

1 Timothy
Pastoral and Servant Leadership in the Church
By
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Brief Introduction to and Overview of Useful Terms and Concepts: CAUTIONARY NOTE:
The following introduction and overview are being provided to facilitate a general paradigm for understanding the more detailed exposition of the biblical passages in the second section. Please do not take these definitions in an overly technical and ridged sense.

Elder - a spiritually mature Believer who has grown in his understanding of the Word with evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit and Spiritual gifting to lead within the covenant community by teaching / *didache*.

Overseer - a function of the elder to ensure that teaching / *didache* among the Believers is in accordance with Sound Doctrine and tied to the Gospel / *kerygma*. Refutes false teaching and engages in discipline of false teachers.

Pastor - an overseeing elder who leads the sheep as an under shepherd of the Good Shepherd according to His Word and by the leading of His Spirit in love as Christ loved us. Manages the Household / Church of God as the Forever Family it is. Such love and care includes praying for those in need, especially for the sick. The under shepherd is not accountable *to* the sheep. Rather, he is accountable to the Good Shepherd *for* the sheep.

Deacon - a servant leader within the Church who meets the material and interpersonal needs of the brethren within the covenant community in an effort to support the primary teaching ministries (*aka*: 'the ministry of the Word'). Of particular concern, within the local congregation, is ensuring that widows and the dispossessed (orphaned) are cared for with the collective resources of the community.

What does this biblical understanding look like in our local congregation? While shared terminology, such as "Rector" and "Vestry" may be used, they will likely have a different, biblical, understanding than what may be predominantly practiced today. In essence, the rector is an ecclesiastically recognized pastoral elder overseeing and leading the local congregation's teaching, ministries, corporate worship, biblical stewardship of resources, and the spiritual care and maturation (discipleship) of Members. Ideally, the rector should be accompanied by a plurality of other Spiritually-raised pastoral elders to oversee the primary "ministry of the Word" within the local congregation. In some way, all elders will be engaged in a form of Bible teaching. Biblically speaking, the pastoral elder overseers who spend most of their time in prayer and the study of the Word (ensuring that the Word is rightly handled to maintain Sound Doctrine) should receive "double honor" which means financial remuneration. This "ministry of the Word", not the individual elder, is esteemed as the foundation for the Gospel-centered life of the congregation which is the basis for this ministry receiving financial support. The vestry is a

manifestation of the biblical diaconate; a body of servants with various Spiritual gifts and talents being called and selected among the congregation to serve the pragmatic, material, and interpersonal needs of the congregation. Their terms of service depend on the needs of the congregation. The vestry serves as the heart and hands of the pastoral elders and under their oversight and leadership according to the "ministry of the Word." They help with the pragmatic application and use of available resources in faithfulness to biblical stewardship with the direction and oversight of pastoral elders. The vestry is not called to determine or regulate matters regarding teaching, ministry or worship. Rather, the vestry serves the needs of the congregation in a manner that supports the primary "ministry of the Word." Those engaged in such service within the local congregation are vital to the care and support of the Brethren, and this service demonstrates the importance and roles of different Members within the Body of Christ as manifested in the local congregation. In sum, 'elders' engage in pastoral leadership through the "ministry of the Word", and the vestry, along with other specifically gifted Members, engage in servant leadership through "the ministry of tables" as 'deacons.' Some servant leader deacons are officially appointed to their positions based on their Spiritual gifts (i.e., the vestry), others are not appointed yet extremely valuable for the life of the congregation (i.e., cleaning, clerical, benevolence among Brethren, and preparations for the Assembly's Service).

