

**Introduction** (1 Pet 2:13-17, Rom 13:1-7)

Most of us have not grown up under a king or monarchy, but I spent most of my childhood living under a king. I grew up in Iran, where the Shah of Iran reigned. In countries with a king, people learn to honor the king. I was living in Iran when they coronated the Shah as the Shahanshah, which means, king of kings. There were festive lights put up in every city in Iran during the coronation. They strung lights for the coronation the way we do for Christmas. They celebrated and honored their king. Mohammad Reza Pahlavi was a good king and had the best interests of his people in mind, and he was worthy of their honor. Whenever the Shah would come to town, they would put up lights and decorations to honor him.

Today, we are going to look at honoring our authorities. Here in America, especially after this election, I am not so sure that we even know how to honor those in authority. It seems we have no problem speaking evil of a President or a President Elect. We have no problem speaking evil of our Senators and Congressmen. There is not a lot of respect shown to our governmental authorities. Some people argue that leaders and authorities need to earn our respect.

I was at a home one time giving some counsel to a husband and wife who were struggling in their marriage. We spoke about how the Scriptures teach us to honor one another. I said that husbands are commanded in 1 Peter 3:7 to honor their wives as joint heirs. I also told the wife that wives are commanded in 1 Peter 3:1-6 to honor and respect their husbands. In that passage, Sarah called Abraham Lord. She was honoring him as she would the Lord. Her husband is the primary authority that she is under. The wife came right out and said, in the presence of her husband, that he was not worthy of being honored. She said she would start honoring him when he began to act honorably. I told her that she was to honor him no matter what. She should honor his position, and it should be done as unto the Lord. I mentioned that our obedience is never contingent upon the actions of another. We are called to do what is right, even if others do not do what is right. We have to love others, even if they do not love us. We have to honor others, even if they do not do what is right. While it is true that those in authority should act in a way that merits respect and honor, the Scriptures tell us to honor our authorities.

The Scriptures provide us some clear guidance about honoring our authorities. Today, we want to look at three specific ways that the Scriptures tell us to honor our authorities. First, we are to honor them by submitting to them. Second, we are to honor our authorities by doing what is right. Third, we are to honor our authorities by rendering to them what is due.

**Honoring Our Authorities**

1. Honor Authorities by Submitting to them (1 Pet 2:13-17, Rom 13:1-2)
2. Honor Authorities by Doing What is Right (1 Pet 2:15, Rom 13:3)
3. Honor Authorities by Rendering Them What is Due (Rom 13:7, 1 Tim 5:17-18)

**1. Honor Authorities by Submitting to them** (1 Pet 2:13-17, Eph 6:1-2, Rom 13:1-2)

The first way that we are to honor our authorities is by submitting to them. Peter writes that **we are to submit ourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution**, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him. Next, he tells us that it is the will of God for us to do right and silence the ignorance of foolish men. As Christians, we are free from the law of sin and

death. Peter tells us not to use our freedom for a covering for evil, but as bondslaves of God. That is the second way of honoring our authorities. He finishes the passage by commanding us to honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, and honor the king. In context, we are to honor our authorities by submitting to them.

(1 Pet 2:13-17) “Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, {14} or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. {15} For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. {16} Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. {17} Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.”

A few weeks ago we looked at how honoring our father and mother was the foundation for how we are to relate to all people, our authorities, and to God, our Father. We saw in Ephesians 6 that Paul wrote for children to obey their parents. He quoted from Deuteronomy 5:16 and Exodus 20:11, saying, “honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise.” One way that children are to honor their parents, who are their authorities, is by obeying them. The principle of honoring our authorities by submission and obedience is very clear in Scripture.

(Eph 6:1-2) “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. {2} HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise),”

Paul also wrote in Romans 13 that every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. **All authorities have been established by God**, and when we resist authority, we are opposing the ordinance of God. He concludes in verse seven that we are to render to all what is due them, tax to who tax is due, custom to whom custom is due, fear to whom fear is due, and honor to whom honor is due. Again, the context is that we honor our authorities by submitting and obeying our authorities.

