

April 22, 2012
LEADERSHIP, MAN UP! (Part 1)
1Timothy 2:11 – 3:13

Years ago in my first seminary experience the president of that seminary made a statement that has stuck with me for 35 years. It both challenges me and convicts me. And it will do the same thing for any pastor or any deacon who is serious about his calling. And the statement was, "Everything rises and falls on leadership". Now, I do not believe that this statement is 100% accurate. Moses was a pretty good leader most of us would say, and God got so disgusted with Moses' congregation that He would have killed them all had not Moses interceded for them and changed His mind (Numbers 14:11-12). The Corinthian church was so tough on the apostle Paul that the major purpose of the entire book of 2 Corinthians was defending his apostleship. Evangelist Jr. Hill, an icon among Southern Baptists, told the story about how crushed he was when a church he served while in seminary dismissed him as their pastor. So it is not totally correct that everything rises and falls on leadership.

But there is one thing about leadership that is true. While good leadership does not guarantee success, bad leadership guarantees failure. And just a cursory glance at Judah and Israel's history bears this out. Judah had a mixture of godly and ungodly kings in their history, but every one of Israel's kings were wicked to the core. And when Judah had a godly king God always blessed. But when the wicked kings of Judah and Israel reigned then terror and judgment reigned right along with them, and finally things got so bad that both kingdoms were eventually destroyed. That's the reason Deborah and Barack sang in Judges 5:2, "When leaders lead in Israel...bless the Lord!" And beloved, the same truth still holds over 3500 years later in God's church. When the leaders lead in a godly manner, God can do great things!

So today we are going to take a look at the leadership of God's church. You need to know what God expects out of your leaders. And you also need to know what you can do to enable your leaders to better fulfill the ministry that God has called them to do.

Turn in your Bibles, please, and read with us from 1Timothy 2:11 through chapter 3:13. Now, in our text we see the most detailed job description for pastors and deacons in the entire Bible. And the first thing that we notice is a clear statement concerning a special group in the church with a special calling, but whose calling is not to be pastors and deacons. And ladies, you are that special group. Look again at 2:11-12. Now, I fully understand that here we are dealing with a

lightening rod in the eyes of many women, and some men as well. Women have left churches over this issue and churches have been disfellowshipped from their associations over this issue. And the Bible has been declared indiscernible or downright wrong over this issue. But if we believe in an infallible Bible, and we do, we must take these verses at face value. And along with other verses in chapter three they tell us without a doubt that the offices of pastor and deacon are reserved for men.

Now, we do need to take just a few moments to explain Paul's language and reasoning here. First of all, he is not saying that women are not to open their mouths from the moment that they walk through the front door of their church. The word "silence" in verses 11 and 12 is the same Greek word that is translated "peaceable" in verse 2, and it means quietness in general, but it does not forbid women from ever speaking at all. But from a careful comparison to other Scripture we can see what Paul is talking about. Listen to 1 Corinthians 14:34-35. In both 1 Timothy and 1 Corinthians Paul is referring to the meeting of the entire body of Christ in a setting such as we are in now, when the whole church gathers to worship and hear the word proclaimed. And he says that in those settings women are not to speak, and not even allowed to ask questions, but to ask their questions to their husbands at home.

Now, the obvious question here is "why?" Does not Paul write in Galatians 3:28 that in Christ there is neither male nor female? He certainly does. But there Paul is clearly speaking in reference to salvation. Whoever we are, male or female, Jew or Gentile, slave or freeman, we are all one in Christ Jesus and we are all equal in Christ. But here Paul is dealing with the matter of order. God has always been a God of order. God says in 1 Corinthians 14:40, "Let all things be done decently and in order". At the end of Creation Week for the sake of order God placed all that He had made in subjection to man, which in Genesis 1:27 means male and female. Human beings, male and female, have dominion over all creation.

But God's plan for order didn't stop there. Just like God placed Creation under the man and the woman's authority, God placed the woman under the man's authority in the home. 1 Corinthians 11:3 states: "But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man...." And in Ephesians 5 Paul writes, "Wives submit yourselves to your own husband, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife...." Now, wives, contrary to what all the feminists groups will preach to you, this is the best position that you could ever have in life, for your husband to be your head! For your head is your caretaker,

your protector and provider, the one who loves you more than anyone in this whole world, the one who would lay his life down for you. Amen, ladies? Now, I can see right through some of you wives right now and you are thinking, "Not the doofus that I married". Well sister, if your husband is a doofus, then trust God to turn him into a Sir Lancelot, submit to him and pray for him! And husbands, every one of us needs to get down on our knees every day and ask God to make us a Sir Mike, or a Sir Marty, or a Sir Sam, or a Sir Rooster, or whatever your name is, for this is the kind of husband He commands us to be.