Brief and General Resources for an Overview of the Aforementioned Ministries:

<http://www.desiringgod.org/articles/what-is-the-role-of-an-elder>

<http://www.9marks.org/journal/biblical-qualifications-and-responsibilities-deacons>

<http://www.gotquestions.org/deacons-church.html>

<http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vestry>

More on Elders Teaching and All Believers Proclaiming: When looking at roles of pastoral overseeing elders, they need to model and inform others against treating them as sacerdotal priests who mediate God's blessing to people which is proclaimed in the Gospel. While pastoral elders, to varying degrees, are charged to teach (*didache*), all Believers are called to grow into the priestly and prophetic role of giving a reason for the hope we have within us (*kerygma*), evangelism, and pointing people to Jesus Who, alone, can deliver them. We all must be equipped with the Gospel and emboldened by the Spirit to serve these roles as disciple-making disciples out on mission (*Matthew 28:18-20*). This is the New Covenant empowering of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. All Believers are called to evangelism. Pastoral elders who teach and oversee the Sound Doctrine within the Church are not 'gurus' who mediate the blessings to be received by God's Word and Spirit. Pastoral elders, just as every Believer, must point the people we encounter to the Word incarnate Who alone is the Mediator between God and man. We are all just fellow beggars telling others where to go to get bread. There is not a special route other than the narrow path of the One Whom we must direct People to; the Eternal High Priest, Jesus.

2 Timothy 4:1-2:

(Ref. John Stott in BST series) The 'preaching of the Word' will be 'patient' or 'long-suffering'; because, Believers must trust in the perfect timing of God to work in and through His People by

His Word and Spirit. God's Word does His work in His People by His Spirit; not by human pressure tactics. Such 'ministry of the Word' will involve both *kerygma* (proclaiming the Gospel of Christ crucified with a summons to repent) and *didache* (teaching and instruction for proper understanding). While distinct, they can never be entirely separated; because, Sound Doctrine acknowledges that the calling of one to repent of their sins and to trust in Christ Crucified is the Gospel truth for Believers and unbelievers alike in their 'obedience of faith' with Spirit-enabled loyalty to the Scriptures which reveal the culmination of redemptive-history occurring in the Person and work of Jesus. This is also called teaching 'the whole counsel of God' (Acts 20:20, 27; cf. 19:8-10).

Key: differentiate *kerygma* (essential in evangelism for all Believers) with *didache* (doctrinal and biblical teaching behind the *kerygma* within the Church by those lawfully chosen and called). *Didache* = 'the whole council of God' / Sound Doctrine culminating in the *Kerygma* / Gospel, highlighting why this Good News is so good. The following link may help articulate this.

<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/preaching-christ/>

Review the article at the following link to explore further the intimate and essential connections of how Gospel-centered teaching within the local congregation facilitates fulfilling the command of our Lord for us to evangelize and make disciples.

<http://www.desiringgod.org/conference-messages/the-church-and-evangelism>

“Biblical Eldership” and Exegetical Studies with Alexander Strauch

1. *1 Timothy* is the most important letter in the NT for teaching on biblical eldership. It also significantly addresses two other closely related areas – deacons (3:8-13) and women (2:9-15).
2. *Acts 20:27-31* provides information on “the disruptive situation in the church at Ephesus that prompted” the writing of *1 Timothy* (Strauch, pp. 181-182).
 - a. This prophetic anticipation came true 5 or 6 years later in the form of false teaching that appeared to derive from within the congregation.
 - i. Problems, over these 5 years, existed and developed within the eldership likely as the result of false teachers being allowed into leadership-teaching positions.
 - This is the reason Timothy had to remain in Ephesus; to help get things set straight.
 - “It is not easy to stop determined and energetic false teachers. The elders of the churches of Galatia were also unable to stop the invasion of false teachers. The tragic history of Christianity demonstrates the inability of many Christian leaders to keep churches pure from doctrinal error. The desperate need for sound teaching leads Paul to address one of the most important issues of the local church – the moral and spiritual qualifications of its elders” (Strauch, p. 186).

