



# The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V22 N15 April 26, 2020

## DEAR TIMOTHY

“Instructions for Leaders”

1 Timothy 5:17-25

### THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

#### Church

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

*“Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”*

**Ephesians 4:15-16**



How should the church treat its elders?

In Paul's first letter to his protégé, Timothy, the apostle identifies two servant-leader positions in the church: 1) the position of “overseer” (*episkopos*) mentioned in 3:1-7 (cf., “bishop” NKJV) or “elder” (*presbuteros*) mentioned in 5:17-21 (the two terms refer to the same position, cf., Acts 20:17, 28 and Titus 1:5, 7); and 2) the position of “deacon” (*diakonos*) mentioned in 3:8-13. Overseers or elders *serve* by *leading*; deacons *lead* by *serving*. Paul doesn't mention pastors because the term “pastor” (*poimēn*) refers to a spiritual gift—not a position in the church. One author writes: “No one in the New Testament [is] referred to as the pastor. Even in their correspondence with local congregations, the writers of New Testament epistles never greet local ‘pastors.’ For starters, ‘pastor’ in the New Testament is a spiritual gift, not an office (such as ‘elder’ or ‘deacon’). A person who holds church office might possess the gift of pastor/shepherd, but pastor/shepherd is not an office” (Sandra Glahn, “Can a Woman be a Pastor? Looking at the New Testament,” <https://blogs.bible.org/can-a-woman-be-a-pastor-looking-at-the-new-testament/>).

What Paul tells Timothy about the fundamentals of church governance has found diverse expression in many contemporary forms of church polity. We will begin by recognizing that there are *denominational* churches; for example, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, as well as others. And there are *nondenominational* churches, for example, Bible churches like Central Bible, as well as others with names like Rush Creek, Gateway, Fellowship Dallas, Watermark Community, and Christ Chapel. Nondenominational local churches are autonomous, self-governing congregations, which have practically no organizational connections to one another, whereas, denominational local churches are organizationally linked by their denominational ties and are more or less accountable to and subject to the authority of their respective denominations.

Denominational churches often have *episcopal*

or *presbyterian* hierarchical forms of government. The first form functions with a single leader, often called a bishop. The Roman Catholic Church may be the most well-known example of episcopal-type churches. The Pope is the Bishop of Rome. Below him are other bishops who are in turn responsible for other bishops down to the parish priest.

The second form functions not with a single leader but with a body or board of leaders called “elders” or “presbyters.” In churches with this form of government, the local board of elders answers to a higher board of elders, which is made up of elders selected to represent each of the various congregations. Ultimately, the final board of elders (sometimes called the general assembly) has authority over all matters of that denomination.

Since nondenominational congregations are autonomous, they more often have *congregational* or *elder* forms of government. In those with a congregational form, final authority rests with the congregation, which elects its primary leaders, namely the senior pastor, and perhaps other elders, and deacons, who are delegated authority by the congregation to carry out their responsibilities. When the congregation is only involved in major decisions, the senior pastor usually exercises sole authority in the everyday affairs of the church.

In those with an elder form, final authority rests with the elders. Central is an example of an autonomous, nondenominational church governed by a board of elders, all of whom are able to and do teach. Its elders are affirmed by the congregation at the annual business meeting in December. Central's Lead Pastor, responsible for preaching the Word and supervising staff members, is himself an elder. Central does not have a “board of deacons” but it does have men and women who lead by serving in the church. These servant-leaders are doing the work of ministry associated biblically with the position of deacon. The elder form of governance most closely resembles that reflected in 1 Timothy.



## EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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17 *The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.* 18 *For Scripture says, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."* 19 *Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.* 20 *But those elders who are sinning you are to reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning.* 21 *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.*

22 *Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.*

23 *Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.*

24 *The sins of some are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them.* 25 *In the same way, good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden forever.*

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Bracket "who direct the affairs of the church" in v. 17.
- Circle "double honor" in v. 17.
- Underline "for Scripture says" in v. 18.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 20.
- Circle "everyone" and "others" in v. 20.
- Box "so that" indicating *result* in v. 20.
- Circle "elect angels" in v. 21.
- Bracket "laying on of hands" in v. 22.
- Bracket "share in the sins of others" in v. 22.

What one word would you use to describe the **TONE** of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the **THEME** of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about \_\_\_\_\_."



## DIG DEEPER

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Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Identify *two* responsibilities of elders according to verse 17.
  
2. Distinguish “honor” from “*double* honor” in this context (cf. vv. 3-16).
  
3. Paul cites “Scripture” in verse 18. Where are his two citations found?
  
4. Put the point of the two citations in your own words.
  
5. Elders are to be protected against false charges being leveled against them. How so?
  
6. Elders who refuse correction are to be rebuked “in the presence of *all* so that the *rest* may stand in fear.” To whom do “all” and “the rest” refer?
  
