

Hebrews 13:17

OBEY THEM THAT RULE OVER YOU

- I. What we must do.
 - A. The first calling is to obey.
 - 1. Listen, pay attention to listen with a view to being persuaded, to be a follower.
 - 2. The concept implies that we have minds and wills, which are Spirit influenced for good.
 - 3. And implies that the elders use the only power they really have: the Word of God.
 - B. And we are to “submit” ourselves, i.e., accept their authority, be subject to them, yield to them.
 - C. These two admonitions fit together.
- II. The reasons for our submitting and obeying our office-bearers.
 - A. First, we submit because the authority of an office-bearer is that of Christ.
 - B. The second reason is found in the fact that they “watch for your souls.”
 - 1. They take spiritual care of the souls of the sheep God gave into their charge.
 - 2. The care is described as “watching,” i.e., alert, attentive, sleepless, circumspect, ready.
 - C. A third reason for submission is the fact that the elders have to give an answer to God for their care.
 - 1. In the judgment day they will be judged for how they cared for and watched over God’s sheep.
 - 2. The knowledge of the judgment day is an incentive to the sheep, as well as to the office-bearers.
 - 3. Office-bearer grief is “not profitable” for the sheep, because it brings hurt to themselves.
 - D. May we, the sheep of God’s flock, remember this calling God gives us, and be more determined to obey and to receive the Word brought by the office-bearers with all readiness.