But ladies, this is the reason that God has said that you are to be quiet in the church. It has nothing to do with your worth before God, but all to do with God's order of authority. As God has ordained that men have the leadership role in the home, so has he ordained it in the church. Look at verse 13. Adam was formed first and Eve was formed as his helper (Genesis 2: 20-22). Look at verse 14. You know what happened in the Garden of Eden when Eve was tempted by the devil. Eve fell for his lie, stepped out of her role as Adam's helper and became his leader, led him to eat of the forbidden fruit, and a bad thing happened! She led him into sin and they brought the curse of sin upon the entire human race. And God says that because of the order of creation, and because of the bad things that happen when God's order of authority is reversed, women are to remain quiet in church. And wives, if you take issue with this, then please don't come up after the service and complain to me about it. Wait until you get in the car and complain to your husband.

Now, this in no way means that women do not have a calling to serve God in the church. I shudder to think what every church I've ever known anything about would do without its women! But let me tell you, they would be hurting! Because in many churches in America today, it is the women who are the pillars and the men who are the wimps and who need to man up. But there are many things that women can and should do in the church. Titus tells us that the older women should be teachers of good things – that they should teach the younger women to love their husbands and children and to be good homemakers (Titus 2:3-5). Women can teach other women the Word and they can teach children the Word. Pricilla helped her husband to teach Apollos, who was a man, but she did not teach the whole church. And as we said last week, women like Dorcus and Lydia had tremendous ministries of service in their church. So all of these women had important roles to fulfill in the life of their church, but they just weren't the pastors or the deacons.

But lest any of the women in the church become discouraged with their supportive role, Paul gives them a word of encouragement in verse 15. Now, this

is one of the most difficult verses to interpret in all of Paul's writings. What could he have been talking about when he said that women would be saved through childbearing? Well, we know that he could not have meant spiritual salvation. We are saved from our sins by our faith in Jesus Christ alone. But the word "saved" can also mean physical salvation or physical healing. When the disciples were about to drown in a raging storm on the Sea of Galilee, they cried, "Lord, save us!", and it's the same Greek word for being saved from sin. When the woman who had been hemorrhaging for 12 years came to Jesus for healing she said to herself, "If I only touched the hem of His garment I shall be made well", and "made well" is the same Greek word again.

So what Paul is telling all Christian women is this. "It was a woman who instigated the fall of the race into sin. And that is a horrible stigma for all women to bear. Nevertheless, God has a plan for your deliverance from that terrible stigma and also a plan for your usefulness. And that is to cooperate with Him in replenishing the earth as He has commanded. But, you shall be saved through childbearing only as you continue to walk in the path that He has ordained, a path of faith, love, holiness, and self-control". Ladies, some of you work outside the home because you have to, and others do it because you choose to. But never forget, your day job is in your home! Young ladies, I believe the Bible teaches that if God gives you a husband and opens your womb that you should bear children. But God is in control of all things, and if He chooses not to give you a husband or open your womb then He has a better plan for you, and you must trust Him for it! But if you do have a husband and/or children, never forget that your day job is your most important job, and that is keeping your home, doing all that you can to make it a godly home. And no matter how high you climb on the corporate ladder, or if you forever remain on the bottom rung, this is what matters most to God.

So we have seen that God has ordained that women are not to be pastors or deacons, but are to remain quiet in the church. And now we will jump out of the frying pan into the fire. What are the qualifications for the two offices of God's church, the pastors and the deacons? Today we will look at qualifications of the pastor. Chapter 3:1 speaks of the office of a bishop. Now, the word "bishop" in the Greek means "the superintendent, head, or overseer of any Christian church".

But this is only one of three titles for the leader of God's church. A second New Testament title is the one we are most familiar with, which is "pastor". Paul writes in Ephesians 5 that God has called some in the church as pastors. And the word "pastor" means "the presiding officer, manager, or director of an

assembly". The verb form of "pastor" expands his duties. Jesus said to Simon Peter after He was resurrected, "Tend My sheep" (John. 21:16). And Peter uses the same word in 1 Peter 5:2 speaking to a group of pastors when he said, "Shepherd the flock of God which is among you". And the idea is to meet all the needs of the God's people, which is to lead the sheep to follow God's leadership, to feed the sheep the Word of God, and to protect the sheep from false teachings.

And the third title for the leader of the church is the one most commonly used, and that is elder. This title speaks not of the function of the leader but of his spiritual maturity. The term has its roots in the Old Testament in both Judaism and Gentile nations. Elders were older men in their communities, some of them served on councils that governed their communities, and supposedly they were wise, mature men. But all three terms, bishop, pastor, and elder, refer to the same office in the New Testament church.

So what should be the qualifications of a man who pastors God's people? Well, first of all, there must be a **God-birthed desire** in his heart to pastor. Chapter 3:1 says that if a man desires the office of a bishop he desires a good work. Now, the word "desire" means to stretch out and grasp for something, to passionately long for something. And when you read the New Testament, you find very little else said about the calling into the ministry.

In Acts 13:2 the Holy Spirit commanded the church at Antioch to separate Barnabas and Saul to the work to which they had been called. In Hebrews 5:4 God says that no man takes the honor of the priesthood upon himself, but only those called of God, as Aaron was. But from these Scriptures we see the critical point about the calling of a pastor. A true call to pastor does not come from a man's own head and it does not come from the church. It doesn't come from mama or grandmama or well-meaning Aunt Suzie. It comes from the Holy Spirit of God. A true calling of God will humble a man and not make him proud. And if it is a true call from God it will not be a passing fancy. It is something that a man can't get away from. A man may run from his calling, as did Jonah, but just like Jonah, he can't outrun God. But when he yields to the Holy Spirit and accepts his call, he will turn around and passionately run to it just as fast as he ran away from it.

