1Thess #115

Godly leaders do not demand obedience!

Let us start with a bit of good news – the ladies in Wyoming have given me the message that Aunt Donna is home from the hospital. She still needs prayer but she is in stable condition!

Also, I will be working on a flyer for the Bible Conference. So, if I don’t have your email or mailing address please feel free to contact me on prbministry.org and make sure you give me that info.

I will send out flyers sometime in August.

Let us open back up in 1Thessalonians chapter five.

We will read from verse 11 into verse 14 only because there is so much doctrinal content in these next few verses that we will need to spend several hours on unpacking these scriptures.

1Thes 5:11 Therefore, encourage one another and build one another up, just as you also are doing.

The Apostle Paul is commending the Bels at Thessalonica as he is about to pivot toward a reprimand.

/1Th 5:12 But **we ask you**, brothers *and sisters,* to **recognize those who diligently labor among you and are in leadership**over you in the Lord, and give you instruction,\

[1Th 5:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/5/13/s_1116013) and that you regard them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.

 Verses 12 and 13 go hand in glove within this lesson.

[1Th 5:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1th/5/14/s_1116014) We urge you, brothers *and sisters,* admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

First off the Apostle Paul is making a request and not a demand.

/1Thes 5:12 – *we ask you (erōtaō)*

This is a request from the Apostle Paul, asking that they obey the chain of command, that leadership ordained by GOD is properly respected and compensated. \

ERO-TAT-OH, comes from a root word that means to seek - to look for something. This is used as a term for seeking an approval.

No matter what role of leadership someone is in – father, husband, boss, pastor or president, there is never a doctrine to back up tyranny.

In fact, there are Biblical principles that speak to standing against tyrants.

/A true leader requests and humbly asks for those to follow their protocols of leadership. That is the opening and common approach. It only turns to stronger applications when the authority is undermined and/or rejected after clarity of regulations, expectations and truth have been fully laid out. \

No one can force leadership and mandates upon other people. When a person in leadership begins the march toward control and manipulation of other people’s freedoms and liberties they have broken a barrier of trust and have made a stance against GOD’s first divine institution.

 REPEAT

Folks, we are about to embark on a series that will make some people uncomfortable - even I am not going to feel exactly comfy-cozy in this series.

/1Thess 5, verses 12 & 13 demand clarity of the following Biblical principles;

Roles of spiritual leadership.

Being under the right spiritual authority.

Tithing compared to grace giving.

Submitting to spiritual authority rather than being forced under authority.\

Many of the aspects of authority whether at work or in marriage and government, apply… but our main focus in this series will be spiritual authority in relation to a ministry or church.

/1Thes 12:13 - *But we ask you, brothers and sisters, to recognize those (eidō)*

This is the Apostle Paul making a request to adjust back toward appreciating and uplifting those in authority. When Bels absorb false doctrine they have subtly rejected the authority of the accurate teaching over them. \

The Greek verb – EYE-DO, speaks to not only appreciation but to exam and truly pay attention to something or someone fully - having your full attention. To perceive with the effort to understand the knowledge.

When Bels go astray after they have been under solid teaching it is a form of disrespect that can turn into a very troublesome habit if not addressed right away.

The Apostle Paul knew the men he had underneath his authority and he knew the effort he, himself put into his own teaching ministry. He was requesting that the Thessalonians turn back toward the proper chain of command before more of them got lost.

/1Thes 5:12 - *to recognize those who* ***diligently labor among you*** *and are in leadership;*

***Diligently labor*** – (*kopiaō*) meaning someone who is exhausting themselves to bring forth truth. This word is used for a level of work that means the person is fatigued at the end of the work day.\

COP-EE-OT-OH, is a strong word used for someone who is exhausted after their work. Usually meaning to labor until you are weary.

This is the calling for spiritual leadership especially the role of pastor-teacher. The role of a pastor is to exhaust themselves in the study of the word and feed the flock.

This was a common term used by the Apostles and the teaching of leadership within the early church, unfortunately today it is lost on many spiritual leaders.

/Gal 4:11 I fear for you, that perhaps **I have labored over you in vain**.

Col 1:29 For **this purpose I also labor, striving according to His power** which works mightily within me.\

Jump over to 1Timothy chapter four RF.

/Phlp 2:16 **holding firmly the word of life**, so that on the day of Christ I can take pride because **I did not run in vain nor labor in vain**.

Gal 4:19 My children, **with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you**—\

If your pastor has free time on their hands every week, to visit the local hospital and speak to political and community leaders.

If they engage in social justice campaigns and appear at all the community action programs, I would question their labor in the WORD.

/1Ti 4:7 But **stay away from worthless stories**that are typical of old women. Rather, **discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness**;

Timothy was called into the role of pastor-teacher. This was how the role and the calling was to be approached two thousand years ago. \

The only thing that has changed is mankind’s attitude of true spiritual leadership.

GODLINESS points to higher levels of SM, it is the Greek noun, *eusebeia.* It means a lifestyle dedicated to Christ. This would be a BEL who engulfs themselves in the two power options and forges forward no matter what!

Occupation with Christ.

[1Ti 4:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/8/s_1123008) for bodily training is just slightly beneficial, but godliness is beneficial for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come.

The Apostle Paul is using an analogy to highlight exercise and physical fitness and in doing so, he is pointing to spiritual training.

[1Ti 4:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/9/s_1123009) It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance.

/[1Ti 4:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/10/s_1123010) For **it is for this we labor and strive**, because we have set our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all mankind, especially of believers.