7. What do you infer from Paul’s “charge” to Timothy in verse 21?
  
8. Explain what Timothy is not to do *hastily*, indicated by “the laying on of hands.”
  
9. Explain how being “hasty in the laying on of hands” could result in Timothy “sharing in the sins of others.”
  
10. Paul makes a point about “sins” and “good deeds” in verses 24 and 25. Put it in your own words.
  
11. **Discussion:** Paul is instructing Timothy about elders. Talk about how you would apply his instructions to church staff .

### Commentary On The Text

1 Timothy 5:17-25 is about elders. The chapter opens with Paul's instructions regarding how Timothy is to relate to different age groups in the church. Instructions regarding the treatment of widows (vv. 3-16), elders (vv. 17-25), and slaves (6:1-2) then follow. According to one analysis, verses 17-25 unfold as follows: "Verses 17-18 deal with the respect and material help that elders deserve. Verses 19-20 deal with the possibility of elders being accused of sinning. Verse 21 is a general command that, in this context, applies to the way elders are treated. Verse 22 seems to arise from the potential problem of sinning elders. It is difficult to relate verse 23 to the context, but verses 24-25 continue the theme of private and public sin triggered by verse 20" (Walter L. Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 1993-94).

In these verses Paul gives Timothy four rules to follow. *First*, elders who are doing their job of directing the affairs of the church well, especially if they are involved in preaching and teaching, are not only to receive *respect* but also *remuneration* from the church; the Greek word *timē*, translated "honor," can denote either. The meaning of "double honor" has received much discussion, but the expression most likely refers to the *honor* due the position, as well as an ample *honorarium*—rather than twice the amount of financial support paid to widows (cf., v. 16) or elders not involved in preaching and teaching. Paul quotes Moses (Dt 25:4; cf., 1Co 9:9) and Jesus (Lk 10:7; cf., 1Co 9:14) in his appeal to Scripture to justify his instructions regarding remuneration and captures the gist of Scripture when he writes: "For it is written in the Law of Moses: 'Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.' Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, doesn't he? Yes, this was written for us, because whoever plows and threshes should be able to do so in the hope of sharing in the harvest. If we have sown spiritual seed among you, is it too much if we reap a material harvest from you? If others have this right of support from you, shouldn't we have it all the more" and "Those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel" (1Co 9:9-12, 14).

*Second*, when accusations are leveled against an elder, they are to be confirmed by two or three witnesses. On the one hand, "Paul was not urging special treatment for the elder, but he was urging fair protection from capricious accusations. The church leader should enjoy at least as much protection as the ordinary Jew had under the law (see Deut 17:6: 19:15)" (Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NAC,

156). The reputation of the elder deserves to be protected, as well, because his reputation is critical to the witness of the church. But on the other hand, "fair protection" must not be abused, that is, used to out of hand dismiss accusations of sexual abuse and sexual assault where multiple witnesses may be unavailable.

*Third*, if an elder, guilty of the charges brought against him, persists in sinning, he is to be reproved "before *everyone*, so that the *others* may take warning." The present tense suggests this elder is continuing to sin—perhaps up until the time his sin comes to light, which means his sin is not a one-time lapse in judgment. Commentators debate who is meant by "everyone" and the "others." At a minimum, "everyone" refers to the elders and "others" to the other elders in cases of private sin. However, if the charges against the accused elder have been confirmed by two or three members of the congregation, it seems likely that his sin is public knowledge. In that case, the rebuke would need to be public, so that the other members of the congregation might take warning. In such matters, it is of utmost importance that Timothy avoid showing partiality or favoritism of any kind.

*Fourth*, elders must not be appointed hastily—whether it be the appointment of new elders or the reinstatement of those who after confrontation and repentance now wish to resume their duties. One commentator explains: "Timothy must not be hasty in commissioning elders. If he appoints unworthy people and they sin, he is to some degree responsible . . . Paul concludes with two reasons that Timothy should not be hasty in commissioning elders. The first is that while the sins of some are evident and disqualify the sinner from holding office, others' sins are less obvious. If elders are appointed too quickly, Timothy will find out after it is too late that they are not qualified for the office (v 24). The second reason is that while the good deeds of some people obviously attest that they should be leaders, others' good deeds are not as visible. If Timothy is too hasty, he will miss the opportunity of appointing qualified people (v 25)" (William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 46, *Pastoral Epistles*, 305-306).

