

First Among Equals

Lecture Outline

Part 1 of 4

Introduction

“Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,’ and, ‘The laborer deserves his wages.’” (1 Tim. 5:17-18 ESV)

I. The Church’s D_____ to H_____ its Elders: 1 Timothy 5:17–18

F. Honor Those Who L_____ W_____

G. Honor Those Who L_____ in P_____ and T_____

H. The M_____ of “Labor in Preaching and Teaching”

I. R_____ E_____ to Double Honor

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Part 2 of 4

“Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,’ and, ‘The laborer deserves his wages.’” (1 Tim. 5:17–18 ESV)

I. The Church’s Duty to Honor its Elders: 1 Timothy 5:17–18 (cont.)

E. The Meaning of “D_____ Honor”

F. The Meaning of the Word “Honor”

G. The S_____ Basis for M_____ Honor

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“Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,’ and, ‘The laborer deserves his wages.’” (1 Tim. 5:17-18 ESV)

II. First Among a C_____ of E_____: L_____ Among L_____

A. In light of what we have learned, an extremely important biblical concept to grasp is “f_____ among e_____.” Failure to understand the concept of “first among equals” (or 1 Tim. 5:17) has caused some elderships to be t_____ i_____ in their pastoral care and leadership.

B. Examples:

1. Jesus and the T_____ A_____

2. P_____ in A_____

3. P_____ and B_____

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III. First Among a Council of Equals: Leaders Among Leaders

B. Examples (cont.):

7. E_____ 4:11:

“And He gave the apostles, and the prophets, and the evangelists, and the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”

IV. A_____ of This Doctrine

A. This doctrine is easily a_____. There are two extremes to the concept of equality and diversity with the eldership.

B. What “First Among Equals” D_____ N_____ M_____

C. A_____ of First Among Equals

D. All this must be balanced out with Jesus’ teaching on s_____ l_____. All great leaders are, in the end, servants of the people of God. Yet there is the constant danger of exalting one man over all others, making him the “holy man,” the P_____ p_____.

Love Among Elders

Lecture Outline

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I. Introduction

- A. The fall has adversely affected every human relationship.

- B. The fall has adversely affected every church leadership team.

- C. The fall can provide opportunities for personal growth and unity.

II. Building solid relationships among elders.

- A. God has provided the resources for leaders to function in love and unity.

- B. God has given to us all of the resources that we need to live Spirit-led lives as we work and serve together as leaders, in addition to being role models to the flock.

- C. Three foundational passages for building love and unity among elders;
Colossians 3:14, Ephesians 4:1-3, Ephesians 4:31-32

III. Soul maintenance is vital to a leadership team.

- A. A loving leader must be a healthy leader.

- B. Leaders set the tone for the whole congregation.

- C. The health of a leader sets the tone for those he leads.

Love Among Elders

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IV. Love: The Key Ingredient for Elder Relations

- A. The Biblical Emphasis on Love

- B. The Church Leader's Wardrobe

- C. The Church Leader's Model for Love

- D. The Church Leader's Mandate for Love

V. A Self-Test to Measure an Elder's "Love Factor"

- A. In 1 Cor. 13:4-7 substitute "an elder" for "love."

- B. So as we work together as church leaders, let's make it our goal to:
 - Wear the right wardrobe (put on love)
 - Model love
 - Pursue love

As leaders of God's people, let's bathe everything we do in love.

Love Among Elders

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VII. Practical Suggestions for Building Love and Unity Among Elders

- A. Paul tells the Corinthians: *“Let all that you do be done in love.”* (1 Cor. 16:14)

- B. Let me give you a few practical suggestions toward building a more loving and caring environment among the leadership team:

- C. Purposely set aside a regular time for praying and sharing personal needs.

- D. Design and implement a pledge of protection for the leadership body.

- E. Determine to have the hard conversations when needed.

- F. Regularly set goals and evaluate progress as a team.

VIII. Conclusion

- A. We can have a crowded church with countless programs, but it does not guarantee that the leadership team will be healthy and on track spiritually. I want to encourage you to be intentional when it comes to the health of the elder board.

“And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.” (1 Peter 5:4)

Accountability

Lecture Outline

Part 1 of 3

- I. **Opening**

- II. **A_____ it, and p_____ about it.**

- III. **Have r_____ m_____ of accountability and openness.**

- IV. **S_____ and practical steps**

- V. **R_____ the c_____ of sin.**

- VI. **C_____**

VII. Resources

VIII. Effective Accountability

- A. Effective accountability does not r_____ e_____ on accountability.

- B. Effective accountability is involved e_____ rather than l_____.

- C. Effective accountability involves someone with m_____.

- D. Effective accountability involves someone with a_____ (Heb. 13:17).

- E. Effective accountability should avoid e_____ d_____ (Eph. 5:11-12).

- F. Effective accountability places the responsibility for c_____ on the person with the p_____.

- G. Effective accountability must a_____ hold people a_____.

