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November 22, 2020

1 Peter 5

There is a challenge within Christendom that has existed since the creation of the Church big C. The problem is disagreement in interpretation of words. Words spoken by Jesus; Words dictated by God to men who then write them down as they heard them. Add to that then translations from one language to another with the interpreter trying to find a word in the translation language that matches the word and intent of the translated language.

As a matter of fact, even the manner in which a church small c is organized has so many variables; Congregational leadership, Elder rule or leadership, Pastor rule or leadership and the list goes on. Add to that membership or non-membership, voting etc, it is all very confusing. So, what does the Bible say, what was God's intent?

Instructions to Elders

1The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

We will start where God started with Peter in describing a person of authority within the Body of Christ. We have to start there because there were no Baptists, no Methodists, no Catholics there were just “believers and non-believers) Even with that thought there was disruption ostensibly by Satan trying to bring in confusion within the Body of Christ. We’ll get to that in a minute but let’s start with the first verse and the term “Elder”.

According to Strong’s Concordance (Greek)

4245 *presbýteros* – properly, a *mature man* having seasoned judgment (experience); an *elder*.

You will notice in the definition there is little in the way of bona fides that qualifies a person to be an elder other than age and good or seasoned judgement. So we are all on the same sheet of music so to speak the term bona fides according to American Heritage Dictionary;

- n. Good faith; sincerity.
- n. Information that serves to guarantee a person's good faith, standing, and reputation; authentic credentials.
- n. Good faith; fair dealing. See bona fide.

1The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

God via Peter is calling on those in a local groups called churches small “c”, Peter refers to himself as one of those “elders” or in the Greek *presbýteros*; but adds that he was a witness to Jesus suffering and is going to be part of the “***glory that shall be revealed***”

I think a Biblical case can be made that these “elders” are what are considered today as “pastors”. The word pastor comes from Latin but it’s meaning in Strong’s Concordance Word Helps is;

4166 *poimén* – properly, a *shepherd* ("pastor" in *Latin*); (figuratively) someone who the Lord raises up to *care* for the total well-being of His flock (the people of the Lord).

We go to the next verse to see what it is that God through Peter is exhorting these “elders” older men with seasoned judgement” to accomplish.

2Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

It appears that God is already seeing signs of misappropriation of a position that some would call “authority”. The cautions in this verse are two;

1: willing followers to an individual “elders” leadership

2: not for money or payment

I personally don't know of any elders that are paid perhaps there are some in some churches. It appears it would be forbidden by scripture if there are.

These elders are to operate within a willingness on the part of those in attendance and not by force. These elders are to do this for a simple goal of "ready mind".

However, and here is where it gets a bit murky; Elders were also likely pastors when we examine the ancient texts apparently and the appointment of such men to lead a group within a town or city. Often these were groups of Christians that met in people's homes. A person selected in the early church would be the "overseer", "elder" or "pastor". These men were appointed by the apostles as they stood up these various body of believers in different towns and cities.

The idea of human leadership started in the Old Covenant and this is just one example.

Jeremiah 3:15 And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.

The first time we find the term "shepherd" is in Genesis

Genesis 4:2 Then she also gave birth to his brother Abel. Now Abel became a shepherd of flocks, but Cain worked the ground.

This is obviously a reference to the animal called a “sheep” but later became a reference to all of mankind when God made reference to man as “sheep” even Jesus referred to as a “lamb”. The idea was that sheep were a benign creature that God created. They were often lost without a leader called a shepherd. They were often hunted by wolves and other creatures.

A military man made an observation that was used in training that there are three kinds of people in this world;

Sheep

Wolves

Sheep dogs

In this analogy sheep represent all of humankind. Wolves were once sheep but became hunters for the father of lies Satan. Sheep dogs were once sheep but became benevolent protectors of the flocks. I suppose if we were to intertwine this analogy with the scripture, we are studying the sheepdog would be the “elder” or “pastor”. The wolves of course are those humans who have rejected Christ and actively hunt to destroy the sheep at large.

Back to our study of who these “elders”/ pastors should be and how they should conduct themselves.

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

Here again, we find God through Peter bringing up a subject that must have been paramount in God's eyes when describing how a body of sheep were to be overseen. The list is added to the items from vs 2;

1: willing followers to an individual “elders” leadership

2: not for money or payment

3. not being “lords” over God's heritage....

