

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 02 June 2019..... 1Timothy 1..... Entrusted
- 2) 09 June 1Timothy 2..... On Mission
- 3) 16 June 1Timothy 3..... Setting the Example
- 4) 23 June 1Timothy 4..... Staying the Course
- 5) **30 June..... 1Timothy 5..... Being Responsible**
- 6) 07 July..... 1Timothy 6..... Lasting Investments
- 7) 14 July..... 2Timothy 1..... Confidence
- 8) 21 July..... 2Timothy 2..... Focused
- 9) 28 July..... 2Timothy 3..... Diligent
- 10) 04 August..... 2Timothy 4..... Enduring
- 11) 11 August..... Titus 1..... Living with Opposition
- 12) 18 August..... Titus 2..... Living with Integrity
- 13) 25 August..... Titus 3..... Living to Do

INTRODUCTION

- **Quick Test:** Is the Church a Business, Bank, or Family?
- **Quick Test #2:** Is God more concerned about us having a comfortable and enjoyable life full of things, or is He more interested in conforming His saints into the image of His Son?
- **Quick Test #3:** Is it appropriate to leave an elderly church person living on the street homeless? Yes; No; Depends
- **Quick Test #4:** Is it biblical to fire an Elder/Pastor when Attendance goes down, or when he is guilty of adultery?
- **Note.** The Church was not designed to help those who could help themselves or who could be helped by others
- **Note.** All that matters is keeping God's commandments.. **1Cor 7:19**

Passage	Comments
1Timothy 5:1-2	<p>Show Respect and Avoid Impropriety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When someone needs to be rebuked for open sin, their respective age and sex determines the approach to use to show the highest respect & to avoid impropriety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ If the man is elderly, treat him as a father figure ♦ An older woman as a mother figure ♦ If the man is on the young side, then as a brother ♦ And younger women as sisters • Also, for church related offenses, the one doing the chastising should have appropriate authority..... WHY?
5:3-16	<p>Show Compassion with Tough Love</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v3. Honor or support widows who are "widows indeed" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Over 60 years old (IOW, too old or feeble to remarry) ♦ ..and they have no means of family support • Paul did not assume God would work supernaturally for widows, but that God would meet their needs providentially AFTER they "prayed night and day" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Possibly other church members would care for them • v7. Even widows were to be made aware of these principles to live by so they could "be above reproach" • v8. Principle to Live By – Families are responsible for their weaker members – unless they are prodigal • vv9-10. Widow qualifications for long term support <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Being over sixty years of age 2. Faithful to her husband – wife of 1 husband (lit. a one-man woman) – not divorced/remarried 3. Is well known for bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble – IOW, stellar testimony 4. Devotes herself to all kinds of good deeds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Why 60 years of age? Should that age limit be adjusted for our day and age? This is another good reason why God wants the right people who are spiritually mature to properly assess each situation • vv11-15. Younger widows should consider getting married to avoid being tripped up by SatanHOW?

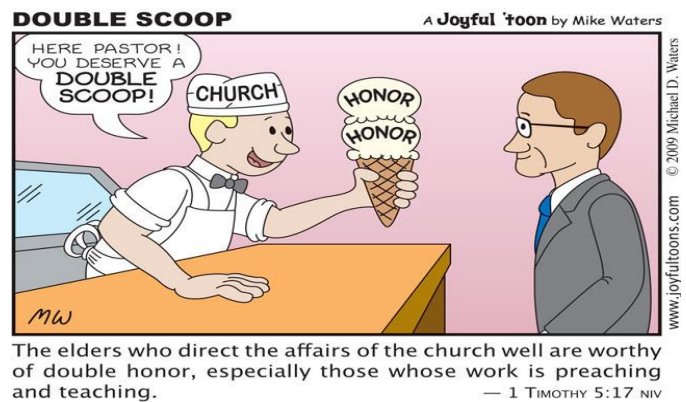
Passage	Comments
Long Term Church Support	<p>Scripture is very restrictive with defining who the church should support on a long term basis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The only valid candidates are widows who possess a stellar testimony, have numerous good deeds, have no family, and are too old or feeble to remarry ♦ All others must rely on family, friends, neighbors, the Govt, and/or God for assistance – but not the church ♦ The church should be the last resort. Yet, churches often get suckered to give support to young, able-bodied sad-luck stories who are in need of financial counseling rather than a tax-free handout
5:17-22	<p>Concerning Elders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • vv17-18. "...double honor" for those who toil in God's word to teach sound doctrine – Teaching God's word is a high priority for church Elders/Pastors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ No one gets saved without hearing God's word ♦ No one grows without absorbing God's word ♦ No one avoids sin without obeying God's word • "Double Honor" probably refers to providing proper compensation for teaching elders (Pastors) and giving elders the benefit of the doubt in areas of dispute • v19. Charges of elder misbehavior should not be frivolous or taken lightly <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Paul warned the Ephesian elders that "savage wolves" and "men speaking perverse things" to mislead the church would arise from among the elders themselves – so be warnedActs 20:28-31 • v20. Principle to live by #1. Know when and how to rebuke publicly – for example, when a church leader fails to repent, or for a teaching moment for the church • v21. Principle to live by #2. Show no partiality. Give tough love to all who need it from Elders to Widows • v22. Principle to live by #3. Don't rush into ordaining people into leadership. Prove all to avoid sin later

