

PROPER ATTITUDE OF THE CONGREGATION TOWARD THE ELDERS

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TEXT:

“And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves” (1Thessalonians 5:12-13).

INTRODUCTION :

- 1) Much has been said relative to the qualifications and work of the elders.
- 2) Elders must know their responsibilities and must have the proper attitude toward the sheep that they shepherd.
- 3) Likewise, the sheep must have the proper attitude toward their shepherds.
- 4) The relationship between the elders and the members are not to be taken lightly by either.
- 5) Attitudes are very important: We must make sure that our motives as well as our actions are Biblical.
- 6) What are some of the attitudes that members should possess toward the elders?

I. TO KNOW THEM.

- 1) “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;” (1Thessalonians 5:12).
- 2) The church should be well acquainted with its elders.
- 3) Sometimes elders may try to get better acquainted with some members, but members shun them and/or not cooperate with them.
- 4) To know them is more than just acquainted, also respect and appreciation should be shown.

II. ESTEEM THEM HIGHLY IN LOVE.

- 1) “And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace

among yourselves” (1Thessalonians 5:13).

2) Esteem - to value or deem them highly (again respect & appreciation)

3) Why?

(1) For their works sake, verse 13.

(2) They have a tremendous responsibility (work).

(3) All should value them and work together with them. (Church administration, evangelism).

(4) All should want the work to go forward.

(5) “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine” (1Timothy 5:17).

III. SUBMIT TO THEM.

1) “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17).

2) “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine” (1Timothy 5:17).

(1) Submit - to yield to.

(2) Just as elders must submit to Christ, members should submit to the elders.
(3) POINT: Elders are not law makers, can't change word, and must not be self-willed.

(4) “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

3) But elders do have authority, do rule, and they look out for the best of the congregation - we are to submit.

4) An army of generals never won a battle! (We must all work together).

IV. BE CAREFUL NOT TO RECEIVE RUMORS AGAINST AN ELDER.

1) “Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear” (1Timothy 5:19-20).

2) Those that are in the business of leading and correcting the members will have enemies.

3) We must be cautious relative to receiving false reports against the overseers.

4) Elders can (and do) make mistakes, sometimes sin - if unrepented must be exposed.

5) "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (1Timothy 5:20).

VI. IMITATE THEM.

1) "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation" (Hebrews 13:7).

2) The members of the congregation should follow the shepherds example in holy conduct.

3) We expect the elders to attend every service faithfully and to be a part in every good work (and should expect such).

(1) But the word applies to all.

(2) If we imitate the faith of the elders, attendance would be 100%.

(3) Every good work would be carried out.

4) "For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you" (1Corinthians 1:11).

VII. CALL THEM WHEN IN NEED.

1) "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him" (James 5:14-15).

2) We understand that when a sheep goes astray that a good shepherd will seek the lost sheep.

3) However, the scriptures also tell us to call for the elders when in need. (Call them, use them)

4) Should have such good relationship that both shepherd and sheep are working together.

VIII. PRAY FOR THEM.

1) Elders are men that need your prayers.

CONCLUSION:

1) For every divinely imposed obligation upon the elders, an equal obligation is imposed upon the members to respond. (Cooperate).

2) May God give us strong, qualified elders to lead us in the way that is right and ultimately to heaven.

3) May we also be a congregation that will work diligently under the oversight of the elders of the local congregation.