3. Qualifications and Requirements = these characteristics are expected of *all* Believers (e.g., *Galatians 5:22-26*). Compare with *Titus 1:5-9* for another list of qualifications that correspond to this list from *1 Timothy 3*.
- a. Preliminary Considerations
 - i. “**Trustworthy Statement**” – highlights the importance of these qualifications for overseers. “In effect, it says that what is stated is indeed true and deserves constant repeating among the Lord’s people” (Strauch, p. 186).
 - One of 5 in Paul’s Letters to Timothy and Titus
 - *1 Timothy 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2 Timothy 2:11; Titus 3:8*
 - ii. Overseer (aka: ‘bishop’) = Plurality of Elders
 - “The overseer of verse 2 is not someone different from the elders of *1 Timothy 5:17-25* who lead and teach the church. Paul plainly demonstrates that *overseer* is used interchangeably for *elder* when he switches from the term ‘elder’ to the term ‘overseer’ within the Titus list of elder qualifications (*Titus 1:5, 7*). The singular form of the word ‘overseer’ does not imply that there is only one overseer in the church at Ephesus. We know that in Paul’s previous speech to the Ephesian elders (the same church leaders mentioned in 1 Timothy), he addresses a plurality of overseers (*Acts 20:17, 28*); to the church in Philippi, Paul greets a plurality of ‘overseers’ [*Philippians 1:1*]. The reason that the term ‘overseer’ in *1 Timothy 3:2* and *Titus 1:7* is singular is because Paul uses a generic singular, that is, the singular name representing an entire class or type when speaking about the overseers. Thus, the singular ‘overseer’ stands for *all* overseers – *all* elders. From Paul’s use of singular and plural constructions, we can conclude that the church structure of *1 Timothy* is pre-Ignatian and still follows the simple, brotherly, elder system of oversight that is recorded in Acts” (Strauch, pp. 186-187).
 - *episkope* – “overseership” or “the office of overseer”: “It represents the position and function of the church official called the overseer (*episkopos*) who is mentioned in verse 2” (Strauch, p. 186).
 - iii. ‘Work’ = ‘shepherd God’s Church that He purchased with His own blood’ (Strauch, p. 187).
 - This is a ‘good’ work, and the *desire* for such work is God-given with the accompanying gifts of the Holy Spirit for such service.
 - b. ‘Blameless’ = above reproach: This is the general heading or over-riding qualification that is more specifically delineated in what follows. This does not mean ‘sinless’ but ‘above scandalous reproach’ or “free from any offensive or disgraceful blight of character or conduct, particularly as described in *verses 2-7*...which delineate concrete, observable qualities that define what it means to be irreproachable” (Strauch, p. 189).
 1. ‘husband of one wife’ = a one-woman man: Above reproach in his marital and sexual life. *Mia*=one; *gynaikos*=wife or woman; *andra*=husband or

- man. “*The husband of one wife* is meant to be a positive statement that expresses faithful, monogamous marriage” (Strauch, p. 192).
2. ‘temperate’: “self-control, balanced judgment, and freedom from debilitating excesses or rash behavior...stable, circumspect, self-restrained, and clear-headed” (Strauch, p. 193).
 3. ‘sober-minded’ = prudent: similar to ‘temperate’ and emphasizes self-control. “sound-minded, discreet, and sensible, able to keep an objective perspective in the face of problems and disagreements” (Strauch, p. 193).
 4. ‘of good behavior’ = respectable: “self-control, proper behavior, and orderliness...well-behaved, virtuous” (Strauch, p. 193).
 5. ‘hospitable’: cf. **John 13:34-35** – hospitality is “found within the larger context of Christian love... Giving oneself to the care of God’s people means sharing one’s life and home with others. An open home is a sign of an open heart and a loving, sacrificial, serving spirit” (Strauch, p. 194).
 6. ‘able to teach’: cf. **Acts 20; Titus 1:9-2:15** – elders must shepherd the flock of God. “A major part of shepherding the flock involves feeding it the Word of God. Therefore, elders must be ‘able to teach’ in order to do their job. The ability to teach entails three basic elements: a knowledge of Scripture, the readiness to teach, and the ability to communicate. ...an elder must know the Bible and be able to instruct others from it. God’s Word brings growth to the church and protects it from falsehood. Therefore, shepherd elders must be able to teach God’s Word” (Strauch, p. 195).
 7. ‘not given to wine’ = not addicted to wine: Paul “is prohibiting the abuse of wine (or any other substance) that would damage a man’s testimony and work for God” (Strauch, p. 196).
 8. ‘not violent’ = not pugnacious: One who is not “a fighter, a bad-tempered, irritable, out-of-control individual. Elders are often at the center of very tense situations, so a bad-tempered, pugnacious person is not going to solve issues and problems. He will, in fact, create worse explosions. Because a pugnacious man will treat the sheep roughly and even hurt them, he cannot be one of Christ’s undershepherds” (Strauch, p. 196).
 9. ‘gentle’: “A gentle man stands in vivid contrast to the pugnacious man. A gentle man exhibits the willingness to yield and patiently makes allowances for the weakness and ignorance of the fallen human condition. One who is gentle refuses to retaliate in kind for wrongs done by others and does not insist upon the letter of the law or his personal rights [cf. **1 Corinthians 8-10** and ref. **1 Cor. 9** outline notes]. God fully expects His undershepherds to shepherd His people in the same way He does. He will not let His people be driven, beaten, condemned, or divided. [Was this an aspect of Moses sin when we became angry with the Israelites in **Numbers 20:1-13**?] Thus the shepherd must be patient, gracious, and understanding with the erring – and at times exasperating – sheep. So elders must be ‘gentle’ and ‘forbearing’ like Christ” (Strauch, p. 197).
 10. ‘not quarrelsome’ = uncontentious: cf. **2 Timothy 2:24, 25a, Titus 3:1-8** “God hates division and fighting among His people...which paralyzes and

