

“Pastoral Authority”
1 Timothy 4:11
(Preached at Trinity, June 20, 2021)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Beginning with verse 6 and continuing to the end of the chapter Paul is giving some of the qualities of an excellent minister of the Lord Jesus Christ.
1 Timothy 4:6 NAU - "In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus" (Can also be translated excellent minister – fits the context)
2. I’ve pointed out that although Paul is writing this letter to Pastor Timothy to remind him of the importance of maintaining excellence in his life and ministry, these expectations are important for us all. All of us should strive to maintain excellence in our lives. All of us are servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. All of us must be zealous to maintain sound doctrine and moral purity.
1 Timothy 4:16 NAU - "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching"
3. In **Verses 7-9** Paul describes the importance of living a disciplined life and describes it as a “trustworthy statement deserving of full acceptance.” In other words, it is an undeniable truth—the truth that the Christian must give high energy and effort regarding the matter of personal godliness.
Our flesh is opposed to the rigors of the Christian life - we must maintain strict control over our flesh. Our greatest enemy is often inward. We must wage warfare against our own flesh.
1 Peter 2:11 NAU - "Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul."
4. In **Verse 10** Paul states our grand motivation. We labor and strive because of Christ. We have set our hope on Him. He has captivated our affections. He is the focus of everything in our lives.
5. Now beginning with **Verse 11** Paul is speaking particularly to Timothy and the pastoral office. While it doesn’t apply to your life personally, it does hold great importance with regard to your church. What is your expectation for those who lead you? And do you understand the nature of the pastoral office?
6. As we’ve seen, the pastoral office is primarily a teaching office. One of the qualifications we saw in **Chapter 3** was that he should be an able teacher.
As a shepherd he is charged with the care of Christ’s church.
 - A. The pastor should always be in teaching mode, always ready to teach God’s people, always ready to rightly apply God’s Word to the situations of life.
 - B. Paul uses another word to describe the pastor’s teaching - παραγγέλλω
The NASB doesn’t really express the fullness of this word. It translates it “prescribe.” That gives it a rather benign meaning. We think of the recommendations of our physician—recommendations we may receive or reject.

The word is stronger than this, far greater than a recommendation. It refers to a command. It means to pass on strict orders.

CSV, ESV, NIV - "Command and teach these things."

KJV, NKJV - "These things command and teach."

- C. The word is in the imperative. It is a command to command. And it is in the present tense, to command and go on commanding.
By "these things" Paul is referring to the instruction he has conveyed in this Epistle. It is the "these things" Paul was speaking of in **3:14-15**.
7. Not only should the pastor be in teaching mode, his teaching should be in command mode. God's Word carries a firm, "Thus saith the Lord."
This demands bold confidence in God's Word. This sometimes demands unshakable resolve even in the midst of conflict. Sometimes courage in the face of fear.
Voddie Baucham spoke of a supposed 11th Commandment.
"Thou shalt be nice."
"When a pastor says something confrontational it usually dies the death of a thousand qualifications. Just say what the Book says. They are afraid of those who are more offended by the fact that you confronted the sin than that the sin offends God."¹
"This is where we are. We are so weak, so feminized. Just manliness, just a manly confrontation is seen as something that we can't take..."²
8. This morning I want us to consider the subject of pastoral authority. He must teach in command mode. There is authority that accompanies the pastoral office, but what is the nature of this authority?
- I. The Pastor's preaching and teaching must always reflect the authority of God's Word.
- A. He should never be apologetic or simply put forth suggestions and ideas
1. The pastor's teaching should not be tentative but definite and persuasive.
 2. Man's problem is sin. It is an effort to dethrone God.
 3. The pastor must stay in command mode – OBEY! SUBMIT!
 4. He will sometimes face opposition from those who resist the truth.
2 Timothy 4:3-4 NAU - "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, ⁴ and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths."
 5. The pastor should never strive to merely entertain. He should be friendly, but making friends is not his chief goal. God's heralds are often hated.
 6. He should be dead serious concerning the Word of God
- B. A pastor's authority, however, is not a self-ordained authority nor is it an absolute authority - The Pastor's authority comes from two sources
1. First, the pastor gains his authority from the nature of His office
We have seen that the word translate "bishop" is ἐπίσκοπος
The office is one of oversight, of shepherding, of leading the church. Their office has the duty of governing the church.

¹ Voddie Baucham [sermon on YouTube](#).

² Voddie Baucham quoted on the [Pulpit and Pen website](#).

