

What is the Government of God in the Church? VII Functions of the Ministry

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We've gone through all of the situations of the wrong kind of government, the wrong application of authority, and today we're going to finish up 1-Timothy. We've covered concerning what an elder should do; what he is; how he needs to conduct himself; and so forth. This is fundamental for those who are going to be elders or teachers:

- they have to be dedicated to God.
- they have to have God and the Truth of God first in their lives
- they have to be yielded to the Holy Spirit
- they have to follow the Holy Spirit's lead; and then his family and the brethren.

If he does not take care of himself spiritually—and he's got to do this pretty well independently—then who's going to take care of him spiritually? That's why some of the things are here concerning what ministers and elders ought to do.

We finished in 1-Tim. 4 last time, about physical exercise and exercising yourself to Godliness. 1-Tim. 5 gives quite a few admonitions: how to treat older men, how to treat older women, younger women, those who need help, those who need support and so forth.

1-Timothy 5:17: "Let the *ordained* elders who are leading well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who are laboring in *the* Word and doctrine." That's a very important thing. Notice, it is "...laboring in the Word..."—the Word of God. In that case it involved those who were copying the New Testament epistles and doctrine. So, we have seen that doctrine is important. Doctrine states what the teachings of the Church are. There are true doctrines; there are false doctrines, etc.

Verse 18: "For the Scripture says, 'You shall not muzzle an ox treading out *the* corn,' and, 'The workman *is* worthy of his hire.'"

Then it says a very important thing, and this has also been abused within the Church and authority, too, v 19: "Do not receive an accusation against an elder, except on *the testimony of* two or three witnesses."

Now, that's very important in all accusations that come along, because today especially, how many things do you see on the news where they have one accuser and destroy someone's life. And many times the accuser is lying. That is true not only dealing with elders, but dealing with anyone. Anyone can say anything today, and there are too

many people out there who want to say things that are disparaging and put down in people's minds, and make them think ill of the person that they're talking about.

Verse 20: "Those *elders* who sin *should be* corrected in the presence of all... [that's probably all the elders] ...in order that the others also may fear." Also, if it is of note then the whole Church should know it.

Now let's understand something concerning the statement that says 'love covers a multitude of sin.' How does love cover a multitude of sin? Is it sort of the mushy love and say, 'Oh well, we won't say anything about it' when it's something that needs to be known? *No, love covers a multitude of sins when there is repentance and the sins are forgiven and covered.* If it does involve other people; if it does involve brethren in the Church; then it needs to be handled so that everyone knows what has happened; and everyone knows that there is either repentance or there is not repentance. When it's understood that way, you're not going to have people—men and women—out there trying to do things to get away with it, because they know they won't be able to get away with it.

Here's one of the charges we need to cover here, too, as well. As a matter of fact, the whole pastoral Epistle of 1-Timothy is a charge by Paul to Timothy and subsequently in the Bible, to all elders; for all elders to know how they need to lead their lives, serve the brethren, do what they need to do. 1st & 2nd Timothy and Titus are your manual; that's your ministerial manual. Not some corporate thing that comes out from a headquarters.

Verse 21: "I charge you before God and *the* Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels..." That's a pretty hefty charge—isn't it? You cannot use any higher authority than God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and it also included the elect angels. Why? *Because the elect angels watch over you, protect you and help take care of you*—whether you're an elder or whether you're someone in the Church, because the angels were created to be spirits to minister to those who are heirs of salvation.

How many times can we look back and see how we were rescued from some things and it had to be an angel to do it. Many times, inexplicable otherwise.

"...that you observe these things without prejudice... [without politics] ...and let nothing be

done by partiality” (v 21). So, you have two things here:

1. you don't have your favorites
2. you don't have the ones you despise

You treat all the brethren the same, and you love them. And you're concerned for them.

But many, many times you find that, ministers in particular, have prejudice against this person or that person, or have partiality toward one and toward the other. And when you have a corporate hierarchical structure, what happens? *Those who want to curry the favor get into the partiality side of the elder* and then strokes him and curries him and climbs the ladder through doing tasks: being a deacon, being a local elder and finally made a preaching elder. If he's really, really good, he goes all the way up and becomes a great evangelist. No, that's not the way it is to be. So we have climbers—yes; or pushers/pullers. Do you know what a pusher is? *You push someone higher and higher and higher by talking about how great they are and what a fantastic office they have!* Then they reach down because you're loyal to them and they pull you up.

Well, what we need to understand is, God knows all of that. When that happens, know for sure, there are going to be troubles and difficulties that are going to follow.

Here's another good bit of advice for all elders, v 22: “Do not be quick to lay hands on any man... [that is for ordination] ...neither take part in *the* sins of others. Keep yourself pure.” Now, all of that has to do with: Don't let there be politics within the Church.

Does this apply to baptism? *Of course! Yes, it applies to baptism!* See sermon series on *Baptism*; it is going to be given to everyone who desires baptism so that they are fully prepared; because too many times in the past some people were dipped. And like even one translation translates John the Baptist as John the Dipper. We have an introduction answering some questions about baptism. We're also working on another booklet, *By Grace You have been Saved—Now What?* That takes a person from baptism into what they need to do into establishing a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, etc. It'll be some time before we get that one finished, but we're working on that. Yes, it applies to everything.