Spiritual leadership in the realm of pastor-teacher is dependent upon exercise of the mind – it is not an emotional rollercoaster! \

One of the easiest ways to recognize the right pastor-teacher for your life is to eliminate the ones who habitually use fun stories and fluffy messages to teach you.

[1Ti 4:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/11/s_1123011) Prescribe and teach these things.

The Apostle Paul is actually using a phrase that means a command – he is telling Timothy do not stray from this line of authority and this dedication to accurately handling the WORD.

None of this is a suggestion!

/[1Ti 4:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/12/s_1123012) **Let no one look down on your youthfulness**, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith, *and* purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

Every pastor-teacher has different challenges and weak spots, expect that people will seek to attack those links of your chain of command. \

God chooses men for church leadership from all walks of life – all degrees of intellect and backgrounds.

The 12 Apostles were all different personalities of men – all different levels of education.

/The two expectations for the gift of pastor are academic honesty and exhausting labor in study and teaching. You cannot compromise those two expectations. The gift of pastor-teacher has several qualities needing to be fulfilled, yet these two expectations carry above and beyond everything else for that office. \

[1Ti 4:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/13/s_1123013) Until I come, give your attention to the *public* reading, to exhortation, *and* teaching.

Paul never told Timothy as a pastor *- just have fun and tell fluffy stories, just go with whatever you feel.*

There were specific and tight guidelines given to all the early church leaders by the Apostles.

The Apostles wanted the men behind the pulpits to follow in imitating their walk with Christ.

Not to develop new, fun and interesting teachings to keep butts in the seats!

/[1Ti 4:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/14/s_1123014) Do not neglect **the spiritual gift within you**, which was granted to you through *words of* prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders.

ALL pastor-teachers are called by GOD into that office. It didn’t matter whether it was a fisherman, a carpenter or a highly educated Pharisee – the hand of GOD is on that man. \

If you don’t understand this concept of GOD ordained men and God ordained ministries, you may fall victim to false teachers.

The gift of pastor-teacher is not a cosmic popularity contest nor is it a calling for all types of men who like to engage in public speaking.

I venture a guess that if you put 100 pastors in a room - maybe 8 or 10 out of that 100, have the true calling for that office.

This is why it is a difficult series to teach and it will make all of us uncomfortable at some point.

There is nothing in any of the Apostle’s messages and teachings to pastors, that appeared to be leading these men to think a lucrative and easy career was ahead for them.

There was always a warning of being accurate and studying hard…be imitators of their leadership.

Endure the difficulties and stay in the WORD.

/[1Ti 4:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/15/s_1123015) **Take pains with these things; be *absorbed* in them**, so that your progress will be evident to all.

Written in the present, active imperative, meditate habitually in the WORD and be fully invested as you continue to cultivate this gift. \

Just as a farmer cultivates and works the land daily, to bring forth fruits and vegetables that are healthy. So too does the pastor-teacher, continually dig, mediate and nurture the WORD and his notes to prepare a healthy meal for the congregation.

 REPEAT

[1Ti 4:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1ti/4/16/s_1123016) Pay close attention to yourself and to the teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Every pastor-teacher is going to be held accountable for what they have taught.

It is not a gift to be taken lightly.

The pastor-teacher is not a king or a tyrant or a politician. They are not a prophet in the sense, that they do not have dreams and visions and get behind the pulpit to speak on those dreams and visions.

They are to be respected in their calling and they are to be supported by those who recognize them as their spiritual teacher.

/1Tim 5:17 The **elders who lead well are to be considered worthy of double honor,** especially those **who work hard at preaching and teaching**. 18 For the Scripture says, “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE IT IS THRESHING,” and **“The laborer is worthy of his wages.”\**

The gift of pastor-teacher is never to be controlled by the congregation, they are not to attempt to guide the pastor on what or how he teaches.

The pastor’s authority is to be respected and obviously, he is called to receive his wages from grace provisions of the congregation.

But the pastor is not to put his nose in your personal affairs and attempt to manipulate you in any way, any shape or any form.

If a pastor is off the mark, as far as what or how he is teaching, the best thing to do is remove yourself from that authority.

Deacons and church administration and elders in the ministry can speak to the pastor and take a vote. Yet I warn to tread lightly because this can be a very difficult ground to navigate.

/2Tim 2:6 The hard-working farmer **ought to be the first**to receive his share of the crops.

The pastor cannot live off the crumbs of the ministry yet they also cannot become involved in any form of greed.\

I want to close the beginning of this series with a few principles in relation to pastors and church leaders.

Which means the office of evangelist, deacon and prep school or administration – any form of leadership in a ministry.

/Church leaders are flawed creatures yet they are called into a higher standard and they have to continue to maintain, integrity levels that fulfill the plan of God. Their spiritual journey will be evaluated on a higher scale in the end, God does put a stronger emphasis on leadership. Pastors are the head role as a temporal shepherd, representing Christ as the Good Shepherd. \

Shepherds lead the flock, therefore, that shepherd better be the right man for the job! They better exhaust themselves in that job and realize they have accountability on a larger scale than the average Christian.

/Pastors are not to be held up like a form of deity, nor are they viewed as completely flawless. Church leaders who try to manipulate or dominate those under their authority have crossed a boundary into tyranny that is dangerous. The authority of the pastor is to be highly regarded in reference to ministry or church matters. Congregation members who believe they are under the right teacher should willingly have an attitude of submission toward his authority. \