

Elder Training Series

Session 27 - Job Duty of 'Extensively Use The Scriptures Comprehensively' - PART 5 (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.

[Note: The discussion in this document continues onward the discussion from the previous document, 'Session 26', in this 'Elder Training Series' about 'Extensively Use The Scriptures Comprehensively' - PART 4.]

READ: "**All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness...**" (2 Timothy 3:16), and "**...devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.**" (1 Timothy 4:13)

(Continuing) SECTION POINT: Elders, overseers, and pastors have the duty before God to ensure that the Scriptures are prominently presented, explained, and applied in the messages, and the functioning, and the programs of their church or ministry.

-- Job Duty: Extensively Use The Scriptures Comprehensively (continued)

BIBLICAL COUNSELING:

- - As an extension of 'teaching', counseling in a church or ministry is an activity of privately meeting with one or a few related persons, ascertaining the problems they are having, and then as a remedy or solution, teaching and applying the contents and concepts from Scripture verses that pertain to their problems.
- - This counseling that should be conducted in a church or ministry is known as "biblical" or "pastoral" counseling.
- - Biblical counseling uses Scriptures to facilitate an activity of God to effect transformational change in the counselee's life. (Romans 12:2)
- - Biblical counseling extensively utilizes, teaches, and applies God's Word, which activates, energizes, and facilitates God's Spirit and God's power to work on the thinking of the counselee. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)
- - This approach, of the counselor facilitating God being extensively involved in these three ways, has the substantial potential of producing dramatic and easily measurable improvement results in the lives of the counselees.
- - And conversely, however, 'therapy' counseling approach conducted by a "Christian" therapist is by nature going to be far less effective because it does not tap into nor draw on God's extensive involvement using His divine power and Scriptures within not only the life of the counselee, but also the counseling approach and the counseling abilities of the therapist.
- - So, for true churches and ministries, a wise direction to take is to persistently refuse to have any 'therapy' be conducted, and instead arrange for only counseling that is "biblical" or "pastoral" to be conducted.

- - On a further note and to be frank, counseling is not an activity that any elder, overseer, pastor, or ministry leader should be doing, because many of them do this poorly, or ineffectively, or even counterproductively or unintentionally harmfully to the

counselee, even though on the basis of their position in the church they think they are doing a great job at counseling.

- - To do biblical counseling well and effectively, there is a need for the counselor to possess and exercise a combination of all of these spiritual gifts: 'help others', 'showing mercy', 'faith', 'encouraging', 'message of knowledge', 'message of wisdom', 'teaching', 'evangelism', and 'pastoring'. [Note: Descriptions of these spiritual gifts are contained in Sessions 12-16 of this 'Elder Training Series'.]

- - The counselor also needs to possess a nature of excellently being discerning, analytical, and a very good listener.

- - The sophistication and intricacies of counseling a person necessitates that the counselor have some academic training in biblical counseling, along with some initial supervisor monitoring.

- - Obviously, therefore, elders, overseers, and pastors need to be regularly monitoring the counseling that is being conducted in their church or ministry, and should not assume that everything within the counseling ministry of their church is occurring or continuing to occur appropriately and productively.

- - For some basic training on biblical counseling, see the documents in the "Series: Biblical Counseling Training for Lay Counselors" - on the "Counseling" web-page on this website, www.BelieverAssist.com.

- - For somewhat more-advanced training on biblical counseling, see Chapters 3-6, 11-12, and applicable content in the other chapters, in the E-book document "Children Of Fire", on the "Counseling" web-page on this website.

- - For some significantly-advanced training on biblical counseling of a severe-abuse victim who has dissociation, see the (doctorate) Research Thesis document "Treatment For Dissociation", on the "Counseling" web-page on this website.

EVANGELISM:

- - Throughout the New Testament of the Bible and especially in the writings of the Apostle Paul, evangelism is a key element of and priority function for God's Kingdom. (Romans 1:1-4,9)

- - In 2 Timothy 4:5, elders, overseers, pastors, and ministry leaders are assigned the job duty like Pastor Timothy, **"But you,... do the work of an evangelist..."**.

