

Sermon Notes

June 6, 2021

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Sheep and Shepherds 1 Timothy 5:17-25

Safeguards

- ❖ What safeguards must both sheep and shepherds keep in place if the church is to be both pure and powerful?
 - the church is a dynamic, supernatural organism
 - spiritual gifts, talents and abilities that help the church grow, prosper and be fruitful in her efforts
- ❖ The gift of godly leaders
 - qualifications for leadership (ch 3)
 - duties and responsibilities of leaders (ch 4)
 - responsibilities of church members to leaders (ch 5)

Blessed To Be A Blessing

- ❖ God blessed Israel so that Israel would be a blessing to the nation who surround her
 - a conduit of blessing
 - a witness to her neighbors
- ❖ Because the leaders of Israel fail, the nation of Israel fails to fulfill her purpose

- ❖ Through Jesus and the birth of the church, God expands the circle of those through whom He intends to carry His light to the nations
 - sadly, the church is just as susceptible to missing the mark and falling away as was Israel
 - the church needs to honor, care for, protect, discipline, and choose her leaders wisely

How to Honor Your Leaders

- ❖ **Labor** carries with it the picture of strenuous effort
 - those who labor and fulfill their responsibilities well are worthy of **double honor**
 - “twofold” honor
 - remuneration (*cf.* 1 Corinthians 9:7-12a, Luke 10:7)
 - respect
 - comes in all sorts of different ways
 - how you speak about your leaders
 - how you respond to the counsel and correction of your leaders (*cf.* Hebrews 13:17)
 - how you encourage your leaders
- ❖ Protect your pastor
 - **Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses**
 - malicious attacks against Paul (2 Corinthians 10:10)
 - never listen to gossip about leaders
- ❖ However, those who sin are to be held accountable and to be publicly rebuked

- discipline is necessary for the sake and well-being of the church (v. 20)
- the church must be reminded of the reality and consequences of sin
 - discipline must be carried out without prejudging and with fairness
 - fair, evenhanded discipline in the sight of the Father and the Son who will judge the whole world according to the strictest standards of justice

How to Choose Your Leaders

- ❖ ***Do not be hasty*** in putting people into positions of leadership responsibility, especially pastors
 - ask the hard questions because the purity of the church is at stake
 - indifference and apathy in the selection and ordination of pastors makes you complicit in their sins
- ❖ People who are put in positions where they don't belong create havoc for the church
- ❖ Some personal advice from Paul to a "stressed-out" pastor
- ❖ Dealing with conspicuous and hidden sin as well as conspicuous and hidden good works
 - ask the Holy Spirit for discernment in making decisions
 - good deeds tend to rise to the surface

Personal Application

1. What is your attitude about leaders? Are you thankful for them, resentful of them or apathetically indifferent toward them? How do your attitudes line up with the teaching Paul gives in this section of Scripture?
2. How ready, willing, and able are you to submit to the leadership of others?
3. What are one or two practical steps you can take to honor and protect the leaders God has given to our part of Christ's body?