherds; *"No man putting his empty hands on your empty head can make you a pastor."* – Jack Spender; Therefore, **It is a Divine Calling from the Lord!**
- Now, it takes some time for God to show who He is raising up as elders; a *spiritual process* that takes place in the *heart* and *works its way out* into the *life*.
- (Time Lapse between the *inward impression* and the *outward expression*)
 - *"No active work proves that there is no active desire; if an elder ceases to desire the work of shepherding the sheep, he ceases to be an elder"* – Warren Henderson November Elders Shopnotes

NAS – "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires {to do}."

Early Church – First Mention of the establishment of elders is in Acts 14:23, *"And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed."*

We also read in Titus in 1:5 – *"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting (lacking appointment) and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee."*

- Book of Acts we see an *orderly* transition of authority from Apostles to Elders and Deacons within the household of God in a time of unprecedented holiness and growth
- Many times Paul and Barnabas would go on a missionary journey to revisit the churches and to observe their *order* and appoint elders so that the work of furthering the gospel would go unhindered
- Word ordained (gr cheirotoneo) means "to elect", "to designate with the hand" the electing or appointing of elders was done by an apostle (sent one or missionary) or his designee
- It was the Holy Spirit working through the apostles to appoint those men among the brethren who were doing the work of overseeing God's flock and exhibiting the godly qualities; obviously this is no longer feasible as the apostles have long passed into the Lord's presence

Two Greek Words used for describing elders

- In Titus 1:5 (also Acts 11:30; Acts 20:17; 21:18) – word for elders (*presbuteros*)
 - *Stresses his spiritual maturity* as a leader - I Tim. 5:1 "Rebuke not an elder but intreat him as a father"
- In 1 Timothy 3:1 and 1:7 (also Acts 20:28) (*episkopos* = "overseer")
 - *Stresses his work. The word "oversee" implies authority. When instructions are given that require authority the word overseer is used.*

- No hint of modern English word bishop found in Roman Catholicism which refers to a monarchical or hierarchical structure or Episcopalian form of church government
- *“As sheep of the flock themselves, they must live and work “among” the saints much of the time. But as “undershepherds”, they must accept spiritual authority and not be afraid to confront problems, and clear them up.”* - Jack Spender Elders Shopnotes November 2016
- With a plurality of leadership there is a *“balance of authority”*, a sort of check and balance for the wellbeing and safe keeping of the sheep
- Therefore, the elder is characterized not by the office he holds but by the work he does among the Lord’s people. *A Life-time of Leadership characterized by Servant Leadership!*

BIBLICAL CHARACTER QUALIFICATIONS OF GOD’S MAN

- Some 22 qualities listed here and in Titus – teaches us that God is very concerned to show us the kind of man to lead His flock. This is **“God’s Ideal Man”**; **These are the things that God will hold a man accountable if he is going to lead the sheep. An elder must be exhibiting personal discipline and moral integrity in order to care for others.**

MORAL REQUIREMENTS

- Blameless – anepileptos – “without reproach”; “not accused”, above reproach, irreproachable; not deserving rebuke or censure
 - Meaning “you cannot bring an accusation against him & win” (though many may try!)
 - Reputation must be blameless, doesn’t mean sinless
 - May lose his temper or be out of sorts but should not be characterized by such behavior
 - It means he doesn’t have a sin nobody knows about (no secret or hidden pattern of habitual sin)
- Husband of one wife – single minded, **“One Woman Man”** can’t be hypocritical in his judgment; must be an example of strict morality;
 - Most intimate relationship in the home & in the church - Who otherwise would know him best?
 - A wise husband listens to his wife, takes her into his confidence and respects her godly insight while protecting her from potentially damaging news or accusations
 - A wise husband will listen to his wife’s counsel as she is a real help-meet in understanding the barometer of the Church family as in the home. She will give a *sense of belonging* or *sense of unsettledness* of the sheep
 - Because a woman has the God-given ability to be emotional, she might sense or discern trouble before her husband. He must not brush aside her feelings but seek to understand the *cause* of such *disruptions*.