kills many local churches. It may be the single, most distressing problem Christian leaders face. Positively stated, an elder must be a peaceable man” (Strauch, p. 199).

11. ‘not greedy for money’, ‘not covetous’ = free from the love of money: cf. *1 Timothy 6:3-11* and *Hebrews 13:5* “...an elder should be content with God’s provision [and] model godly contentment and faith in Christ’s loving provision for them” (Strauch, p. 198).
12. ‘one who rules [manages] his own house well, having his children in submission [control] with all reverence [dignity]’: “The key measurement when evaluating a man’s management of his household is his children’s behavior. This means he must be a responsible Christian father, husband, and household manager. Thus a Christian father must control his children in an honorable, respectful, and dignified way. We must note that the children referred to in verse 4 are children who live at home, under their father’s authority. In the *Titus 1:6* passage, the verb...also indicates that the children are presently in the home and under the father’s authority” (Strauch, p. 199).
 - Note: parallel between the congregation and the household of a family
13. ‘not a novice’ = not a new convert: “An elder...must be mature and know his own heart [and] understand the craftiness of the enemy [so that he may not be] vulnerable to pride – the most subtle of all temptations and most destructive of all sins” (Strauch, p. 200).
14. ‘must have a good testimony among those outside’ = a man with a good reputation among nonbelievers: “An outsider’s opinion of a Christian leader’s character cannot be dismissed, for it affects the evangelistic witness of the entire church, ‘the pillar and support of the truth’” (Strauch, p. 201).
 - a. *Qualifications Demand Examination: cf. verse 10* – “Starting in *verse 8*, Paul lists the qualifications for deacon, just as he has just done for elders. In the middle of the deacon’s list of qualifications, Paul interjects an essential requirement that makes all the other requirements meaningful: ‘And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons.’ The words ‘and...the also’ are important to the development of Paul’s thought in this section (*1 Timothy 3:8-13*). They also alert us to something slightly different from, but essential to, the five character requirements listed for deacons (*1 Timothy 3:8, 9*). Through these words, Paul emphasizes that deacons must be tested in the same way that elders must be tested. Thus, ‘and...these also,’ refers back to the overseer mentioned in the previous section (*1 Timothy 3:1-7*). The passive imperative form of the verb that is rendered ‘let these...be tested’ stresses the necessity for testing a prospective deacon or elder. Testing is not an option. Every prospective elder or deacon must be evaluated by others” (Strauch, p. 203).

i. Deacons = Servants/Ministers: Deacons come under the authority of the elders (Who discern God's Word) and serve as the heart and hands of the pastoral elders by serving specific temporal / physical needs of the brethren in the fellowship (i.e., caring for widows who need food, building committee, vestry). This enables the pastoral elders to be devoted to prayer and the service of the Word (*cf. Acts 6:3*).