Paul's interjection regarding Timothy drinking a little wine for his stomach condition, which is in parentheses in the NET Bible, may have been triggered by his reference to personal purity in verse 22. Perhaps Paul is concerned that Timothy might take his words too rigidly as an exhortation to avoid wine altogether, and he wants him to know that purity does not require total abstinence.

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## Word Studies/Notes

### v. 17 *elders*

"The term translated 'elders' in 5:17 is the plural of the same word translated 'older man' in 5:1. This is the first extended discussion of the term in 1 Timothy in reference to a church leader (see 4:14, where a related term 'body of elders' appears). Usage in the New Testament suggests that the term 'elder' and 'overseer' (3:1) were used interchangeably (see Titus 1:5, 7; Acts 20:17, 28). W. Hendriksen suggests that the term 'overseer' was used when the emphasis was on the character of the work" (Lea and Griffin, 154).

### v. 17 *who direct* . . .

All elders are "overseers" in charge of the church's activities. "'Direct the affairs of the church' is literally 'preside over' or 'rule' (*proestōtes*). It was the responsibility of these earliest church officials (cf. Acts 14:23) to supervise the work of the local congregation" (Ralph Earle, "1 Timothy," in *The Bible Expositor's Commentary*, 11:380). The same word is used in 3:4, 12 with regard to elders and deacons managing their own families well.

### v. 17 *double honor*

I.e., respect and ample remuneration. "Since the word for 'honor' (*timē*) was used in the sense of a price paid for something, it has been suggested that here it might be translated 'honorarium' (BAG). But that raises the problem of 'double' – double what was paid to the widows, or double what the other elders received? . . . Bernard's suggestion is helpful: 'Double honour, i.e. ample provision, must be ensured for them; *diplē* is not to be taken as equivalent to 'double of the sum paid to widows,' or in any similar way, but without any definite numerical reference' (p. 85). Perhaps we should allow both 'honor' and 'honorarium,' as Paul may have intended both" (Earle, 380).

### v. 18 *for Scripture says*

Cf., Dt 25:4; Lk 10:7 (cf., 1Co 9:14). "Paul cited two scriptural authorities to support his instruction to those who serve the church by providing leadership as elders: Moses (Deut. 25:4; Lev. 19:13; Deut. 24:15; cf. 1 Cor. 9:9) and Jesus (Luke 10:7; cf. Matt. 10:10). If Paul meant that both quotations were Scripture, this is one of the earliest New Testament attestations to the inspiration of another New Testament book (Luke and or Matthew; cf. 2 Pet. 3:16). However, he could have meant that only the first quotation was Scripture. He may have simply been quoting a commonly accepted truth (a contemporary proverb or saying) that Jesus also

quoted, which Matthew and Luke recorded, for support (cf. Mark 1:2-3)" (Thomas L. Constable, "Notes on 1 Timothy," 2020 ed., 111, [planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1timothy.pdf](http://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1timothy.pdf)).

### v. 20 *everyone* . . .

"Who are the 'all' and the 'rest,' the elders or the entire church? . . . It seems reasonable to assume, on the basis of Matthew 18, that if they could deal with the problem adequately without involving the whole congregation, they would do so" (Constable, 111, 112). "It is a safe rule that private sins should be dealt with privately, and only public sins publicly. It is neither right nor necessary to make what is private public, until all of the possibilities have been exhausted" (John Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 139). I would add this caveat to Stott's counsel: charges of sexual abuse and/or sexual assault on the part of a church leader are serious. Such flagrant sins may be investigated privately, but if discovered to be true, must be rebuked publicly, and reported to authorities.

### V. 21 *elect angels*

"The 'elect angels' are the unfallen angels in contrast to the fallen angels (Jude 6)" (Lea and Griffin, 157). Or "by 'elect angels' Paul means those angels whom God chooses to do his special tasks (cf., e.g., 1 Cor 4:9; 1 Tim 3:6; Rev 2:1) and who will be part of the final judgment" (William D. Mounce, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 46, *Pastoral Epistles*, 316). "'God,' 'Christ Jesus,' and the 'elect (chosen) angels' are all judges (Matt. 25:31; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Rev. 14:10). Lock believed that the 'elect angels' are 'chosen [elected] to share in the judgment'" (Constable, 112).

### v. 22 *laying on of hands*

"Laying on of hands, in this context, probably refers to public ordination (cf. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6). Another view is that it refers to the restoration of repentant fallen elders" (Constable, 111-112). "Most recent versions and commentators favor the interpretation that this passage prohibits hasty ordination. That fits in well with the main discussion of this chapter. And the laying on of hands in these epistles seems to be regularly associated with ordination (cf. 4:14; 2 Tim 1:7)" (Earle, 381).