- - Evangelism is the ministry function of presenting the "gospel" to persons who have not personally placed their faith in Jesus Christ, that He is the perfect sinless Son of God, that He died on the cross to pay the punishment they deserve for all their own sins, and that He rose from the dead on the third day. (1 Corinthians 15:1-8)

- - An evangelistic presentation utilizes teaching (or preaching) of a few distinct specific Scripture verses to inform non-believing listeners about how God has provided a way through Jesus Christ for humans to receive salvation from eternal punishment for their sins. (Colossians 1:13-14)

- - A proper evangelistic presentation always includes presenting the few basic biblical doctrines that are directly derived from those few distinct specific Scripture verses that pertain to the gospel.

- - And to be complete, the evangelistic presentation then includes an invitation for those non-believing listeners to place their faith in Jesus Christ, which they can then express and describe to God in prayer, which the presenter can assist them in using and weaving into their personalized prayer some of the key phrases and words from the presentation.

- - In effect, through the presenting of the gospel, God adds more humans to His Kingdom. (v.16 in Romans 1:14-17; Colossians 1:13-14)

- - Thereby, God has assigned the true church, its leadership, and true believers with this responsibility and duty of presenting the gospel to non-believers, along with then offering them the opportunity to place their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. (1 Corinthians 12:28 "in the church God has appointed..." with Ephesians 4:11 "...some to be evangelists..."; 2 Timothy 1:11; 4:5; Philippians 1:4-6)
- - "...As men approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel..." like "Paul, Silas, and Timothy" (1 Thessalonians 2:4; 1:1), therefore, elders, overseers, pastors, and ministry leaders need to: ensure that evangelism is occurring in their church or ministry; monitor that it is being conducted properly and with an invitation; and train other true believers to do evangelism.
- - And be aware that there are effective ways to do evangelism, and there are ineffective ways to do evangelism. The challenge is to find effective ways.
- - One effective and practical way to do evangelism is to integrate and weave the gospel and its evangelistic presentation into the contents of sermons and Bible lessons of Scripture verses that in some way also allude to, or relate to, or mention a basic biblical doctrine of the gospel. In essence, each of these integrated sermons or lessons thereby contain simultaneously-preached or -taught content that is for both the saved and the unsaved persons in the audience.
- - Effective evangelism conducted in your church and in the community neighboring your church has a major propensity to contribute to the growth of the number of people attending your church. (for example, Acts 2:1-42 and verse 41)

- - For more training information on 'evangelism', see (or review) the description of 'the spiritual gift of evangelism' contained in the middle of the document "Session 15 - Spiritual Gifts of 'Preaching', 'Evangelist (Evangelism)', 'Leadership'" of this "Elder Training Series", located on the "Home Page - Ministry" of this web-site, www.BelieverAssist.com.
- - For training information on 'how to present the gospel', see the document "Session 02 - Presenting the Gospel" of the "Series: Biblical Counseling Training for Lay Counselors" on the "Counseling" web-page of this web-site.
- - To review examples of 'how to make a gospel presentation with an invitation and a prayer', see the 'Evangelistic (Gospel) Presentation' sermon-or-lesson documents near the bottom of the "Topical" web-page of this web-site.

MINISTRY APPROACH:

- - In order for God to exceedingly bless and prosper a church or ministry, its ministry approach needs to accurately and fully align with what God instructs in the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16-17) - in other words, God's work done in God's way.
- - Therefore, within the ministry approach of the church or ministry, it is crucial for each elder, overseer, pastor, and ministry leader to maintain personal integrity or be **"above reproach"** (1 Timothy 3:2), including always **"putting off falsehood and speaking truthfully to his neighbor** (or "fellow humans"), **for we are all members of one body"** (Ephesians 4:25; Strong's #4139).
- - And within the ministry approach, it is crucial for each of these top leaders to consistently and excellently **"discharge all the duties of their ministry [job functioning]"** (2 Timothy 4:5), which certainly precludes such behaviors as: inappropriate absences; unreliability; tardiness; procrastination; avoidance; neglect; laziness; unpreparedness or under-preparedness; disorganization; poor time management; making excuses; getting sidetracked into doing ministry work that is outside of the ministry job employment position work that the leader was hired to do; and etcetera.
- - In discharging all the duties of their ministry job functioning and ministry approach, of course it is of paramount vital importance to always **"do what is good and right in the eyes of the Lord your God"** (Deuteronomy 12:28), even if it will result in the extreme of

putting into jeopardy your ministry position or ministry employment (1 Peter 2:19-23). The foundation of taking this kind of stand is to "entrust" to God any adverse aftermath. (v.23)

- - Within the ministry approach of the elders, overseers, pastors, and ministry leaders, "doing what is good... in the eyes of the Lord" obviously includes consistency in actions and responses (not previously discussed in this 'Elder Training Series') such as: **"accepting one another"** (Romans 15:7); **"bearing with each other and forgiving whatever grievances you may have against one another"** (Colossians 3:13); edifying or **"building others up according to their needs"** (Ephesians 4:29); **"to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate, and to show true humility toward all men"** (Titus 3:2); and etcetera.

- - Another high priority and extensive need for a ministry approach is for each elder, overseer, pastor, and ministry leader to possess and exert love, as instructed by Jesus in John 13:34, **"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."**

- - This love needs to be comprehensive and genuine (1 Corinthians 13:1-3) - loving God; loving every fellow human; loving doing ministry; loving serving all of the people who attend the church or ministry; and loving each of their fellow leaders.

- - Due to the extensiveness of this love, therefore it must come from the top, being modeled and promoted by the head pastor, along with the elders, who lead the church or ministry and thereby set the tone or atmosphere or environment within which and from which the church or ministry operates.

- - Due to its delicate and precarious nature, this 'atmosphere of love' must be continuously nurtured, and fostered, so that it is always present, and always active, and thereby always exerting influence. (1 Corinthians 13:7-8a)

- - Therefore, the top leaders - the head pastor, the elders, and the overseers, must resolve to always be both personally and corporately possessing and exerting love in all of their functioning as the top leaders of their church or ministry.

- - So, their attitude and behavior will contain characteristics such as: genuine regard of love; genuine smiles; genuine greetings; genuine concern; genuine compassion for the suffering of adversity; genuine helpfulness; genuine follow-up; genuine modeling; genuine cooperativeness; and etcetera.

- - And there is no overt nor covert: frustration; or anger; or arrogance; or contempt; or disdain; or annoyance of being bothered, or being interrupted, or being inconvenienced, or being given another problem to solve; and etcetera.

- - Even in and especially in times of disagreement, or dysfunction, or disruption, or strife, or division, or conflict within the functioning in the church or ministry, this 'atmosphere of love' must be maintained, exerted, and perhaps propped up, to some degree.

- - An approach philosophy and truth in 2 Timothy 2:22-26 provide a compelling firm foundation for this response of pure love in the midst of conflict in the church or ministry.

- - Like Pastor Timothy, elders, overseers, pastors, and ministry leaders are charged to: **"pursue... love and peace"** (v.22); avoid **"foolish and stupid arguments"** (v.23); refrain from **"quarrelling"** (v.24); and **"instead... be kind to everyone..."**, **"forbearing"** and **"not resentful"** (v.24, Strong's #0420).

-- The rationale for this kind of ministry approach is supplied in the next 2 verses:

- - - - **"25. Those who oppose him ["the Lord's servant" (v.24)] he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth,**

- - - 26. and that they will come to their senses and escape from the trap of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will".

- - As each leadership person interacts with people who are in essence oppositional, or counter-productive, or hindering, or disruptive, or destructive to the healthy and/or effective functioning of their church or ministry, they are to keep in mind that those oppositional persons are unwittingly in spiritual bondage as workers for the Kingdom of Darkness.