-“Since *diakonos* was the waiter at table, and *diakonein* means to engage in service of a social kind...it is understandable that the ‘deacons’ are thought to have specialized in practical administration and ministry... So then, rather than distinguishing deacons from overseers as social workers from teachers, it is perhaps better to think of the deacons as assisting the overseers in their ministry. Since the qualifications for the diaconate overlap with those for the presbyterate, it will not be necessary to study them in detail. First, deacons must have self-mastery [control]...in their behavior, speech, use of alcohol and attitude to money. Second, deacons must have orthodox convictions [as those who] *keep hold of the deep truths [mystery] of the faith with a clear conscience (9)*... Thirdly, deacons [as elders] must have been tested and approved. Fourthly, deacons must have an irreproachable home life. Verse 11 raises a problem. Literally it runs: ‘Women likewise...’ And commentators are not agreed whether these women are the deacon’s wives (as in NIV) or deaconesses (NIV mg.), for the word could apply to either. Commentators are still divided on this question. One or two suggest that it could be a reference to both, since wives and deaconesses share in assisting the deacons in their ministry. In either case, these women are to be *worthy of respect (semnos)*, like the deacons in verse 8, *not malicious talkers but, having control of their tongue, temperate (nephalios)*, like presbyters in verse 2, *and trustworthy in everything (11) [ref. Romans 16:1]*” (Stott, BST, pp. 100-101).

-“Inside the church...it looked as if the widows were being treated differently because they were either Greeks or Hebrews. It seemed that cultural or ethnic prejudice was threatening the unity of the church and the physical well-being of some members. ...so the apostles did two things. First, they determined to prioritize their own ministry of the Word and prayer, over caring for physical needs. Second, they instructed the church to choose seven men to ‘serve’-to deacon (v. 2). In doing so, the apostles made provision

for both the ministry of the Word and the ministry of the widows. The apostles under the inspiration of God's Spirit appear to have created an entirely new office in the church for the specific purpose of serving tables. And the loftiness of the office is seen in (a) the character of the individuals required to fill it ('full of Spirit and of wisdom' v. 3), (b) the fact that it facilitates the ministry of Word and prayer, and (c) the unifying and strengthening effect it has on the whole church. The deaconate is important! Are there widows in our churches who are not well cared for? Perhaps we need to consider our work with deacons. Are there inequities in the distribution of benevolence resources in the church? Sounds like a job for deacons. Are there cultural tensions and threats to unity in the church? Do we wish to see a more diverse church integrated in Christian life? The position of deacon was established to promote harmony across cultural and language lines. When looking for deacons, churches must look for men full of the Spirit. The office is a spiritual office. Its discharge is a spiritual work, even if your church organizes deacons around specific practical tasks. The church and the gospel receive no advantage from our appointing those who are not full of the Spirit. The primary purpose for which the apostles appointed deacons was to make sure the ministry of the Word was not neglected. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, commenting on *Acts 6:3*, noted three ways in which the deacon must recognize the priority of spiritual matters and the ministry of the Word:

It is wrong to put 'serving tables' before the preaching of the Word of God because it is always wrong to put man before God. That, in a nutshell, is the real trouble with the world. Man is at the center; man is everything... So it is wrong to put man before God, and second, in exactly the same way, it is wrong to put the body before the soul. In other words, we are not only wrong about God, we are wrong about man. What is man? According to the modern theory, man is only body, and so you must attend to everything to do with the body; give it plenty of food, plenty of drink, clothing, shelter, medical care, plenty of sex. Oh, the tragedy that humanity should think it is complimenting itself and exalting itself by turning its back upon God to concentrate on physical needs. And this is what this Word of God encounters, what it denounces... Finally, is it not the height of folly and indeed the

greatest tragedy to put time before eternity? The feeding of the body only belongs to time. A day is coming in the life of all of us when we will not be interested in food, and when food will not be able to help us at all; we will be beyond that.

