

Theme: Those who bear the image of God, in whom that image is being renewed through the grace of God in Christ Jesus, are those who give honor where honor is due.

Background: We continue to look at "family relations" – and "family responsibilities"

I. Honoring the Elders – Worthy of *double* honor?

'Time' – has two meanings: "honor/respect" and "price" (worth)

A two-fold honor includes affirmation and support

A. Affirmation (recognition)

1. Acknowledging their work/ministry
2. It's never wrong to thank someone for his or her service

B. Support

1. Levites/Priests were supported (2 Chronicles 31:4; 1 Corinthians 9:9, 14)
2. Support for the elders/shepherds is appropriate - Their labor is hard, not menial (Deuteronomy 25:4; Luke 10:7)

NOTE: Paul equates Jesus' words with those of the Pentateuch.

II. Guarding the Flock

A. Handling accusations

1. Don't dignify (accept) every complaint
2. Don't dismiss (reject) those with merit/support
There must be more than one witness whenever possible (Deuteronomy 19:15; 2 Corinthians 13:1).

B. Pursuing discipline

1. Persisting in sin?
 - a. Following Matthew 18
Multiple steps of the process
 - b. General principle
 - 1) Private sins kept private
 - 2) Public sins made public
2. A public rebuke
 - a. The nature of the sin? Personal or doctrinal – makes no difference
 - b. The purpose of discipline
 - 1) The honor of Christ
 - 2) Reclamation of the sinner
 - 3) The purity and protection of the church
 - c. The elder's higher responsibility and accountability
They are judged more strictly (James 3:1)

C. The fine line in discipline

1. Abuse of discipline
 - a. Undermining the heart of the gospel
 - b. Bringing fear – not driving it out (1 John 4:18)
2. Failure to discipline
 - a. Purity of the church is marred
 - b. Honor of Christ ignored
 - c. Sinner is left to eternal judgment – no repentance
 - d. Body no longer protected from danger and sin

III. Timothy's Charge

- A. A solemn charge
 - 1. The witnesses to the charge?
A solemn occasion
 - 2. These things (rules, instructions/directions)
Regarding the purity of the church
- B. Judge fairly
 - 1. Without prejudice/bias
Neither rush to judgment nor to acquittal
 - 2. Without favoritism
Not acting with "partiality" (playing favorites?)
- C. Using great caution
 - 1. In the leaders you choose
 - a. On those who repent?
OR
 - b. Ordination?
More consistent with Paul's use and Timothy's experience (cf. 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6)
 - 2. Do not be hasty!
Don't risk it if you are not sure
- D. Guarding your own life
 - 1. "Keep yourself pure"
 - 2. Purity and "abstention" are not the same thing
- E. Be discerning
 - 1. Look past the surface
 - 2. Good or ill – all will be revealed (Revelation 14:13)

IV. Honoring Authority

NOTE: What about "slavery?"

- A. Under unbelieving masters
Hold out the gospel
- B. Under believing masters
These are your brothers in Christ

V. Teach These Things

Those who bear the image of God, in whom that image is being renewed through the grace of God in Christ Jesus, are those who give honor where honor is due – to God, who is worthy of all honor and glory; but also to the weakest in church by providing for them; to those who have been faithful servants – with recognition and affirmation; to the elders – through respect, obedience and support; and to others in authority – in full submission out of reverence for Christ.