Verse 23: “No longer drink *only* water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.... [This is not to say then, nip all day long.]: ...Some men's sins are open to public view, going before to judgment; and some men's *sins* follow after” (vs 23-24).

- they're hidden
- they're sneaky
- you can't know what it is
- they hide them
- they cover it up

Verse 25: “In a similar manner also, the good works *of some* are openly seen... [especially by political climbers] ...and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.” In other words, *God knows!*

Now 1-Tim. 6 becomes a very important chapter, especially in relationship to some of the modern evangelical teachings that Jesus Christ was only the minister to the Jews.

A comment was made: You don't have to discuss all your sins with everybody. You shouldn't discuss them at all, especially if you repented of them and it doesn't affect anybody else. You don't need to announce your whole past life. God knows it. When you're baptized, that's all buried under the watery grave and under the blood of Christ. ***Elders and ministers are NOT to discuss private matters of the other brethren with other brethren.*** Sometimes an elder should not even discuss it with his wife. Now, she might feel a bit deprived in some ways, but some things are that way and should remain that way. However, if the sins are public and open, then that's a different situation that you have to deal with.

Another comment was made: God forgives sins, but people never forgive. Or they may have a prejudicial inkling toward it. So, we have to consider all of those things, too.

Instead of slaves today, it's whoever you work for. In other words, this is how to be a good employee, but they did have slaves.

1-Timothy 6:1 “Let as many slaves as are under the yoke *of servitude* esteem their own masters worthy of all respect, so that the name of God and *His* doctrine be not blasphemed. Do not let those who have believing masters despise *them* because they are brethren; rather, let them serve *them even better*, because they are believing and beloved who are being helped by the good service. These things teach and exhort.... [again, we're talking about doctrine] ...If anyone teaches **any different doctrine...**” (vs 1-3).

This is very important today, because too many of those who are supposedly ministers and elders—however they look at themselves; whether they have rank or don't have rank—there are too many different and strange and wild doctrines that fly around the Church, that whenever that happens there always seems to be some of the brethren that will follow it. It's wild! And some of the doctrines

have absolutely no basis in fact on anything. Rather it's run on emotion, feeling and supposition.

Also you have to realize that there are some who bring in different doctrines because they are subversive and they want to undermine the true doctrine to get you away from God, *and those are truly agents of Satan the devil*. We have seen that happen, too—haven't we? *Big time!*

Verse 3: "If anyone teaches **any different doctrine** and does not adhere to sound words, *even those* of our Lord Jesus Christ..." (v 3). Let's stop here for a minute and analyze the statement that 'the Gospel was only for the Jews.' They can't read this verse because this verse says that *we're to use the words of Jesus Christ*. That's the whole basis and foundation of everything that comes after the Gospels. It's also very interesting to take the #7: there are seven divisions in the Bible

- What is the middle number? 4.
- Which day of the week was Jesus crucified on? *The 4th day!*

That's important because God divides the Bible: three for the Old Testament, four for the New Testament. The New Testament is superior because it interprets the Old Testament and is built upon the foundation of the Old Testament. These bring the personal teachings of Jesus Christ, Who came in the flesh; God manifested in the flesh. Everything that is taught has to square with the sound words even those of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Notice what else comes after that: "...and the doctrine *that is* according to Godliness" (v 3). What is the doctrine that is "...according to Godliness"? *All the epistles!* All the epistles that tell you how to live your life—beginning with the general epistles: James, 1st-2nd Peter, 1st-2nd-3rd John, Jude and then all of Paul's epistles. All of these things contain the doctrine that is "...according to Godliness." That is"

- how you're to live your life
- how you're to change and overcome
- how you're to develop the character and mind of Christ
- how you are to prepare for the first resurrection
- how you are to grow in grace and knowledge

—because doctrine means teaching, and this is the teaching of Godliness so you can become like God!

Now let's sum it up in this one statement—here is our model. Not only are we to study and learn about Jesus Christ, but here is the model, Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children." That's a doctrine of Godliness—is it not? *Yes, indeed!*

Let's see another Scripture that's important for us to understand along these lines: the doctrine of Godliness. There's no way you can just give a simple sermon on it, because that includes all the New Testament—doesn't it? Here's another doctrine: 'Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.' So that's how God wants us to have that as a goal. He wants us to have a perfect goal to shoot for—not a goal as 'Well, I'm pretty good, but I've got this fault and I have that fault, but all the other good things about me make up for it.' That's not how God looks at it. We are to become perfect! All the things that are shortcomings and sins we need to repent of, and many times we have to repent of them quite frequently.

Even Jesus said when Peter asked Him the question, 'Lord, if my brother sins against me, how often should I forgive him—seven times?' Christ said, 'No, I say to you seven times seventy' (Matt. 18). All of that is showing how we need to look at the perfection of God. After all, we're going to be the children of God the Father—is that not correct? *Yes!* All of that is the 'doctrine according to Godliness.'

1-Timothy6:4 talks about *many* preachers, even within the Church of God. I heard a preacher the other day say, 'You know what the sin was in the Garden of Eden? *Emotion!* They got led away with their emotions.' Then at the end of the service they had all the emotions: 'Hallelujah! Praise God!'

