

Loving Your Leaders

I Thess 5:12-13

¹² And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,
¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.
Be at peace among yourselves.

Introduction:

A Biblical leader is a follower who teaches others how to follow.
Jesus' admonition was:

Mt 4:19, And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

Mt 16:24, Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

John 10:27, My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

The Apostle Paul sums his leadership in First Corinthians 11:1 saying, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

Pastors are given a huge responsibility to lead the flock of God into a growing relationship with the Lord.

This is not accomplished by Leadership technique, or skills in human management.... The Church is not like a corporation or business where you manage assets and people for a profit. The church is a Body of Believers, a Living organism that needs more than just a spokesman or a person to tell them what to do.

We are sheep in need of a caring shepherd. Words like love, care, compassion, gentleness, respect, honor, humility, service, are what make a great leader, pastor in church...

Its easy to be a dictator, to rule by might. to say do this or do that, but it is a whole other world to rule from the platform of humility.

This is found in

Phil. 2

I Cor. 4

"Humility is to make a right estimate of oneself."

— Charles H. Spurgeon

In his autobiography, nineteenth century preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon records a conversation he had with his wife one Sunday evening: "I fear I have not been as faithful in my preaching today as I should have been; I have not been as much in earnest after poor souls as God would have me be. . . . Go, dear, to the study, and fetch down Baxter's Reformed Pastor, and read some of it to me; perhaps that will quicken my sluggish heart."¹

Spurgeon was not the only one helped by the seventeenth century British Puritan's writings. Baxter has been called the greatest of all English preachers, the virtual creator of popular Christian literature, and "the most successful preacher and winner of souls and nurturer of won souls that England has ever had."²

Richard Baxter wrote

The very design of the gospel doth tend to self-abasing; and the work of grace is begun and carried on in humiliation.

Humility is not a mere ornament of a Christian, but an essential part of the new creature: it is a contradiction to be a sanctified man, or a true Christian, and not humble.

Our very business is to teach the great lesson of self-denial and humility to our people, and how unfit is it then that we should be proud ourselves!

One Author wrote

We are in desperate need of genuine leadership—broken, humble people who are not afraid to admit that they need God; men who are more worried about prayer than about status and recognition; men who petition God rather than position themselves. Many men want the recognition, but not the brokenness; the honor, but not the humility.

I believe that the pulpit is partly to blame.

Today, the truth is often neglected, watered-down, or avoided altogether in the hope of not offending members and building a large audience. Judgment is never mentioned; repentance is never sought; and sin is often excused.

We want to build a church rather than break a heart; be politically correct rather than biblically correct; coddle and comfort rather than stir and convict.

Pastors are to be pillars who support truth, not who oppose it. Truth is not "flexible" when it comes to absolutes—it's solid and unyielding. Truth liberates. Truth rebuilds. Truth restores. Truth heals. Truth transforms.

Truth prevails—you don't change truth—truth changes you!
We must begin here.

Where are the Isaiah's and Jeremiahs calling nations to repentance? Where are the Peters and Paul's who spoke with such authority that martyrdom did not silence them? Though they are dead, they still speak! Where are the Wycliffs who stood so unyielding for the truth that he was called *The Morning Star of Reformation*?

Where are the Tyndale's and Huss' who were burned at the stake for simply declaring the truth? Where are the Luther's who, when asked to recant or face possible execution, said, "Here I stand; I can do no other"? Where are the John Calvin's who shape the religious thoughts of our Western culture?

Where are the John Knox's who cried, "Give me Scotland [for the cause of Christ] or I die"? Where are the Whitefield's who shook continents? Where are the Howell Harris', Daniel Rowlands', and Griffith Jones' who preached with such passion during the Welsh revivals of the 18th century that we still honor them today?

I say again, "Where are they?" Where are the John Wesley's who said, "Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and we will shake the gates of hell?" Where are the David Brainerd's who spent so much time in prayer that even the great Jonathan Edwards was convicted? Where are the Robert Murray Machines who, even though he died at age twenty-nine, was one of Scotland's most anointed preachers—causing people to weep before even preaching a word (not emotionalism, but anointing)?

Where are the Spurgeon's who spoke with such authority that his sermons are read more today than ever before? Where are the D.L. Moody's who brought America to her knees? Where are the Evan Roberts' who, during the Welsh Revivals of 1904-5,

preached so powerfully against sin that people cried out to truly know God? Where are the Puritans like Richard Baxter, who said with such humility, "I speak as a dying man to dying men"?

