

Elder Training Series

Session 20 - Job Duty of 'Directing The Affairs Of The Church': Category Of Church Interpersonal Regard / Interactions / Functioning - PART 1 (NIV based)

(Repeating) NOTE: Again perhaps it would be prudent for you to mark or highlight the items in this document that you need to work on or improve.

READ: "**The elders who direct the affairs of the church well...**" (1 Timothy 5:17a), and "**But you [pastor Timothy]... discharge all the duties of your ministry**" (2 Timothy 4:5)

SECTION POINT: Elders, overseers, and pastors need to actively oversee and ensure that 'oneness', 'being united', 'being in agreement', and 'cooperation / collaboration' are occurring and predominantly prevailing in their church or ministry.

- - In regard to elders, overseers, and pastors fulfilling the job duty functions that relate to "directing the affairs of the church", this document will continue the study (from the previous "Session 19" document in this 'Elder Training Series') of another category that is common to most churches and ministries for which elders, overseers, and pastors need to exert oversight.

-- 7. Church Interpersonal Regard / Interactions / Functioning - PART 1, including the virtues of 'oneness', 'being united', 'being in agreement', and 'cooperation / collaboration'.

- - Three very important interconnected dynamics in every church or ministry are how their people regard each other, how they interact with each other, and how they function together and in respect to each other.

- - A church or ministry that is operating negatively or deficiently in any of these 3 dynamics will correspondingly lack productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness in accomplishing its programs for God's purposes.

- - So, healthiness in interpersonal regard, interactions, and functioning in the church or ministry are crucial for ministries to advance God's Kingdom and God's program.

- - Obviously, then, elders, overseers, and pastors need to prioritize and stay extensively involved in and invested in establishing, maintaining, and nurturing all aspects of each of these 3 dynamics in their church or ministry.

ONENESS:

- - A foremost prominent overarching virtue in the healthiness of interpersonal regard, interactions, and functioning in the church or ministry is the virtue of 'oneness'.

-- 'Oneness' is defined in Philippians 2:2 as:

- - - - "**being like-minded**" - meaning having the "same" 'way of thinking', the same "general mental disposition", the same "opinion", the same "direction", the same "interest" (Strong's #0846, #5426); every true believer in the church or ministry is in alignment with the other true believers in their thinking, beliefs, and mentally moving in the same direction spiritually;

- - - - "**having the same love**" - meaning having a love that is identical in each true believer because it emanates from the same source - God; every true believer in the church or ministry is in alignment with the other true believers in possessing and extending the same godly love to every person around them;

- - - - "**being one in spirit and purpose**" - meaning having a oneness or likeness spiritually, which constitutes simultaneously having a oneness or likeness in their spiritually-based purposes or objectives that they are trying to achieve; every true believer in the church or ministry is in alignment with the other true believers in the same spiritual and religious element of who they are, what they are, what they believe, and what they are pursuing.

UNITED:

- - If this 'oneness in spirit, purpose, and love' pervades the true believers in the church or ministry, then it will even supply the foundation and fortify amongst them the presence of being 'united'.
- - Being 'united' can be defined as "being joined together" or "combined so as to form a whole or a unit; to join and act together in a common purpose, endeavor, interest, attitude, or action; to cause to adhere or become bound together by adhesion"; (from Strong's #4822 in Colossians 2:2; *AHD* - 'unite')
- - Refer back and notice that a main characteristic of 'oneness' is the various parts 'having the same...' important qualities.
- - Now notice that a main characteristic of being 'united' is 'being bonded together that includes the presence of an adhesive strength' - which fits well with, is complementary to, and builds upon 'oneness'.

IN AGREEMENT:

- - When the virtue of 'oneness in spirit, purpose, and love' and the virtue of being 'united' are present among the true believers in the church or ministry, then the virtue of being and functioning 'in agreement' can come into existence and thrive.
- - Being 'in agreement' can be defined from 1 Corinthians 1:10 as the various elements possess a "sameness" in their "**mind and thought**" and "speaking", therein "**agreeing with one another**" and thereby aligning with each other, which manifests as being in accord, aligning, "**uniting**", and harmonizing as a whole, with "**no divisions among [them]**". (Strong's #0846, #3004; *AHD* - 'agreement', 'unity')
- - The virtues of 'oneness', being 'united', and being 'in agreement' are mutually-reliant and mutually-impacting - they each rely on and feed off of the others, they each exert influence on each other, and when all 3 are present, they will naturally form a bond that is quite strong and resistant to their counterpart - division.
- - Nevertheless, elders, overseers, and pastors should stay alert to and be monitoring the 'oneness', being 'united', and being 'in agreement' in their church or ministry.

DISAGREEMENT, DIVISION:

- When the elders, overseers, or pastors detect hints that 'disagreement and division' are sprouting, they should immediately take decisive proactive steps to quench them. They should:
 - - - - Face the issues or doctrines that are inciting the disagreement and/or division, analyze them, and then address them directly with the person(s) who are promoting or causing the disagreement and/or division.
 - - - - Present God's position on those issue(s) with quotes, explanations, and applications of relating Scripture verses.
 - - - - Address any objections or concerns that are subsequently raised.

- - - If anyone refuses to accept those appropriate applications from the Scriptures, then those person(s) should be confronted, warned, and commanded to immediately cease their disagreement attitudes and divisive activities.

- - - If they still refuse after a second warning, then their membership should be terminated and they should be expelled from the church or ministry, without delay. It is better to lose a few of your members or attenders that are taking a divisive stance, than to allow them to remain in your church or ministry and risk serious escalation of disagreement, discord, and division.