(Rom 13:1-7) “Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. {2} Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves....{7} Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.”

When we look at spiritual authorities, the principle is still the same. The author of Hebrews tells us to obey our leaders in the church and to submit to them. God gives two responsibilities of elders in this passage. Leaders in the church are to keep watch over our souls and they must give an account to God. I can tell you that the leaders in our church do keep watch over your souls. They pray for the flock individually and when they meet corporately. A good amount of time is spent at each leadership meeting praying over the flock. God commands the flock is to obey and submit with joy, and not with grief, or it will not be profitable. Again, the main point is we need to honor our authorities by submitting to them and obeying them.

(Heb 13:17) “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.”

The church is not exempt from being under government authorities. We are taught to submit to every human institution, whether to kings or to governors. These authorities have been established by God. Some would argue that when the government uses our taxes for wrong purposes we should not pay the taxes. I have come across many Christians who refuse to pay income taxes. I believe that Romans 13 makes that very clear. We are to pay taxes to whom taxes are due. Christians are not exempt from paying taxes, even if you do not like the ways that the taxes are being used.

King Solomon wrote that those who keep the royal command experience no trouble. There is no fear of authority when we do what is right. However, he also added, “for a wise heart knows the proper time and procedure.” Proper time and procedure speak of order. God is a God of order. He commands things to be done properly and in order. One of the jobs of kings and those in authority is to make sure things are done properly and in order. It is interesting that the word for submission in Greek is *hupotasso*, which means to be under proper order and arrangement. The word *insubordination* means not to be under proper order and arrangement. Wise people understand the proper time and procedure; they understand that obedience to authorities brings about order.

(Eccl 8:5) “He who keeps a royal command experiences no trouble, for a wise heart knows the proper time and procedure.”

**There are times or exceptions when we may need to violate a royal command.** One exception would be when an authority tells us to do something that is morally wrong or violates our conscience. I have had authorities tell me to cheat on their handicap or get fired. I chose to get fired. God rewarded me for my stand against being told to do something that was wrong. I have had authorities tell me to lie about things. I won't do that either. When the apostles were ordered by the Jewish leaders not to preach in the name of Jesus, they replied that they had to do what is right in God's eyes. They understood the principle that authorities are established by God. God is over all authorities. **When a lower authority tells us to do something that violates a command from a higher authority, we have to obey the higher authority. God is the highest authority.**

(Acts 5:27-29) “When they had brought them, they stood them before the Council. The high priest questioned them, {28} saying, “We gave you strict orders not to continue teaching in this name, and yet, you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.” {29} But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.”

There are some procedures that should be followed if we are going to violate a royal command. Here are some considerations to follow before violating the command of an authority. **First, be very clear about the issue.** Be clear about where you stand on the issue. Get counsel, study, do research and make sure you have a clear conviction about the issue. **Second, have a submissive heart.** A submissive heart wants to submit and is looking for ways to submit. A rebellious heart is harsh and resistant. An authority will pick up on the heart attitude. **Third, make an appeal to the authority.** Give an alternate plan of action and ask permission to do that instead of the first order. Daniel and his companions were asked to eat the king's food. They were very clear about the issue. Some of the meat would be unclean meat, and the Law said they were not to defile themselves by eating unclean meat. They had the right heart attitude. Third, they made an appeal that they could be tested with a vegetable diet for ten days. You can see their heart attitude in the appeal that they made. They asked to be tested for ten days. The overseer allowed them to be tested, and at the end of the appeal period, their appearance was better than others, and they were allowed to continue.

(Dan 1:5-16) “The king appointed for them a daily ration from the king's choice food and from the wine which he drank... {8} But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with the wine which he drank; so he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself... {9} Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion in the sight of the commander of the officials, {10} and the commander of the officials said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has appointed your food and your drink; for why should he see your faces looking more haggard than the youths who are your own age? Then you would make me forfeit my head to the king." {11} But Daniel said to the overseer whom the commander of the officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, {12} "Please test your servants for ten days, and let us be given some vegetables to eat and water to drink. {13} "Then let our appearance be observed in your presence and the appearance of the youths who are eating the king's choice food; and deal with your servants according to what you see." {14} So he listened to them in this matter and tested them for ten days. {15} At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food. {16} So the overseer continued to withhold their choice food and the wine they were to drink, and kept giving them vegetables.”