As the church falls deeper into self-reliance and further from reliance on God, our need for bold leadership has never been greater. Change in our nation will only occur when there is a strong conviction of sin, genuine faith, humility, and sincere repentance, beginning in the pulpits. May God grant us the wisdom and strength to proclaim these truths.

We must stop confusing God's patience with His approval and preach with conviction from the pulpits again—as dying men to dying men.

Shane Idleman, founder and lead pastor of Westside Christian Fellowship in Lancaster, Calif.

Review

Pastors priorities

1. Labor— —Labor in ministry and Word
2. Lead— —Over you in the Lord
3. Lesson—-Admonish, instruction

Lesson

We Urge you—-Pres. Act. Indic.

erótaó: to ask, question

Original Word: ἐρωτάω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: erótaō

Phonetic Spelling: (er-o-tah'-o)

Short Definition: I ask, question, request

Definition: (a) I ask (a question), question, (b) I request, make a request to, pray.

HELPS Word-studies

2065 *erōtáō* (from *eromai*, "ask") – make an earnest request, especially by someone on "special footing," i.e. in "*preferred position*."

2065 /*erōtáō* ("to ask on *special footing*, intimacy") requests from a "preferred position" (E. Abbot, *Johannine Grammar*, 467,8). Such requesting receives *special consideration* because of the special relationship involved.

Request (2065)(*erotao* from *éromai* = ask, inquire) means to ask for, usually with implication of an underlying question. The verb does not carry the note of an authoritative command but rather that of a friend making an urgent appeal to a friend. The term suggests that those making the request stand in a position of familiarity with those being treated.

In **MacArthur's** comments on this verse, he explains that *erotao* is...

a verb that means "to plead," "implore," or even "to beg." Instead of coming across as authoritarian, intolerant, or overbearing, Paul gently corrected those struggling under this error. (MacArthur, John: 1 & 2 Thessalonians. Moody Press or Logos)

I. Recognize your Pastors

to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,

recognize- know —-Perfect. Active Infinitive

eidó: be aware, behold, consider, perceive**Original Word:** οἶδω**Part of Speech:** Verb**Transliteration:** eidó**Phonetic Spelling:** (i'-do)**Short Definition:** I know, remember**Definition:** I know, remember, appreciate.**HELPS Word-studies**

1492 *eídō* (*oida*) – properly, to see with *physical* eyes (cf. Ro 1:11), as it naturally bridges to the *metaphorical* sense: *perceiving* ("mentally seeing"). This is akin to the expressions: "I see what You mean"; "I see what you are saying."

1492 /*eídō* ("seeing that becomes knowing") then is a *gateway* to grasp spiritual truth (reality) from a physical plane. **1492** (*eídō*) then is physical seeing (sight) which should be the constant bridge to mental and spiritual seeing (*comprehension*).

Appreciate (**1492**) (**eido**, **oida** - eido is used only in the **perfect tense** = oida) literally means perception by sight (perceive, see) as in [Mt 2:2](#) where the wise men "saw His star". The meaning of **eido** is somewhat difficult to convey but in general this type of "knowing" is distinguished from **ginosko** (and epiginosko, epignosis), the other major NT word for knowing, because ginosko refers to knowledge obtained by experience or "experiential knowledge" whereas **eido** often refers to more intuitive knowledge, although the distinction is not always crystal clear.

Appreciate is not most accurate rendering of "**eido**" (to know) which in context is recognition of the vital function for which these leaders have been gifted. The idea is that the saints at Thessalonica need to come to know the worth of their leaders. They must not remain ignorant concerning them but by careful consideration come to a full understanding of their true character and diligent labor. The practical result of such acknowledgment will be cooperation with and submission to their nurturing admonishments.

Vincent writes that we are to...

Recognize them for what they are, and as entitled to respect because of their office.

Stedman writes that **appreciate** means ...

"know them." Recognize them. Be aware of them. Do not take them for granted. I know of churches where pastors are treated as hired servants; they are there to respond to the whims of the board of the church or the vote of the congregation. They are treated with little or no respect and at times are severely mistreated. That is a shame. Here the apostle is saying, "Get to know your leaders. Understand that they are people and do not ignore them." (Ibid)

Hiebert makes some interesting observations on this passage writing that...

Ministers are often urged, and rightly so, to "know" their members, but here the members are called upon to "know" their leaders. And surely much of the tension that at times develops between the pastors and members would be dissipated if the members would learn to know and appreciate the duties and ministries of their spiritual leaders. Such a recognition and appreciation of their spiritual leaders is "a purely spiritual exercise possible only to spiritual persons. Non-spiritual persons cannot recognize, and would not acknowledge, spiritual workers or their work.