-- Elders, overseers, and pastors are presumably authorized and even mandated by God to take these steps, because they are derived from the parallel of how to deal with persons who oppose sound doctrine, as cited in:

- - - Titus 1:9, "**...refute those who oppose [sound doctrine]...**", 10. "**For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers...**", 11. "**They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach...**", 13. "**rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith**", 14. "**and will pay no attention to ...myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth**".

- - - Titus 3:10, "**Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.**"

COOPERATION, COLLABORATION:

- - By obvious necessity, elders, overseers, and pastors need to foster and ensure that 'cooperation' is occurring amongst the leaders, their staff, and their workers.

- - Cooperative attitudes, "willing acquiescence, and readily extending mutual compliance" should always be present and prevalent in interactions amongst the leaders, the staff, and the workers, in order to produce agreeable and pleasant working conditions. (AHD -'cooperation')

- - Furthermore, cooperation is crucial for the occurring of 'collaboration', wherein those various people doing the work in the church or ministry are "jointly working together" in cooperative coordination in order to accomplish all of the various aspects of the functioning of the ministries of the church or ministry. (AHD -'collaboration')

- - God's intention and design is that all true believers in a church or ministry fit together as a group, cooperate together as a group, work together as a group, and individually fulfill their area of contribution within the group. (For supporting details, see the document "1 Peter 2:5 - Assigned To Be Ministering In A Priestly Fraternity" on the web-page 'Sermon or Lesson Outlines - 1 Peter' of this web-site, www.BelieverAssist.com .)

NEGATIVE INTERACTIONS (THAT COUNTERACT COOPERATION, COLLABORATION):

- - Realistically, elders, overseers, and pastors should expect that there will be occasions in which a 'difficult person to get along with' will be involved in the functioning of a ministry.

- - Or there will be occasions of clashes between two opposite personality-types, which produce resistance, friction, communication breakdowns, dysfunction, and perhaps even discord.

- - Or there will be a profound, entrenched, and vocalized difference of opinion about how best to proceed - how to implement or accomplish something.

- - Or there will be an outright and unjustified refusal or deliberate ignoring of a clear and appropriate directive that has been given by an authority person.

- - Another likelihood is there will be occasions of what can be called 'territorialism' - wherein a person inconsiderately claims and attempts to exert or enforce exclusive rights to the use of particular equipment, or rooms, or spaces of a church or ministry.

- - For elders, overseers, and pastors, passivity and hoping that problems like these will go away on their own and not produce long-term negative consequences is a naive and foolish perspective and response to the occurrence of these types of negative interactions in their church or ministry.

- - Typically, the person, who was unpleasantly or unjustly mistreated in these types of negative interactions, is a good and appropriate worker, and consequently will quietly stop doing that type of ministry work or phase-out attending that ministry functioning or church, in order to avoid experiencing any more unpleasantly or mistreatment in the future.

- - Meanwhile, the abusive person, who perpetrated unpleasantly or unjust mistreatment, will continue attending and perpetrating, while being oblivious to how much harm he/she is inflicting on other workers and on the atmosphere, interactions, and functioning in the ministry.

- - A reasonable assertion here is that it will prove very beneficial for elders, overseers, and pastors to keep their ears open for signs or reports of negative interactions within their church or ministry, and then to immediately investigate and appropriately address those occurrences of negative interactions, privately with the persons involved.

APPLICATIONS:

- - As an elder, overseer, or pastor, do you see and strongly value the importance of the dynamics of how the people in your church or ministry regard each other, how they interact with each other, and how they function together? If not, then spend time during the next few weeks thinking about it deeply, meditating on it, and praying that God would enlighten you in this regard.

- - Are you willing to prioritize and train yourself to continuously monitor these three dynamics in your church or ministry? Or instead, are you going to be uninformed, unconcerned, uninvolved, and oblivious to the condition of interpersonal interactions that occur in your church or ministry - that God has placed under your care, to nurture its well-being and well-functioning?

- - When you become aware of a problem, or dysfunction, or negative situation that occurred in one (or more) of these three types of interpersonal interactions, are you willing to promptly take action to intervene, address, and attempt to remedy the adverse aftermath? Or instead, are you going to do nothing, say nothing, and by your lack of actions essentially ignore what happened and its aftermath? Is that wise?

- - Can you securely implant into your ministry philosophy the priority of the virtues of 'oneness', 'being united', 'being in agreement', and 'cooperation / collaboration'? If so, furthermore how are you going to implant them into the minds and hearts of your fellow co-leaders, your staff, your workers, and your members? Essentially, how are you going to implement these virtues and sustain their presence in your church or ministry?

- - Are you prepared to initiate and take bold and direct action to shut down disagreement and division in your church or ministry? And are you prepared to remove

persons from your church or ministry if they refuse to cease their division inciting activities?

- - In your years of experience in churches or ministries, have you ever been made aware of good workers, or good teachers, or good leaders who left the ministry work they were doing because they were mistreated through hurtful conversations, comments, assumptions, clashes, or behaviors? What are you going to do when that happens to someone in your church or ministry?

- - As an elder, overseer, or pastor "entrusted with God's work" of "directing the affairs of the church", are you going to "discharge [well] **all** the duties of your ministry [job]" regarding the aspects of 'Church Interpersonal Regard / Interactions / Functioning' that have been presented in this document? Perhaps you should think carefully about this. (Titus 1:7; 1 Timothy 5:17a; 2 Timothy 4:5)

Works Cited:

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