

## INTRODUCTION

Remember that the subject of this letter is: 1 Timothy 3:15 ...how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God...

And the will of our Lord Jesus regarding our behavior in His congregation is not something we resent or chafe under. Instead, we are very happy to learn from His apostle what His will is for us. One of the things we don't like about being new to some situation is that we don't know what we are supposed to do. So we like it when someone who knows will tell us, especially if it is the person in charge. So even though our flesh might rebel at being told what to do and not do in the congregation, our born-again inner man rejoices in it.

We had the congregation's duty, each member toward his own family.

We had the congregation's duty toward its widows.

Now we have the congregation's duty toward its elders, its pastors.

Previously we had how the congregation is to choose men for its elders or pastors.

Now we have how the congregation is to treat those men it has chosen for its elders or pastors.

**The congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ is to count its elders worthy of double honor.**

## TEXT

1 Timothy 5:17-18 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. 18 For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE AN OX WHILE IT TREADS OUT THE GRAIN," and, "THE LABORER IS WORTHY OF HIS WAGES."

## BODY

**The congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ is to count its elders worthy of double honor.**

- I. The Congregation Is To Honor Its Elders for the Sake of Their Work
  - A. In every line in this passage
    1. who rule well
    2. who labor
    3. while it treads out the grain
    4. the laborer
  - B. Remember this from 1 Timothy 3:1
    1. the office of a bishop --- a good work, a worthy work, a noble task
  - C. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13a (12) And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who **labor** among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, (13) and to esteem them very highly in love **for their work's sake...**
  - D. The congregation needs the work of the elder
    1. the work of ruling
      - a) that the worship be kept decent and orderly

- (1) that nothing be added to what our Lord has instituted
- (2) that nothing be taken away from what our Lord has instituted
- (3) that nothing be perverted from what our Lord has intended
- b) that the ordinances be duly administered
  - (1) baptism
    - (a) that it not be neglected
    - (b) that it not be perverted
    - (c) that it be understood rightly
    - (d) that it be practiced rightly
  - (2) the Lord's Supper
    - (a) that it not be neglected
    - (b) that it not be perverted
    - (c) that it be understood rightly
    - (d) that it be practiced rightly
- c) that discipline be maintained
- d) that selection and ordination of new officers be done biblically
- 2. especially the work of the word and doctrine
  - a) not that the work of ruling and the work of the word and doctrine are separate things
  - b) but within the larger work of ruling over the congregation, the work of the word and doctrine is the most important thing
  - c) teaching the Bible as true, and the very word of God
  - d) teaching God and His law as the perfect standard of love and righteousness
  - e) indicting man as sinful, and needing to be saved from the wrath of God to come
  - f) proclaiming the gospel or good news of Jesus Christ
    - (1) that He has died on the cross for sinners
    - (2) that He was buried
    - (3) that He rose again from the grave
    - (4) that all who turn from their sins and trust in Him are forgiven their sins and justified in God's sight, and so are saved from eternal death to eternal life
- 3. elsewhere prayer is mentioned, although it isn't mentioned here
- E. The congregation is to recognize the importance of this work, the need for this work, and so the value of this work
- F. Since the work the elders do is so important, so necessary, so valuable to the congregation, the elders themselves, who do this work, are to be counted necessary, to be thought of as important, to be reckoned as valuable
- G. Then to treat the elders as necessary, important, valuable because they do the necessary, important, valuable work is to honor the elders for the sake of their work