Heb. 13:7

⁷ Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of *their* conduct.

Heb. 13:17

¹⁷ Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account.

II. Regard Your Pastors

¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.

esteem — — Present Middle Infinitive

hēgeomai: to lead, suppose

Original Word: ἡγέομαι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: hēgeomai

Phonetic Spelling: (hayg-eh'-om-ahee)

Short Definition: I lead, think

Definition: (a) I lead, (b) I think, am of opinion, suppose, consider.

HELPS Word-studies

2233 *hēgéomai* (from **71** /*ágō*, "to lead") – properly, to lead the way (going before as a *chief*) – cognate with **2232** /*hēgemón* ("a governor or official who leads others").

2233 /*hēgéomai* ("what goes before, in front") refers to *coming first in priority* such as: "the leading thought" in one's mind, i.e. to esteem (regard highly); or a leading authority, providing leadership in a local church (see Heb 13:7,17,24).

[**2233** /*hēgéomai* ("an official who *leads*") carries important responsibility and hence "casts a heavy vote" (influence) – and hence deserve

cooperation by those who are led (Heb 13:7; passive, "to esteem/reckon heavily" the person or influence who is leading).]

Esteem (2233) (**hegeomai [word study]** from **ágo** = to lead) has two basic meanings in the NT. One is to lead as one would do in a supervisory capacity as when describing men in any leading position - ruler, leader, governor ([Ac 7:10](#)) and stands opposite of a **diakonos** or servant in ([Lk 22:26](#)). In the apocryphal writings **hegeomai** was used of military commanders. It was also used to describe leaders of religious bodies, both pagan and Christian (latter in [Heb 13:7](#), [17](#), [24](#), "leading men" in [Acts 15:22](#), "chief speaker" in [Acts 14:12](#)). In secular Greek **hegeomai** was used to describe the pagan god Hermes as "the leader of the word"

The second meaning means **to engage in an intellectual process** (Here in [1Th 5:13](#), [2Co 9:5](#), [Php 2:25](#), [Php 3:8](#), [2Pe 1:13](#)). In this latter sense, **hegeomai** conveys the picture of leading out (note the root verb of origin = **ago** = to lead) before the mind, and thus to regard, esteem, count, reckon. This latter meaning is found in the present verse. In this sense, **hegeomai** pictures one giving careful thought to something and not making a quick decision. The picture is that of one leading his or her mind through a reasoning process to arrive at a conclusion.

A T Robertson has an interesting comment writing that **Paul** is saying we are to...

Get acquainted with them and esteem the leaders. The idlers in Thessalonica had evidently refused to follow their leaders in church activities. We need wise leadership today, but still more wise following. An army of captains and colonels never won a battle.

very highly

5228 *hypér* (a preposition) – properly, beyond (above); (figuratively) to extend *benefit* (*help*) that reaches beyond the present situation.

5228 /*hypér* ("beyond") is usually best translated "for the *betterment* (*advantage*) of," i.e. focusing on *benefit*. M. Vincent, "**5228** (*hypér*) signifies something like '*in the interests of the truth . . . concerning.*' J. B. Lightfoot (on Gal 1:4) . . . remarks that *hypér* has 'a sense of *interest* in,' which is wanting to *perí*" (*WS*).

[**5228** (*hypér*) naturally expresses *conferring benefit*, i.e. for the sake of "*betterment*" (improvement, extending benefit).]

ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ (*hyperekperissou*) — 3 Occurrences

Ephesians 3:20 Adv

GRK: πάντα ποιῆσαι ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ ὧν αἰτούμεθα

KJV: exceeding abundantly *above* all that

INT: all things to do *exceedingly above* what we ask

1 Thessalonians 3:10 Adv

GRK: καὶ ἡμέρας ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ δεόμενοι εἰς

INT: and day *exceedingly* imploring for

1 Thessalonians 5:13 Adv

GRK: ἡγεῖσθαι αὐτοὺς ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ

KJV: to esteem them *very* highly in

INT: to esteem them *exceedingly* in love

Very highly (4057) (**huperekperissou** from **huper** = above + **ek** = intensifies meaning, adding idea of exhaustlessness + **perissos** = exceeding some number or measure, over and above, more than necessary) means more than, out of bounds, overflowing all bounds, surpassing, superabundantly, surpassingly, beyond measure, exceedingly, quite beyond all measure, overwhelming,

over and above, more than enough. It describes an extraordinary degree, involving a considerable excess over what would be expected.