## **2. Honor Authorities by Doing What is Right (1 Pet 2:15, Rom 13:3)**

We read from Romans 13 about being in subjection to the governing authorities. I skipped over a few verses, and I want to go back and pick up those verses. In verse two Paul writes that whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God, and they will receive condemnation upon themselves. He adds, “for rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.”

(Rom 13:2-4) “Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. {3} For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; {4} for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.”

Notice in verse three that Paul exhorts us to do what is good. We honor our authorities when we do what is right or good. When we do the right things, we have no fear of consequences from our authorities. When we do not do the right things, we face the wrath of the governing authorities. It is pretty simple. People that work hard and do the right things in the work place get rewarded and commended for their work. People that act inappropriately and do not do the right things in the work place face disciplinary action or termination. On the home front, no child gets in trouble for cleaning his room, making his bed, doing his homework, or doing what is right. Parents would be overjoyed and would commend the child. Solomon wrote that the father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, and he who sires a wise son will be glad in him. Parents are honored by their child's good behavior.

(Pro 23:24) “The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, And he who sires a wise son will be glad in him.”

On the other hand, a foolish child brings grief and dishonor to a parent. Notice what Solomon says about a child that does foolish things rather than the right things. “A foolish son is a grief to his mother.” I will add that the foolish son is also grief to his father. Both the mother and father are dishonored by a son that does foolish things.

(Pro 10:1) “The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish son is a grief to his mother.”

Paul taught that **there is no reason to fear our authorities when we do what is right**. We honor their authority by doing the right things. When I drive the speed limit, I have no fear of being pulled over by the authorities. I say that, and yet I got pulled over a couple of months ago. I had spent the day at the hospital with my father. It was about 9:30 at night and I had just turned off of Old 66 onto Sedillo Hill road and a deputy pulled me over. I had a good conscience. I had not been speeding. When the officer pulled me over, I asked him, “Sir, what did I do wrong?” It was a fair question. I was not aware of any law that I had not obeyed. He told me that I had failed to maintain my lane on several occasions. Old 66 is a curvy road before it gets to Sedillo Hill road, and the officer was at least three hundred yards behind me, so there as no way that he could have seen me cross a white or yellow line. I did not argue with him. I was respectful. He asked me a number of questions about where I had been and what I had been doing. Then, he lectured me about being careful the rest of the way home, and he let me go without a citation. If I had been driving 65 on that 55 lane or had done something else in violation of the law, then I would not have had the same confidence and freedom of conscience that I had when I was pulled over.

Several months ago, James took me to Arizona and I bought a Nissan truck. On the way back, I passed through a little town. I slowed down to 35, which was the speed limit. On the way out of town, there was a 45 speed limit posted, and I sped up to 45. A minute later I saw a sign with 55 on it, and I began to speed up to 55. Unfortunately, there was an officer in between the 45 and 55 and he clocked me going 55, and he pulled me over. I was clearly in violation of the letter of the law, and deserved a ticket. I was respectful to the officer, and I ended up getting a warning ticket. I was grateful that I just got a warning ticket. I actually do try to drive the speed limit. I really like cruise control. I can set it on the speed limit and not worry about what speed I am going. I use it as much as possible. Besides helping me obey the law, the engineers tell me that you get better gas mileage using cruise control. Again, the main point is that we should honor our authorities by driving the speed limit or doing what is right.