Elder Accountability

Lecture Outline

Part 2 of 3

Introduction

IX. S_____ L_____

A. Ministry in the New Testament is s_____ ministry.

B. Jesus sent out his disciples t_____ b__ t_____.

C. We all have a profound propensity toward m_____.

D. Biblical pastoral ministry is hard work. It should be a s_____ burden, where we
h_____ one another and s_____ one another.

E. Practical ways to cultivate and foster a_____ among an eldership team:

1. Regular e_____ m_____

2. Job d_____ and r_____

Accountability

Lecture Outline

Part 3 of 3

IX. Shared Leadership (cont.)

F. Practical ways to cultivate and foster accountability among an eldership team (cont.)

3. R_____ back.

4. Have i_____ f_____.

5. Have elder r_____.

6. Intentional p_____ of one another.

G. "The Lord sent them out two by two." We need each other. We cannot be L_____

R_____ elders.

105: Shepherding by Plurality

Communication

Lecture Outline
Part 1 of 4

I. General Principles of Good Communication

F. Be aware that skillful communication is h_____ w_____.

"Better is open rebuke than hidden love." (Prov. 27:5)

1. In all of Paul's letters, we see his exemplary ability to communicate with others:

- a) In a c_____ -c_____ setting,
- b) On a m_____ level,
- c) About serious p_____, and
- d) To e_____ and c_____ people.

2. Our Lord Jesus Christ was also a very e_____ communicator.

3. If we want to be good communicators, we have to want to i_____!

G. Learn to speak g_____, c_____, g_____, and t_____.

1. *"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Prov. 15:1 NIV)*

2. *"Sweetness of speech increases persuasiveness." (Prov. 16:21b ESV)*

3. *"By forbearance a ruler may be persuaded, and a soft tongue breaks the bone." (Prov. 25:15 NASB)*

4. *"I, Paul, myself entreat you, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ..." (2 Cor. 10:1a ESV)*

5. *"Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear." (Eph. 4:29 NASB)*

(1) We are to be the kind of speaker who e_____ and builds people up.

(2) How we speak must be a_____ for the m_____.

(3) Paul says we speak g_____ to those who hear us.

(4) How important it is to speak w_____ words and to be careful of e_____ and i_____ speech, or c_____ and c_____ speech.

6. *"Let your speech always be with grace [graciousness, attractiveness], as though seasoned with salt." (Col. 4:6a NASB)*

105: *Shepherding by Plurality*

Communication

Lecture Outline
Part 2 of 4

II. General Principles of Good Communication (cont.)

C. Be aware of the ways you b_____ good communication.

1. Lecturing and p_____
2. Withdrawing or giving “the s_____ t_____”
3. Being easily a_____ or h_____
4. Monopolizing c_____
5. Being a_____

D. Make a conscious effort to be a p_____ l_____.

Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness [that God requires]. (James 1:19 ESV)

1. People want to be heard and u_____.
2. When people come to you, train yourself to l_____.
3. When you are in a conversation with someone, a_____ lots of q_____.

E. Be p_____ in your communication.

1. Because elders work under shared leadership, we need to be p_____ and d_____ in how we communicate to one another.
2. This is especially true at e_____ m_____.
3. A healthy eldership team promotes an atmosphere that encourages everyone to speak up honestly without fear of r_____ or a_____.
4. Make sure this atmosphere of encouraging communication is maintained in the elders’ meetings and in the whole c_____.
5. You must be able to speak to one another without i_____ and f_____.
6. We need to be able to speak to one another clearly, honestly, openly, and sincerely; otherwise, we as elders will not be able to make good d_____.

Communication

Lecture Outline

Part 3 of 4

III. General Principles of Good Communication (cont.)

- F. Be sure to clarify r_____ and work a_____.
1. Shared leadership requires continual c_____ among group members about their areas of responsibility and specific assignments.
 2. As the saying goes, "What is e_____ business is no one's business."
 3. It is essential that elders clearly communicate:
 - a) Specific r_____
 - b) Special a_____—written down in m_____ m_____.
 4. Provide adequate i_____ when you give a person a job to do.
- G. Don't spring important d_____ on people.
1. I have seen many d_____ and fights in churches because we as leaders spring decisions on people and they have not participated in the decision.
 2. When anything you decide on affects another group, you need to have people from those groups p_____.
 - a) Learn to bring people into the elders' m_____.
 - b) Learn to communicate with anyone whom your decision will a_____.
 - c) Our people have w_____ and i_____ that you may not have.
- H. Stop the r_____ m_____ before it stops you.
1. F_____, o_____ communication with the congregation stops church rumors.
 2. An area where this is extremely important is c_____ d_____.
 - a) If there is some type of conflict among key people in the church, do not w_____!
 - b) Step out in f_____ of the problem and talk to the congregation!
 3. When there are major controversies or misunderstandings, it is crucial for the elders to o_____ -*communicate*.
 4. You as elders must c_____ clearly and let the people know that you are h_____ the situation.
 - a) Tell them to come to you if you have questions, not to ask o_____ p_____.
 - b) In some very severe situations where the church's survival is at stake, you may need to release some p_____ i_____ about the situation.