ASIDE NOTE: JVMcGee thinks Paul was married and his wife died otherwise he could not be a member of the Sanhedrin without being married

- Being an elder does not require marriage but those with a wife and children *bring certain credibility* and *gain essential experience* necessary to lead in the assembly of God’s family. The elder must have the right balance of feeding and admonition as a father has of nurturing and discipline in the home.
- This is also the objective side of a man referred to as being **“JUST”** in Titus 1:8. Why do you think your mom says, “wait until your father gets home.”
 - a father is much more able to be objective in disciplining his own son or daughter if the need arises
 - ()
- This is ALSO important in the disciplinary work of an elder. *If they need to discipline a family member who is walking in a disorderly manner detrimental to the flock, the option of the person of the family is to get right with God or leave the assembly. The church does not have the option of voting the elder(s) out.*

- A woman, if she were an elder, would very often be partial in her dealings not because she is crooked...but because she has an *instinctive nature* to protect her own family and loved ones.
- But because the woman has a *more sensitive nature* she may be able to discern things quicker than her husband. Women very often discern deep spiritual truths quicker than men.
- Yet the man has the *built-in capacity* to reason intellectually (consider our bible studies); whereas, most woman don't have the time or energy to spend studying and teaching the Word (*godly lady letter*)
- However a women needs to express herself by talking through things whereas a man needs time *alone* so he can work through things in his heart and mind before he can talk about them.
- **Neither has an inferior role;** God has given each a very precious nature for the healthy & harmonious care and development of His Church

CHARACTERISTICS DESCRIBING AN ORDERLY LIFESTYLE – POSITIVE REQUIREMENTS – What a godly man ought to be...

- **Vigilant** (nephaleous) – describes the temperament of a godly man
 - Self-controlled or temperate, “calm in crisis”, one who keeps his cool; “mild-mannered”
 - Good spiritual, psychological, and physical balance (not up one day and down another rollercoaster)
 - Able to recognize dangers and course-correct
- **Sober** – discreet, of a sound-mind, exercises “sound sensible judgment”; able to make a righteous judgment
 - Humility or sober assessment of his own abilities & gifting (*right estimation of himself*)
 - He means business and is careful about his own sense of humor
 - Not easily swayed by popular opinion
 - Able to curb one’s desires or impulses
 - “Ready to be called upon at any moment!” = “Clear-mindedness”
- **Of good behavior**
 - Well behaved and *orderly* and modest lifestyle; doesn’t go to extremes; consistent conduct; no questionable business deals or partnerships “above board” (*Orderly Person – good administrator!*)
 - Behavior motivated by his love for his Lord
 - Behavior regulated by God’s Word – therefore apt to find him where the Word of God is preached
 - Does not call attention to himself but calls attention to Christ in all things (lives by Col 3:17)
- **Given to hospitality**
 - Sets or provides for an environment of hospitality (again where his wife comes in)
 - A man can hold court while his wife is able to meet the needs of the guests (good partnership)
 - Necessary for the survival and expansion of the early church
 - Necessary for fellowship of believers and the meeting of needs (lack of H – sign of selfishness, lifeless, loveless assembly J&FM)
 - “Lovers of strangers”, *loves to care for strangers*
- **Apt to Teach**
 - Competent to teach – “able to communicate with others in a non-threatening objective manner”
 - Great deal of his work is instructing (questions, problems, counseling, guidance, direction)
 - Able to rightly divide or handle the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15)
 - Divine ability to grasp spiritual truth and break it down clearly & give it out for the perfecting of the saints (maturity), work of the ministry (furtherance of the gospel), and for the edifying of the body of Christ (Eph. 4:12)
 - Mental ability / Capacity & Propensity to study and grasp truth in God’s Word and pass it on to others
 - Confronts false teachers and sinful behavior in order to protect the flock to guard the body of revealed truth from perversion and error (Titus 1:9)

NEGATIVE REQUIREMENTS – What a godly man should not be characterized by...

