

*Edgemont Bible Church*  
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*1 Thessalonians 5:12-15*

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Intro: The Church is a special institution, built by the Lord Jesus Christ (Mt 16:18; Acts 4:11-12; 20:28; 1 co 3:9; Heb 3:6; 1 Pe 2:5-7); it is the pillar and ground of the truth (1 Tim 3:15). Just because all of this is true, it does not mean that it is free of difficulties. Between the law of sin in our members, the spiritually immature, or even the unregenerate, the Church has to deal with sin problems in one way or another. Like the individual believer, the church has to recognize and confront sin, weaknesses, imperfections, and difficulties caused by sin in order to grow spiritually (Mt 18:15-18; 1 Co 5:1-7; 1 Jo 1:9; Jas 5:16). Verses 12-13 give directions concerning the relationship between the shepherd and the flock. This relationship is important in order to have a healthy and spiritually progressing body (Heb 13:17; 1 Pe 5:1-5).

#### XIV. Growing a Healthy Flock – Part 1: The Relationship between Shepherds and Sheep

##### A. The Shepherds Responsibility to the Sheep – vs 12

###### 1. Leadership is important to the Church

a. the qualifications and duties of leadership are listed in 1 Tim 3; Tit 1

b. The four terms and characterization of leaders

i. Elder - spiritually mature and wise - **Presbuteros** - older; a senior; an Israelite Sanhedrist (also member of the celestial council) or Christian "presbyter":-- elder(-est), old. – Acts 15:2ff; 20:17; 1 Tim 5:17,19; Tit 1:5; Jas 5:14; 1 Pe 5:1,5; 2 Jo 1; 3 Jo 1

ii. Overseer – has spiritual oversight and authority – **episkopos** - a superintendent, Christian officer in charge of a (or the) church:-- bishop, overseer. – Acts 20:28; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:1-2; Tit 1:7

iii. Pastor – able to lead and protect his flock – **poimen** - a shepherd: pastor. – Eph 4:11; Mt 9:36; Mk 6:34

iv. Leader – able to provide spiritual discernment – **hegeomai** - to lead, i.e. command (with official authority); to deem, consider:-- account, (be) chief, count, esteem, governor, judge, have the rule over, suppose, think. – Heb 13:7,17,24

c. Finding leadership for NT Churches was important and difficult

i. The Church was less than 1 year old, new converts

ii. The Church was made up of common people and slaves – not accustomed to leadership or its responsibilities – had to learn on the job

iii. If you are given leadership when you are just as spiritually young as everyone else, why would anyone listen to you?

2. And we urge you, brethren,

a. The Church at Thessalonica were already growing spiritually and had become a model to other Churches – 1:7-9

b. Paul gently introduces a new topic

- i. Paul was capable of a forceful expression of authority - Acts 13:9-11; 27:21-26; 1Co 10:1; 5:1-8; 11:17-22; 2 Co 2:8-11; Gal 1:6-9; 3:1-9
- ii. He used the same form in 4:1
- iii. They were already doing well, this was like a request of a friend

B. The Responsibility to Labor – vs 12b

1. those who labor among you,

a. **kopiaō** - to feel fatigue; to work hard, (bestow) labor, toil, be wearied.

b. A faithful pastor works hard among his people

- i. proclaiming the Gospel – 2 Tim 4:5
- ii. explaining and applying truth – 1 Tim 3:2; 2 Tim 4:2; Tit 1:9
- iii. warning and admonishing the sheep - -Ro 15:14; Col 1:28; 3:16; 1 Th 5:14

Counseling from the scripture – 2 Tim 3:16-4:4; Pro 17:17; 27:6,9,17

2. Paul's example

a. 1Th 2:9 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.

b. 2Th 3:6-8 But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you,

c. Speaking to the Ephesian Elders - Acts 20:18-20,31,33-35

C. The Responsibility to Exercise Authority – vs 12c

1. are over you

a. **proistemi** - to stand before, conveys the idea of authoritatively presiding, leading, or directing.

b. Paul uses it 4 times instructing Timothy about the character and duties of Church elders

- i. 1Ti 3:4-5 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);
- ii. 1Ti 3:12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.
- iii. 1Ti 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

2. The responsibilities of the leadership done with a great deal of effort in the Power of the Holy Spirit.

a. to give spiritual guidance and direction,

- b. setting the tone
- c. Bringing about functioning unity
- d. Relating well to the people of the Church
- e. Helping them deal with personal difficulties
- f. Finding Biblical solutions for problems
- g. Working for necessary change in the Church

3. in the Lord

- a. Pastors are not self-appointed
- b. Their authority does not derive from fallible humans
- c. They are equipped and appointed by God

D. The Responsibility to Provide Instruction – vs 12d

1. and admonish you,

**a. noutheteo** - to put in mind, to caution or reprove gently:--admonish, warn.

b. Acts 20:31; Ro 15:14; 1 Co 4:14; Col 1:28; 3:16; 1 Th 5:14; 2 Th 3:15

c. Not just to give instruction impersonally, to instruct for the purpose of correcting and changing people

2. Shepherds are to be skilled instructors of the Word of God – 1 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:9

a. Their authority does not go beyond the Word of God

b. Teaching has positive and negative aspects

i. Exhorting to practice truth

ii. Admonishing those who are not practicing truth

E. The Sheep's Responsibility to the Shepherds – vs 12a-13 (video on Facebook)

1. The responsibility to appreciate

a. When most are unkind, critical, or indifferent to leadership, the sheep are to appreciate

i. Honor – 1 Tim 5:17

ii. Submission – Heb 13:17

b. to recognize those

**c. eido** - to see, to know:--be aware, behold, consider, (have) know(-ledge), look (on), perceive, see, be sure, tell, understand, wish.

2. The responsibility to esteem

a. and to esteem them - **hegeomai** - to regard, think about, consider, count, esteem, judge.

b. very highly – **perissos** - superabundant (in quantity) or superior (in quality); excessive; preeminence:--exceeding abundantly above, more abundantly, advantage, exceedingly, very highly, beyond measure, more, superfluous, vehement(-ly).

c. in love – intensifies the responsibility

d. for their work's sake - acknowledging C3a-c

3. The responsibility to submit

a. Be at peace among yourselves.

**b. Eireneuo** - to be (act) peaceful:--be at (have, live in) peace, live peaceably.

c. In this context refers to the sheep with the Shepherd –

i. Heb 13:7

- What - Remember those who
  - rule over you,
  - who have spoken the word of God to you,
- How - whose faith follow,
- Why - considering the outcome of their conduct.

ii. Heb 13:17

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