- c) I _____ the groups or the families who are immediately involved in the ugly situation. Meet with them on a more intimate basis to discuss the situation and give them instructions on how to handle it.
- d) As the elders, we remind them of proper Christian c_____. They must not start r_____. They don't have all the f_____.
- e) You must stop the g_____ and tale-bearing before it starts. Tell the congregation that those are s_____!

Communication

Lecture Outline

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IV. Elders are to Model Good Communication within the Church Body

F. Elders Communicating within the E_____

1. This can be done very practically and easily by going out to l_____ together, or going on r_____ together.
2. Get to k_____ one another!
 - a) If you k_____ and t_____ one another, you will be better communicators because you u_____ one another.
 - b) If there is s_____ or distrust, every little thing will be misunderstood or taken in the wrong way.
 - c) You should get to know how the others speak and their s_____ and w_____.
 - d) You must learn how to communicate within the elders' m_____ and on i_____ bases. Every meeting, you should be practicing good communication with your fellow elders.
 - e) If there are communication snags, you need to try to r_____ those and openly talk about them among yourselves.
 - f) Learn to l_____ and enjoy one another.
3. Do not be a p_____ eldership; be active in your communication.
4. If you have a p_____ with another elder in communication or understanding, get together over a meal and discuss the problem.
5. As elders, we:
 - a) H_____ one another
 - b) P_____ one another
 - c) C_____ one another
 - d) S_____ one another
 - e) Study and seek to u_____ one another

G. Elders Communicating to the C_____

1. Ideas for improving your communication with the congregation:
 - a) P_____ line
 - b) Church _____

- c) N_____
- d) S_____ morning
- 2. However you choose to do it, it is crucial to communicate with the c_____.
- 3. Bring in g_____ to your elders' meetings.
- 4. Don't be afraid to repeat your v_____ over and over to the church.
- 5. Every five years, we hand out a big s_____ to our congregation.
- 6. We want them to e_____ us and e_____ the church.

H. G_____ within the Church Communicating with One Another

- 1. The e_____ and d_____ need to communicate.
- 2. Maybe the w_____ ministry needs to get together with the y_____ ministry to discuss areas that they are overlapping.

Self-Discipline

Lecture Outline

Part 1 of 4

V. Self-Control

“For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. . . . He must [be] hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled [sensible], upright, holy, and d_____ [s_____].” (Titus 1:7–8; ESV)

A. Disciplined or self-controlled refers to _____ over one’s e_____ and passions, especially over one’s bodily d_____ (1 Cor. 7:5, 9, 25).

B. A F_____ of the S_____

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, . . . s_____.” (Gal. 5:22-23)

C. The Wisdom of P_____

“Whoever is slow to anger is better than the m_____, and he who r_____ his spirit than he who t_____ a city.” (Prov. 16:32)

“A man without self-control is like a c_____ broken into and left without w_____.” (Prov. 25:28)

D. The Spiritual Athlete

Every athlete exercises s_____ in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be d_____.” (1 Cor. 9:25–27)

E. The Self-Control P_____

For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your f_____ with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and k_____ with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness . . . For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being i_____ or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Peter 1:5-6, 8)

VI. Self-Discipline

"T_____ [or exercise/d_____] yourself for godliness." (1 Tim. 4:7)

There can be no deep, significant, long-lasting s_____ g_____ without a d_____ life of p_____, r_____ and s_____ of the Bible, and responsible Christian s_____.

Self-Discipline

Lecture Outline

Part 2 of 4

III. Steps to Cultivate a Self-Disciplined Life

- A. Make a c_____ d_____ to be a self-disciplined person.

- B. Pray c_____ and persistently about d_____ greater self-control.

- C. Start s_____ and achieve small v_____ first.

- D. Stop p_____ before it stops you.

- E. Have someone hold you a_____.

Self-Discipline (continued)

Lecture Outline

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IV. Practical Steps for Organizing a Busy Life

- A. Organize your life and s_____ with it.

- B. Use a daily p_____, c_____, or digital p_____.

- C. P_____ your day and your week.

- D. Create a c_____.

- E. Organize your w_____ s_____.

- F. Be o____ t_____.

- G. When you work, w_____.

- H. Do not be a s_____ to your p_____.

Self-Discipline (continued)

Lecture Outline

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V. Practical Steps for Organizing a Busy Life

- I. Learn to seize s_____ u_____ of time.
- J. Understand the principle of f_____.
- K. F_____ t_____ with your responsibilities.
- L. Do the h_____ and most i_____ job first.
- M. Plan for r_____, e_____, and f_____.
- N. Take care of your b_____.
- O. Learn to say n_____.
- P. Get c_____ from someone who has a w_____ life.
- Q. Seek to be disciplined in e_____ a_____ of your life.

Conclusion