The congregation is to honor its elders for the sake of their work

- II. The Honor the Congregation Gives Its Elders For the Sake of Their Work Is To Be A Double Honor
- A. There are two aspects of honor mentioned in this context, very close to the lines we are studying today
    1. 1 Timothy 6:1 Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed.
      - a) here the servant is to honor the master in the sense of revering him and obeying him because he is under the master and the master rules over him
    2. Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are really widows.
      - a) we know from previous study that the primary way we are to honor widows indeed is to provide them with the necessities of life, to provide them their living
  - B. Because of the elder's work, the congregation is to count him worthy of both of those aspects of honor
    1. in order for the congregation to have the full benefit of his work in ruling the congregation, and especially of his labor in the word and doctrine, the disciples of Jesus Christ must honor the pastor in the sense of loving him, revering him, esteeming him highly, submitting themselves to him, understanding him to have been given the rule over them by the Holy Spirit
      - a) 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13a (12) And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, (13) and **to esteem them very highly in love** for their work's sake...
      - b) Hebrews 13:17 Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.
    2. and, in order for the congregation to have the full benefit of his work in ruling the congregation, and especially of his labor in the word and doctrine, the disciples of Jesus Christ must honor the pastor in the sense of providing his living, paying him for his work, so he can continue in it
  - C. This understanding of today's passage in 1 Timothy is in our 1689 Confession of Faith - 1689.26.10
    1. ...it is incumbent on the churches to whom they minister, not only to give them all due respect, but also to communicate to them of all their good things according to their ability...
    2. the scripture proof given in that place is today's text, 1 Timothy 5:17-18

The congregation is to honor its elders for the sake of their work

The honor the congregation gives its elders for the sake of their work is to be a double honor

- III. The Rightness of Honoring the Elders for Their Work's Sake Is Proven from the Scriptures
- A. "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE AN OX WHILE IT TREADS OUT THE GRAIN,"

1. this is Deuteronomy 25:4
  2. the context in the law was paying workers
  3. the apostle teaches us that it was written for men
- B. "THE LABORER IS WORTHY OF HIS WAGES."
1. this is Luke 10:7
  2. the context in the gospel was Jesus sending out his disciples to go preaching the gospel in the towns of Israel
  3. the apostle teaches us that the principle applies to a congregation's pastors, also

## CONCLUSION

The congregation is to honor its elders for the sake of their work

The honor the congregation gives its elders for the sake of their work is to be a double honor

The rightness of honoring the elders for their work's sake is proven from the scriptures

**The congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ is to count its elders worthy of double honor.**

1 Corinthians 9:4-11 Do we have no right to eat and drink? 5 Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? 6 Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working? 7 Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? 8 Do I say these things as a mere man? Or does not the law say the same also? 9 For it is written in the law of Moses, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE AN OX WHILE IT TREADS OUT THE GRAIN." Is it oxen God is concerned about? 10 Or does He say it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. 11 If we have sown spiritual things for you, is it a great thing if we reap your material things?

1 Corinthians 9:13-14 Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? 14 Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

Thad - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 16:5-8

Roel - Scripture Reading - Deuteronomy 24:14-25:4

Jeremiah - Congregational Prayer

Rita - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 370 "Jesus Saves!" - Andrew lead

Allison - Trinity 581 "To Thee, O Lord, I Fly" - Alex lead

Rita - Trinity 262 "God, In the Gospel Of His Son"

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13a (12) And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who **labor** [G2872 *kopiaō*] among you, and **are over** [G4291 *proistemi*] you in the Lord and admonish you, (13) and **to esteem** [G2233 *hegeomai*] them very highly in love for their **work's** [G2041 *ergon*] sake.

**who rule well** [G2573 *kalos*]

Gen, KJV, NKJV, ESV rule well

CSB are good leaders

Calvin:

who faithfully and laboriously discharge their office...

In short, he means that honor is not due to the title, but to the work performed by those who are appointed to the office.

Geneva:

let the church or congregation see to this especially, as God himself has commanded, that the elders that do their duty well, are honestly supported.

Gill:

nor are lay elders meant, who rule, but teach not; since there are no such officers appointed in the churches of Christ; whose only officers are bishops or elders and deacons

There are no other that rule in churches, but such who also speak to them the word of God; wherefore by him that rules, and the labourer in word and doctrine, are not meant two distinct orders, but different persons of the same order; some of these ruling well, but do not take so much pains in the ministry of the word; while others of them both rule well and labour in the word

JRY:

a very important point in light of what developed later, men receiving a living for holding an office, regardless of how well they did the work, and whether or not they did the work at all!

**double honor** [G5092 *time*]

JRY:

honor means essentially “value”

to honor someone means to treat him according to his value or worth

to honor someone rightly, we must treat him according to his value or worth as assigned by God

-that means sometimes we honor someone according to his position, not according to his conduct, recognizing those who are in authority over us e.g. 1 Timothy 6:1 Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed.

