

1 Timothy 5:17-25 Subject: Integrity- Being who you appear to be

To get the full background go to the refuel website: www.usfbc.com/refuel

Purpose of 1 Timothy: 1. To direct Timothy to give vigorous personal opposition to the false doctrine developing in Ephesus (1:3). 2. To instruct Timothy about the kind of behavior that should characterize Ephesian believers as members of “God’s household. (3:15)”

Last week: **Come Alongside**

Parakaleo – exhort – to come alongside

Fabrice talked about how as the church we must come alongside each other. We must treat older believers as mothers and fathers and younger as siblings. But, then we must take care of each other with respect. What Fabrice also talked about was how the widows needed to be cared for – something that is mentioned throughout Scripture in the OT and the NT

After Paul addresses how to care for the widows he talks about how to treat the elders and pastors as a result of how the false teachers were disrespecting and degrading them.

5:17-25

V. 17 – Elders = Overseers = Pastors – have a big responsibility and that is to direct the affairs of the church (take care of the people) and are responsible for your soul. They answer to God for you.

The ones who do it well are worthy of double honor - respect the elders of the church

Hebrews 13:17 – “Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.”

Do you respect the elders/pastors of your church? They have a monumental responsibility of answering to God for your soul. Paul doesn’t just talk about respect but also getting paid. He says this especially for those who preach and teach. Why? Because they are caring for your soul and that is worth more than any amount of money in the world. Examine your heart attitude toward your pastor; if he is serving you well, show your respect by contributing generously to his support. You can do this through tithing and serving in the church. Both of these methods give honor to the elders who direct the affairs of your church. Another tangible way is to recognize someone for a job well done – a letter of gratitude, phone call of appreciation, expressing a public, personal word of praise tagged on facebook or twitter. Easy things we can do that go a long way.

Paul also states that those who preach and teach should be especially honored – These types of Elders communicate to the whole church how to protect themselves against heresy – kind of like we are doing right now.

v. 18 – This expression originally comes from Deut 25:4. “Paul reasoned that if God could show concern for the laboring ox, the congregation needed to show proper concern for its pastor.” (NAC) However, in 1 Corinthians 9 Paul explains that God was caring for the ox but this had implications towards humans. Paul expresses how we can appreciate the elders/pastors of a church. The first was with respect and honor, the second was monetary appreciation.

v. 19 Paul follows the Law of Moses from Deuteronomy 17:6 where two or three witnesses are needed to establish a case against someone. The false teachers were bringing false accusations to the elders, which also happens today. If you are a minister – you are willingly being open to

getting attacked. Satan will do whatever it takes to drag you in the mud so that the whole church/ministry will stop believing in God. This is what was happening, but they weren't following the right way to handle it. You have to have at least two witnesses accusing the same thing to warrant a valid response. This is also how we deal with other Christians when there is an issue between two people within the church – Matthew 18:15-20 “This demand does not place elders beyond successful accusation, but protects them from frivolous, evil accusers, by demanding the same process of confirmation of a sin as for all in the church.” - MacArthur

v. 20 – When someone **continues to sin** (not a one time thing), and have already been confronted by 2 or 3 people, they should be reprimanded in front of the whole church! They have violated their qualifications to serve as stated in 3:2-7. Wow can you imagine if we actually did this? People might be less likely to sin ha!

“The purpose of discipline is restoration, not revenge. Our goal must be to save the offender, not to drive him away. Our attitude must be one of love and tenderness (Gal 6:1-3). In fact, the verb restore that Paul used in Galatians 6:1 means “to set a broken bone.” Think of the patience and tenderness involved with that procedure!”

v. 21 – Paul charged Timothy, as a representative of God, to carry out these instructions. Refers to chosen angels – the ones that didn't fall with Satan (Jude 6). What's really interesting is that Paul implies that God's angels watch over human affairs (1 Pet 1:12).

We must discipline without any partiality or favoritism. Sin is sin and must be dealt with according to the standards of Scripture. Some of the influential leaders had been led astray by the false teachers and needed to be dealt with.

v. 22 – Paul is referring here to ordination which took place by the laying on of hands. Ordination is a ceremony that affirms a man's suitability for and acceptance into public ministry as an elder/pastor/overseer. The laying on of hands is basically someone being circled by other believers and placing their hands on them. This came from the OT practice of laying hands on a sacrificial animal to identify with it. This should only be done through investigation and a preparation period to be certain of the man's qualifications. This takes time and is the reason why Paul says don't do it hastily, don't rush through it – my ordination was grueling!

Not sharing in the sins of others – did you know you can get ordained on the internet? When a pastor gets ordained that church is saying, we trust this guy with the souls of people. So when they mess up, that sin is on the people who ordained them. This usually happens with a hasty ordination. They weren't tested to be qualified through time.

Keep yourself pure – Purity involves “separation from immorality and also single-mindedness of purpose.” When you keep yourself pure you will find people who are committed to purity like you. You will attract these people. That helps us stay pure and helps elders find others suited to be elders.

v. 23 – Water was not exactly filtered back then. Many times it was polluted and carried diseases. Wine was used as a medicine in both Jewish and Greek cultures. Timothy had these stomachaches and so Paul prescribed wine to calm his stomach. Timothy may have been abstaining from wine due to the command from Paul back in 3:3 that elders should not give in to drinking because it messed with their decision making and to be different than the world.

v. 24 – Some sins are obvious in people’s lives. Others are not – in the same way good deeds are sometimes very evident, especially by your speech and facebook page; however, there are still some that no one will ever know about. You must still judge everyone the same way because you never know if someone is truly living in sin or not. But going back to v. 22 if you do things hasty you might miss those sins that are “not in plain sight.”

v. 25 – “The good actions of some people are clearly obvious. Those with other good qualities, not obvious at first glance, cannot remain permanently hidden. Genuine character, like cream, always rises to the top. These words represent a warning against hasty rejection.” (NAC)

When I look at this whole section of text I keep thinking of integrity: you should respect the elders who are above reproach/having integrity, one person cannot bring an accusation due to a lack of integrity, do things without partiality, make sure your judgment of people has integrity by taking time to pray and evaluate their lives.

I know that when you live your life according to what Paul is telling Timothy here you can live a life of integrity within the church.

5 qualities to have integrity within the church:

- Appreciation (affirming outstanding performance) v. 17
- Fairness (not listening to unsubstantiated accusations) v. 19
- Impartiality (avoiding all favoritism) v. 21
- Caution (not reaching hasty decisions) v. 22
- Discernment (looking beyond the outward appearance to the heart) v. 24-25

Whenever these principles are in operation, mistakes will be avoided, the church will be preserved in peace and love, and God’s name will be protected from dishonor.

Integrity - Being who you appear to be

This week – Dan Cathy President of CFA said that CFA is run based on Biblical Principles – especially when it comes to the traditional family. This created an uproar and many people are boycotting CFA and calling the company anti-gay. Dan Cathy hasn’t done anything different – the company has always been accused of this based upon their Biblical Principles stance. You know what I see? Integrity – Dan Cathy is being who he appears to be and not hiding it. They treat everyone as Christ commands us to, with love and respect.

When you live a life of integrity – being who you appear to be, you will always face opposition but as followers of Christ we answer to God and no one else. When we live a life of integrity we are showing double honor to God by offering ourselves as living sacrifices for him.

Questions:

1. How do you feel when you know someone respects you? Doesn’t respect you?
2. What is the church’s responsibility toward its elders?
3. How does verse 18 tells us to appreciate an elder?
4. According to verses 19-20, how should a church handle accusations against an elder?
What will this procedure do to gossip?