If we understand what the term “lord” means in this context we need to go again to Strong's Concordance;

Transliteration: kurios

Phonetic Spelling: (koo'-ree-os)

Definition: lord, master

Usage: lord, master, sir; the Lord.

HELPS Word-studies

2962 *kýrios* – properly, a person exercising *absolute ownership rights*; *lord (Lord)*.

This term “lord” is used in connection with Jesus and based on that we understand that these “elders/pastors” were not to put

themselves in the position of Jesus, but were to be benevolent shepherds.

4And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

Hebrews 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Even though in vs 4 it does not say but it is obvious that the “chief Shepherd” is of course Jesus Christ.

Upon Jesus appearing something happens that “a crown of glory” will be given to faithful shepherds. This is not a king’s crown it is in more in the form of a wreath that goes on the head. They were used as a sign of a victor. The Greeks used them as awards to those who won a race as in the Olympics.

These crowns will pale in comparison to what Jesus has done for us. As an example for what likely we will all do is what the 24 Elders do who are around the Throne of Jesus.

Revelation 4: 10The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Cast Your Cares on Him

5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all *of you* be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

Younger believers are to submit to Elders. We have long had a saying that says; “Respect your Elders”. Now that is a broad statement not necessarily Biblically centered because many cultures adhere to this ideal. It is Biblically based, however.

God then tells us to go beyond giving deference to just Elders, but we are to give honor to one another, in humility. The reason is that God is not impressed with haughty attitudes but as we have seen so many times God prefers humbleness in Believers.

6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:

Matthew 23:12

For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.

Perhaps you have noticed over the past 20 years or so the education system in America was really invested in teaching children self-esteem. Do you think that idea started with the education system? The idea of self-importance is from the pit of hell. It mimics Satan’s basic flaw;

Isaiah 14: [12](#)How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

[13](#)For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

[14](#)I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.

[7](#)Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Our safety lies within Christ our Lord and Savior. I wrestle constantly with the idea of being a protector; can or should I continue in that role or simply become a victim of evil. Currently my go to verse to decide on that question is;

1 Timothy 5: [8](#)But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.

It can be a dangerous thing to build a doctrine on one verse especially in light of what and how Jesus approached those who hated Him. This world is a dangerous and violent place and God has given us governments to protect us. But what happens when those governments fail to carry out their duty of protection us and our families from this evil. At this point in my life I believe God is telling me that it is my responsibility to provide from my family and included in providing is protecting. I would not hesitate to kill and wild animal that is threatening my family; so how about a crazed

person who is threatening my family. They have made a choice to bring violence to my door and my current belief is that I will repel violence with any means necessary to provide for my family. And when I say my door I mean; anywhere my family is. As to who my family is God sorted that out to expand from the physical family to the spiritual family and I feel the same obligation to protect other believers as I do my physical family.

8Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

The world is oblivious to the evil in this world or they are welcoming it with open arms. In either case, judgement is coming.

Benediction and Final Greetings

10But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*.

It is through God's Grace that we are even able to be saved. He did not have to extend Grace to us, He did not have to offer His Son as the perfect sacrifice, He could have just let us all die off. But instead He gave us Life Spiritual life to live an eternity with Him. In that decision of Grace, He also offered us Salvation,

Perfection, and Strength all intended to settle us in His Perfect will.

11To him *be* glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

12By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.

It is reconned by most scholars that this Silvanus is the same partner in Christ that is recorded in the letters to the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 1:19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea.

Peter calls Silus out for his dedication to the Faith and Teaching of the brethren.

13The *church that is* at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so *doth* Marcus my son. 14Greet ye one another with a kiss of charity. Peace *be* with you all that are in Christ Jesus. Amen.

The word “church” in italics indicates that it does not appear in most historic translations except in Sinaiticus. The most prominent reference in the word used is “sister”. It is further considered that Peter is speaking of his own wife as the “co-elect) in Babylon and she is adding her salute to Silus.

Marcus is considered to be John Mark also known as Mark the author of the Book of Mark. Marcus as Peter referred to him as “son” is meant in the Spiritual sense and not in the physical sense. He traveled with Paul and aided Peter in Rome. Apparently, Peter felt it appropriate to add John Mark’s salutation as well to Silus.

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