-that means sometimes we honor someone according to his position e.g. 1 Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are really widows.

to honor a congregation's pastor rightly, the disciples need to

-acknowledge how valuable is the work of his office

-acknowledge how the Lord has set the pastor over the congregation to do the work of his office

a congregation's pastor is worthy of a double honor

-for the sake of his work, to revere him as set over the congregation

-for the sake of his work, to pay him what he deserves for that work

Chrysostom (as quoted by Calvin):

meaning "support and reverence."

Calvin:

a comparison is here drawn between widows and elders. Paul had formerly enjoined that honor should be paid — to widows; but elders are more worthy of being honored than widows, and, with respect to them, ought therefore to receive double honor.

Geneva:

We must be more concerned for them, than for the rest.

Trapp:

Countenance and maintenance...reverence and recompense

that they may give themselves continually and cheerfully to preaching and prayer, Act\_6:4.

Bengel:

Double, i.e. large

Gill:

this is to be understood both of that outward respect that is to be shown them by words and actions; and of a sufficient maintenance that is to be provided for them; in which sense the word "honour" is used in this chapter before

some think that the comparison is between the widows before mentioned, and these elders; that if poor widows in the church are to be honoured and maintained, then much more the officers of it; these are worthy of more honour, even of double honour, or, a larger and a more honourable main tenant: and indeed this seems to be the meaning of the word "double" when used both in an ill and in a good sense...and so may here signify, that the ministers of the Gospel ought not to have a short and scanty, but a large and honourable maintenance

Clarke:

Almost every critic of note allows that τιμη here signifies reward, stipend, wages. Let him have a double or a larger salary who rules well

**especially [G3122 *malista*]**

**who labor [G2872 *kopiao*] in the word and doctrine**

ESV in preaching and teaching

CSB who work hard at preaching and teaching

Geneva:

There were two types of elders: the one dealt with the government only, and looked to the behaviour of the congregation; the other in addition to that, dealt with both preaching and prayers, to and for the congregation.

Calvin:

there were at that time two kinds of elders; for all were not ordained to teach. The words plainly mean, that there were some who “ruled well” and honorably, but who did not hold the office of teachers

Bengel:

those who had been so employed (*κοπιῶντες*), were less at leisure for working, and for acquiring fortune, and were worthy of compensation.

Gill:

labouring in the word in private; besides which there is labouring in doctrine, in public

Barnes:

Those among them who “labored in the word and doctrine,” and who gave up all their time to the business of their office, would be worthy of special respect, and of a higher compensation.

Fairbairn:

the term presbyters is everywhere used by Paul and by the other sacred writers in reference to the stated, ordinary, and perpetual pastors of the church

ecclesiastical antiquity is silent respecting a class of presbyters whose duty was to rule merely, as contradistinguished from both ruling and teaching

**the laborer is worthy [G514 *axios*] of his wages**

Carroll:

Wherever there is no adequate provision for ministerial support, and the preacher must do things for his living, run a farm or practice medicine, we may rest assured that he cannot give his undivided attention to the ministry, and that churches that receive that kind of ministry do not receive the full work of the ministry. The calamity in that case is on the church. Oftentimes it is downright covetousness that is the cause of it. Churches think we can get Brother So-and-so for fifty dollars a year, and we can just have preaching once a month. Can a church prosper on once a month's preaching?

I have always taken this position: If any preacher, truly called of God to preach, will implicitly trust, not the churches, but the Lord Jesus Christ to take care of him, and will consecrate his

entire time to the work of the ministry, verily he shall be clothed and fed, or else the heavens will fall, and God's word will not be so.

I made that statement once and some of the brethren questioned it. I still stand on it.

If I were a young man again, I would do just as I did then, burn all the bridges behind and push out on the promises of God, that perhaps not in my way, not in the church's way, but in some way the Lord Jesus Christ would take care of my wife and children.

I would say in my heart, "I am God's man; I am to go out as his minister, to do his work, to do no other business; and sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, I will trust the Lord and stick to my work." I have tried trusting Jesus and he has never failed; I have had men to lie to me straight-out; I have had 1,000 promises to fail, coming from men, but never has any promise of God failed that he has ever made.