1-Timothy 6:4—if he doesn't teach those things: "He is proud and knows nothing. Rather, he has a morbid attraction to questions and disputes over words..." I still get those papers, especially concerning the Passover and concerning the Old Testament definition of *sunset* and *between the two evenings*—'ba erev' and 'ben ha arbayim.' I finally had to write one man and say: 'I can help you no longer. You keep asking the same question over and over and over again, and if you don't believe how God Himself uses those two words in Exo. 16, from the very mouth of God, I can't help you. I don't care if the Jews say it's three in the afternoon, or if you wait until it's dark enough to see three stars. That has nothing to do with the Truth.' But he keeps writing these things. So, I finally just had to say, 'Look, get a life.'

The thing is this: the Truth is the Truth is the Truth is the Truth! And you can prove the Truth over and over and over again. If you don't quite understand all the Truth you're going to learn some more Truth about it as you study more and go into things deeper. That's what happened with *The Christian Passover* book. I had one person write and say, 'Why did you have to write a book of 500 pages

about the Passover, it ought to be very simple to understand?"

"...disputes over words from which come envy, arguments, blasphemy, wicked suspicions, vain reasonings of men who have been corrupted in *their* minds and *are* destitute of the truth—*men* who believe that gain is godliness. From such withdraw *yourself*" (vs 4-5). That doesn't necessarily mean monetary gain. That can mean gain of people, gain of numbers, as well as wealth and money and all this sort of thing. What you have to do is exactly what he says here: *love God, serve him and do what is right.*]

Verse 6: "But Godliness with contentment is great gain." Why? *Because you're following the doctrine that is 'according to Godliness.'*

So he gets down to the final analysis; this is the 'belly-button' check as I like to say it. The reason we have belly buttons is so that we can always remember that we came from someone else, who came from someone else, who came from someone else. You can always remember you had a father and you had a mother. And it goes all the way back to Adam, and God doesn't tell that he had a belly button or not, so I can't answer the question.

Verse 7: "For we brought nothing into the world..." Nope! You're born a squalling, crying baby, covered with white junk—in the embryonic fluid—to keep you from becoming like a withered prune. You come out and you have your umbilical cord on. It's a boy! It's a girl! Wait a minute, there are two more coming—in some cases. Just as an aside: I know that with one child it's difficult. Two is twice the work. Three is three times the work. But I don't know how they get along with quadruplets and quintuplets and sextuplets. I just don't know! But they all brought nothing into the world.

"...and it is evident that neither do we have the power to carry anything out *of the world*" (v 7). When you're in a casket, you're not taking anything, you're just there. You may be dressed. You may have a nice casket, but it's going in the ground with you.

Verse 8: "But having food and clothing, we should be satisfied with these." It doesn't mean you don't need to strive to do better. But let the blessings come from God rather than you out trying to strive to increase in wealth and riches and all of this sort of thing. Like some people, who, when they didn't get what they want, said, 'Well, I can make a lot of money working on the Sabbath. I can get time and half and double time. And after all, doesn't God want me to prosper. So therefore, if I work on the Sabbath to provide for my family then that's perfectly all right.' Well, that's a lack of faith and you're not depending on God. He can take care of

you and provide everything for you. Besides, what wealth are you really looking for? The wealth of this world? *or* The wealth that comes from God at the resurrection?

Verse 9: "For those who desire to become rich fall into temptation and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts, which cause men to sink into destruction and perdition." That is a perfect verse to describe the sub-prime and economic problem in the United States and in the world on a vast, vast scale. Are they sinking into destruction? *Yes!*

Verse 10: "For the love of money is a root of all evils; *by* which some, *while* striving after *riches*, were seduced from the faith, and have impaled themselves with many sorrows." Impaling is a very difficult process, if you understand what impaling is. I need not describe it, but it's full-length body spearing.

Verse 11: "But you, O man of God, flee these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance *and* meekness. Fight the good fight of the faith!... [because it is a fight] ...Take hold of eternal life to which you were also called, and did profess a good profession in the presence of many witnesses" (vs 11-12).

Let's look at a few verses over here that add to it. All of these things have to do with the requirements and qualities and character and attitude and love and devotion of those who are to be elders and ministers.

2-Timothy 1:8: "Therefore, you should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor *of* me His prisoner..." 'Who's your head-minister?' *Well, it's Paul.* 'Oh really! I understand that he's in jail. What did he do that was wrong?'

"...but jointly suffer with *me for the sake of* the Gospel, according to *the* power of God, who has saved us and called *us* with a Holy calling..." (vs 8-9). It is a Holy work. It is a spiritual work. And the calling of all the brethren is a Holy calling and what are they called? *Holy brethren! Yes!*

"...—not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which *was* given us in Christ Jesus before the ages of time; but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, Who has annulled death, and has brought to light *eternal* life and incorruptibility through the Gospel" (vs 9-10).