### v. 22 *share in the sins*

"Paul warned Timothy of the danger of making hasty appointment to Christian offices. One need not call the practice here ordination, but it has all appearances of referring to an approval for ministry such as appears in Acts 13:3. Paul hinted that one who participates in such an appointment shares in the sinful results that can easily follow" (Lea and Griffin, 157-58).



## APPLY THE TEXT

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### CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Paul instructs Timothy to amply honor elders who direct the affairs of the church well, protect elders against false accusations, reprove elders who sin, and appoint elders only after careful examination.

### CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



## 3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



## FAMILY TALK

I think I can say with confidence that every single person in the world has had a life-changing experience over the past few weeks. In five short weeks, our whole world has changed from how we work, grocery shop and educate our kids, to how we “go” to church. Leading a church through a global pandemic must be especially challenging. Under the direction of our Lead Pastor David Daniels, the entire staff of CBC has done amazing things! In a matter of a few days our pastor helped guide us through a community shelter-in-place order and spearhead the launch of virtual church, connecting us in a way we never thought possible. This may read as one simple sentence, but it would honestly fill a book to expound upon. Our pastoral team has intentionally lived out the church’s commitment to our core values of surrendering to God’s Word while missionally caring for our congregation and community through gospel generosity. You as a congregation have responded to a missional call and gone beyond in unimaginable ways. What a crazy few weeks it has been! Paul says in 1 Timothy 5:19 that pastors who lead their church well are “worthy of double honor.” Our pastors have led extremely well! Can I encourage you as a family to “double the honor”? Will you consider writing your pastor a note of thanks from your family? Better yet, will you double up on praying for your pastor? Now, more than ever, let’s encourage our pastoral team.

### What Does The Bible Say?

What does the Bible say? Read 1 Timothy 5:17-21

1. What are the elders who preach and teach worthy of?
2. Explain verse 18 using your own words.
3. When should an accusation against an elder be considered?

### What Do You Think?

Why is it important to pray for your pastor?

### What Do You Do?

With your family, write a letter or draw a picture to send to your Community Pastor.

## CORE COMPETENCY: Church

I believe God uses the people in the church to do His work.

## MEMORY VERSE: Colossians 3:23

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for man.*

## KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: [kids@wearecentral.org](mailto:kids@wearecentral.org)

- \_\_\_\_\_ I completed my Bible Study
- \_\_\_\_\_ I memorized this week’s verse
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought my Bible to church
- \_\_\_\_\_ I brought a friend



CHILD’S NAME

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE

# OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

## CENTRAL BELIEFS

**Authority of the Bible** (2 Timothy 3:16-17)  
*I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.*

**Church** (Ephesians 4:15-16)  
*I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.*

**Eternity** (John 14:1-4)  
*I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.*

**The Holy Spirit** (Romans 8:9)  
*I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.*

**Humanity** (John 3:16)  
*I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.*

**Identity in Christ** (John 1:12)  
*I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.*

**Jesus Christ** (Hebrews 1:1-4)  
*I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.*

**Life Purpose** (Acts 20:24)  
*I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.*

**Personal God** (Psalm 121:1-2)  
*I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.*

**Salvation by Grace** (Ephesians 2:8-9)  
*I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.*



## CENTRAL VIRTUES

**Love** (1 John 4:10-12)  
*I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.*

**Joy** (John 15:11)  
*I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.*

**Peace** (Philippians 4:6-7)  
*I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.*

**Patience** (Proverbs 14:29)  
*I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.*

**Kindness/Goodness** (1 Thessalonians 5:15)  
*I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others*

**Faithfulness** (Proverbs 3:3-4)  
*I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.*

**Gentleness** (Philippians 4:5)  
*I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.*

**Self-Control** (Titus 2:11-13)  
*I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.*

**Grace** (Colossians 3:13)  
*I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.*

**Hope** (1 Peter 1:3-5)  
*I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.*

**Humility** (Philippians 2:3-4)  
*I choose to esteem others above myself.*



## CENTRAL PRACTICES

**Bible Study** (Hebrews 4:12)  
*I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Biblical Community** (Acts 2:44-47)  
*I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.*

**Compassion** (Psalm 82:3-4)  
*I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.*

**Disciple-Making** (2 Timothy 2:2)  
*I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.*

**Evangelism** (Acts 1:8)  
*I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.*

**Generosity** (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)  
*I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.*

**Prayer** (Psalm 66:16-20)  
*I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.*

**Single-Mindedness** (Matthew 6:33)  
*I focus on God and His priorities for my life.*

**Spiritual Gifts** (Romans 12:4-6)  
*I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.*

**Worship** (Psalm 95:1-7)  
*I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.*

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**Stephanie Thomas** (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. She and James are Shepherds of the Bailey Community Group. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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