THE BACK PEW - JEFF LARSON



Passage	Comments
Should Bad Elders be Removed from Office?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Too many pastors are asked to leave for political reasons more than for scriptural reasons. IN FACT, there are no scriptural reasons for anointed elders to be asked to leave their appointed responsibilities, even for negative church growth or for flagrant sin! Say what? Nowhere in Scripture (OT or NT) do we see corrupt priests or church elders being removed from office or being asked to step down from their God-ordained positions. E.g., in the OT, Eli was never told by God to remove his 2 wicked sons (Hophni & Phinehas) from the priesthood. These men were guilty of horrendous sins while in office, including open fornication/adultery, which God calls a "horrible thing" (Hos 6:10). Instead, God told Eli to rebuke his errant sons. When Eli failed to correct his boys and they failed to repent, then God slew them..... 1Samuel 2-3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recall that priests were in a "perpetual priesthood" which meant they could not be removed from office except by death Ex 40:15 Jesus did not tell the people of His day to overthrow their spiritual leaders (priest & scribes) but to do what their leaders told them to do and not to follow their poor example Mat 23:3 Jesus also called the priests of His day hypocrites Lk 13:14-15 but He never challenged them to step down, but to step up. Likewise, in the NT, we see elders challenged to correct some bad behavior, but never fired or asked to resign from their God-ordained positions. Again, are we <input type="checkbox"/> a business, <input type="checkbox"/> a bank, or <input type="checkbox"/> a family? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul told the Ephesian elders to "be alert" for false teachers rising up from amongst themselves Act 20:30 Timothy (an Elder) was to rebuke bad elders publicly so others would be fearful of sinning. (How is this done) 1Tim 5:20 John (the Apostle/Elder) said he would deal with Diotrefes personally, that is, Elder to Elder 3John 9-10 	
So what is a Church to do if it has a Bad Elder or 2?	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If an unrepentant sex offender can be tossed out of church (1Cor 5:1-13), why can't a sinful or unrepentant Elder? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Again, it revolves around the anointing/appointing, which God takes very seriously 1Tim 5:19-20 As seen in 1Cor 5:1-13, the Church is responsible to break fellowship and remove unrepentant sinners, but God removes wayward Elders. We can challenge, but we should not usurp God's authority since His callings are irrevocable Romans 11:29 Other more pertinent questions to ask are: "How did a bad elder, a wolf, get into that position to begin with"? What biblical principles were violated in selecting him? Was he on the young/inexperience side [don't pick a novice (1Tim 3:6), and a young ruler is death to a nation (Ecc 10:16)]? Was he approved/selected by other elders or by a committee of nice people who don't have the elder wisdom needed to know what to look for in a good elder besides the criteria listed in Titus & 1Timothy? They need to know & consider the whole counsel of God. An Ugly Consideration. God has the option to remove good elder(s)/ shepherd(s) and allow bad ones to come into a church because of faithless behavior by His people.....cf. Jer 3:14-15 	
A lesson from Saul & David on removing God's anointed servant	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> King Saul was not a man after God's own heart. He did things his own way or he heeded to the cries of the people instead of God's Word David had several opportunities to remove Saul from office, but his position was "it is not up to me to remove God's anointed" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1Sam 24:6, 10, 12. I will not put my hand on God's anointed 1Sam 24:13. As the ancient proverb says, the wicked produces wickedness, but my hand shall not be against you 1Sam 26:9-10. No one can raise his hand against the Lord's anointed and be guiltless. Let the Lord remove Him. Does Saul's anointing as an OT King of Israel transfer to the position of a church Elder today? YOU BE THE JUDGE: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A church Elder is a God-appointed position Eph 4:11 God's callings are irrevocable Romans 11:29 Nowhere in the NT do you see Elders being removed or asked to step down, even in the corrupt churches noted in Revelation 2-3. Elders are challenged, YES, but not removed..... 1Tim 5:20 	