I want you take that verse, and especially for everyone who thinks that you can solve the spiritual problems of America by political means, for voting for whomever you want to vote for, or you have a man who you follow, who you think is really, really good. You think about it! That's why we need to

follow Christ, because He has annulled death. He was resurrected from the dead! {Note sermon: *Jesus Our Hero and Champion*} ***There's no man on earth that you can follow that has any of the qualities of Christ!***

People ask me: Who are you going to vote for? Like they did on the radio program there—like Gianni did: Who do you think is going to win the election? And as she was closing out, when the music was coming on, I said, 'Whoever God wants.' Didn't have time to answer it, because when you read Dan. 4, what does it say? *That God sets up over the kingdoms of men the basest of men; and gives it to whomever He desires!* God looks down at the nation:

1. How much righteousness are the people doing in the letter of the law?
2. 'What will be My judgment upon them?'
3. *They're going to get whom they deserve!*

Who should be their leader? In some countries that are just filled with lawlessness and hatred and witchcraft and things like that, God set up over men those who are dictators, ruthless, because there's no other way you can handle a complete lawless society. What are you going to do in Darfur? What are you going to do in Somalia? Or Zimbabwe? Terrible place to live! ***You're not going to solve any of the problems of this world by following a man!***

Let's apply that to preachers. There are still some people so enamored with a man that they say 'if we follow these 18 points that this man restored to the Church, then we'll receive salvation.' That's committing idolatry. If it's only 18 points that are restored, what about the rest of the Bible. People don't think!

Christ "...has annulled death, and has brought to light *eternal* life..." (v 10).

Now, let's look at the election of the—they're calling him today—the *new messiah*. What is he promising? *Healthcare for everyone! Tax the rich and distribute to the poor!* And all of the other doctrines that he has I guarantee you that if that happens, at the end of four or eight years everybody's going to be disillusioned because they're putting their trust in a man and trying to solve spiritual problems by political means. It's going to fail! That's why we always need to be looking to Christ. This is also especially true for those who are elders and teachers.

"...*eternal* life and incorruptibility through the Gospel" (v 10).

I want to tell you something about the Bible. The Bible is the only book—I don't care what

language it's been translated into—that will tell you about the history before the world was created and on into the ages of eternity. It begins 'In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.' In the end we have *New Jerusalem and God dwelling with man and we now step out into the ages of eternity*—with a glimpse of it there in Rev. 21 & 22.

You show me one other book in the world that even comes close to that. Plus it shows all the things about human history that we need to know as to why everybody made all the awful mistakes that they made, even with the knowledge of God—and they didn't have the Holy Spirit of God, that's why. We need to understand:

- how great the Bible is
- how great the Word of God is
- how great our calling is.
- how fantastic Christ is

resurrected from the dead, "...annulled death, and has brought to light eternal life..." Everyone wants to live forever—right? Think about how much money people spend just to exist a little bit longer—on drugs or tubes or whatever it may be. That's something!

What was the Apostle Paul? Let's see what he says about himself, because some people are so enamored with the word 'apostle' or 'evangelist.' Some ministers who supposedly hold that rank tell everyone, 'Look up to me, because I'm this, that and the other thing.' Well, Paul didn't do that. He was the opposite. I admonish you to read very carefully 2-Cor.—the whole book—and you will understand how Paul carried out his ministry.

Verse 11: "Unto which I was ordained a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of *the* Gentiles." What is he? A preacher? an apostle? a teacher? All of them, because these are all functions of what he was to do.

- he was an apostle bearing the authority of Jesus Christ
- he was a preacher because he preached the Word of God
- he was a teacher because he taught; he wrote

This thing that, as we discussed in Eph., 4 he gave some apostles, some evangelists, some pastors and some teachers shows that *those are all functions*. They are not offices or ranks. To have them as offices and ranks, then you're following the hierarchy of the Catholic Church. Always remember that when it was said, 'If there's any one thing the Catholics have right, it's church government,' what did God do to the church that proclaimed that? Where is it? Just think!

Verse 12: “For which cause I am also suffering these things; nevertheless, I am not ashamed. For I know Whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He has the power to keep what I have committed *to Him* for that day. Hold *as the* standard *for doctrine* the sound words that you heard from me, in *the* faith and love that *are* in Christ Jesus. Guard the good thing that was committed *to you* by *the* Holy Spirit that is dwelling in us” (vs 12-14). That means we’re to be alert; we’re to guard:

- guard our hearts
- guard our minds with the Holy Spirit
- guard the doctrine
- guard the brethren

Verse 15: “You know this, that all those who *are* in Asia have rejected me...” Paul ended up being alone. What’s going to happen if that happens in your life—whether you’re a minister or not a minister—when there’s no one else but you? Just because there’s no one else, are you going to give up on God? Does that mean that God has gone away someplace just because other people have? *No!*

“...of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes” (v 15). Then he talks about the one who came to Rome for him.

2-Timothy 2:1: “Therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that *is* in Christ Jesus.” All the things I’m talking about here have to do with the elders and ministers that they set the tone within the Church based upon their conduct and their character, and their dealings with the brethren, and what they teach. We’re going to see some other things that we need to add to it here

Verse 2: “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, these *things* commit to faithful men, such as will be competent to teach others also.”

Especially in that day, because they didn’t have things like we have now. We can record and send these out, but we do have competent and faithful elders in the Christian Biblical Church of God who teach the brethren, and who teach them the Word of God. And they are not ‘yes’ men, and they are not following me, because they are following me as a person; because they won’t allow themselves to do it and I won’t allow them to do it—and neither does God want it.

Verse 3: “You, therefore, endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.”