- **Not given to wine** – not consumed with nor controlled or overtaken by alcohol; not a drunkard; though abstinence is not required the man of God must heed to Eph 5:18, *“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit”*; Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35 Tells us that wine is a mocker – it can make a merry heart but can also hit you with a delayed effect that biteth like a serpent and stingeth like an adder. Can be poisonous and deadly (adder has deadly venom).
 - Nothing should cloud or impair one’s judgment; not addicted or enslaved to wine
 - Not addicted, preoccupied, or overindulgent with wine
 - Many opportunities to be in people’s houses at the dinner table holding court speaking to needs – also in business dealings
- **No Striker** – not violent or pugnacious (argumentative, aggressive, confrontational)
 - Exercises Self-control
 - Doesn’t try to settle his disagreements physically – refuses to retaliate from wrong done by others
 - Settles problems by seeking God’s will
 - Doesn’t use position of authority to knock down others!
- **Not greedy of filthy lucre** (I Tim. 6:10) Shouldn’t be a lover of money but a lover of people
 - Not greedy for money or looking to take advantage of the vulnerable; Must be Trustworthy
 - Cannot visit people’s homes , who may be vulnerable (or even feel obligated to give an elder a gift for their spiritual help), and expect to be compensated in any way
 - *“Can’t be looking to destroy for money what Christ died to pay the price to save.”*
- **But Patient** (epiekes) – gentle and peaceable (NAS); seemingly suitable, equitable (fair, just, impartial)
 - Forebearing – he needs to bear trials without grumbling; help bear others burdens (Gal. 6)
 - Reasonable, someone who sees things from God’s perspective; someone you can talk to
 - 2 Cor. 1:3-5 Ability to comfort others with the same comfort received from the Lord!
- **Not a brawler** – not a contentious person (not a pushover) but not someone who is constantly stirring up trouble in the church *“rabble rouser”*
 - Not someone apt to fly off the handle or be embittered with rage (I’ll take you all on mentality)
 - Not involved in contentious or wearisome debating
 - A Peaceful Man who is **glad to commit the matter over to the Lord for further study of scripture and prayer!**
- **Not covetous** (aphilarguros) – free from the love of money; not greedy
 - Word suggests idolatry or the worship of money ahead of everything else
 - Worldliness, materialism – *wanting something God never intended you to have*
 - *The love of money will draw one away from God!*
 - No hidden or ulterior (underhanded) motives

3:4-5 **One who ruleth his own house well** (also said or likewise deacons in 3:12)

- This man is the **accepted** leader and a protector and guardian of his own house!
- A man’s family is a **visible indicator** of whether he is able to lead God’s people
- Man who would have authority in the assembly of the saints will show by example through the authority he already has in his own house and whether he is able to **bring order** to a larger group. Does he foster an atmosphere of mutual love and respect where each of the members are subject one to another?
- A man must be able to govern his children with a gracious and serious spirit by maintaining a healthy balance of nurturing and discipline
- Children in **subjection** Children under control NOT Perfect but are obedient and a blessing to the Lord.
- With all gravity (semnotes) – worthy of respect and admiration
- An elder as a father in the home should have the **natural authority without** being a **dictator**
- *“Since it takes a great deal of ability and knowledge to care for God’s church, it follows that if a man does not know how to manage his own household he will not be able to manage the more difficult and demanding task of caring for God’s flock.”* – Biblical Eldership – Lewis and Roth
- Family/home is a training / proving ground for future ministry (remember progression I spoke of at E Forum)

Not a Novice (gr. Neophutos) – “newly planted”; not a recent convert or one recently baptized; unknowledgeable or not grounded in the N.T. doctrines [**Not a Spiritual Beginner**]

- Maturity requires time and experience for which there is no substitute!
- **Warning** – someone new comes into your assembly and looks the part or is a prominent person in the business arena but is not proved in the N.T. doctrines should not be pushed to the front of the God’s flock!
- Rapid promotion may easily lead to excessive pride and instability in the church
 - False sense of altitude make subsequent fall all the greater!
 - Fall into condemnation of the Devil – no longer held blameless (accuser can hold something over head)
 - Lest being lifted up with pride (gr. Taphoo – “to wrap in smoke”, “cloudland of conceit”, airs of pride)
- A few years in the early church were enough to recognize those doing the work of an elder exhibiting the godly qualities as a constant flow of new converts were being ushered into the fellowship
 - **Recognizing elders** in a local assembly brings **order** and stability to the sheep
 - Most likely that God will raise up from within the assembly (as one labors among the saints)