Listen to what Paul said about his call: "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!" When a man has the call of God on his life he will be like Jeremiah, who

declared, “But His word was in my heart like a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding it back, and I could not” (Jeremiah 20:9).

So the first qualification of a pastor of God’s people is that he must be God called, and woe to the man who tries to pastor without the call of God. Better that he try to swim the Atlantic, for he would come closer to success. For the work of a pastor is a supernatural task that can only be fulfilled by a supernatural call and a supernatural anointing.

Now, I want us to notice four areas to which he must give constant attention. And the first area is his personal life, which Paul addresses in verses 2 and 3. A pastor should be a man who is temperate. He allows nothing in his life to detract from his vigilance to his calling. He is clear and well-disciplined in his thinking. He can have a good time, but he is a man too serious about the needs of a hell-bound world to flit away precious hours socializing for no spiritual benefit. He is hospitable, generous, and gentle. And he is a man who will not touch a drop of alcohol if it hurts his Christian witness.

There is a second area which the man of God must give great attention to, and that is his family life. He is the husband of one wife – which literally means he is a one-woman man. We will speak more about this next week. And the pastor is a man who should have control of his own children. For Paul says that if a man cannot manage his own family, how can he manage God’s family?

The pastor must give attention to his church life. Paul says that he must be able to teach. A man might be impeccable in every area of his life, but if he doesn’t have the gift of teaching then God has not called him to pastor. For a pastor’s two main callings in life are to preach and pray. And if a man can only do 50% of his job he’s bound to fail. I was in a pastor’s luncheon a number of years ago with Haddon Robinson, who is one of the most well-respected preaching professors in our country. And someone asked him the Q&A time which was task was most important in a pastor’s overall calling, preaching or being a good administrator. And he answered the question with an illustration. He said that no matter how much a quarterback knew about opposing defenses and no matter how much of a motivator he was with his teammates, if he couldn’t throw the ball he just couldn’t cut it. And then he said, preaching is throwing the ball. A pastor must be able to teach.

But a pastor also must not be a novice; he must not be a new Christian, for there are just some things about leadership in the church that you don’t learn

overnight. And so God's man must have been saved long enough to grow beyond the baby Christian stage, and he must be able to teach.

But finally a pastor must give attention to his public life. Paul says that the pastor must have a good reputation among those who are outside the church. Now, every soul in the community will certainly not like the pastor! In fact, Paul says in 2 Timothy 3:12 that if the pastor is doing his job he is going to make some enemies! But that goes for every Christian. But the pastor can't be a man whose words and actions just readily turn people against him. For how can the church reach out to the lost if the lost do not respect their leader?

So the pastor who is effective in his calling must be a man who excels in his personal life, his family life, his church life, and in his public life. And Paul sums up all of this in six short words in verse 2 – “A bishop then must be blameless”. That word does not mean perfect, it means “not to be held”. A pastor is not a man who could be held guilty with a defect of character that would make him unfit for spiritual leadership. And if you would boil it down to just one word, a pastor is a man of integrity. He is a man whose people can say, “My pastor is not perfect, but I know that he is real. He genuinely seeks to walk the walk as well as talk the talk”.

Years ago I cut an article out of a daily newspaper that every pastor should read often and take to heart. It is entitled, “Reverend, get back on your pedestal”. I want to read to you some excerpts:

“...Over the past decade, the prestige of the clergy has dropped sharply.

The corner druggist ranks higher than the minister these days in polls of “most respected occupations.”

The sordid sagas of Jim Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, and other fallen preachers played a large part in the slide of the clergy in public estimation.

...It should be a reason for boasting that we were made only “a little lower than the angels.”

Whether or not we believe that about ourselves, we want to believe it about our ministers. We want them to be special. We don't really want to think they are like the rest of us.

But today you often can't tell the difference between a member of the clergy and anybody else when you meet them.

...A poll of members of the Episcopal Church shows that what is uppermost in the minds of most of them is the “spirituality of the clergy.”

Apparently, they sense that today's clergy are more interested in being accepted as one of the crowd than in being a spiritual guide.

...Outside the pulpit they merge into the crowd. They become one of us.

Hail-fellows-well-met, they talk of many things. But they bring us no word from the mountain.

The influence of the church will continue to decline as long as its ministers would rather be one of the crowd than to stand above, bidding the rest of us to "come up."

Reverend, get back on your pedestal!

May God give every preacher in America the grace to climb back up on his pedestal for God's glory!

But may I say this in closing. Men, the truth is, there is no double standard for our conduct as Christian men in the Word of God. God has not said, "Pastors, you be blameless in your conduct, but I'll cut the rest of you a little slack". No, God has said to all of us, "Be holy, for I am holy!"

Now, how does that happen? It happens by the power of the Holy One Who lives in our hearts, Jesus Christ.