

TODAY'S LESSON

“THE WORK OF ELDERS”

(1 Thessalonians 5:11-15)

By James Hamilton



*Sunday Morning Live Stream
9:00 AM CT April 14, 2024*



THE WORK OF ELDERS

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11-15

Form Follows Function

- We had several classes and sermons about:
- what **elders** are
- the **need** for **elders**
- the **qualifications** of **elders**
- the **responsibilities** of **elders**

This lesson is about **the work of elders**

What **the church should expect** from **elders**

What **elders should expect** from **the church**

Form Follows Function

- **Acts 6:1-7** the church **before** elders and deacons
- Deacons to **serve tables** so **apostles** could focus on **spiritual matters**
- *We will give ourselves continually to prayer and ministry of the word*
- Deacons to **handle logistics** so **elders** can focus on **spiritual matters** **1 Tim. 3:1-13**
- **Pray James 5:13-16** **serve the word**
Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 20:17-38

Function

- Pray James 5:13-16 “pray a lot”

James 5:14-16

Is anyone among you **sick**? Let him call for **the elders of the church**, and let **them** pray over **him**, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. **15** And **the prayer of faith will save the sick**, and **the Lord will raise him up**. And **if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. 16**

Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Function

- Pray James 5:13-16 “pray a lot”
- Serve the word Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 20:17-38

Ephesians 4:11-12

And **He Himself gave** some to be **apostles**, some **prophets**, some **evangelists**, and some **pastors** and **teachers**, **12** → **equip the saints** → **the work of ministry**, → **edifying** of the **body** of **Christ**
Teach the word of Christ to the saints
Equip them to serve others in their lives
Elders have a **unique opportunity** in this area;
can relate to challenges of life more than an **evangelist**

Acts 20:17-38

- Met with elders for the last time (partners for 3 years)
- Reminded them of his example 1 Peter 5:2-3
- Humility, tears and trials
- Withheld nothing that was helpful (the whole counsel of God)
- Publicly & house to house, night & day
- Warn, watch yourselves and the flock the church Jesus bought with His blood is now in your hands
- Support the weak, more blessed to give

Function

- Pray James 5:13-16 “pray a lot”
- Serve the word Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 20:17-38
- Act with the awareness that every soul you oversee is precious Matt. 16:24

Matthew 16:26

For what profit is it to a **man if he gains** the **whole world**, and **loses his own soul**? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

Each soul is **precious** to **God**

Your soul is so **precious** that **God gave His Son** for it **Rom. 5:6-8; 1 Peter 1:18** *redeemed... from your aimless conduct...by the precious blood of Christ*

Function

- Pray James 5:13-16 “pray a lot”
- Serve the word Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 20:17-38
- Act with the awareness that every soul you oversee is precious Matt. 16:24
- Each soul is precious to God
- 1 Peter 1:18 *redeemed...from your aimless conduct...by the precious blood of Christ*

Function

- Pray James 5:13-16 “pray a lot”
- Serve the word Ephesians 4:11-12; Acts 20:17-38
- Act with the awareness that every soul you oversee is precious Matt. 16:24
- Each soul is precious to God 1 Peter 1:18
- Elders must give a count Heb. 13:17; Ezekiel 34:4; Heb. 12:14-17

Hebrews 13:17

Obey those who rule over you, and submit, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account (Titus 1:7 blameless as a steward of God). Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

Tremendous burden (a reason for **plurality**)

Willing to entrust your soul and **souls** of **your family** to the **oversight** of **these men**?

You must **support** those that bear this burden!

Ezekiel 34:4

- **Shepherds must:**, (but they did not):
The **weak** you have **not strengthened** (**1 Thess. 5:14**), nor have you **healed** those who were **sick** (**James 5:14-16**), nor **bound up the broken**, nor **brought back what was driven away**, nor **sought what was lost** (**Luke 15:1-7**); but with **force** and **cruelty** you have ruled **them**.

Be among them **1 Peter 5:1-3**

Know them **John 10:3**

Lead them **John 10:4**

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

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.

14 Now we exhort you, brethren, **warn** those who are **unruly**, **comfort** the fainthearted, **uphold** the **weak**, be **patient with all**. **15** **See that no one renders evil for evil** to **anyone**, but **always pursue** what is **good** both for yourselves and for all.

Hebrews 12:14-17

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: 15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled; 16 lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. 17 For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.

Looking Carefully

- Let no one get lost in the crowd **Heb. 10:25**
- Or slip away unnoticed
- Make sure everyone absent is contacted
- Put each one to work for the Lord **Rom. 12**
- Eye the spiritual barometer (joy, sorrow, unrest, bitterness, despair, indifference?)
- Encourage each one to cultivate deeper relationships with others outside the assembly **Heb. 3:13**

A Spiritual Leader **is Like a Father**

- **1 Thess. 2:9-12**

1 Thess. 2:9-12

For you remember, brethren, our **labor and toil**; for **laboring** night and day, that we might **not be a burden** to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God.

10 You are witnesses, and God also, how **devoutly** and **justly** and **blamelessly** we **behaved** ourselves **among** you who believe; **11** as you know how we **exhorted**, and **comforted**, and **charged every one** of you, as a **father does his own children**, **12** that **you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom** and **glory**.

A Spiritual Leader is Like a Father

- **1 Thess. 2:9-12** he is **sacrificial, devout, fair**, without a character flaw (**example**); he **encourages, comforts, instructs** with the understanding that **God is watching**
- **How to teach your child to walk**
- **Goal is to walk worthy of God**
- **1 Tim. 3:1-7**

Proven Spiritual Character

A bishop then **must be blameless**, a **one-woman man**, **temperate**, **sober-minded**, of **good behavior**, **hospitable**, able to teach; **3** **not given to wine**, **not violent**, **not greedy for money**, but **gentle**, **not quarrelsome**, **not covetous**; **4** one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence **5** (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); **6** not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. **7** Moreover he **must have a good testimony among those who are outside**, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

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- **1 Tim. 3:1-7**
- **Titus 1:6-9**

Proven Spiritual Leadership

...if a man **is blameless**, a one-woman man, **having faithful children not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination.** **7** For a bishop must be blameless, as a **steward of God**, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, **8** but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, **9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught**, that **he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.**

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- **How to teach your child to walk**
- **Goal is to walk worthy of God**
- **1 Tim. 3:1-7** a **successful example**
- **Titus 1:6-9** **proven spiritual leadership**

God is YOUR Father

- **Heb. 12:9-12** He is the Father of our spirits
- He gave His only Son to die for you **Rom. 5:6-8**
- Jesus willingly gave His life so you could be His eternal brother **1 John 3:16**
- Believe and confess Jesus is Lord **Rom. 10:9**
- Repent **Rom. 2:4**
- Be baptized into Christ's death and be born again **Rom. 6:3-4**
- Walk in newness of life; God will teach you how

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"CHURCH OF CHRIST MEETING @ 9500 AR 5, ALEXANDER AR. 72002"

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