Verse 7: “Give careful consideration to the things *that* I am telling you, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things. Remember *that* Jesus Christ, of *the* seed of David, *was* raised from

among *the* dead according to my gospel; for which I am suffering hardship, *even* to the point of being imprisoned like a criminal; but the Word of God has not been chained. Because of this, I endure all things for the sake of the elect in order that they may obtain *the* salvation that *is* in Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (vs 7-10).

Think about this for a minute. How many elders and ministers in some of these corporate churches are really willing to endure all things for the sake of the brethren? *Many of them don’t*, because if they get crossways with the minister, they’re disfellowshipped with the drop of a hat. So, *Paul’s way of doing things is entirely different.*

(go to the next track)

Verse 11: “This is a faithful saying: If we have died together with *Him* [by baptism] we shall also live together with *Him*... [it says that we are conjoined into His death and then we are raised in the likeness of His resurrection] ...if we endure... [Remember what Jesus said, ‘the one who endures to the end, the same shall be saved.’] ...we shall also reign together with *Him*; if we deny *Him*, He will also deny us” (vs 11-12).

Where does that come from? *That comes from Matt. 10*—that ‘if you profess Me before men, I will profess you before the Father and the angels. If you deny Me, I will deny you before God and the angels.’ So there it is, *the doctrine of Christ!*

Verse 13: “If we are unfaithful, He remains faithful—He cannot deny Himself... [because He is what He is, *eternal*] ...See that *they* remain mindful of these things, earnestly charging *them* in the sight of the Lord not to argue over words that are not profitable in any way, *but which lead to the* subverting of those who hear.... [if you want to see the evidence of that, read the *Journal*] ...Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God...” (vs 13-15). That’s what an elder or minister needs to do: study, *study*, **study**; restudy, *study*, *study*, **study**—it’s a lifelong project!

All of us need to do that, in fact, because what we are dealing with, we are dealing with words that Jesus said ‘are spirit and are life’; inspired by the mind of God, Who is eternal. There is an eternal wealth of learning out of the words of God continually forever.

Too many ministers are like one I knew; I worked for him and I went to visit him. I was in his office and we sat down and we were talking, and he just moved out there to that area, I think it was Oklahoma City at that time. He had a big stack of sermon notebooks that were the spiral notebooks—big stack of them. He said, ‘Fred, you see these; these contain all my sermons. And in about 3-1/2 or

4 years when they're ready to move me again, I've gone through them all, then when they move me to a new area I just start over again.' I thought to myself, *that's not the way to study the Word of God*; because you end up in a ditch and a ditch is an open-ended grave I'm told.

Verse 15: "Diligently *study* to show yourself approved unto God, a workman who does not *need to be* ashamed, **rightly dividing the Word of the Truth.**" If you wrongly divide the Word of the Truth, you're going to get a wrong conclusion. Just think of it simply this way: Have you ever written down a phone number and one number was off and you kept dialing and dialing. And after about the third time when the person you weren't suppose to talk to answered the phone, and 'Whoops, again!' Same way with the Word of Truth! You've got to rightly divide it to put it together so it is always building, it is always adding to, it is always growing in the grace of knowledge.

Verse 16: "But avoid profane and vain babblings because they will *only* give rise to more ungodliness."

2-Timothy 3:14—I expect you read all the rest of the verses up to this point: "But *as for* you, continue in the things that you did learn and were assured of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*; and that from a child you have known the Holy Writings... [which in this case are the Old Testament] ...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus" (vs 14-15).

That's a very interesting statement—isn't it? You're not going to find salvation in the Old Testament until Christ has come. You can't understand a lot of the Old Testament until Christ has come. All you have to do is listen to some of the teachings of the Jews who reject Jesus Christ, and you're going to see they're way off base on so many things; *because it is not through Jesus Christ!*

Now, here's how we need to look at the Scriptures always; and too many ministers—especially in 'Protestantismville' still stand up there and say, like one translation has, v 16: 'All Scripture *that is* God-breathed is profitable for doctrine.' That leaves open the question: Are there some that are not God-breathed? And that's, I think, how the *NIV* translates it, or one of the modern translations.

It is: "**All Scripture...** [that's all inclusive] **...is God-breathed...**" (v 16). In other words, as Peter said, 'By the Holy Spirit' that God used to motivate the men to write what He wanted them to write. As in the case of Moses, he had very good motivation, he heard it directly from God.

All Scripture being God-breathed, that means everything in it; all the genealogies, because those are important. They may be boring to read, and in some cases very hard to read, but as far as the legal documentation that God wants for historical purposes, it is absolutely essential.

"...and *is* profitable for doctrine... [How many times have we covered *doctrine?*] ...for conviction..." (v 16). This is important because if you do not have conviction, you do not have faith. You have to have faith **and** conviction. It's absolutely true for anyone who's going to be teaching. He has got to have the conviction that the Word of God is true, that it is God-breathed, that it is absolutely necessary for us to know and to understand—and have that conviction.

- he cannot lead
- he cannot teach
- he cannot stand for the Truth
- he cannot have a spiritual backbone

unless he has conviction!

"...for correction..." (v 16) The minister has to do some correcting. Who should he correct first? *Himself!*]

"...for instruction in righteousness; so that the man of God may be complete, fully equipped for every good work" (vs 16-17).

