

## Honoring Those Who Serve

### Introduction:

We need to respect; honor; love those who rule over us as elders (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13). It is important to recognize those who serve us – because of the tremendous responsibilities they have. A great hindrance of the church today is a failure of members to know their obligations to elders. What can we do to honor those who serve?

### I. Know them. (1 Thessalonians 5:12)

- A. There is a dual responsibility here.
  - 1. Elders need to be accessible.
- B. But...what does it mean to *know* them?
  - 1. Know their lives; know the truth they advocate.
  - 2. Know their desire relative to the congregation.
- C. This duty to *know* means to recognize their authority, to respect, and highly regard their leadership.

### II. Esteem them highly in love. (1 Thessalonians 5:13)

- A. Christians have a responsibility to love everyone.
  - 1. For sinners. Should love their souls.
  - 2. For our enemies. Mt. 5:43-44; 1 Thess. 5:15
- B. For brethren. John 13:34-35; 1 John 3:11, 23
  - 1. It would seem that we have are to have a special love for brethren!
  - 2. Rom. 12:10; Heb. 13:1; 1 Pet. 1:22
  - 3. Back to 1 Thess. 5:13 – a special love for our elders.
- C. Why? Because of the work they do.
  - 1. Heb. 13:17 – they watch for our souls.
- D. There is a lack of respect/love for them in the church today.

### III. We honor the elders by submitting to them. (1 Timothy 5:17)

- A. Obviously, not in things that are unscriptural. Acts 5:29
- B. Elders are to RULE WELL and we are to OBEY.
  - 1. Some only want to obey as long as everything goes their way.
  - 2. We are to do more than just obey – we are to submit!
    - a) Means to give into their desires & abide by their decisions.
    - b) Eph. 5:21; 24; 1 Pet. 5:5 – submit to one another.
- C. But, elders are exempt from taking in the desires of the congregation in making decisions. Elders are not LORDS over the church.

### IV. We honor them by imitating them. (Hebrews 13:7)

- A. Follow in their footprints as long as they follow Christ's. (1 Cor. 11:1)
- B. Rom. 12:1-2; Titus 2:11-12 – these are expectations for EVERY Christian – not just those who serve in leadership capacities.

### V. Pray for them. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

- A. Pray that the church may be in peace.
- B. That the elders will lead with humbleness and in a godly way.

### VI. Call on them when in need. (James 5:14)

- A. Do we hide our troubles from them?
  - 1. Or can they be sought after for advice/wisdom when times get rough?

**Conclusion:** Are you as a member here in subjection to our elders?