3:7 **Moreover – Even still yet...**

- **Must** have a good report/reputation of them without – **“Outside Church Community”**
 - Pays his bills, trustworthy in business, conducts himself in public on the sports field with integrity
 - Good **representative** to the **Cause of Christ** (necessary to protect the church from unnecessary scrutiny or abuse)
 - “Practice must not be in variance with profession”
 - This person has gained confidence and respect within the work force and in the community! Can be relied on to do a good honest day’s work.
 - *“I like when someone shares a prayer request from his place of employment. It tells others that he is someone they can trust to represent the cause of Christ before the throne of grace.”*
- **Lest** he fall into reproach and the snare of the Devil (1 Tim. 6:9 *trap*, 2 Tim 2:26 talks about being captivated and intoxicated by the Devil’s influence at his own will)
 - These are *traps* set to allure a man outside the comforts of the church
 - Can cause one to be reproached & no longer blameless (ex. Adultery)
 - Good reason to pray for your husbands who travel for work!

Read: I Timothy 3:8-13

IMPORTANCE OF DEACONS – Their Work

- (The earliest allusion to deacons is in Acts 6:3; **Although the Greek word for Deacons is not found there; Scripture gives us sufficient grounds to see that the purpose for their appointment was mainly practical. Since they were entrusted with the practical distribution of the Church's offerings it was essential that they too (likewise) be morally equipped men for such employment/undertaking. Deacons are seen to be especially linked to elders in Phil 1:1 who accompanied elders in the work of the ministry to the saints and became a practical accountability partner in the discipleship of new converts that came along and the delegation of duties in the growing church!**
- Early Church leaders (apostles) recognized that a certain group of widows were neglected in the daily distribution of necessities. Apparently, there was a communication breakdown for which the apostles instructed the assembly to recognize 7 men of *honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom*, whom we (apostles) may appoint over this business? And they chose Stephen a man *full of faith* and the Holy Ghost and Phillip andpreaching deacons (Acts 7&8)!
- *Although the assembly takes part in the selection process, the authority by which the deacons act in the assembly rests in their appointment by the elders (Acts 6:3&6).*

3:8 Likewise (in like manner, after the same manner – pattern after the same moral character REQ'S as the elders)

MORAL CHARACTER REQUIREMENTS OF DEACONS – How to recognize them...

- **Grave** – Not Morbid ☺ but **Men of Dignity** (respect); Not silly *“Not easily deceived”* – Dave Roche
 - Man of honest or honorable character; **Men of Quality & Substance**
 - Element of seriousness is prominent in both E & D
- **Not double-tongued** – **Not** “two-faced” (gr. Dilogos) – “talebearer”; suggesting idea of gossipers
 - Speaking one thing to one person & something different to another (**with the intent to deceive!**)
 - **Man of His Word** – Speaks of consistency in word and deed; honest
 - Not a dictator but must have the courage and conviction to stand up for what is right especially in matters that concern the welfare of God's Household/Family
- **Not Given** (or addicted) to **Much Wine**
 - Bible does not teach total abstinence; In those days wine was used as a medicine (I Timothy 5:23 Paul encourages Timothy to use a little wine for his stomach's sake and thine often infirmities (AJV)
 - Even today medicines contain a high % of alcohol
 - The word *“much”* as it pertains to the use of wine
 - Directed to deacons who would manage the distribution of food and drink and thus be *reminded much more often* of their *moral responsibilities*?
 - Compared to - Higher standards for elders / overseers due to their house-to-house visitations
 - “Better to teach abstinence than to be fooled by the abuse of alcohol.” - JVMcGee
- **Not Greedy of Filthy Lucre** (unquenchable love of money)
 - As a **Man of Integrity** he knows how to handle the money of the church (**God's money**)
 - It is necessary that a deacon be found blameless and *held to a higher standard* when it comes to the *financial matters* of the church!

Note doesn't say they have to be apt to teach – Stephen and Philip were preaching machines!