Passage	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One more Consideration. Yet, w/ all the problems churches may have, God is still in control, the gates of Hell have not & will not prevail against His Church. His word is going forth, people are still getting saved, BUT, oh, how churches could reap God's desired blessings, including exponential growth as a mustard seed, if they would only do things His way – Else we could get leanness to our soul Ps 106:15 Let's not be like the Corinthians who got reprimanded by Clement of Rome (A.D. 96) for deposing their elders, men who were appointed on apostolic authority & by common consent, and they were not to be regarded as dispensable (Expositor's Bible Commentary, p589). 	
Super-heroes for Today Include Elders, Deacons, and their Wives & Children	WE NEED MORE SUPERHEROES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Since the qualifications for Elders and Deacons and for their wives are a cut above the norm, their personal sacrifices to meet and maintain those qualifications make them superheroes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Elders and Deacons give up precious family time to spend in study, in prayer, in hospital visits, and fellowship with families in need Their wives and kids give up their family head so he can be with others. Life is not about them!!! Elder and Deacon families make sacrifices in the areas of food, drink, & entertainment for testimony sake They also spend less time in front of the TV and computer and in personal hobbies to spend it with each other and before God and His word They must be on guard 24x7 to maintain a positive testimony in words, thoughts, and deeds
	Have Supernatural Miracles Ceased? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> "...use a little wine for the sake of your stomach..." Paul tells Timothy, in essence, take some medicine Paul once worked all kinds of signs and wonders (Acts 14:3); He healed all kinds of diseases in Ephesus (Acts 19:11-12); he even raised the dead (Acts 20:9-10); and he healed everyone on the isle of Malta (Acts 28:8-9) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> So why couldn't Paul or even Timothy say a prayer to relieve a simple upset stomach? Were Paul & Timothy in sin? Or did they lose their faith? Where were the ones with gifts of healings? And where was Paul's special handkerchief? Also, consider that Paul could not even heal himself of a thorn in the flesh (2Cor 12:7-9); nor could he heal Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25); he had to leave Trophimus sick in Miletus (2Tim 4:20); and James 5 says the sick should confess their sins and have the church elders pray for them for a healing. Where were the faith healers and miracle workers? We have to acknowledge the problem was not with Paul or Timothy, but with God invoking a change God now works providentially ("...all things work together for our good" Rom 8:28) We won't see supernatural miracles again till the 2 witnesses from Revelations 11 show up in the future



Passage	Comments
5:24-25	<p>Common Sense Selection Process</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paul continued advising Timothy on what to look for in high quality people, e.g., Elders and Deacons v24. We are to avoid those with "conspicuous sins" or obvious flaws – if one is not faithful in small things, they will not be faithful with more ... Mat 25:21 But there will be some "savage wolves" who slip in, whose sins show up later.....Acts 20:28-31 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Apostles were duped by Judas Paul was duped by DemasCol 4:14, 2Tim 4:10 John had to deal with Diotrephes (elder to elder) since he chased people out of church . 3John 9-10 And John was duped by false brethren 1John 2:19 Consider This → It is better to have a few Elders and Deacons who meet all the qualifications than a lot of "good ol' boys" who fail to meet some of the qualifications

What is the worst that can happen if churches continue hiring & firing pastors based on a secular business model when church growth & finances take a down turn or moral failure becomes evident, instead of on biblical principles?

