

Recognize Their Value

Scripture: 1 Thess. 5:12

Introduction:

Last week I saw the most amazing thing I have probably ever seen. I was over at Covenant visiting Jean Kelly and it was raining really hard. Charity and I rushed out to the car umbrella in hand. I was really glad to have an umbrella. As we were leaving we passed the park area on the west side of the hospital and saw a man walking down the side walk in no hurry what so ever totally drenched from the heavy rain. Can you guess what was in his hand? A closed umbrella.

I've spent some time thinking about why a man would hold a closed umbrella in his hand while a cold driving rain was pounding him.

Sometimes we can be that way spiritually. Have you ever been to the point were you just lost your focus, you couldn't figure out the right thing to do even though it lie clearly at handSpiritually we can find ourselves in the same condition as the man I mentioned.....drowning with the drain plug in our hands.

A couple of weeks ago during the leadership class that meets on Monday night. We had this awesome lesson on the responsibility of the church members to the church leaders. Very specifically I am thinking about our relationship with the Elders. I was so encouraged to be reminded of the importance of Elders and their function in the Church that I am presenting a like message this morning.

This morning I want us to consider what a valuable tool God has placed in our hands for our spiritual growth when he gave us Elders.

-Also I want us to think about why so many times we just stand out in the pounding rains of life and refuse to seek out these godly Elders to help us.

Lesson:

I. Let's start with a question. Does the church need Elders?

***QUESTION:** How many of you have ever attended a church without Elders?

1. If you want some pointed details on why the church needs Elders see these folks after church.

a. They will tell you about the dreaded business meetings?
-How many of you have sit through church business meetings?

b. When I was 14 years old I used to sit in those meetings and
-listen to brothers in Christ curse at each other.
-Listen to brothers, not very spiritual, making spiritual help make spiritual decisions.

***The very thought of a men's business meeting makes me want to puke.**

c. Decisions were made by a VOTE

-Who will make a motion

-Who will second the motion.

***If we all agree it must be godly!**

-And before the vote the preacher or one or two of the leading members would state their opinion and it was understood that we needed to vote that away.

-Why? Because we couldn't disagree and still be Godly.

2. The problem with this is very obvious

***We see on Paul's 1st missionary journey**

-Elders were appointed in every church Acts 14:23

***Why? That is what God wanted.**

TS God wants us to have Elders simply because we need them.

II. Let look at why a church needs Elders.

A. Need Elders by their definition

- 3 words describe an Elder
- Used interchangeably, In Paul's address to the Eph. Elders, Acts 20: 17, 28

1. PresbuterosPresbyter, Elder

- of age
- The dignity 1 Tim 5:2 & 1 Pet 5:5
- Wisdom
- * I need someone like this in my corner don't you?

2. Episkopos....Bishop, overseer

- curator, guardian, superintendent
- a superintendent sees the big picture and stays focused on the outcome.
- Titus 1:5 Paul tells Titus in Crete to set things in order and appoint Elders
- Good handle on scriptures
- * I need someone like this in my corner don't you?

3. Poimen....Pastor-Shepard

- gentle and loving
- Won't give up on you
- won't give in to you either.
- Not swayed by every emotion
- * I need someone like this in my corner don't you?

B. Need Elders by their Qualification 1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9

1. Without reproach.....Blamless (Nothing an adversary could see upon to make a charge)
2. Husband of one wife.....Good at relationships
3. Temperate.....Patient.....no short fuse
4. Self controlled.....Manages himself well
5. Respectable.....Lives a good life
6. Hospitable.....Friendly
7. Able to teach.....Knows the word
8. Not given to drunkenness.....Clear minded
9. Not violent.....Gentle
10. Not quarrelsome.....Works for solutions
11. Not a lover of Money.....Sees true value exists in people
12. Manages his own house well...Good leader
13. Not a recent convert.....Experience

**TS -In these things, I see Wisdom, Structure & Leadership
-A wonderful asset.**

III. The effectiveness of our Elders is greatly dependant our response to them.

- How effective can an Eldership really be without the support of the congregation.....NOT VERY!
- Have you ever known a church who supports their Elders insofar as they agree with their decisions.
 - Have you known brothers and sisters in Christ who refused to listen to the Elders.....Who made their work hard and cumbersome
 - How many times has the church across the brother hood limited and actually harmed the work of the Elders because they failed to understand or acknowledge their responsibility to the Eldership.
- On the other hand I know of wonderfully functioning Elderships and they are that way because they have been shaped by the very people they now Shepard.
 - And they have the full support and backing of the churches they Shepard.
- Church I submit to you this morning that we take seriously our part in making the Eldership effective by our supportiveness lest Satan move in and choke out the work that we have been doing.

IV. Our responsibility to the Leadership of the Elders

1. (Know them) 1 Thess. 5:12
 - Spend time together
 - Building trust together

2. (Remember) Heb 13:7
 - Literally “Look to them with feeling”
 - Sensitive & understanding
 - They get tired...Long hours behind the scenes.
 - Need encouraged ,Need affirmation and affection.

3. (Consider the result of their conduct) Heb. 13:7
 - Members here are asked to look at the outcome of the leaders life.
 - Elders like the rest of us make mistakes
 - All sinned
 - But we are asked to consider that they have shown time and again their willingness to turn away from sin and to follow God’s will.

4. (Imitate their faith) Heb 13:7
 - Certainly it is ok to follow a godly example
 - Careful not to follow the person
 - Construction trucks sign “Don’t follow into construction”
 - The Apostle Paul tells Timothy to follow his pattern 2 Tim 1:13
 - Tupos is the word patter/ form
 - Insomuch as I follow the Lord.

5. (Obey) Heb 13:17
 - In our culture obey has a bad meaning.
 - It means opposite of freedom...slavery
 - It means someone is better than someone else
 - In the spiritual sense obedience has valued because it is related to discipline and spiritual growth.
 - Here the meaning isto persuade oneself to believe.
 - Our first response should be to believe, trust and give control To these godly leaders.
 - Without obedience a child grows up without discipline in their lives
 - Acknowledge their authority
 - their rule, discipline and authority 1 Thess 5:12 taking the lead
 - *confidence, assurance and trust

6. Submit Heb 13:17
 - Means to lay no obstacles
 - Lay no unnecessary burdens on the leaders that would make their work more difficult.
 - Submission here denotes willingness
 - Attitude
 - *It is nearly impossible to lead an unwilling, resistant people.

7. Don’t receive accusation against. 1 Tim 5:19

V. **Worthy of Honor** 1 Tim. 5:17-18

- Honor here refers to the recognition of value
 - Not critical towards
 - But honor with respect.
- Let's not take them for granted.

VI. **They watch for your souls** Heb. 13:17

- Must give an account for your soul
 - Watch here is the idea that sleep is lost
 - Most of us never know just how seriously these guys take this task
 - How heavy the responsibility lies on their hearts.
 - The countless hours they give behind the scenes helping folks.
 - They don't do it for recognition but their main objective is to get you to Heaven.
 - And they must stand before God and give an account for you

Conclusion:

- The Elders work can be grueling drudgery or pleasantly effect. They really reflect a lifetime of investment by the church. They have been groomed by Sunday school teachers, mentors and their desire to please God.
- Church this morning I ask you how long will we stand out in the rain, being pounded by Satan and all the terrible things he would have us by into, while we have Elders.....Loving Shepard's right in our very hands.
- Are we as a church willing to help the effectiveness of the Eldership by:
 - Accept their appointment as established by God (Romans 13:1)
 - Trust them
 - Value their leadership
 - By seeking out their council