So you start out 1-Timothy 1:1 and you read it all the way down here to 2-Timothy 3:16, and that is the sum of it. Verse 17 summarizes everything.

Here's another charge which is really very important, 2-Timothy 4:1: "I charge you, therefore, in the sight of God, even the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is ready to judge *the* living and *the* dead at His appearing and His kingdom... [he's reminding him, whatever you do, remember God is going to judge you, and He *is* returning!] ...**Preach the Word!**..." (vs 1-2).

Today that's even more imperative because we have all the Word of God. Go watch Joel Olsteen and see how much of the Word of God he preaches. He stands up there and tells a lot of good, nicey, nicey stories about New Age 'goodism' and how to project yourself and do good and be well and think good thoughts. All of that is New Age nonsense! Yes, we are to have good minds, good character, but with the Holy Spirit of God; not coming from within ourselves to puff up ourselves and think how good we are, but coming to us from God with His Spirit in us. Entirely different!

Verse 2: "Preach the Word! Be urgent in season and out of season... [if you're preaching boring sermons, pay attention] ...convict... [those who are listening then receive conviction of the

Truth, and determination to do things that are right ...rebuken... [Yes, indeed, there's a time to rebuke!] ...encourage, with all patience and doctrine."

And v 3 has happened over and over and over again. Not only are there false ministers who stealthily come in, as Peter said there in 2-Pet. 2, but there are also false brethren who come in. Then when all of the troubles hit the doctrinal fan, which it will—so that those who are approved of God will be known and separated out from all of those who preach the heresies—here's what happens:

Verse 3: "For there shall come a time when they will not tolerate sound doctrine..." They won't listen to it anymore. How many left the Church when they were told, 'Well, you know, you don't have to keep the Sabbath Day, Sunday is just as good.' And the spectacle that happened when they said, 'Oh well, you can eat unclean foods.' Half the local church was down at the Red Lobster that night gobbling up shrimp, lobster and all of that sort of thing.

"...but according to their own lusts they shall accumulate to themselves a great number of teachers... [Are there great numbers of false teachers? *Yes! Everywhere!*] ...having ears itching to hear what satisfies their cravings... [got to have something new] ...and they shall turn away their own ears from the truth; and they shall be turned aside unto myths" (vs 3-4).

So, you have both of those problems that will come along; and we've lived through this and we have seen this, too—haven't we? *Yes, we have!* Yes, it applies mostly to the Church, but what happens after they leave the Church? *They go out and set up pseudo-Christian churches in the world and they have a worldly Christianity;* and that's how we have the worldly Christianity that came along. All you have to do is just listen to the Crystal Cathedral. Listen to what they preach there on some Sunday. Compare that with the Word of God.

- Do they have a lot of people out there? *Oh, yes!*
- Do they have important people with highly recognizable names? *Yes!*
- Do they receive millions and millions of dollars every year? *Yes!*

I've often thought, and I've driven by there and I've seen it and it is all glass. I've often thought, one day an earthquake is going to hit and it's going to be the 'tinkle cathedral'—everything is going to crash down. But there it is.

Verse 5: "But *as for* you, be vigilant in all things, endure hardships, do *the* work of an evangelist; fully carry out your ministry" (v 5). The phrase "...do the work of an evangelist..." is very

important, because Paul didn't say, 'hurry up and come over here to me because I want to raise you in rank and ordain you as an evangelist.'

Timothy was an elder, a teacher, a minister; and now because Paul was going to die—because he says here: 'there's a crown of life laid up for me, my end has come'—he says, "...do the work of an evangelist..." What did he do? Put his own hands on his head and say, 'I hereby now elevate myself to the rank of an evangelist'? *No! It is a function!*

- when you are evangelizing, *you're an evangelist*
- when you're pastoring, *you're a pastor*
- when you are teaching, *you're a teacher*

All of those are various functions of anyone who is an elder.

How do you settle disputes within the Church? You obviously have an office, and in fear and trepidation you call all the offenders into your office and you rake them over the coals and if they don't submit to you, you summarily disfellowship them! *That's the way it's normally been done.* Has anybody ever experienced any of that? *Well, of course you have!* In those kind of churches I even remember a minister who sent in a question concerning Matthew 18—which was the right question: the method that we are using by calling people in to correct them seems to be contrary to Matt. 18. Guess what? *He was disfellowshipped!*

What is the simplest and easiest way to solve problems? *At the lowest level!* I remember in the hierarchical church I was in, you would have a problem or a divorce and re-marriage case, they said to write it up and send it in. You wrote it up, but I have yet to see any report that contained all the facts that were really necessary as was told to them. So then, it comes up to the next level and they read it; and then they have certain questions and they can't answer it, so, they send it up to the next level. And it goes to what is called 'headquarters.' There they had a special council of ministers to sit around and read these things and they never could make up their minds because the facts were never fully known. *Christ has it the easiest way:* If there's a problem, you solve it between yourselves. Isn't that simple?

Matthew 18:15: "So then, if your brother sins against you... [go and snitch to the minister and get a few 'brownie points'] ...**go and show him his fault between you and him alone...**" In many cases what are you going to find is that it was really a misunderstanding. *Alone!* Don't run down and blab it to someone else first, and then go. And I've had people run out and blab it to others first and then it gets spread all around and then when I ask them 'why did you do that?' *Well, I was seeking counsel.*

No you weren't. You couldn't keep your mouth from having your tongue run out and spew everything all over the place.

