***Dealings With Elders & Discernment For Sin***

**1 Timothy 5:17-25 - March 31, 2019**

*How is the church supposed to see to its Elders/Pastors,**while discerning and dealing with issues of sin?*

**1 Timothy 5:17+18**

1) A Church Is To Honor Its Elders Through Financial Compensation

Not all churches can afford to pay their pastors; and if the pastor is able to work and provide for himself/family, and if he is okay with no or even partial compensation, then that's permissible.

A church should also consider Lay Elders versus Staff Elders; the former may not need to be paid.

If a church is able, there are many pastors who should be compensated - if they are "*free from the love of money*" (1 Timothy 3:3) and, if they "*rule well*" and "*work hard*"!

Those Pastors/Elders who work hard at preaching/teaching are "especially" worthy of "double honor" (financial compensation).

Pastoring is a sacred and serious matter. **James 3:1 Hebrews 13:17**

**1 Timothy 5:19-22**

2) The Church Must Deal With Its Elders/Pastors Carefully, Publicly (At Times), As Well As Slowly (Concerning Ordination)

When it comes to charges of sin against a Pastor/Elder, not only do there need to be 2-3 witnesses, but the charge(s) would need to be egregious or one's that could harm the church, especially if they continue in it (a character flaw); and so we want to be careful.

The spiritual leadership of the church should handle this - ideally the Pastor/Elder Body, or others (as needed).

There may be times where the suspension or removal of a pastor may need to be made *public* - to keep the Body from sin (Vs.20*b*).

This might seem harsh, but to not deal with the *seriousness* of certain sins can have a major effect on the church.

When the Body of Christ allows egregious sin (especially in its leaders), that kind of "Body odor" not only stinks to heaven but it can lead to spiritual decomposition as a local Body can experience the beginning signs of death if it's not properly dealt with.

We can become accustomed to sin not only in life but also in the church. We can be around it so much that we hardly smell it; and like bacteria, it begins to spread - and some if not handled can become septic, leading to death!

A church and its Pastors/Elders are to move slowly concerning ordination (Vs. 22). The leaders can share a degree of responsibility (for sin) when it comes to ordaining someone before they're ready.

It's a matter of maturity; they need to be seasoned. They need to be tested and approved. They're to be committed for the long haul. They need to be able to refute those who contradict (Titus 1:9).

**1 Timothy 5:23-25**

3) The Church Is To Be Authentic & Open With Our Sin - As Some Sins Are Obvious, While Others Are Obscured

What we see on the outside can be very different from what's on the inside - which eventually comes to the surface or will one day be revealed.

It's amazing how our impurities come to the surface as the boiling pressures of life pull them to the top.

The *best* spiritual policy isn't to bury any sin, but to be open, authentic and honest, as we confess our sin in humility, contrition and repentance.

*"When we seek God in difficult times & agree with Him & His truth, we're then humbling ourselves & submitting to His rule & reign."*

But to not "speak the same" and agree with God about our sin, will only lead to further or eternal bondage.

*"That's what the devil does with men; he makes them forge their own chain, and then binds them hand and foot with it and casts them into outer darkness.” ­­*- Charles Spurgeon

But there's good news - and this is the point of the gospel; if we will be authentic and open about our sin (and not obscure it), then God can offer us forgiveness in Christ and eternal life.