

Know Your Leaders

We have a problem with leaders

- Dictate
- Decide
- Swagger
- Steal
- Sleep

BUT...

- We rebel / resist
- We idolize
- We criticize
- We take (only)
- We shift into Neutral

So... This Text –

1) Who: Descriptors of Church Leaders

Listed as 3 Greek participles preceded by a single article “the”... not talking about 3 different types of leaders, but 1 type of leader that fulfills these 3 functions in your midst.

Labor among you,
Have charge over you,
Instruct/Admonish you.

a) Diligently labor

b) Have Charge Over You (“Over You”) –

Having a position of authority – they have been placed “over” the church and its members.

2 Cor 10:8 is an *authority which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you...*

1 Pet 5:2 – elders are to *exercise oversight...according to the will of God.*

Heb 13:17 – *obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.*

c) Admonish

Admonish (*noutheteo*) is a word only used by Paul, and is really a broad word can carry the idea of comfort, encourage, exhort, correct, urge.

It is not quite a “command,” but it is certainly not

merely a “suggestion.”

Leon Morris rightly terms it a “brotherly word, but a big-brotherly word.” It corrects wrong, but not in a shaming kind of way, but rather an appealing kind of way.¹

2) What: Responding to Church Leaders

a) Know Them – v. 12

Over and over in this letter, Paul has spoken of how the Thessalonians “knew” him and responded to him with such love and kindness and respect... (1:5, 2:1-2, 2:13, 3:6, 4:2).

And essentially what he is saying here to them is, *“know” your leaders like you “know” me.*

b) Esteem them highly – v. 13

In love... not fear, not deference, not obligation... but rather “in love

3) Why?

Because of their work...

¹ Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistle to the Thessalonians*, NICNT, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 166-167.

4) How?

- a) Submit to their Leadership – Heb 13:17, 1 Cor 16:16, 1 Peter 5:5
- b) Imitate their Faith – Heb 13:7, 1 Peter 5:3
- c) Help them with their Task – 1 Thess 5:11, Rom 14:19
- d) Cut them some Slack – 1 Cor 13:7
- e) Give them “Double Honor” – 1 Tim 5:17, Heb 13:17
- f) Pray for them – 1 Thess 5:25, Heb 13:18
- g) DON’T Engage in Man-Exalting Tendencies - Matthew 6, 23...
 - a. Robes
 - b. Titles
 - c. Seats (parking spaces) of honor
 - d. Assume they are sinless
 - e. Blindly follow whatever they say

Praxis

1. What are various ways our culture tends to view its leaders?
2. How have Christians wrongly viewed their leaders?
3. How can you “know” your leaders better?
4. What are ways to “esteem” them in love?
5. Spend some time specifically praying for individual leaders...