### **3. Honor Authorities by Rendering Them What is Due (Rom 13:7, 1 Tim 5:17-18)**

Many people hate getting audited by the IRS. I am not terribly excited about it, but I have no fear of the IRS. I claim all my income. I have receipts for all my expenses and deductions. I do what is right and pay my share of my taxes. I render what is due to the government. Notice how Paul ends the passage in Romans 13. “Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. If we render unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar, we will have no fear of the IRS or any other authority. **We should render our taxes to the government.**

(Rom 13:7) “Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.”

I come across lots of businesses that tell me if I pay cash they will give me a discount, and I won't have to pay sales tax. There is a tire place near my office where my parents and I have used for nearly forty years. It has changed ownership several times, but we have stayed with them. Recently, I made a decision not to use them any longer. I had to have some shock absorbers and other work done and it was going to run about six hundred dollars. He told me if I paid him cash he would cut the bill and eliminate the sales tax. I told him that the method of payment did not absolve him from the responsibility of collecting and paying the sales tax. I could give lots of other examples of this. The Scriptures are clear; we need to render to all what is due them. Sometimes it is taxes that are due, and sometimes it is other things that are due.

What are some other things that are due to our authorities? I believe that we are called to show honor and respect in our words. We are not to dishonor our authorities with our words. I believe that I have crossed that line on a number of occasions. Sometimes we disagree with the policies or decisions that our President may make. The tendency is to curse, belittle, slander, and dishonor the authority. It is okay to disagree with the policy. It is not okay to dishonor or show disrespect to the authority. I have had to ask the Lord for His forgiveness a number of times on this issue.

Another thing that is due is our prayer support. The Scriptures teach us that **we should pray for kings and those in authority**. We should render to them our prayers. As a pastor in this church, I greatly appreciate the prayer support that you have given me. I could mention many of you by name, but I won't. I just want to thank you for supporting Karen and I with your prayers. You have prayed for my safety while traveling. You have prayed for provision and blessing for the company I work for. You have prayed for wisdom, and many other things. You have honored me with your prayers.

(1 Tim 2:1-2) "First of all, then, I urge that entreaties and prayers, petitions and thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, {2} for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity."

Another thing that Paul mentions that is due is honor. In this case, he is not necessarily speaking about verbal honor. Honor very often implies financial support. In Proverbs 3:9-10, God tells us to honor the Lord with our wealth and from the first of our income. He is telling us that we need to give back to the Lord a portion of what He has given to us. It should be a weighty portion, as the word honor, kabad (Strong's H3513), means weighty.

In 1 Timothy, Paul tells us to honor widows who are widows indeed. He said that families are to take care of the financial needs of their own widows so that the church is not burdened financially for their care. Paul gives a whole section on who the true widows are. The point I want to make is honor in this case is clearly financial. **We honor our authorities by rendering financial support to them.**

(1 Tim 5:3-4) "Honor widows who are widows indeed; {4} but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God."

In 1 Timothy 5, Paul says that we need to give double honor to the elders who rule well, and especially those who work hard preaching and teaching. As a leadership team, we try to rule well. We try to manage our finances well. We have tried to set up an administration where we have qualified people over each area of ministry. On the preaching side, we work hard to make sure that the flock

is well fed. We take these two responsibilities very serious. On the honor side, Paul makes sure that we understand what he is talking about by his next two statements. He quotes Deuteronomy 25:4, where we are commanded not to muzzle an ox while he is threshing. Next, he says a laborer is worthy of his wages.

(1 Tim 5:17-18) “The elders who rule 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 HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

In 1 Corinthians 9, Paul also quotes Deuteronomy 25, explaining that God is not concerned about oxen. God was saying that people should be paid for their work, and that includes those in the ministry. When someone sows spiritual things into us, we should return material things to them.

(1 Cor 9:9-11) “For it is written in the Law of Moses, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING." God is not concerned about oxen, is He? {10} Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops. {11} If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?

