

March 3, 2021

Worthy of Honor

Thus far we have meditated on three principles from **Romans 13:1-5**. Do you remember what they are? First, all authority is ordained by God. Second, because the authority is the minister of God, we are not to resist or stand against them. And third, we are to submit to the authorities in our life as unto the Lord. In the context of this passage, Paul is speaking of civil authority, but the principles apply to all authority including authority in the home, authority at work, authority at school, and authority in the church. It is this spiritual authority that we want to consider this week.

Let's begin with **Hebrews 13:17**. The opening statement makes it clear that we are to submit in obedience to those who have the rule over us. This agrees with Romans 13:1-5. The next phrase, however, reveals that Paul is talking about spiritual leaders, not civil leaders. Pastors and teachers, those who handle the Word of God, have a spiritual responsibility to watch over and care for the souls in their flock. As under-shepherds of the chief shepherd, they are entrusted with the care of the flock, a responsibility for which they must give account to the chief shepherd, Jesus Christ. Do you realize that your pastor and teachers must give account of your attitude and actions towards spiritual leadership? If the report is not good, it is unprofitable, not for them, but for you. The average Christian never considers or takes into account the impact of their actions on the shepherd and the account he must give to the Lord. It is a grief of mind to the spiritual leader to have to report that one of their sheep has gone astray, wandering in rebellion from the fold and flock of God.

By the way, the same is true of the parent in the home. Parents have a spiritual responsibility to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. A child who is rebellious against that authority, fails to understand the responsibility and accountability of the parent to the Lord. A young person who rebels against their parents is ultimately rebelling against God. While the rebellion is manifested in the earthly relationship, the root of the problem is in their heavenly relationship or the lack thereof.

Notice what Paul has to say about elders in **I Timothy 5:17-18**. The term elder is one of three words used to describe the office of pastor. The first term, pastor, speaks of his responsibility to shepherd and feed the flock. The second term, bishop, speaks of his responsibility to oversee or superintend the work. The third term, elder, speaks of spiritual maturity and leadership. Three terms, one office, the office of pastor. The pastor is to be counted worthy of double honor. Why is that? Because of their spiritual responsibility to watch over the souls of the flock and to feed them the Word of God.

What does double honor mean and how is it manifested in the church? The word honor means to value. To whatever degree we value others in our life, such as family or friends, we are to value the pastor to a greater degree. This is manifested in our attitude towards them, the gifts we give them, how we financially provide for them, how much we pray for the, how we encourage them, etc. Take some time this week to think about ways you can show your pastor you value him.