A solid deacon prioritizes God over man, the soul over the body, and eternity over time even while he attends to the important practical and bodily needs of people. ...we Christians should not miss the fact that such lowliness and willingness to serve reflects Christ's life and humility. He came to serve, not to be served, and to give his life as a ransom (**Mark 10:45**). Does he evidence the fruit of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22-23**; cf. **Philippians 2:3**; **James 1:19-20**). [A deacon is not a diplomat but is sincere in his speech. He is not two-faced. He avoids saying one thing to someone and then something different to another. He says what he means regardless to whom he is speaking. He also does what he says, and he speaks the truth in love (**Ephesians 4:15**).] Like elders, deacons should be sober and self-controlled. And they should not be people who take advantage of others for their own profit and benefit. The mission of deacons, after all, is to care for the practical concerns of the body, which often involves benevolence. That's a terrible platform to give someone who will exploit others for his or her gain. [A deacon should also be content with their current status in life.] Since deacons care for the practical needs of the body, perhaps even being assigned a specific area of service, we may run the risk of thinking...of deacons as doers but not as thinkers. But to 'hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience' requires a steel grip in the gospel of Jesus Christ. Deacons must be examined or put to the test. The person who passes the testing should labor with the full support and commendation of the church body and its leaders. The testing affirms the person's gifting and character and endorses his ministry. It enables confidence in service" (Anyabwile, pp. 20-43).

- ii. Laying On Of Hands = Public Confirmation/Commission: cf. **1 Timothy 4:6-16** "The significance of the elders' action differed from that of Paul's action. Paul and the prophetic word were the channels 'through' (Greek, *dia*) which God conferred the 'spiritual gift.' The laying on of the elders' hands [**verse 14**], Scripture shows, was done *in association with* (Greek, *meta*) Paul's laying on of hands and the prophesies. Precisely what the laying on of the elders' hands signified, however, is not explained. If we assume

the act was similar in significance to that recorded in *Acts 13:1-3*, then the laying on of the elders' hands was a public commissioning by which the church entrusted Timothy to God's care and to the work to which God had called him. By doing this, the elders identified themselves as partners with him and expressed full agreement with his special task. ...the elders, as public witnesses to that word and representatives of the church(es), placed their hands upon him" (Strauch, p. 205). While this was done by the "presbytery" (*presbyterion*: also called the "eldership", "council of elders" or "body of elders"), such appointment should be done before the entire congregation, so all the people are called to acknowledge their appointment and offer them the honor due to them for this particular 'ministry of the Word'.

- **Honor due to Elders (among others):** cf. *1 Timothy 5:17-25* – "The entire section of *1 Timothy* from *5:1* to *6:2* addresses the proper treatment of various groups of people within the church [including] the congregation's duty to honor the church elders. That is, he gives further instruction on how Christians must treat one another in God's household (*1 Timothy 3:14, 15*). It is impossible to fully understand biblical eldership without grasping this highly instructive passage..." (Strauch, p. 206).
 - **Double Honor: verses 17-18** (ref. *1 Corinthians 9* and relevant outline notes) – "In verses 17 and 18, Paul instructs the congregation to care for the economic welfare of elders who rule well, particularly those who labor at preaching and teaching. In the same way that needy widows had been abandoned by family members and fellow believers as a result of self-centered living caused by false teaching (*1 Timothy 5:3-16*), it appears that the church's spiritual leaders had been neglected. The elders to whom Paul refers are identified by two qualifying clauses:
 1. 'who rule well' [*prohistemi* = "rule" ('which is a bit strong'); better is "lead", "manage", "direct"] and
 2. 'those who work at preaching and teaching' [NKJV – 'those who labor in the word and doctrine'; *kopiaō* = "work" (cf. *1 Thessalonians 5:12*), "a vigorous and laborious work"] ...Paul's uppermost concern is that the congregation properly honor those elders who labor at preaching