Some people do not believe pastors should get paid at all. They quote 1 Peter 5, where Peter says that pastors should do their work not under compulsion, but voluntarily. They are not to do it for sordid gain, but with eagerness. In this passage, Peter is saying that pastors should not be made to pastor. They should do it because they want to do it. It is the desire of their heart. Next, he warns against doing it just for sordid gain. Instead, they need to do it with the right motives. They are to be eager or passionate about pastoring. Pastoring is something that they will do with or without the title. Studying the word, teaching the word, caring for people, and the many other things that a pastor does is what is in their heart. It is who God has made them to be. They want to do it and they are passionate about doing it. Peter is not saying that pastors should not get paid. The Scriptures clearly tell us that we are to feed the ox while they are threshing. **We are to give double honor to pastors who rule well and work hard at preaching and teaching.**

(1 Pet 5:2) “shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;”

Paul teaches us to give double honor to the elders that rule well. That means that they should be well paid, and their financial needs should be well taken care of. They should not have to work a second job. In some churches this is a big issue. One pastor told me that one of the board members complained about his salary because it was more than he was making. The pastor should not be limited to the salary of the lowest member of the board. Pastors who rule well and work hard at preaching and teaching should be given double honor. That pastor should probably have been paid twice what that committee member was making.

I was in a pastor’s prayer meeting one day and the pastor of a church said that they were hiring a full time youth pastor and worship leader. I asked him what they were going to pay him. He said that they would give him \$800 a month, and he could have as much day old food as he wanted from what was donated to them by grocery stores. Grocery stores take the food that has an expired expiration date,

and any fruits and vegetables that are spoiling, and give it to churches and other ministries. In Atlanta, you could not rent a decent apartment for \$800, much less pay for car insurance, gas for your car, health insurance, good food, etc. What they were paying that youth pastor/worship leader did not give him double honor. It did not honor him. As a member of our board, I am committed to making sure our pastors are paid well.

I have found that pastors that manage well and work hard at their preaching and teaching usually have churches that are growing. Healthy, growing churches can afford to pay their pastors well. So, many times this takes care of itself. However, in church plants, this is not always the case. Most church planters must work a second job. Paul was a church planter, and he did not take salary from the churches he planted. He offered the gospel free of charge. He did accept offerings from other churches that he had already planted. I have tried to pattern my ministry after Paul's ministry. I have worked hard day and night to get this church planted, and I have done it free of charge. There have been no other motives.

When Paul taught us to honor widows, he also instructed us on who true widows were. In like manner, when he taught us to give double honor to pastors who manage well, he also instructed us on the qualifications of a pastor. In 1 Timothy 3, Paul gave the qualifications for elders, and I have grouped these qualifications into three main areas. There are three C's: Calling, Character, and Capability.

### A. Calling

Paul writes in 1 Timothy 3:1, "if anyone aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do." The word desire is *orego*, which means to stretch oneself or to reach for. One of the five fingers that point to the calling of a person to be a pastor is the inward desire. We saw earlier in Peter's exhortations to pastors that they should pastor voluntarily and not under compulsion. **A pastor should have an inward desire.**

(1 Tim 3:1) "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do."

A couple of years ago I asked our Leadership Team to fill out a questionnaire. In it, I asked if they had a desire to pastor. I was trying to find out if they aspired to the office of overseer. Since that is one of the five indicators, I wanted to find out if they had a desire to be ordained as a pastor. I offered to meet with any of them and discuss their questionnaires. The only one on our Leadership Team that said he had a desire to pastor was Greg Richard. I concur with him. I recognize that he has a desire to care for the flock.

There are other signs of the calling. In Acts 20:28, Paul told the Ephesian elders that it was the Holy Spirit that made them overseers. **The Holy Spirit should call a pastor.** God makes overseers. Putting somebody in a pastoral role without the calling and anointing from God is a vain thing. I know of many people who say they are ordained ministers, and all I see is a piece of paper from an organization that promises to ordain people in the ministry. They do not have the calling, character, and capability to shepherd a flock. They were not made overseers by the Holy Spirit. I believe that the Holy Spirit has already made Greg an overseer, and today we are recognizing that calling on his life, and are ordaining him as a pastor at the East Mountain Vineyard Church.

