

September 29, 2019 - Hebrews 13:17 -25 “Esteem Church Leaders and Exhortation”

Introduction:

The leadership of the local New Testament Church is vitally important. However, according to a recent survey of Christian adults conducted by the Barna Research Group, 90 % of Americans say they believe the nation itself is facing a crisis of leadership. A 2016 Gallup poll found that only 18% of managers demonstrate a high level of talent for managing others – meaning a shocking 82% of managers aren’t very good at leading people. Gallup estimated that this lack of leadership capability costs U.S. corporations up to \$550 *billion* annually.

Leadership is vitally important and especially for the church too. AWANA no longer requires the Senior Pastor to sign off on their statement of beliefs. This was the beginning of many conservative churches existing. Christians today ignore this God given, ordain leadership for the church. You do not have a New Testament church apart from the leadership structure that was set forth by the apostles given by our Savior for His Church. Folks, no-where else in the whole world is proper leadership more important than in the church of Jesus Christ.

The late Dr. Lee Roberson use to say remember, “Everything rises or falls on leadership”. We need God-called men in the leadership of our churches. We need leadership that is consecrated to God. We need leadership that is pro God and uncompromising when it comes to God’s word. We need leadership to follow the bible when it comes to God’s church and not the world not what we think is best. Finally, the author of Hebrews makes his final words and expresses the importance of...

I. Respect for Church Leadership (13:17).

1. Have a spirit of submission. The author put it like this: **Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account (13:17a-c).** The word obey is troubling to some. The Greek “**pā'-thō**” means to trust, have confidence, be confident. Please note the word "submit"... Gk. (hypotasso) it means "be subject to," signifying "to place one's self under subjection; to render one's self subordinate. You will not submit until you understand that this is God’s will-His design. Let me explain a little about dispensation.

2. "God created man in his own image" and gave him dominion over all the earth," including its plant and animal life (Gen. 1:26-29). The fact that God gave mankind this dominion reveals the original form of government that He ordained for our planet was a theocracy. The term theocracy means God-rule and refers to a form of government in which God's rule is administer by His representative. God created Adam to be His earthly representative and made him responsible for administering His rule in accord with His will over this earthly province of His universal kingdom.

3. Sometime after God established this earthly theocratic kingdom, His enemy, Satan, successfully persuaded Adam to join him in his revolt against God (Gen. 3:1-6). As a result, Adam fell away from God, which resulted in several tragic consequences. Because God's earthly representative had defected from Him, the theocracy was lost from planet Earth.

Through Adam's defection, Satan usurped the rule of the world system away from God. Thus, God's lost theocratic kingdom and was replaced by Satan's rule and he has continued to dominate the world system ever since the fall of mankind. God sent His son Jesus to die on the cross to destroy Satan's Kingdom and to established the church in His blood. The Church is God's place for His theocratic rule. He instituted the church and as Paul wrote to the ...

Ephesians 4:11-14

4. We note the latter part of verse 17 speaks of doing the ministry with joy. One of the greatest ways to fill an elder with joy is for God's saints to have a willing, submissive spirit toward God and His word. There are other things you can do to fill the elders with joy and make their work lighter and not grievous. Be in the attendance of the church meetings. It is frustrating to see a person forsaking the assembly to the point that they ultimately fall away. The Holy Spirit is seeking to produce in us God's perfect design. "Brethren, you cannot expect the elders to shepherd you if you aren't willing, cooperative sheep! In short, to bring joy to the elders, be a faithful Christian. That will bring unity and a wonderful communion into our church.

II Support leadership decisions by prayer Hebrews 13:20-21.

1. The author also wants his readers to pray he will be able to come back to them soon (13:19). Whatever was preventing him from returning, the writer wants his readers to pray for its resolution. Pastor's need your prayers you may be surprised how his preaching and teaching will improve. In fact, put all your church staff on your prayer list and you will be amazed at how much better they all will minister to you.

2. We learn a lot about how to pray for others by reading prayers in the Bible. An excellent prayer is found in Hebrews 13:20-21. The writer prays for his readers that the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant (13:20) would do two things.

III. Commit to the truth of Scripture (13:22-25).

1. The author closes this letter with an appeal for his readers to receive his word of exhortation (13:22a). The word that is translated exhortation (par-ak-lay'-sis) means a persuasive discourse, stirring address and refers to a sermon of encouragement as in Acts 13:15. Many people who believe Paul wrote this epistle think the reason it doesn't have his usual greeting and writing style is because it is a sermon he preached rather than an epistle he wrote.

2. This letter, or sermon, was to encourage the Hebrews to consider the superiority of Christ over the old covenant and its priesthood, sacrifices, and rituals. The writer of Hebrews makes it clear God has given us the final Word, and it is not through a lawgiver or prophet. We learned from the very beginning God's ultimate medium for speaking to us is Jesus Christ.

3. The book of Hebrews is a message from God. It is encouragement to the saints for today.

Therefore the writer asks the Hebrews to receive his word of exhortation because many people do not want to hear sound doctrine. This is truer today than ever before. Paul warned Timothy (2 Tim. 4:3a). **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.**

Instead, because of their selfish desires, they will surround themselves with teachers who aspire to tell them what they want to hear. Soft soap the truth...there is no hell, etc.

4. People want to hear what makes them feel good, and what makes them happy, healthy, and wealthy. They want to know what God can do for them, not what they can do for God. People with itching ears fill huge auditoriums and convention centers to hear speakers who pervert the Gospel into a religion of greed and selfishness. Also, more and more people want religious entertainment, or a "touchy-feely" service, rather than a worship service that expounds the Word of God. They never promote the local church; Christ establishment.

6. "Paul concludes saying, "I know it's been hard and heavy, but hang in there, "for I have written a letter unto you in few words." You say few words? You can read the whole book in less than an hour. It's been brief, powerful, arduous --he says bear with it.

III Closing Remarks.

1. Paul closes with some personal notes. Then he says know that our brother Timothy is out of prison and if he'll come along, we'll be seeing you pretty soon. The writer informs his readers that Timothy is set at liberty and if he comes to see them, he will bring Timothy with him (13:23a). No other book in the New Testament mentions Timothy's imprisonment. Next, the readers are exhorted to salute their church leaders and all their fellow believers (13:24a). The author concludes with a greeting from those who come from Italy (13:24b).

This phrase may indicate either the author was in Italy or some Italian Christians were with him. "So, he must have been hanging around a group of Italian Christians from Rome at this time. The epistle ends: Grace be with you all (13:25). The word translated grace (CHARIS, car'-is) means "divine favor."

2. There are at least three kinds of grace: saving grace (Eph. 2:8), equipping grace (Rom. 12:6a), and empowering grace. How does Acts 20:32b describe God's empowering grace? This is also called "growing in grace." We don't have to please God all by ourselves. He will give us empowering grace that will enable us to stick with the truth of Scripture. To really please the Lord, set up a "tent of meeting," sacrifice the right offerings, support your church staff, and stick with the truth of Scripture.

Conclusion:

To sum up, God's way is that the congregation obeys and submits to its elders and deacons who operate by the guiding of the Holy Spirit. We have the Holy Spirit as an honored Guest in every Christian gathering, and He can be grieved very easily. A frivolous attitude, a rebellious frame of mind, or a fed-up complacency will do it." The Bible warns about having a rebellions spirit against spiritual authority.