and teaching. By using ‘preaching and teaching’ [or ‘word’ and ‘doctrine’], Paul covers all dimensions of public discourse. Since all elders are required to be ‘able to teach’ (*1 Timothy 3:2* [as are all mature Christians called to teach and defend the faith (*Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 5:12*)], but only some elders labor at teaching, what is the difference between these elders? The answer is found in the participle ‘those who work hard [labor]’ (*kopiontes*). The reason these elders ‘work hard’ at teaching is because they are spiritually gifted to do so. They are driven to study Scripture and to work fully at teaching. Nothing else satisfies them like teaching and preaching God’s Word. They are skilled at communicating divine truth, and there is a marked effectiveness to their teaching. Although all elders must be able to teach, not all elders are Spirit-gifted teachers and shepherds who labor in the Word” (Strauch, pp. 209-210). In *Ephesians 4:11-12*, “shepherds [pastors; pastoral elders] and teachers are closely linked together but not identical. Shepherds [pastors] are included in the category of teachers, but not all teachers are included in the category of shepherds [pastors]. The shepherd gift, then, uniquely combines teaching and governance. As critically important as the teaching and shepherding gifts are to the local church, the New Testament does not elevate those who possess these gifts to a special priestly or clerical status. Nor does it create a distinct office separate from the eldership. Nor does it give to any party exclusive rights to preach, baptize, lead in worship, or administer the Lord’s supper. In fact, the New Testament doesn’t assign a special title or name for these elders even though their giftedness and full- or part-time working status for the church distinguishes them from the other elders. [This unbiblical distinction between ‘clerical’ and ‘laity’ is biblically and pragmatically corrected, to a

degree, in “The Trellis and the Vine.”] The elders, then, who labor in the Word and exercise good leadership are in the words of Scripture, ‘leading men among the brethren’ (*Acts 15:22*)” (Strauch, pp. 210-211).

3. “So ‘double honor’ refers to honor for an elder of the church and [additional] honor for his extra labor [of teaching and preaching with the necessary time devoted to study for that ministry]. The word ‘honor’ (*timē*) means ‘respect,’ ‘consideration,’ or ‘high regard,’ and in certain circumstances includes the idea of monetary aid. This latter sense appears to be predominant in *1 Timothy 5*. *1 Timothy 5:3* states, ‘Honor widows [who are truly widows]. The instruction that follows (vv. 4-16) demonstrates that honoring these widows primarily involves monetary assistance (vv. 4, 8, 16). A church honors a destitute Christian widow by providing for her material livelihood. The biblical quotations in *verse 18* show that material provision is uppermost in Paul’s thought. Paul also affirmed the right of those who preach and teach to receive financial provision from others [in *1 Corinthians 9:4-14* (cf. *2 Cor. 11:8,9; Gal. 6:6; Phil. 4:16; 1 Thess. 2:5, 6; 2 Thess. 3:8, 9; Titus 3:13*). In our present passage, Paul instructs the congregation to support congregational elders who preach and teach...so in *verse 18* he adds scriptural support and clarification to his charge. Quoting from both Old [*Deuteronomy 25:4*] and New [*Matthew 10:10; Luke 10:7*] Testaments [Paul is illustration] the right of teachers and preachers to receive material sustenance for their labors (*1 Corinthians 9:9; 1 Timothy 5:18*). The passage thus implies the provision of adequate living support, not merely token gifts, for the worker. Jesus originally spoke these words to the seventy before He sent them out to preach. Paul applied His words to all who teach and preach the gospel (*1 Corinthians 9:14*).

Here, in *1 Timothy 5:17, 18*, Paul applies the same words to elders who labor in the Word” (Strauch, pp. 211-215).

- *Alistair Begg’s insights:* Ministry as the preaching and teaching pastoral elder is to “go into the kitchen once per week to prepare a meal and serve it up to the sheep.” The *honor* is the work of the Word and the labor involved in rightly dividing the Word of Truth (*2 Timothy 2:15*). The *honor* is not in the position or title, but in the teaching and preaching work of the Word. This is the Spiritual gift that eventually occupies much time of study that, in addition to the other ministries of pastoral elders, leads to the congregation paying to support him; because, he does not have the time for a full time job. The qualifications for pastoral elders are the same for all and are simply the characteristics for all Christians via fruit of Holy Spirit. This is the *parity and diversity among pastoral elders*. The difference lies in that they are also men who are called by God to shepherd the flock which involves protecting the congregation from wolves, teaching Sound Doctrine, visiting and praying for the sick, and judging doctrinal issues utilizing their God-given Spiritual gifts for the building up of the Church. For example, one’s Spiritual gift and vocation is to preach God’s Word every Sunday and to feed the flock with God’s Word (meat), but the same person may have no business involved in the music ministry.