2. The Pastor must have confidence in his calling
 - a. He has been commissioned by Christ. He is Christ's herald.
 - b. A man with this confidence will preach boldly – his only concern will be that he please Christ.
When the apostles were commanded to cease preaching Peter boldly answered, "We must obey God rather than men."
 - c. If he has been called, he has been equipped to carry out the office – empowered by the Holy Spirit.
Jesus told His apostles, "but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you"
 - d. We can see this with the apostles.
Consider Peter – Previously he had been nervous, apprehensive, he was such a coward and so fearful for his life that he denied the Lord.
Afterward he preached with boldness, power, and authority.
In Acts 4 the religious leaders could not dispute the authority of Peter and John
Acts 4:13 NAU - "Now as they observed the confidence of Peter and John and understood that they were uneducated and untrained men, they were amazed, and *began* to recognize them as having been with Jesus."
- C. Second, the pastor's authority comes from the authority of Scriptures
1. "These things" are not suggestions – The Bible is not an archaic religious book - The Bible sets forth the rule of life. It is the very Word of God.
 2. The pastor must preach in command mode – it is not his words but God's words which carry authority. Paul made it clear that his power and authority did not rest in himself.
1 Corinthians 2:3-5 NAU - "I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling, ⁴ and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, ⁵ so that your faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God."
 3. If God has not spoken it in His Word it is wrong to give it Divine authority. It is wrong to make authoritative proclamations where the Scriptures are silent.
But where the Scriptures speak, we must command.
 4. This demands high confidence in the Word of God
2 Timothy 3:16-17 NAU - "All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ¹⁷ so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work."
 5. It also demands high confidence in his understanding of the Scriptures
2 Timothy 2:15 NAU - "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth."

II. The pastor's authority is a limited authority. All earthly authority is a delegated authority and is always in danger of being abused.

Many pastors become unbiblically authoritarian.

There are two sources for blame: The Congregation, The Pastor himself

- A. The fault of the congregation – How can the congregation be to blame. Often it is the congregation that sets up this supreme authority figure. It usually has several causes.
1. Idol worship – sinful flesh is often not content with the unseen reality of the one true God and the one true Shepherd.
 - a. Like the Israelites in the days of Samuel, they want a leader they can see rather than God.
 - b. Many congregations begin to follow a man rather than Christ. They set him up as an idol and then allow him to lord over them. They become proud of him and boast to other congregations about their idol. We can call to mind some of the so-called celebrity preachers today.
 - c. God will share His glory with no man
 2. Fear of man
 - a. Some are gripped with a desire to please man.
 - b. They spend their time dancing around their idol – they would never question their exalted leader
This is the root cause of many cults.
 3. Unbelief – they don't believe God guides His people today
 - a. They don't spend their time in prayer and meditation.
 - b. It is easier just to ask their leader to take all of the responsibility for their soul – the pastor becomes their surrogate god.
 - c. This leads to laziness – it is always easier to follow the teachings of a man than to take the time to search the Scriptures to see if he is speaking the truth.
- B. The fault of the pastor – there are several things a pastor must never forget. Sin and authority are a dangerous mix. It can lead to pride, arrogance, a lust for power. History is littered with endless dictators.
1. The pastor is under the authority of the Chief Shepherd
 - a. He is speaking the words of Christ to the people of Christ.
 - b. The church does not belong to the pastor – he must continually direct the sheep to the Good Shepherd.
 - c. Those pastors who lean towards authoritarianism are often guilty of unbelief – they cannot trust that Christ is active in His church.
 - d. They cannot trust that the Holy Spirit is active conforming God's people to Christ's image.
 2. The pastor must be a servant to all – the pastor's life is a life of service. One of the pastor's gifts is the gift of service.
 - a. A dictator's life is a life of being served.
 - b. A pastor's life is one of serving others.

3. His authority must be tempered by humility
 - a. Moses had great authority but we read of him:
Numbers 12:3 NAU - "Now the man Moses was very humble, more than any man who was on the face of the earth."
 - b. No man has ever had the authority of Christ – yet no man has ever demonstrated the extent of His humility.
 - c. This is why a pastor must not be new to the faith
1 Timothy 3:6 NAU - "*and* not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil."
4. A pastor's authority must be driven by love – no pastor will abuse his people if he loves them
 - a. The shepherd in ancient Palestine walked ahead of his sheep leading them, calling them by name to follow him to green pastures.
The sheep followed because they had come to know and trust the shepherd's care and concern for their well-being. It was the shepherd who fought the lion or the bear. It was the shepherd who protected the sheep from thieves. It was the shepherd who left the 99 to search for one who had gone astray.
 - b. Today sheep ranchers employ barking dogs to drive frightened, harassed and bewildered sheep ahead of them. The sheep are motivated by the fear of the snapping dogs.
 - c. This isn't Christ's way for His beloved sheep. A pastor must lead the sheep, warn of dangers, keep them from wandering.
5. His authority must be validated by his example

Conclusion:

1. Every pastor is a sinful man. All are in danger of neglecting their office or of lording over God's people.
2. The pastor must be gentle, but bold as a lion.
 - A. True revival always involves men of God pounding truth from the pulpit, with power and authority.
Lloyd-Jones – "The great characteristic of all revivals has been the authority of the preacher."
 - B. But the pastor's authority must never exist apart from servanthood, humility, love, patience, trust in Christ.