

Biblical pattern.

- 2) Without partiality. The word found here means to avoid inclination of favour for one or another. Oh, if these two measures were only used in cases under discussion how different the results would be for the assemblies of the Lord.

3. PROSPECTIVE LEADERS--chosen. vv. 22-25.

Leaders must be set up. It is imperative that some be given the responsibility of directing the group. A leaderless group is like a man without a head! It is utter foolishness to require everyone to be on the same plane. God doesn't do this and no amount of argument will change His Word. But when men are needed, how do you get them? Here are some considerations:-

- a. Without haste. Some consider this to be a reference to accepting a repentant leader back into the fold. Rather, it has reference to making certain of right choices. Due inquiry and testing is so important in matters of leadership it is especially important to count that time is never wasted in waiting!
- b. Without sin. If one hastens into an appointment, he leaves himself open to the charge of sharing or being an accomplice with another's sin! Of this sort of thing, Timothy is urged to keep pure!
- c. Without falsity. The point to the last two verses of the section is this: some are so obviously unfit for God's service that their situation is evident before all. Of others, the truth takes time to come out! Similarly the worthy candidates are often known immediately and others are not known until after some time. How those who are charged with gaining leaders need wisdom from the Lord (James 1:5)

Conclusion God give us leaders who are in step with the will and purpose of God. Amen.

THE BOOK OF FIRST TIMOTHY

"A Divine Charge"

I Timothy 5:17-25

Introduction

1. Leadership is both a responsibility given by God and a necessity amongst men. They form a part of the orderly arrangement which He has designed for His church.

2. The term employed in this text is "elder" and it signifies an office of overseeing the work of the Lord. They are a company of godly men who watch and care for the testimony of our Lord under the guidance of the Spirit of God. The elders are a special group of the Lord's servants and they concern a position rather than an age-level group.

3. Paul notes for Timothy that there are three sorts of leaders. Each sort has a series of criteria by which they are to be considered. Think of these matters and prayerfully see your place of involvement in the social structuring of God's household.

1. FAITHFUL LEADERS'--rewarded. vv. 17, 18.

- a. Estimated. The verb employed here means to "deem worthy." The person has been considered and a judgment is rendered concerning him.
- b. Tested. There are two areas in which these men operate and are to be judged:-

- 1) Administration. This is gathered from the phrase "rule well" which is a peculiarity of the Pastoral Epistles. Literally the verb means "to stand before," hence to preside or govern. Business-like capacity and the insurance of good order and success.
- 2) Edification. The verb "labour" is the one normally used for toil and hard work. Those who faithfully discharge the responsibility of the arduous duty of teaching and preaching

are in mind here. Those who would minimize the importance of "teaching" or doctrine would do well to consider the emphasis placed upon it in this context by the Spirit of God! It takes a higher and more demanding position than administration. Note: in most churches people are more concerned about smooth-running operations than they are about faithful ministry of the Word and doctrine!

c. Rewarded. Two items are mentioned here:-

- 1) General reward. It is true that a genuine servant of God does not maintain his view upon remuneration of a monetary sort. Yet, this is his due. Like the ox which treads out the corn is to be allowed the chance to partake of the grain (Deut. 25:4), so the servant of God (literally the "worker") is expected to receive for the labour he has given unto God.
- 2) Double reward. This does not mean that such persons who teach the Word and doctrine are to gain twice as much as administrative officers. But the thought is that there will be an ample provision for such persons. They are to be considered more in line because they operate in two areas: administration and in ministry of the Word and doctrine.

NOTE: It would be well for all the saints to watch carefully their care of those who serve with the Lord. From this text, and some others, it is not a mean matter to amply provide for those in the service of God. The old idea of keeping Christian workers humble with humble incomes is passe.

2. SINFUL LEADERS--rebuked. vv. 19-21.

The central matter here is sin. How does it relate to the leadership. Study these items:-

- a. Sin envisaged. It may come as surprise to some but sin has and will be found amongst the workers of God. Like John Bradford, we must all admit that "There goes John Bradford but for the grace of God." Gal. 5:17-21 is solid proof of the capabilities of the flesh.
- b. Sin published. One sad sin is not to be flourishingly published. If there are occasional eruptions, these are to be understood in grace. But those who are everlastingly at it (so the present tense of the verb) are to be rebuked out in the open. If it is the character of the man then it ought to be brought out. The verb "rebuke" is the same one used in John 16 in connection with the work of the Holy Spirit and His ministry with the unsaved. But this sort of thing must not be done lightly. It can only be done upon the authority of witnesses (cf. Deut. 19:15). There is no room here for promiscuous gossip! The reason for this public expose is that others (both elders and people) might keep on fearing lest they be exposed also (so the present tense of the verb). Publication of sins contracted by the saints is a serious business! Be certain of your facts and then remember that this is not a light matter. A person's whole ministry or reputation is being considered!
- c. Sin eschewed. God is called in as a witness and the angels of heaven (not the fallen ones) in this adjuration by Paul. The things Paul has mentioned are to be guarded (observed) and this in two major manners. How?

- 1) Without preference. The word used in the original here means without prejudice and considered against the person. Something comes up and immediately we jump to conclusions! This is not the