- **Protecting Elders: verse 19** – “Honoring elders also includes protecting them from malicious people and false accusations. When people become angry at their leaders, they think they have the right

to strike out at them and say whatever they want to say. So Scripture provides protection for elders...[By arguing on the basis of *Deuteronomy 17:6; 19:15; cf. John 8:17; Hebrews 10:28*, Paul is stating] don't listen to unsubstantiated charges, and don't automatically accept as true an accusation made against an elder. However, fair, reasonable protection from accusations doesn't imply immunity. So Paul adds, 'except on the basis [on the evidence of] two or three witnesses.' This means that an accusation brought by two or three people who have witnessed the sin, or by two or three people who have verified another's accusation, must be investigated and properly judged. George Knight aptly explains...'In effect, Paul is urging Timothy to follow...*Matthew 18* and the O.T. before the church accepts or acknowledges as correct an accusation against an elder" (Strauch, pp. 215-217).

iii. Publically Rebuking and Disciplining Elders: *1 Timothy 5:20* – “The elders who are to be publically rebuked are those who are found guilty of [serious] sin as proven by witnesses (v. 19). The elder's disposition toward his sin is not the issue here. The issue is: and elder's sin demands public exposure. The passage teaches that a proven, public accusation against an elder who has sinned [even if he has expressed, or is expressing, repentance] (or is sinning) must be publically rebuked [before the entire congregation, 'in the presence of all']. The major point is that an elder's sin must be publically exposed, not hidden or swept under the carpet. A spiritual leader's sin must be treated with great concern because it has grave ramifications; it can lead more people astray and can cause the unbelieving world to mock God, the church, and the gospel. If the world sees that local churches take sin seriously, especially in the discipline of sinful leaders, then it will believe that Christians mean what they preach. Furthermore, only when the discipline of an erring church leader is made public is there any chance of controlling one of the most divisive forces in a church; rumormongering, gossip, and misinformation. Not only is the public discipline for the correction of the sinning elder, it is also for deterring others from sin” (Strauch, pp. 217-219).

b. General Guidelines for the 'Screening Process' cf. *1 Timothy 5:22-25*: “The laying on of hands is a biblical expression for appointment to office [aka: pastoral elders] or a specific task [aka:

local deacons/servants] (*Numbers 27:18-23; Acts 6:6*). So, in *verse 22*, Paul charges Timothy not to appoint elders (or anyone) too ‘hastily’ or ‘quickly’. Paul’s warning...indicates that elders were appointed by the laying on of hands. Although the New Testament provides no specific example of the laying on of hands at the time of an elder’s appointment, it was probably the common procedure used by Paul and the first Christians (*Acts 6:6; 13:3; 1 Timothy 4:14*). The same principle applies, particularly in this context, to a disciplined elder who seeks restoration to his position after being removed from office because of sin. It is common for an ambitious leaders to press the church for restoration to office...and don’t have a clue as to the damage they do to the Lord’s people or to the Lord’s name. The laying on of hands creates a bond between the two parties. The one (or ones) who appoints by the laying on of hands ‘shares’ (*koinoneō*, ‘participate’) in the sins or success of the one appointed. ...those who appointed the leader ‘share responsibility’ for those sins [of the leader] (*2 John 11*). The unwise appointment of an unqualified elder could stain Timothy’s character and reputation. It could cause him to ‘share responsibility’ in that person’s sins and failure. So Paul reminds Timothy to keep himself pure from participating in the sins of unfit elders by carefully and prayerfully examining all candidates to church office (*1 Timothy 3:10; 5:24, 25*). [*Verses 24-25* contain two maxims.] “The first maxim refers to two categories of unfit candidates: those who are obviously unfit and those who upon careful examination are found to be unfit. The second maxim refers to two categories of fit candidates: those who are obviously fit and those who upon careful examination are found to be fit. If an unworthy man is appointed to office after careful examination, those in charge cannot be accused of sin because they did all they humanly could to assess the candidate’s character” (Strauch, pp. 221-223).