- Yet they are “Holding the *mystery* of the faith in a pure (clear, clean) conscience”
 - **Mystery** – (gr. Mysterion) – hidden secrets (deep truths or purposes and counsels of God) can only be spiritually discerned by the enlightening work of the Holy Spirit
 - Pure **conscience** (gr. Katharos) – free of guilt and sin as every known sin is laid bare and repented of and confessed before the Lord
- Deacons were not merely men of physical stature but were **Men of Conviction/Understanding**
 - **Morally and ethically sound and divinely enabled to grasp & obey the truth**
 - *Not easily deceived* – why? Because they were **Men of The Book!!!**

Now of course these *all* apply to the elder or spiritual brother or sister *growing* in the Lord

3:10 – Testing or Examination of the aforementioned qualities

- Proved verb for test = dokimazo which means to test in the hope of being successful
 - **Not a test of disqualification**
 - **Men who could be trusted must first have their credibility tested!**
 - Again an Exhortation not to promote someone too quickly without *SCRIPTURAL SCRUTINY*
- Use the office – relieve the elders of more temporal distractions so the spiritual leaders could maintain their *priorities of prayer* and the *ministry of the Word* (6:4);
- Blameless – not sinless – irreproachable or above reproach meaning, “ you cannot bring an accusation against him & win” (though many may try)

3:11 – Special Injunction to Women – High Standards of Wives of Deacons (Even So – “In like manner”)

- Grave – serious, able to be calm & collective
 - For such work of house visitation, house hospitality, baptizing new women converts, certain moral qualities would be essential
- Not Slanderers – not to be gossips, discreet { these 2 might be difficult and could cause much hurt/distrust amongst the sheep}
- Sober – sober-minded, able to make a righteous judgment
- Faithful in all things – To cause of Christ, To her husband, to her children; *absolutely trustworthy*

3:12 – Domestic orderliness & Parental Control are necessary requirements of both E & D (requirements same)

- The deacons are to meet the same personal & familial requirements that were given to the elders
- Rule their own houses well – in a noble manner where there is no room for blame
- Man who would have authority in the assembly of the saints will show by example through the example of the authority he already has in his own house and whether is able to *bring order* to a larger group

3:13 – Purchase to themselves a Good Degree and Great Boldness in the faith

- Purchase – NAS says “obtain”, “preserve, keep”, “get for one’s self” implies **REWARD**
- Good Degree – (gr. Bathmos which literally means “a step”, sometimes used to indicate steps/degrees of a sundial)
 - advancement in service; He that is faithful in the small things qualifies for responsibility in larger things (larger sphere of influence) (Luke 16:10)
 - Good Standing – a deacon who serves well will become a man who can be trusted
 - God is able to trust these men with things that concern His flock/heritage!
 - Suggestive of **promotion** to the spiritual work of elder; however, **not** to be his chief aim (BS, DS, MR)
 - Who better to become elders than those who **they** have known and who have **labored beside** the elders for a number of years already?
- Great Boldness in the faith – NAS says “confidence”
 - Early deacons Stephen and Phillip were examples
 - By-product of faithful service is he will become a **Man of Influence** inside/outside the church
- First benefit recorded in Acts 6 after the *orderly selection* of deacons was *“And the word of God increased”!*

These are the men God has chosen to lead his church during this age

CONCLUSION OR LESSONS then the Doxology?

DANGERS OR PITFALLS

1. To concentrate or scrutinize (the perfection of such qualities) so much as to discourage young men from aspiring to the occupation of an elder or deacon
 - a. Remember the more exacting you are about the items listed the fewer candidates you will probably end up with (JS)
 - b. Not to water down the characteristics but to allow for some latitude for **grace** and **growth**
 - c. Requiring perfection will eliminate all!
2. Danger to select a man based on his physical characteristics rather than on the spiritual qualifications outlined in this passage
3. Danger to Short-cut the *spiritual process of recognition* in being too quick to recognize someone who is successful in business or eloquent of speech