(Acts 20:28) “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

**The sheep should follow a pastor.** Jesus said that sheep will not follow a stranger, but they hear the voice of their shepherd. If a sheep does not hear or follow a man, he is not a shepherd. I believe the flock at the East Mountain Vineyard hear Greg’s voice and are willing to follow him.

(John 10:3-5) “To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. {4} “When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. {5} “A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”

**The apostle should recognize a pastor.** In Titus 1:5-8, Paul told Titus to set in order what remains and ordain pastors in every city. Paul then gave Titus a list of qualifications to look for in people he was going to ordain. Titus was doing apostolic work and the list he had in Titus is nearly identical to the list we have in 1 Timothy 3. The primary difference is who the list was given for. The list of qualifications in Titus is for the apostle looking to positively identify a pastor, and the list in Timothy is for one that aspires to the office of overseer. One that is reaching for this work will make sure that these qualifications are part of his life and ministry. He will get help in the areas that may need strengthening.

(Titus 1:5) “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,”

**The presbytery should recognize a fellow pastor.** Presbytery means the board of elders or pastors. Presbytery is the plural of the Greek word, presbuteros, which is one of three Greek words that is used to describe the office of elder. The word, presbuteros, means an older and mature person. It is a wise and seasoned person. It is a person of character, who is recognized as an elder in the community. The second word is episkopos, which means overseer. It refers to the work that a pastor does. He oversees the flock, and the different ministries within the church. An overseer is a manager. A pastor must manage the affairs of the church. The third word is poimano, which means to shepherd. A shepherd feeds the flock. A shepherd watches over and prays over the sheep. A shepherd protects the flock. In Acts 20, Paul met with the presbuteros (elders) of the church in Ephesus. He tells them that the Holy Spirit has made them episkopos, or overseers. He charges them to poimaina or shepherd the church of God. All three words are used for the same office, but together they bring a fuller picture of the office of overseer.

## **B. Character**

The second C that Paul gives is character. He said that one who aspires to the office of overseer must be above reproach. **An elder must be above reproach** in his family life, in his character, and in the community. Paul said that he must be the husband of one wife. He must also manage his household well, and keep his children under control. He must be temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, not addicted to wine, or pugnacious. He must be gentle, peaceable, and free from the love of money.

(1 Tim 3:2-6) “An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, {3} not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but

gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. {4} He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity {5} (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), {6} and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.”

### C. Capability

The third C is for Capability. He must be capable of doing two things. First, **an elder must be capable of managing**. He must manage the affairs of his own house. If he can't manage his own house, how is he going to manage the affairs of the household of God, the church? The other area that a pastor must be capable in is word ministry. **An elder must be capable of teaching**. Paul says that he must be able or apt to teach. In Titus, he says that he must hold “fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.” A pastor must be a person of the word. As a shepherd, he must be able to feed the flock with God's word. He must be able to protect the flock from false teaching, and be able to refute those who contradict sound doctrine.

(Tit 1:9) “holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”

Paul gave these qualifications for pastors to let us know the high calling of a pastor. We are to honor pastors, and especially those who rule well, and work hard at their preaching and teaching. This morning, we want to recognize and honor Greg Richard as a pastor. Greg has a desire to pastor, and we recognize his calling. Greg is a man of character, and we recognize that he is a man of character. Greg is also a man of the word. He knows sound doctrine, and works hard at his teaching.

If I could have Greg and Linda come forward, we would like to lay hands on him and ordain him. I would also like to have Karen, Bill, and Nelfa come forward. Before we lay hands on Greg, I want to say just a couple public words of confirmation to Greg. Paul says that we are to be careful about who we lay hands on, so that we do not share in the sins of others. Therefore, it was important for me to not lay hands on you quickly, but to make sure that you met all the requirements.

(1 Tim 5:22) “Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thereby share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin.”

First, the Holy Spirit gave me a prophetic word over you several years ago, and confirmed to me the calling on your life as an elder. I spoke and prayed that over you at that time. That calling has been confirmed through your own desire to pastor, and through the confirmation of other pastors in our church.

