

“What Congregations Owe to their Elders, Part 2” (1 Peter 5:5a)
3/31/19, GCC Morning Worship

Introduction:

- A. Review of 1 Peter 5:1–5
 - 1. Pastors are to shepherd the flock of God, exercising oversight (1 Peter 5:1–4)
 - 2. The congregation is to submit to their elders (1 Peter 5:5a)
 - 3. Though Peter isolated “younger ones,” his general exhortation to “submit” was for the whole congregation (cf. Heb 13:17; 1 Cor 16:15–16)
- B. The **purpose** of 1 Peter 5:1–5 is to let the word of God describe what a pastor is to be to his flock and what the flock is to be to her pastor and then hold one another accountable to those roles
- C. What does submission not mean?
 - I. *Submission does not mean that you give the elders absolute authority over your consciences and wills*
 - A. Christ alone has absolute authority over your consciences and wills (Matt 23:8–11; cf. 2LBC 21.2)
 - B. No elder may take the place of Christ over our consciences and wills
 - II. *Submission to elders does not mean that you are to regard your elders as infallible in their interpretation and application of scripture*
 - A. Test what is said!
 - 1. Do not despise Prophecies (1 Thess 5:20–21)
 - 2. Bereans were more noble-minded (Acts 17:11)
 - B. God has given us an infallible Word and an Infallible Guide (the Holy Spirit), but He has not given us an infallible human interpreter
 - C. Avoid Two Pitfalls
 - 1. **Pitfall #1**: *If the church is not infallible in her interpretation of the bible, that means that nobody can really know what the bible says*
 - a. We know what he has said in nature (Rom 1:19–20):
 - b. We can know what God has said to us in special revelation (1 Jn. 5:12–13)
 - 2. **Pitfall #2**: *Everyone in the congregation is equally competent to understand what the bible says*
 - III. *Submission does not mean that you must agree with your elders in matters of judgment and wisdom which are not explicitly addressed in scripture*
 - A. Distinction between scripturally explicit matters and judgment calls where the bible is silent
 - B. GCC is Elder led, congregationally **ruled**
 - 1. Four matters on which the congregation decides:
 - a. Excommunication a professing believer (Matt. 18:15–20)
 - b. The selection of an officer of the church (elder or deacon) and/or trustees (Acts 6:1–6).
 - c. The annual budget (2 Cor 8:19–21)
 - d. Any decision which requires legal matters, a change to the constitution and by-laws (Eph 4:3)

- C. GCC is Elder **led**, congregationally ruled
 - 1. Example of Public Worship and the Regulative Principle of Worship
 - a. Elements determined by the Word of God
 - b. Circumstances determined by the elders of the church
 - 2. Example of service in the nursery
 - 3. In your disagreement, be eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph 4:1–3)

IV. Clothe Yourselves, *ALL OF YOU*, with Humility Toward One Another (1 Peter 5:5)