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

1. All Saints are urged to recognize those whom God has put over them in authority and *esteem them very highly* for the work sake (I Thess. 5:12-13) – **lack of recognition hinders the work**
2. In the case of elders, Our responsibility is to recognize “Not choose, not our choice; God’s choice; God’s Man” – I Thess 5:12-13, Hebrews 13:7&17
 - a. It is important to recognize those who are in authority over us, not because they received the most votes in some election, but because the Holy Spirit of God has done a work in their hearts and is raising them up.
 - b. The word “to *know* them which labor among you” means “*to recognize*”
 - c. God will reveal who is doing the work {of an elder} to those who are spending time walking close to the Lord Jesus Christ
 - d. It takes some time for God to show who He is raising up as elders; a spiritual process that takes place in the heart and works its way out into the life Numbers 11:16 Good Illustration of God providing the **Power in Proportion to the Burden** – Moses and the 70 elders
3. Sheep must submit to the Word of God (I Peter 5:5)
4. Sheep must obey God’s leadership (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 7:22-30, 35 – wandered 40 years in the wilderness until all that disobeyed God died except Caleb and Joshua and the younger generation (< 25yrs)
5. Churches seeking to follow the **New Testament pattern of leadership** will continuously look to train and equip younger men in discipleship and delegation of duties that allow the **work** to go **unhindered** or **undisturbed**.

ELDERS

1. An elder is to be God’s example in the local church that others can follow.
2. An elder’s attitude - I love the sheep, I’m going to feed, care for, and help them no matter the recognition.
3. Faithfulness in the small things leads to greater responsibilities in larger things (**home – church – community**)
4. The functions include to rule (I Tim 3:3-4-5; 5:17) and to guard the body of revealed truth from perversion and error (Titus 1:9)
5. Duties of Elders (I Thess. 5:14-15)
 - a. Warn them that are unruly – walk **disorderly**
 - b. Comfort the feeble-minded – without strength, timid
 - c. Support the weak – Lacking faith
 - d. Follow that which is good – Phil 4:8
6. Elders must give an account (Heb 13:7,17) – for how they ruled used 3x (**rule – led, guide, imitated their Master**)

PAUL'S REMINDER TO US THE CHURCH: Our High Standing & Standard comes from being in Christ as Christians!

I Timothy 3:16 (Great Hymn or Doxology, not meant to be taken chronologically or in **order** of events)

- **Without controversy** (gr. Homologoumenos) – “by common consent”; no disputing the obvious evidence
- Great is the *Mystery of godliness* – appears nowhere else but here
 - “Spiritual truth once concealed now divinely revealed”
 - The mystery of godliness is that God in the person of Jesus Christ entered this world in which we live, paid the penalty of sin, and is making men & women godly (Godlikeness)
 - Could mean practical godliness (as outlined by E&D) is the outflowing of inner character or integrity
- **Visible proofs of**
 - God was manifested in the flesh (*“became visible”* – *“came from out of sight to being in plain sight”*)
 - speaks of reemphasizes Christ’s Incarnation and Virgin Birth and presupposes the Preexistence of Christ
 - (en sarki (sarx)???) – denotes sphere of operation – took on a body bones permeated with blood and became a human being
 - Evidently well known amongs 1st Century believers
 - Application to Christ’s Incarnation and historicity would be *“beyond dispute”*
 - **Justified in the Spirit** (c.f. Romans 1:4) Christ was vindicated in the spiritual realm by God when he was declared to be His Son at His resurrection
 - **Seen of angels** (could mean principalities and powers pre- during and post-resurrection, angelic and demonic)
 - Angels at His Virgin Birth
 - His glory was on display at His Baptism
 - His glory was on display at His Transfiguration
 - His glory was on display at His Arrest (I AM)
 - *“No enemy laid his hand on Him after he was raised from the dead. He will never be dishonored again.”*
 - Host of heaven (band of angelic worshippers) was eager to receive back the exalted Son of God
 - **Preached unto the Gentiles**
 - From the day of Pentecost forward continues today through His Church
 - Reached the farthest corners of the earth
 - Church made up of Jew and Gentile
 - Multitude innumerable in the GT through witness of 144K
 - **Believed on in the world**
 - Proclamation is worldwide but its reception has only been partial
 - *The proclaimed Messiah is received by Faith in the Sphere of this world!!! Today...day of salv*
 - **Received up into glory** – His Ascension marks a fitting climax to Christ’s triumph on earth through the faith of His people and His Triumph in glory displayed in the Heavenly realm
 - Today Christ is at God’s Right Hand interceding for us in the *Sphere of glory!!!*

“The hymn could not close more suitably than with the humiliated Messiah’s exalted entry into His heavenly sphere.”

- Tyndale’s Pastoral Epistles

- *No mention of death and resurrection but the doctrine of the cross and His resurrection must be assumed (Doctrine of Omission)*