F F Bruce said that here we encounter another "one of Paul's coined 'super-superlatives'".

Vincent writes that this is...

One of the numerous compounds of **huper** - beyond, over and above, of which Paul is fond. Of 28 words compounded with this preposition in the New Testament, Paul alone uses 20.

Huperekperissou is the the highest form of comparison imaginable and so means immeasurably more than, quite beyond all measure, infinitely more than

Now to Him who is able to do **far more abundantly** beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us (1Ep 3:20-note)

Morris writes that

There are various ways of expressing the thought of abundance, and this double compound is probably the most emphatic of all.

In love - In the sphere or "atmosphere" of unconditional, giving **love** (see study of **agape**), as is seen in Spirit filled believers.

Hiebert adds that...

Whenever love does not dominate, the admonitions of the leaders, however much they may be deserved by the members, will always tend to provoke resentment against those giving the admonition. If they are to have cordial relations between leaders and members, love must prevail. When they have genuine love they will not merely tolerate the admonitions of their leaders but will graciously accept them. (Ibid)

To "esteem them very highly," is not only to regard leaders as valuable but also to express that esteem in a practical manner.

This is why Paul wrote to Timothy, "If an elder rules well [actually leads well], he is worthy of double honor." ([1Ti 5:17](#)) The apostle meant that the leader should be paid twice as much salary! A double honorarium is the idea.

I Tim 5:17

¹⁷ Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸ For the Scripture says, "*You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,*" and, "The laborer *is* worthy of his wages."

honor — —

timé: a valuing, a price

Original Word: τιμή, ἥς, ἡ

Part of Speech: Noun, Feminine

Transliteration: timé

Phonetic Spelling: (tee-may')

Short Definition: a price, honor

Definition: a price, honor.

HELPS Word-studies

5092 *timé* (from *tiō*, "accord honor, pay respect") – properly, *perceived value; worth* (literally, "price") especially as *perceived honor* – i.e. what has *value* in the eyes of *the beholder*; (figuratively) the *value* (*weight, honor*) *willingly assigned* to something.

I Cor 9:3

³ My defense to those who examine me is this: ⁴ Do we have no right to eat and drink? ⁵ Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as *do* also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas? ⁶ Or *is it* only Barnabas and I *who* have no

right to refrain from working? ⁷ Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

⁸ Do I say these things as a *mere* man? Or does not the law say the same also? ⁹ For it is written in the law of Moses, “*You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.*” Is it oxen God is concerned about? ¹⁰ Or does He say *it* altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, *this* is written, that he who plows should plow in hope, and he who threshes in hope should be partaker of his hope. ¹¹ If we have sown spiritual things for you, *is it* a great thing if we reap your material things? ¹² If others are partakers of *this* right over you, *are* we not even more?

Nevertheless we have not used this right, but endure all things lest we hinder the gospel of Christ. ¹³ Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat *of the things* of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of *the offerings* of the altar? ¹⁴ Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.

III. Remain at Peace with Your Pastors

Be at peace among yourselves.

Be at peace — — Pres. Active. Imperative

original Word: εἰρηνεύω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: eiréneuó

Phonetic Spelling: (i-rane-yoo'-o)

Short Definition: I am peaceful, keep the peace, am at peace

Definition: I am peaceful, keep the peace, am at peace.

HELPS Word-studies

Cognate: 1514 *eirēneúō* (from 1515 /*eirēnē*, "peace") – living in the condition of God's *peace* (gift of *wholeness*, integrity of being). See 1515 (*eirēnē*).

Why is this command necessary and so important? **MacDonald** observes that...

The exhortation “be at peace among yourselves” is no incidental insertion. The number one problem among Christians everywhere is the problem of getting along with each other. Every believer has enough of the flesh in him to divide and wreck any local church. Only as empowered by the Spirit can we develop the love, brokenness, forbearance, kindness, tender-heartedness, and forgiveness that are indispensable for peace. A particular threat to peace which Paul may be warning against is the formation of cliques around human leaders. (MacDonald, W & Farstad, A. *Believer's Bible Commentary: Thomas Nelson or Logos*)

Keathley adds that God gives...

a harvest of peace when believers sow and water their minds with the Word. But Satan, the agent of disunity and strife, seeks to sow fear and anger in order to reap a harvest of discord through hurt feelings, failure to forgive, and selfish ambition. This happens when Christians refuse to operate on the principles and promises of the Word. (*Grace and Peace*)

Hebrews 13:17

¹⁷ Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.