Second, I attest to your character. You meet the character requirements, and I publically confirm that you meet these requirements today.

Third, I attest to the fact that you are a man of the word. You know the word, and study the word. I confirm that you are able to teach, and are a man of the word.

Fourth, Paul said that those that want to pastor, “it is a fine work that you desire to do.” I want to charge you to continue to do the work of a shepherd, just as you have already been doing. Continue to work hard at being our church administration. Administration is a big part of managing the affairs of the church, and you play a huge pastoral role in this area. Generally, it is only one person preaching every week. The bulk of the preaching and teaching is done by Pastor Bill Bice and myself. However, the bulk of the administration is done by you and I, not by Pastor Bill. I charge you this morning to continue working hard at being our administrator. But, I also charge you to continue to work hard at your preaching and teaching. It is a life-long commitment to study the word of God. Work hard at your teachings for the men on Saturday morning. Work hard at your teaching in Life Groups. Work hard at any preaching opportunities you have on Sunday morning. “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” I like how the King James says it. “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” I charge you this morning to continue to study the word, and to rightly divide the word of truth.

(2 Tim 2:15) “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

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Fifth, I am going to charge you to watch over the flock. As a pastor in this house, you are going to give account one day to the Chief Shepherd. This flock belongs to God, not to any of us who have been given an opportunity to shepherd. We are stewards and we want to take excellent care of God’s sheep. They are precious and valuable to Him. He paid a dear price for each of these sheep. Therefore, He expects us to take good care of the sheep. This morning I charge you to shepherd the flock carefully and watchfully. If you do this, the Chief Shepherd promises that you shall receive the unfading crown of glory.

(1 Pet 5:4) “And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.”

Let’s pray.

1. **Honor Authorities by Submitting to them** (1 Pet 2:13-17, Eph 6:1-2, Rom 13:1-2)
  - We are to submit ourselves for the Lord's sake to \_\_\_\_\_ human institution. (1 Pet 2:13-17, Eph 6:1-2)
  - All authorities have been established by \_\_\_\_\_. (Rom 13:1-7, Heb 13:17)
  - There are times or \_\_\_\_\_ when we may need to violate a royal command. (Eccl 8:5)
  - When a lower authority tells us to do something that violates a command from a higher authority, we have to obey the \_\_\_\_\_ authority. \_\_\_\_\_ is the highest authority. (Acts 5:27-29)
  - First, be very \_\_\_\_\_ about the issue.
  - Second, have a \_\_\_\_\_ heart.
  - Third, make an \_\_\_\_\_ to the authority. (Dan 1:5-16)
2. **Honor Authorities by Doing What is Right** (1 Pet 2:15, Pr 23:24, 10:1)
  - There is no reason to fear our authorities when we do what is \_\_\_\_\_. (Rom 13:2-4)
3. **Honor Authorities by Rendering Them What is Due** (Rom 13:7, 1 Tim 5:17-18)
  - We should render our \_\_\_\_\_ to the government. (Rom 13:7)
  - We should \_\_\_\_\_ for kings and those in authority. (1 Tim 2:1-2)
  - We honor our authorities by rendering financial \_\_\_\_\_ to them. (1 Tim 5:3-4)
  - We are to give double honor to \_\_\_\_\_ who rule well and work hard at preaching and teaching. (1 Tim 5:17-18, 1 Pet 5:2)
- A. **Calling**
  - A pastor should have an inward \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Tim 3:1)
  - The \_\_\_\_\_ should call a pastor. (Acts 20:28)
  - The \_\_\_\_\_ should follow a pastor. (John 10:3-5)
  - The \_\_\_\_\_ should recognize a pastor. (Titus 1:5)
  - The \_\_\_\_\_ should recognize a fellow pastor.
- B. **Character**
  - An elder must be above \_\_\_\_\_. 1 Tim 3:2-6)
- C. **Capability**
  - An elder must be capable of \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Tim 3:4-5)
  - An elder must be capable of \_\_\_\_\_. (1 Tim 3:2, Tit 1:9)

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