

## Social Responsibilities for the Needy: Honor to Elders and Slaves

I Timothy 5:17-6:2 / Palm Sunday / April 9<sup>th</sup>

### Introduction: The Spiritual Wolves Reject Jesus on Psalm Sunday

And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. 37 As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples.”

He answered, “I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.” (Luke 19:35-40, ESV)

### HONOR THE SPIRITUAL SHEPHERDS WITH FINANCIAL SUPPORT (5:17-18, ESV)

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,

- “You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out the grain. (Deuteronomy 25:4, ESV)
- And he commanded the people who lived in Jerusalem to give the portion due to the priests and the Levites, that they might give themselves to the Law of the LORD. As soon as the command was spread abroad, the people of Israel gave in abundance the firstfruits of grain, wine, oil, honey, and of all the produce of the field. And they brought in abundantly the tithe of everything. (2 Chronicles 31:4-5, ESV)
- This is my defense to those who would examine me. Do we not have the right to eat and drink? Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living? Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?

Do I say these things on human authority? **Does not the Law say the same? For it is written in the Law of Moses, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain.”** Is it for oxen that God is concerned? Does he not certainly speak for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop. If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more?

Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? **In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.** (I Corinthians 9:3-14, ESV)

“The laborer deserves his wages.”

- Whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace be to this house!’ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest upon him. But if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, **for the laborer deserves his wages.** Do not go from house to house. Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you. (Luke 10:7, ESV)

### HONOR THE SPIRITUAL SHEPHERDS WITH ACCOUNTABILITY FOR GROWTH (5:19-21, ESV)

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.

1. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach,
2. the husband of one wife,
3. sober-minded,
4. self-controlled,
5. respectable,
6. hospitable,
7. able to teach,
8. not a drunkard,
9. not violent
10. but gentle,
11. not quarrelsome,
12. not a lover of money.
13. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?
14. He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.
15. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. (I Timothy 3:1-7, ESV)

### 1. Ignore frivolous unsubstantiated accusations

Do not admit a charge against an elder

### 2. Investigate accusations of two or more witnesses and do not remain silent about these accusations

except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

"A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. If a malicious witness arises to accuse a person of wrongdoing, then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. And the rest shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you. Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. (Deuteronomy 19:15-21, ESV)

This is the third time I am coming to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. (2 Corinthians 13:1, ESV)

### 3. Present accusations to bring about repentance

As for those who persist in sin,

### 4. Expose publicly unrepentant behavior

rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.

Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. And great fear came upon the whole church and upon all who heard of these things. (Acts 5:10-11, ESV)

Nevertheless, with most of them God was not pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things took place as examples for us, that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not be idolaters as some of them were; as it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink and rose up to play." We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ to the test, as some of them did and were destroyed by serpents, nor grumble, as some of them did and were destroyed by the Destroyer. **Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.** Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (I Corinthians 10:5-12 ESV)

### 5. Avoid prejudging, including ignoring the allegations

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging,

**6. Avoid Favoritism, including nepotism**

doing nothing from partiality.

**7. Patiently Investigate elders before appointing them and reinstating them**

Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands,

**8. Do not partake nor cover-up the sins of leaders**

nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure. (No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.)

**9. Utilize discernment in exposing hidden sins and recognizing good works**

The sins of some people are conspicuous, going before them to judgment, but the sins of others appear later.

So also good works are conspicuous, and even those that are not cannot remain hidden.

**HONOR THE MASTERS OF SLAVES (6:1-2, ESV)**

**1. Honor**

Let all who are under a yoke as bondservants regard their own masters as worthy of **all honor**, so that the name of God and the teaching may not be reviled.

**2. Service**

Those who have believing masters must not be disrespectful on the ground that they are brothers; rather they must serve all the better since those who benefit by their good service are believers and beloved.

**SUMMARY OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES: WIDOWS, ELDERS, SLAVES**

Teach and urge these things.

- As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. (I Timothy 1:3-4, ESV)
- First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. (I Timothy 2:1-2, ESV)