"...show him his fault between you and him alone..." That always works! We'll see why it always works. This process that Jesus gave always works.

- Was Jesus the Son of God? *Yes!*
- Was He God manifested in the flesh?
- Is God's way always right? *Yes, it is always right.*
- Does He give us things that will always work? *Yes, He gives us things that will always work.*

This works!

"...If he is willing to hear you, you have gained your brother" (v 15). You end the matter, and it is over with there; and no one needs to know a single solitary thing about it—right? *Yes!* You can also apply this to husband/wife relations. If you have problems between husband and wife, don't go tell your friend over the phone; or tell them over tea; or blab it in someone else's ear. You go solve your marital problems between husband and wife. After all, that's where the problems exist—is that not correct? *Yes!*

Verse 16: "But if he will not listen, take with you one or two others, so that in *the* mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established." Why is that essential? *Because many times when things are told they're not remembered exactly as they really were!* It's an absolute damnable thing concerning these hearings in Congress; because if you do not say exactly the same word over and over again, like some who are never guilty of any crime, but were sentenced to jail-time for lying, when they didn't lie. There were just so many facts concerning the case that they couldn't remember them all in order, so they look at testimony one time—he said this; look at testimony another time—he said this. Which is right? This or this? Instead of simply saying, 'Well, could you please explain the discrepancy. 'Well, I forgot it the first time.' Has that ever happened to you? Have you ever had to go back and explain something because you left something out? *Of course!* So then, you're guilty because your testimony is different.

Well, guess what the haters of the Bible do? They look at Matthew, Mark and Luke and what do they say? *This can't be true because they don't agree word for word.* Well, these are three witnesses reporting, in many cases, the same thing and instead of saying that they're lying or that they're not true, what you do is you put it all together—two or three witnesses (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) how many witnesses is that? *Four!* But Matthew, Mark

and Luke are three—correct? *Yes!* You add them together and you get the full story. It's not that difficult.

That's why Jesus said, 'If he won't hear you, get one or two others and go to him so that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' If that has to happen, well then, this should pretty well solve it, because the next step is the greatest violation that has happened in the Churches of God in this era.

Verse 17: "And if he fails to listen to them, tell *it* to the Church.... [This is interpreted by the hierarchical churches as *tell it to the ministry*. It does not say that! What is the Church? *The Church is 'ekkleisia'*—that is *the ones who are called out!*] ...Tell it to the Church...."

If the Church is a large church, you may want to have different ones from the Church hear it and settle the matter; and the only involvement that the minister or elder has is to conduct the meeting—not to render the judgment himself alone without the Church. Because that way, when it's handled the wrong way, you can take care of anything you want by just disfellowshipping and marking people and getting rid of those who disagree with you. "...tell *it* to the Church..."

With these three steps, you know that if it is always practiced the right way, the first step you're going to solve 90% of the problems. The second step you're going to solve an additional 90% of the problems. The third step: "...Tell *it* to the Church. But if he also fails to listen to the church, let him be to you as the heathen and the tax collector" (v 17). That's the way to solve the problems.

Then He goes on saying here the things that are very important to understand. How important are these things? How should they be run and conducted? *In love; in consideration; considering your own faults, your own mistakes, your own difficulties;* before you talk to someone and say, 'Well, how could you say that? Do you know that that remark just cut me to the quick and I can hardly stand to be around you?' And the person might say, 'Well, I didn't mean it that way.' You resolve it! You take care of it!

When it's resolved and taken care of, what has happened? How should it be resolved?

- according to the Word of God
- according to the love of God
- according in a spirit of meekness and understanding; admitting your own faults and mistakes

Then here's the result of it; this shows how important that it is, v 18: "Truly I say to you,

whatever you shall bind on the earth **will have already been bound in heaven...**” *You look into the Word of God*, which is God’s Word bound in heaven put into writing. You make whatever decision that needs to be made according to the Word of God. You cannot make a decision contrary to the Word of God to enforce your own will. Otherwise, it’s not settling the problem.

“...and whatever you shall loose on the earth will have already been loosed in heaven” (v 18). {note Appendix O: *Binding and Loosing in the New Testament—The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*} In other words, whatever we do then has to be based on the Word of God and is not going to come out of the figment of our own imaginations in making a judgment concerning a dispute.

Verse 19: “Again I say to you, that if two of you on earth shall agree concerning any matter that they wish to request, it shall be done for them by My Father, Who *is* in heaven.” That is people praying for each other; praying over a project; whatever it may be. That is a blanket statement; but again, has to be according to the will of God.

Verse 20: “For where two or three are gathered together in My name...” This is also a broad principle. It can be two or three people together to study the Word of God; can be two or three people together to pray for one another and others; it can be whatever.

“...there, I am in *the* midst of them” (v 20). This means that with the Spirit of God, if you all have the Spirit of God, Christ is there—is He not? *Yes, He is!* He’s paying attention to what is going on—is He not? *Yes, He is!*

Now then, here comes the \$64 Peter question. After hearing all of that, v 21: “Then Peter came to Him *and* said... [because he was thinking on this] ...‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Until seven times?’ [Where does that go back to? *That goes back to v 15!*] ...Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you until seven times, but until seventy times seven’” (vs 21-22).