- The worst from a Church perspective.** Loss of candlestick, it becomes useless, ineffective, dead like Sardis.....[Rev 3:1-6](#)
- The worst from an individual perspective.** David avoided removing King Saul from his God-anointed position. BUT when an Amalekite slew Saul, thinking he was doing David a favor, David slew him because the man was not afraid to stretch his hand against the Lord's anointed[2Sam 1:14-16](#)
 - Know this.** God took credit for removing Saul.....[2Sam 7:15](#)
- Other Scenarios.** Besides the worst scenario of church death, numerous other scenarios could play out as noted in [Rev 2-3](#):
 - Ephesus Model – All work, but no love
 - Thyatira Model – Great works, but poor testimony
 - Laodicea Model – Positive finances, but lukewarm
 - Pergamum Model – Great works, but endures false doctrine
 - Slow death through ineffectiveness occurring over decades
- Granted, many church problems are due to poor leaders.** As the leaders go, so goes the nation, church, or family. If you have strong leaders, you should have a strong church, and if a church has weak leaders, then a weak church ensues. Now, do we fix things our way, the world's way, or God's way?
 - God's Way.** Faith dictates we follow biblical principles whether they make us comfortable or not, and whether they meet our conditions or not. God's way, as depicted in this lesson plan is to challenge poor leaders who are in God-appointed positions, not to fire them. If they don't change, the rest of us only have a few options to consider:
 1. Leave and go to another church
 2. Let God be God, stay faithful, be patient, and continue praying as the faithful saints assuredly did in the unfaithful churches noted in [Revelation 2-3](#)
 - Our Way/The World's Way.** Any other way besides God's way is enmity against Him ([James 4:4](#)). A church could fire their current elder(s) for poor performance and hire new ones, and good things could ensue, such as positive church growth in numbers and finances. BUT, they would follow in the footsteps of Laodicea, Ephesus, Pergamum, or Sardis. There are always consequences for ignoring God's ways:
 1. The loss of God's blessings for obeying His commands
 2. The loss of fruit and rewards with eternal value
 3. Others not seeing God work in His way and in His time

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- One more thought on Benevolence.** The Apostle Paul tried to shame or put pressure on people to take care of their own family members so the church did not have to take on that responsibility. After all, the church had a higher calling than taking care of people who had able-bodied relatives who should stand up to that task.
 - ♦ This, of course, assumes the family member needing assistance is not in the prodigal category.
 - ♦ Would the Apostle Paul tell a church not to support a faithful widow who met all the criteria but was only 59? What if she had Alzheimer's? Again, it cannot be hammered home enough the need to have spiritually mature Elders and Deacons who can biblically work through the various complexities of each situation
 - ♦ Recall that the early church gave much of their hard-earned money to the Apostles directly and not to other reputable and honest people. Why? Because the Apostles were grounded in the word of God and the appropriate principles to apply in tough situations. Once this knowledge and experience was passed on to other faithful followers, then men such as Deacons could assume that responsibility to distribute church benevolence.
- One more thought on Anointings and Appointments.** Again, are churches a Business, a Bank, or a Family?
 - ♦ If we don't have elders selecting elders, but a committee does that, then why have elders at all? Shall we have committees do the other elder responsibilities of shepherding, teaching, and preaching as well? God forbid. We need to let elders do what God has called them to do – lead in the efforts of teaching, discipling, preaching, shepherding, and YES, selecting their replacements / co-laborers in Christ.
- Remember:** God brings His foremost blessings to those who do things His way. Else, the best we can expect is God's rain on the just and unjust, and worst case, leanness to our soul.
- From an Elder/Pastor perspective, God ordained these men to play a vital role in His Kingdom by maturing His children "until we are united by our faith and by our understanding of the Son of God. Then we will be mature and will be like Christ" [Eph 4:11-13](#)
 - ♦ But, even God-ordained elders are imperfect, with some "savage wolves" being able to slip in unawares[Acts 20:30](#)
 - ♦ So, elders need to be held accountable, else some would be ripe to fall like Judas & Demas, who were in it for the money; or like Diotrephes who wanted pre-eminence; or like Hymenaeus & Alexander who were delivered over to Satan for their "shipwrecked" faith and blasphemes – assuming they were elders

NEXT WEEK: **Timothy 6.** Paul provides Timothy with final thoughts on master/slave relationships, godliness, contentment, greed, fighting the good fight, and avoiding worldly entrapments.