- - Thereby, the oppositional persons "coming to their senses and escaping" this bondage requires the intervention, and power, and timing of God to "grant them repentance" which "leads them to a knowledge of the truth" about the sinfulness of their oppositional activities due to the existence of the bondage condition(s) they are captive in. (vv.26,25)

- - Therein, with this reality in mind, each leadership person "must" (v.25) respond according to the dictates in these verses 22-26, in order to create fertile conditions for God to accomplish this deliverance of these oppositional persons from their bondages that cause harm to the church or ministry.

- - It is very important to note here that not every instance of someone opposing the pastor or an elder is sinfully oppositional and/or a result of bondage to the Kingdom of Darkness.

-- Some instances of apparent opposition can actually be any of the following realities:

- - - - a legitimate non-sinful difference of opinion;

- - - - a proper taking a stand for common sense;

- - - - a proper taking a stand for a good and feasible management approach;

- - - - a proper taking a stand for correcting a behavior, or decision, or action of the pastor or elder in order to align with godliness, and/or appropriateness, and/or doing what is right in the eyes of God;

- - - - an appropriate response that comes from experience, or additional knowledge, or insight;

- - - - an act of obedience to a prompting from God, to voice an alternative course of action or approach that God wants the pastor or elder to take;

- - - - a misinterpretation by the pastor or elder of the intentions of the seeming opposition.

- - So, labeling and/or accusing these kinds of seeming opposition as being an action fomented by the devil is not only outright incorrect, but is **extremely abusive and destructive** to the ministerial well-being of the innocent person, whom the pastor or an elder incorrectly judges to be sinfully oppositional on behalf of the Kingdom of Darkness.

Be super-careful how you wield the application of the contents of verses 2 Timothy 2:25-26!! (for example, v.15 in Luke 11:14-20)

- - For a ministry approach to be effective, another key element is the ongoing presence of prayer, as "exhorted and implored" to the elders, overseers, and pastors in 1 Timothy 2:1, **"I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone..."**. (Strong's #3870)

- - Prayer is important to a ministry approach because in essence it should be requesting God to be maximally active and involved in the various aspects that are prayed for, in order for God to ultimately be in control of the ministry approach so that He can bring about maximum positive results, for the benefit of His Kingdom and the church or ministry.

- - Therefore, this kind of prayer needs to be present, needs to be ongoing, and needs to be prevalent.

- - As with the 'atmosphere of love', the 'prevalence of prayer' likewise needs to come from the top - be consistently practiced, modeled, and promoted by the top leadership, starting with the head pastor, and with the elders, overseers, and ministry leaders right there alongside with the head pastor. (Acts 6:1-4)

APPLICATIONS:

- - As an elder, overseer, or pastor, are you knowledgeable about the counseling that is being conducted in your church or ministry? If so, how extensively are you knowledgeable in this regard?

- - Having considered the discussion above in this document about 'biblical counseling', are you committed to ensuring that 'biblical counseling' is being conducted in your church or ministry?

- - If so, are you further committed to ensuring that 'biblical counseling' is being conducted appropriately and competently?

- - Are you committed to ensuring that evangelism is occurring for the non-believers in your church or ministry, and that it is being presented properly?

- - As an elder, overseer, or pastor, are you committed to 'discharging all the duties of your ministry [job functioning]' that you are responsible for?

- - Are you committed to doing your part in establishing and maintaining a genuine and vibrant 'atmosphere of love' in your church or ministry?

- - Are you committed to adopting the ministry approach philosophy of responding to actual sinfully-oppositional persons in your church or ministry with the regard and conduct as cited in 2 Timothy 2:22-26, and patiently waiting for God to grant them deliverance from their sinful bondages?

- - Are you committed to doing your part in establishing and maintaining a 'prevalence of prayer' within the functioning of the ministry approach among your fellow leaders?

Works Cited:

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"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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