That is typical of God’s eternal forgiveness when we ask Him. And remember the model, daily prayer. What are we to ask every day? ‘Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.’ It’s a daily thing.

The Corinthians were kind of a wild church and they had a lot of carnality and sin and everything in there. One of the things that they were doing was ignoring Matt. 18. They were not following the sound words of Jesus Christ. Here’s what they were

doing. They were running to the local court.

1-Corinthians 6:1: “Does anyone among you who has a matter against another dare to go to *a court of law* before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?” What he was saying here was: you’re not using what Jesus told you to do to bring the problems, in the final analysis, before the Church. Rather, you’re running down the road and going to a judge who doesn’t even know the Word of God, who has laws that he must enforce, which are contrary to the Word of God—“...and not before the saints.”

Verse 2: “Don’t you know that the saints shall judge the world?...” We’re to learn how to judge. {Note sermon series: *Judge Righteous Judgment*, including a booklet on that, too.

“...and if the world is to be judged by you, are you unworthy of the most trivial of judgments?” (v 2). Aren’t some disputes between brethren a trivial judgment compared to life and all of that sort of thing? *Yes!* Lots of times you get wrapped up in these things, and what are they? You look at it later—after you’re past the situation—because when you’re in the middle of a situation it seems to be so very important. But when you get past it and look back on it, it is really kind of a trivial thing. Now, not all things, but some of them are.

He asks another question, v 3: “Don’t you know that we shall judge angels?...” That’s a pretty hefty statement—isn’t it? What kind of judgment do we need to learn to have? For our own lives and between each other and solving problems? *Yes!*

“...*How* much more than *the* things of this life?” (v 3). They went to court and then when they came before the Church they did it wrong.

Verse 4: “So then, if you have judgments *concerning the* things of this life, *why* do you appoint *as judges* those who have no standing in the church? Now I say *this* to your shame. *Is it* because there is not a wise *man* among you, not even one, who is able to decide between his brothers? Instead, brother goes to *a court of law* with brother, and this before unbelievers. Now therefore, there is altogether an utter fault among you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather suffer wrong? Why not rather be defrauded? Instead, you are doing wrong and defrauding, and you are doing these things *to your brethren*” (vs 4-8).

That is what’s happened in the Church. Anybody remember the receivership? How that started? *Same way here!* So, there we go! There are a lot of lessons for us about the Government of God in the Church. Let’s also understand this: Not only are we going to judge the world, but we’re going to

rule the world; and we're going to have to rule the world according to God's way, with God's judgment, with His Spirit. All of those are things are very important lessons for us all.

Now, let's summarize the authority that the ministry has within the Church. Remember, the authority of God extends with His Government, with His Spirit, to every single member individually in a relationship between that person and God the Father and Jesus Christ. That is the first line of Government within the Church, because all the government is on the shoulders of Jesus Christ; and He is the Head of the Church.

1. Feed the Flock

Feeding the flock means to *teach from the Word of God* so that all can develop the mind of Christ. As Jesus said, 'It's quite sufficient that the disciple become as the teacher, and the teacher as Christ.' *Feed the flock!* That also shows your love of God, as we read there with the encounter of Jesus and Peter.

2. Edify the Church

Up-build the Church! *Elders are stewards of God!* Always remember that. An elder is a steward, to serve God, to help the brethren become as God wants them to be. Edify and up-build the Church!

3. Do not Allow False Doctrines

If there's some teaching that is in the Bible that is a clarification and makes something new, that's fine; that's not a false doctrine. In some cases, when you study things you come up with the answer you don't know. What do you do?

4. Pray for the Brethren

That's what Paul said, 'I pray for you. I make mention of you day and night.'

5. Anoint the sick

6. Whenever Necessary, Bring Correction

If you read 2-Cor. very carefully, you are going to find the best way for correction to come. It is not to stand up and lambaste everybody, but as Paul tried to do: *to inspire them to make the corrections*—whatever they need to be—*themselves*. But if there needs to be correction, don't hesitate to do it.

7. Be an Example to the Flock by the Way You Live

The same way with all the brethren. Be an example to everyone else by the way you live and conduct your lives.

All of that is the Government of God within the

Church!

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1-Timothy 5:17-25
- 2) 1-Timothy 6:1-3
- 3) Ephesians 5:1
- 4) Matthew 5:48
- 5) 1-Timothy 6:4-12
- 6) 2-Timothy 1:8-15
- 7) 2-Timothy 2:1-3, 7-16
- 8) 2-Timothy 3:14-17
- 9) 2-Timothy 4:1-5
- 10) Matthew 18:15-22
- 11) 1 Corinthians 6:1-8

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- 1-Timothy 4
- Titus
- Exodus 16
- Daniel 4
- Revelation 21 & 22
- 2-Corinthians
- Ephesians 4
- Matthew 10
- 2 Peter 2

Also referenced:

Sermon series:

- *Baptism*
- *Judge Righteous Judgment.*

Sermon: *Jesus Our Hero and Champion*

Booklets:

- *By Grace You have been Saved—Now What?*
by Duncan MacLeod and Philip Neal
- *Judge Righteous Judgment.*

Book: *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter

Appendix O: *Binding and Loosing in the New Testament—The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*

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