

## Pastoral Leadership, Marriage, and Family

### **1 Timothy 3:1-7**

This passage outlines the qualifications for overseers, which can be understood as pastors or elders. It emphasizes the importance of being "above reproach," having a good reputation, being temperate, self-controlled, gentle, and able to manage one's own family well. This implies that a pastor should prioritize leading and caring for their family effectively as part of their overall spiritual leadership. This is a daily test of anyone in this role with consideration for the fact that no one is perfect.

### **1 Peter 5:2-3**

Peter instructs elders to shepherd the flock of God willingly and eagerly, not pursuing dishonest gain but being examples to the congregation. This emphasizes the importance of integrity, humility, and genuine care for the church community by being a great example to the congregation.

### **Ephesians 5:25-33**

This passage addresses the relationship between husbands and wives. It instructs husbands to love their wives sacrificially, just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for it. It encourages husbands to treat their wives with respect, honor, and love, nourishing and cherishing them. This teaching emphasizes the importance of selflessness, kindness, and sacrificial love within the marital relationship.

### **Colossians 3:18-19**

Paul encourages husbands to love their wives and not be harsh with them. This verse emphasizes the need for gentleness, patience, and understanding within marriage.

## Managing Issues within the Church

### **Titus 1:5-9**

When appointing church leaders, it is crucial that they meet certain qualifications and have a good reputation. This highlights the importance of selecting leaders with integrity and character.

### **Matthew 18:15-17**

Jesus gives instructions on resolving conflicts within the church. If you have an issue with a pastor, the first step is to approach them privately and discuss the matter. If the issue remains unresolved, you may involve one or two others as witnesses. If the matter still cannot be resolved, it can be brought before the church leadership for further action.

### **1 Timothy 5:19-21**

In this passage, Paul instructs Timothy on handling accusations against elders or pastors. If there are credible accusations against a pastor, they should be addressed and investigated

impartially. Those found guilty of wrongdoing should be rebuked publicly as a warning to others.

### **Galatians 6:1-10**

This verse encourages believers to restore someone caught in a sin gently. If a pastor is involved in wrongdoing, it is important to approach them with a spirit of love, humility, and a desire for restoration rather than condemnation.

### **Managing Conflict:**

Managing conflict in a church involves applying biblical teachings on love, forgiveness, reconciliation, humility, and wisdom. All of this should be based on and rooted in the following

1. **Prayer**, We have sought God's guidance and wisdom through prayer; asking for discernment and a heart focused on reconciliation and peace.
2. **Direct Communication**, Follow the principles outlined in Matthew 18:15-17.
3. **Mediation**, If a resolution cannot be reached through private discussion, involve one or two neutral individuals who can serve as mediators or witnesses. Their role is to help facilitate dialogue, foster understanding, and encourage reconciliation.
4. **Church Leadership Involvement**, If the conflict remains unresolved, bring the matter to the attention of the church leadership, following the guidelines in Matthew 18:17. We are to offer wisdom and guidance on this matter.
5. **Attention to Divine Authority**, Hebrews 13:17 (see information below regarding Hebrews).
6. **Peacemaking and Forgiveness**, Encourage a culture of peacemaking and forgiveness within the church community. Emphasize the teachings of Jesus on love, forgiveness, and reconciliation. It is our responsibility to encourage grace, reconciliation, and forgiveness.
7. **Seeking Counseling or Guidance**, In more complex or deeply rooted conflicts, it is healthy and wise to seek the guidance of a trained counselor or mediator who can provide professional assistance in resolving the issues.

Throughout the process, it is essential to maintain a spirit of humility, grace, and love, honoring the biblical teachings on unity and the body of Christ. The goal should be to restore relationships, promote understanding, and reflect the love of Christ through every step of the process.

### **Pastor, Elder, or Church Leader Caught in Sin –**

- **Acknowledgement (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9)**: The requirements of an elder.
- **Immediate Accountability (Galatians 6:1)**: Address the issue promptly and with appropriate accountability.
- **Transparency and Confession (James 5:16)**: The pastor should acknowledge their wrongdoing, confess their sin to God, and, if necessary, to the congregation they lead.

- **Correction and Restoration (1 Peter 5:10)** Focus on correcting the sinful behavior and guiding the pastor towards restoration and healing. Lift people up.
- **Accountability Moving Forward (Titus 1:7-9, James 5:19-20, 1 Thessalonians 5:11):** Implement strong continued accountability through oversight and support.
- **Learning from Mistakes (1 Peter 5:1-3):** Be an example to the flock.

We, the Board of Elders, are not the judge. We are the team given authority to manage the situation biblically and with accountability. **James 3:1**, Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. – *judged by God who entrusts teachers with leadership responsibilities.*

### **Divine Authority**

The Board of Elders is the appointed Elder Board team that has been given the authority to manage situations. “The church” in Matthew 18 refers to Pastors, Elders, and Church Leaders. Not everyone will agree with the decisions of “the church” which is why there is biblical wisdom in having confidence in those appointed. The appointed authority is in place specifically due to the strength of their relationship with Jesus, their biblical understanding, their maturity, and wisdom.

Authority is granted in many areas of the bible but there is specific wisdom found in Hebrews. **Hebrews 13:17:** “Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.”

This verse along with the book of Hebrews was likely written around 60-70 AD, when early Christians struggled with their faith. It is believed that the Apostle Paul wrote the book of Hebrews and that he did so to emphasize the sufficiency of Jesus Christ and to encourage Christians to persevere in their faith amid trials and challenges. Specifically, in verse 17 the author is speaking to the relationship between the Christian congregation and its leaders, particularly those who are shepherding the community. The passage was written to encourage believers to respect their spiritual leaders and acknowledge that they have been given authority through God and will be required to give an account of their actions to God.

### **Some of the verses referenced above -**

#### **1 Timothy 3: 1-7 - Pastors**

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He

must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

### **1 Peter 5: 2-3 – Pastoral Example**

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.

### **Ephesians 5:21 – Each other**

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

### **Ephesians 5:22-24 – Wives**

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

### **Ephesians 5:25-32 – Husbands**

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by washing with water through the word and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husband's ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife love himself. After all no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Chris does the church – for we are members of his body. For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh. This is a profound mystery – but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

### **Colossians 3:18-19 – Husbands and Wives**

Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them.

### **Matthew 18:15-17 – Sin in the church**

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.

### **1 Timothy 5:19-21 – Reprove (correct gently) before others**

Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. But those elders who are sinning you are to reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning. I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.

### **Galatians 6:1-10 – Do good to all people, especially those who belong to the family of believers**

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks they are something when they are not, they deceive themselves. Each one should test their own actions. Then they can take pride in themselves alone, without comparing themselves to someone else, for each one should carry their own load. Nevertheless, the one who receives instruction in the word should share all good things with their instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

### **Titus 1:5-9 – Appointing elders**

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

### **Verses for restoration, healing, and grace –**

**Ephesians 2:8-9:** "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

**2 Corinthians 12:9:** "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."

**Isaiah 40:31:** "But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint."

**Psalms 103:2-3:** "Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases."

**Jeremiah 30:17:** "But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds, declares the Lord, because you are called an outcast, Zion for whom no one cares."

**1 Peter 5:10:** "And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast."

**Psalms 147:3:** "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds."

**2 Chronicles 7:14:** "If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."

**Luke 6:37:** "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven."