

STUDIES IN 1 TIMOTHY

LAW NUMBER TWELVE: "Prejudice and Partiality Have No Place in Leadership"

1 Timothy 5:17-25

Key Verse 5:21: "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and the elect angels, that these things you are to guard without showing prejudice, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality."

TEXT:

v.17 Let the elders that are ruling well be deemed worthy of double honor, especially those who are working hard in preaching and teaching.

v.18 For the scripture is saying, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing the grain," and "The worker is worthy of his pay."

v.19 Do not entertain a charge against an elder unless it be confirmed by two or three witnesses.

v.20 Those who are sinning, be rebuking in the presence of all, in order that the rest may be having fear.

v.21 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and the elect angels, that these things you are to guard without showing prejudice, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.

v.22 Lay hands [of ordination] on no one hastily; neither be a partner in others' sins; keep yourself pure.

v.23 No longer drink only water, but be using a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

v.24 The sins of some men are known to all (conspicuous), going ahead to judgment; and in the case of certain individuals, they are following after.

v.25 Likewise also, the good works are known to all (conspicuous), and those that are otherwise not able to be hidden.

INTRODUCTION:

(Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey)

In recent years, since the publication of my book The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, I have worked with many wonderful individuals who are seeking to improve the quality of their lives and the quality of their products, services, and organizations. But, sadly, I have seen that many use a variety of ill-advised approaches in sincere attempts to improve their relationships and achieve desired results.

Often these approaches reflect the inverse of the habits of effective people. In fact, my brother, John Covey, who is a master teacher, sometimes refers to them as the seven habits of ineffective people:

- o Be reactive: doubt yourself and blame others.
- o Work without any clear end in mind.
- o Do the urgent thing first.
- o Think win/lose.
- o Seek first to be understood.
- o If you can't win, compromise.
- o Fear change and put off improvement.

p. 14

(Lincoln on Leadership: Executive Strategies for Tough Times by Donald T. Phillips)

Still the question recurs "can we do better?" The dogmas of the quiet past, are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew.

Lincoln, in his Annual Message to Congress, exhorting its members to join him in a united venture to be conducted by the executive and legislative branches of government (December 1, 1862)

p. 137

Lock paraphrases the passage under consideration in the following way:

Let such presbyters as have presided well be treated by the Church as deserving of yet greater honour and more ample support, especially those who take pains with reaching and teaching, for Scripture lays down the definite command, "Thou shalt not muzzle an ox when treading out corn," and the Lord Himself has said, "The labourer is worthy of his wages." If an accusation is brought against any presbyter, refuse to listen to it unless it is supported by two or three witnesses. But those presbyters who are proved guilty rebuke before all, that the rest may fear to imitate them. When you act as judge, keep before yourself the thought of the last judgment of God, of Jesus Christ, of the chosen angels; and carefully observe these rules, never making up your mind beforehand, never acting out of favouritism. If you have passed censure on any one, do not be over hasty in remitting the penalty; do not let your own good name be soiled by contact with the sins of others; keep your own life pure and untarnished. You have done so hitherto and have with that view abstained from wine, but I would advise you no longer to keep this rule; take wine sparingly, as your digestion is weak and you are so often ill. Such weakness may impair your judgment. In your decisions as judge you will need careful patience; in some cases, no doubt, the sins are patent to everybody and lead you by the hand to a decision, but in others they only appear after investigation. In the same way excellent actions are, as a rule, patent to everybody, and those that are not cannot in the end remain hidden.

pp. 61-62

Demarest says:

Three things are said regarding elders: they are to be paid; they are to be protected from irresponsible accusations; they are to be strictly disciplined.

p. 210

Hiebert says:

Paul next instructs Timothy in regard to his dealings with the elders in the churches and his personal bearing as requisite to this. He sets forth the duty to honor elders who do their work well (vv. 17, 18), instructs Timothy concerning the trial of an elder (vv. 19-21), advises him concerning the ordination of elders (v. 22), adds a parenthetical word of advice to Timothy about his use of a little wine (v. 23), and concludes with an enunciation of some basic principles for the testing of candidates (vv. 24, 25).
p. 100

Wiersbe observes

Apparently Timothy was having some problems with the elders of the church at Ephesus. He was a young man and still had much to learn. Ephesus was not an easy place to minister. Furthermore, Timothy had followed Paul as overseer of the church, and Paul would not be an easy man to follow! Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20) shows how hard he had worked and how faithful he had been, and how much the elders loved Paul (20:36-38). In spite of the fact that Paul had personally sent Timothy to Ephesus, the young man was having a hard time.
p. 70

v.17 Let the elders that are ruling well be deemed worthy of double honor, especially those who are working hard in preaching and teaching.

Paul is taking us back to chapter 3 in returning to the subject of the elders.

In chapter 3:1-7 we looked at LAW #6:

"Character Is a Vital Ingredient of Leadership."

There we considered the numerous qualifications for the elders.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Paul is not merely speaking of elderly men as back in verse 1, but to those who occupy official positions of leadership in the church.

The job of the elder was to be directing the affairs of the church.

There are 3 KEY WORDS that stand out here and help us understand the elder's job description:

1. "RULING WELL"
2. "PREACHING"
3. "TEACHING"

"LET THE ELDERS THAT ARE RULING WELL BE DEEMED WORTHY OF DOUBLE HONOR."

The question comes as to what does Paul mean here by the term "DOUBLE HONOR"?

Does he mean "HONOR HERE" and "HONOR OVER THERE" when he hears "well done thou good and faithful servant"?

Wiersbe says:

If pastors are faithful in feeding and leading the people, then the church ought to be faithful and pay them adequately. "Double honor" (1 Tim. 5:17) can be translated "generous pay." (The word honor is used as in "honorarium.") It is God's plan that the needs of His servants be met by their local churches; and He will bless churches that are faithful to His servants. If a church is not faithful, and its pastor's needs are not met, it is a poor testimony; and God has ways of dealing with the situation. He can provide through other means, but then the church misses the blessing; or He may move His servant elsewhere.

p. 72

Demarest says:

It is an honor to be called by the church to "labor in the word and doctrine." It is thus a double honor to get paid for the first honor.
p. 210

Hiebert says:

The "double honor" apparently means the honor which comes to him on account of his office and that which he obtains by fulfilling his office well.
p. 101

The word "honor" here has its primary meaning of honor and esteem, "although we may grant that the apostle was thinking particularly of the honor which the church was bound to show to their elders by presenting them with the means necessary for their support." Compare our use of honorarium for a fee.
p. 101

Guthrie says:

The adjective descriptive of this honour, double, would appear to have the sense of ample or generous provision, but this would depend on their efficiency, as the adverb well indicates.
p. 105

Lenski says:

The subject of widows begins with honoring (v. 3); so does the subject of elders.
p. 679

Hendriksen says:

Nevertheless, this double honor must not be so interpreted as if any idea of remuneration is completely excluded from it, and as if in connection with verse 18 the thought conveyed is simply this: excellently ruling elders should receive their due, namely, double honor; just like the threshing ox receives its due, namely, wisps of grain; and just like the laborer receives his due, namely, wages.
p. 180

Paul is saying there should be recognition within the body of Christ for the leaders who are doing these 3 THINGS:

1. "RULING WELL"
2. working hard at "PREACHING"
3. working hard at "TEACHING"

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

The elders received a stipend. When they excelled in this ministry of leadership, they were worthy of double honor, or twice the remuneration.

(Transforming Leadership by Leighton Ford)

As Abigail Adams wrote in a letter to Thomas Jefferson in 1790, "Great necessities call forth great leaders."
p. 24

(Jumping Hurdles, Hitting Glitches, Overcoming Setbacks by Steve Brown)

At the entrance to a small inn in a town in Vermont, there's a regulation-size post office box. But, instead of having posted the usual hours of collection notice, the following message has been posted: "Neither rain nor snow nor gloom of night shall stay us from delivering this mail to the post office across the street at least once a day . . . weather permitting and providing there is enough mail in this box to make the trip worthwhile." A lot of Christians are that way about their obedience. As long as it's convenient, they'll be obedient.
p. 249

(Laugh Again by Charles R. Swindoll)

I came across a story in one of Tim Hansel's books that points this out in an unforgettable way. It's the true account of an eighty-two-year-old man who had served as a pastor for over fifty of those years. In his later years he struggled with skin cancer. It was so bad that he had already had fifteen skin operations. Tim writes:

Besides suffering from the pain, he was so embarrassed about how the cancer had scarred his appearance, that he wouldn't go out. Then one day he was given You Gotta Keep Dancin' in which I tell of my long struggle with the chronic, intense pain from a near-fatal climbing accident. In that book, I told of the day when I realized that the pain would be with me forever. At that moment, I made a pivotal decision. I knew that it was up to me to choose how I responded to it. So I chose joy. . . .

After reading awhile, the elderly pastor said he put the book down, thinking, "He's crazy. I can't choose joy."

So he gave up on the idea. Then later he read in John 15:11 that joy is a gift. Jesus says, "I want to give you my joy so that your joy may be complete."

A gift! he thought. He didn't know what to do, so he got down on his knees. Then he didn't know what to say, so he said, "Well, then, Lord, give it to me."

And suddenly, as he described it, this incredible hunk of joy came from heaven and landed on him.

"I was overwhelmed," he wrote. "It was like the joy talked about in Peter, a 'joy unspeakable and full of glory.' I didn't know what to say, so I said, 'Turn it on, Lord, turn it on!'" And before he knew it, he was dancing around the house. He felt so joyful that he actually felt born again--again. And this astonishing change happened at the age of 82.

He just had to get out. So much joy couldn't stay cooped up. So he went out to the local fastfood restaurant and got a burger. A lady saw how happy he was, and asked, "How are you doing?"

He said, "Oh, I'm wonderful!"

"Is it your birthday?" she asked.

"No, honey, it's better than that!"

"Your anniversary?"

"Better than that!"

"Well, what is it?" she asked excitedly.

"It's the joy of Jesus. Do you know what I'm talking about?"

The lady shrugged and answered, "No, I have to work on Sundays."

pp. 27-28

There are 8 COMMANDS in this passage.

COMMAND #1 is here in verse 17:

"LET THE ELDERS THAT ARE RULING WELL BE DEEMED WORTHY OF DOUBLE HONOR, ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO ARE WORKING HARD IN PREACHING AND TEACHING."

v.18 For the scripture is saying, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it is threshing the grain," and "The worker is worthy of his pay."

The apostle is going to be using 2 passages of scripture here from:

the book of Deuteronomy,
and the gospel of Luke.

He is going to be speaking about an "OX" and about a "WORKER."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Paul quotes 2 passages:

1. "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain"--Deuteronomy 25:4 (also quoted in 1 Corinthians 9:9).
2. "The worker is worthy of his pay."

That takes us to:

Leviticus 19:13,
Deuteronomy 24:15,
Matthew 10:10,
and Luke 10:7.

Verse 18 begins with the word "FOR" and he is now stating the reason for the first command in verse 17.

Guthrie says:

Whatever the apostle is here citing, he intends Timothy to understand that a divine sanction underlies the principle of fair provision for those who serve the Church. Too often a niggardly attitude had been maintained towards faithful men who have laboured for Christ in the interest of others.
p. 106

Hendriksen says:

The first saying is quoted from Deut. 25:4. Paul makes a similar use of it in I Cor. 9:8-12. The picture is that of a threshing-floor: a circular piece of level ground, exposed to the wind. Sometimes it is a flat rock on top of a hill. The sheaves of grain have been unbound and lie on this floor, arranged in circles. Oxen are driven over them, so that by the trampling of their hoofs the ripe grain may be shaken out of the ears (Hos. 10:11; Mic. 4:13). Or, for the same purpose the oxen may be harnessed to a rough sledge on which the driver stands or sits, as he guides the oxen around and around. This sledge or drag is a kind of sled consisting of two heavy boards, fastened side by side, and curved upward in front. To the bottom of it sharp pieces of stone are attached, to loosen the kernels of grain.
p. 181

J. Vernon McGee says:

Paul is quoting here from Deuteronomy 25:4 and Luke 10:7. I have known very few preachers who I thought were money-lovers; most men are in the ministry for a different motive than that. You are not going to hurt the preacher if you give him a generous offering. Be generous also to a visiting Bible teacher if his ministry is a blessing to you.
p. 453

Barclay describes the process by saying:

When threshing was done in the East, the sheaves of corn were laid on the threshing-floor; then oxen in pairs were driven repeatedly across them; or the oxen were tethered to a post in the middle, like a pivot, and made to march round and round on the grain; or sometimes a threshing sledge was harnessed to them and the sledge was drawn to and fro across the corn; but in all cases the oxen were left unmuzzled; they were free to eat as much of the grain as they wished, as a reward for the work which they were doing. The actual law that the ox must not be muzzled is in Deuteronomy 25:4.
p. 134

v.19 Do not entertain a charge against an elder unless it be confirmed by two or three witnesses.

COMMAND #2 is a NEGATIVE COMMAND:

"DO NOT ENTERTAIN A CHARGE AGAINST AN ELDER UNLESS IT BE CONFIRMED BY TWO OR THREE WITNESSES."

Deuteronomy 19:15

One witness is not enough to convict a man accused of any crime or offense he may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.

Hiebert says:

Keenly aware that even elders are not exempt from temptation and sin, Paul instructs Timothy concerning his action with those who do fail. He advises him to use great caution in receiving an accusation against an elder (v. 19), is told to reprove the sinning (v. 21), and is solemnly urged to be strictly impartial in his judgment in such cases (v. 22).
p. 102

When such accusations against an elder are brought to Timothy he must not entertain them and start judicial proceedings against the elder, unless two or three responsible witnesses attest the charge. "The influence of even the best minister might be destroyed, if idle gossip and social tattling were accounted a sufficient ground for serious charges and judicial proceedings" (Harvey).
pp. 102-3

Barnes says:

He was not to regard such a charge as well-founded unless sustained by two or three witnesses. It is clear from this, that Paul supposed that Timothy would be called on to hear charges against others who were in the ministerial office, and to express his judgment on such cases.
p. 183

Wiersbe warns:

Church discipline usually goes to one of two extremes. Either there is no discipline at all, and the church languishes because of disobedience and sin. Or the church officers become evangelical policemen who hold a kangaroo court and violate many of the Bible's spiritual principles.
p. 72

v.20 Those who are sinning, be rebuking in the presence of all, in order that the rest may be having fear.

"THOSE" refers to the elders that are sinning.

Verse 20 has COMMAND #3 in it:

"THOSE WHO ARE SINNING, BE REBUKING IN THE PRESENCE OF ALL."

Paul then states the purpose behind this command in the last part of the verse:

"IN ORDER THAT THE REST MAY BE HAVING FEAR."

This public rebuke could be just in the presence of the other elders or it could be before the whole church since they are affected by a person in leadership.

Guy King says:

This publicity may be a very painful proceeding, but it will prove salutary in the end, if its effect is to pull others up sharp. What a striking instance of such publicity we have in the incident in which Achan's transgression was dragged out into the light, and he himself, with his family, punished in the eyes of all, Joshua vii. 16 ff. And how startling was the open treatment of Ananias and Sapphira, upon which, "great fear came upon all the church," Acts v. 2. A worthy leader is to be an example to the flock; an un-worthy a warning to all.
pp. 101-2

In essence, The Bible Knowledge Commentary observes:

Paul is saying, "Take warning."

Barclay says:

Those who persist in sin are to be publicly rebuked. That public rebuke had a double value. It sobered the sinner into a consideration of his ways, and wakened him into a sense of shame; and it made others have a care that they did not involve themselves in a like humiliation. The threat of publicity is no bad thing, if it keeps a man in the right way, even from fear. A wise leader will know when there is a time to keep things quiet, and a time for public rebuke. But whatever happens, the Church must never give the world the impression that it is condoning sin.
pp. 135-36

Matthew 18:15-17

And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed. And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.

Wiersbe reminds us:

The purpose of discipline is restoration, not revenge. Our purpose must be to save the offender, not to drive him away. Our attitude must be one of love and tenderness (Gal. 6:1-3). In fact the verb restore that Paul used in Galatians 6:1 means "to set a broken bone." Think of the patience and tenderness involved in that procedure!
pp. 72-73

Hiebert says:

Such elders, convicted of sin, Timothy is to "reprove in the sight of all," that is, in the presence of all his fellow elders. The verb "reprove" may be translated "convict" and unites "the sharp convincing proof of the error and the sharp condemning reproof of the vice" (Humphreys). "That the rest also may be in fear." Some limit the meaning of "the rest" to the fellow elders, but it seems better to refer it to the church generally. "A public rebuke in such case would at once vindicate the church from complicity with the sin, and deter others from falling into it" (Harvey).
p. 103

Hendriksen says:

Elders who walk in sinful ways must not be spared. In fact, their sin must be punished even more severely than that of others. The law made the same distinction (Lev. 4:22, 27). Timothy must not only bring their sin home to their conscience, but in their case he must do this not privately or in the presence of just a few, but publicly, that is, in the presence of the entire consistory, so that the remaining elders may also become filled with godly fear of wrong-doing.
p. 183

(The Existence and Attributes of God by Stephen Charnock)

Their sins, by the order of divine wisdom, prove whetstones to sharpen the edge of their spirits for God. . . .

A believer's courage for God is more sharpened oftentimes by the shame of his fall. He endeavours to repair the faults of his ingratitude and disingenuity, by larger and stronger steps of obedience. . . .

Herein is the wonder of divine wisdom, that God many times makes a sin, which meritoriously fits us for hell, a providential occasion to fit us for heaven; when it is an occasion of a more humble faith and believing humility, and an occasion of a thorough sanctification and growth in grace, which prepares us for a state of glory.

p. 298

DON'T GRIEVE THE PREACHER!

Obey them [who] . . . watch for your souls . . . , that they may do it with joy, and not with grief. Hebrews 13:17

In this sinful world no church or preacher is perfect; therefore, it is easy to find fault with the Lord's servants. But God is not pleased when we dishonor those who by His grace and calling are responsible for feeding the flock and watching for our spiritual welfare. We are to obey them in all things scriptural, show respect for their high office, and praise them for their self-sacrificing service.

Sometimes we don't appreciate the many demands placed upon men of God. An anonymous author makes these discerning observations: "The pastor teaches, although he must often solicit his own classes. He's a social worker, a counselor, a salesman, and a 'decorative piece' for most church functions. He visits the sick, marries people, officiates at funerals, consoles those in sorrow, and admonishes the wayward. He plans programs, appoints committees (when he can get folks to serve), and spends considerable time tactfully keeping members of the congregation from angry disagreement. In addition to all this, he must find opportunity to study and prepare sermons, and then preach on Sunday to those who don't have a more pressing engagement. Above all, on Monday he's expected to have grace to smile when some jovial chap slaps him on the back and exclaims, **'What a job--just one day a week!'**"

With all the weight of eternal matters resting on the shoulders of Christian leaders, let's assist and encourage them so they may fulfill their heavenly calling with joy. If you want God's approval, **don't grieve the preacher!**

--H.G.B.

So as we feed upon the Word,
Let's pray for those who preach;
And keep from criticizing all
Whom God hath called to teach.

--G.W.

THOT: It's easy to find fault with those whose duties you need not face and whose problems you need not solve.

(From Our Daily Bread, May 26)

v.21 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and the elect angels, that these things you are to guard without showing prejudice, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality.

Paul is giving a very solemn charge to young Timothy.

The opening phrase could be translated "I am charging" because it is in the present tense.

The seriousness of this charge can be seen in the fact that it is being made in the presence of:

1. "GOD"
2. "CHRIST JESUS"
3. "THE ELECT ANGELS"

In this 21st verse we also have the 4TH COMMAND:

"THAT THESE THINGS YOU ARE TO GUARD WITHOUT SHOWING PREJUDICE, DOING NOTHING IN A SPIRIT OF PARTIALITY."

"THESE THINGS" refers to the disciplinary action that he has just been speaking of.

Rank and leadership are not exempt.

Hendriksen says:

Now in the matters discussed in verses 19 and 20, and, in fact, in any matter touching the discipline of church-leaders, one is easily influenced by purely subjective considerations. But this can spell ruin for the church and for all those concerned. Timothy, as apostolic delegate in the churches of Ephesus and vicinity, must not allow this to happen to him. Even today biased judges, ecclesiastical "machines," so-called "investigating-committees" manned by job-hunters, "buddy-ism," and the like can easily destroy a denomination. Corruption generally begins "at the summit." Church History furnishes many examples. The man in the pew does not know what happened "while he slept." When he wakes up--if he ever does!--it is generally too late.

Hence, absolute impartiality and unimpeachable honesty in all such matters are essential. It is for that reason that the charge which the apostle now lays on Timothy is so very grave. Everything is at stake! The church of the twentieth century may well take to heart these solemn words . . .

p. 183

Hiebert says:

It would be difficult to think of words carrying greater solemnity. Timothy is to carry out his task under the consciousness of working under the direct gaze of the spiritual world. All Christian work should be carried out as in God's sight. The use of one article with both "God and Christ Jesus" unites them, both being Deity, while another article with "the elect angels" sets them in contrast as creatures. "The elect angels" are the unfallen angels, as opposed to "the angels which kept not their first estate."

pp. 103-4

Guy King points out:

Such cases are to be judged as in the sight of God and of Christ, and of His holy angels--who, if they rejoice at the conversion of sinners, must weep at the confusion of saints; and, in consequence, there must be nothing but exact rectitude in awarding praise or blame.

p. 102

Barnes says:

The word rendered charge means, properly, to call to witness; then to affirm with solemn attestations; and then to admonish solemnly, to urge upon earnestly. It is a word which implies that the subject is of great importance. Paul gives this charge as in the presence of God, of the Redeemer, and of the elect angels, and wishes to secure that sense of its solemnity which must arise from the presence of such holy witnesses.
p. 185

Demarest says:

The opening words of verse 21 certainly were designed to get Timothy's attention! Charging someone in the name of "God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels" certainly makes it a weighty charge. Not only is it a heavy mandate; it is warmly personal. It is Paul's way of saying, "Take good care of yourself!"
p. 212

Lock says:

The appeal is to the thought of those who will take part in the final judgment (Mt 25:31), with the double suggestion-- (a) Judge, as one who has to represent on earth the Divine Judge in heaven. . . (b) Judge, as one who will have himself to be judged for his actions as judge.
p. 63

Guthrie says:

The sudden and solemn charge delivered to Timothy at this juncture throws a flood of light on the young man's character. He needs stiffening up and the apostle finds it necessary to use a strong expression.
pp. 106-7

"I SOLEMNLY CHARGE YOU IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND OF CHRIST JESUS AND THE ELECT ANGELS, THAT THESE THINGS YOU ARE TO GUARD WITHOUT SHOWING PREJUDICE, DOING NOTHING IN A SPIRIT OF PARTIALITY."

This is the KEY PHRASE to LAW #12 OF LEADERSHIP.

LAW #12 says:

"PREJUDICE AND PARTIALITY HAVE NO PLACE IN LEADERSHIP"

Paul says that Timothy is to be consistent in carrying out this disciplinary action with integrity and doing it:

1. "WITHOUT SHOWING PREJUDICE" or prejudging against,
2. "DOING NOTHING IN A SPIRIT OF PARTIALITY" or showing favor.

The 2 words that Paul is using here that we have translated "PREJUDICE" and "PARTIALITY" are used only here in the New Testament.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary translates:

"PREJUDICE" as "prejudging,"

and "PARTIALITY" as "an inclination toward someone."

We have "GOD," "CHRIST," and "THE ELECT ANGELS" all witnessing this scene and all 3 of them are associated with righteous judgment according to The Bible Knowledge Commentary.

Guthrie says:

In so doing Timothy must be both unprejudiced and impartial, never allowing personal inclination to bias his judgment.
p. 107

Lenski says:

Paul urges so solemnly upon Timothy, namely that he is to observe these things (about dealing with elders in v. 19, 20) "without prejudgment, doing nothing according to partiality." Prejudgment is risky and blinds the eye to just judgment when it should be rendered. [Partiality is] "leaning or inclining toward" somebody or something, hence "partiality." Timothy is usually thought of as being rather tender, some refer to his youth, and so "partiality" is taken to mean that he is warned against being tender and partial to accused elders. But the Greek means "leaning toward," either toward the elder or toward the accuser, for nothing is specified about the direction of the leaning. In a manner Timothy had to act as a judge in these cases, and in all of them, in those to be flatly turned down, and in those to be heard, his one course, for the good of all the elders and of all the churches, was genuine impartiality, consciousness of the fact that he was acting in God's sight. pp. 687-88

Lange says:

The unjust disposition is meant, which may easily lead us to look on the virtues or faults of others through a magnifying glass or a microscope.
p. 64

Demarest says:

To treat others impartially and without prejudice is not normally regarded in the realm of self-care. But for the Christian leader, the connection is clear. Credibility in pastoral ministry is closely tied to unprejudiced and impartial leadership. It's normal and natural to develop "favorites," folks with whom we work easily and naturally. But effective leadership requires that we work just as supportively with those we may not like as well.
p. 212

To work impartially with all requires constant awareness and self-discipline. For most of us, it does not come naturally. But leaders who cater to or are controlled by "favorites" sow the seeds of division that ultimately destroy the effectiveness of any group. This could well be a motto on every pastor's desk: No prejudice, no partiality!
pp. 212-13

Barnes says:

The meaning is, without previous judgment--without any prejudice on account of rank, wealth, personal friendship, or predilection of any sort. Let there be entire impartiality in all cases. Justice was beautifully represented by the ancients as holding a pair of scales equally balanced. It is as important that there should be entire impartiality in the church as in civil transactions, and though it is not wrong for a minister of the gospel to have his personal friends, yet in the administration of the affairs of the church he should remember that all are brethren, and all, of whatever rank, colour, sex, or age, have equal rights.

Partiality, inclination, or proclivity--that is, without being inclined to favour one party or person more than another. There should be no purpose to find one guilty and another innocent; no inclination of heart towards one which would lead us to resolve to find him innocent; and no aversion from another which would make us resolve to find him guilty.

p. 185

Guy King says:

The words translated "preferring" and "partiality" are interesting, and both imply prejudice: the first, is prejudice against the accused; the other, is prejudice in favour of the accused. No, no; away with them both, and let the judgment be entirely unbiased--facing all the facts, making all allowances, coming to free conclusions, awarding just penalties, whoever, or whatever, the accused may be.

p. 102

Barclay says:

Timothy is urged to administer his office without favouritism and without prejudice. B. S. Easton writes: "The well-being of every community depends on impartial discipline." There is nothing which does more harm than when some people are treated as if they could do no wrong, and when others are treated as if they could do no right. Justice is a universal virtue, and in it the Church must surely never fall below the impartial standards which even the world rightly demands.

p. 136

Hiebert says:

"Without prejudice" points out that he is not to prejudge a case unfavorably without making a calm and careful investigation of the evidence. He must also avoid the opposite error, "doing nothing by partiality." The literal meaning of "partiality" is "leaning or inclining toward," hence points out that besetting sin of judges of being favorably inclined or biased toward one party in the trial.
p. 104

Wiersbe puts it this way:

Paul's third caution is that Timothy obey the Word no matter what his personal feelings might be. He should act without prejudice against or partiality for the accused officer. There are no seniority rights in a local church; each member has the same standing before God and His Word. To show either prejudice or partiality is to make the situation even worse.
p. 74

J. Vernon McGee illustrates it this way:

Timothy is to treat everyone in the church alike. There may be an officer in the church who is a wealthy man and who has been good to the pastor. Perhaps he has bought the pastor a suit of clothes or helped him buy a new car. A pastor will often brag that such a man is a member of his church, and he may not feel inclined to bring any charges against him even though it is evident the man is guilty. Paul says that we are not to show partiality in the church. James said the same thing in James 2.
pp. 454-55

James 2:1-4

My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with an attitude of personal favoritism. For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, "You sit here in a good place," and you say to the poor man, "You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives?

James 2:9

But if you show partiality, you are committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors.

"PREJUDICE" is a prejudgment; it is discrimination. It is used legally and is only used here in the Greek New Testament.

The word in the English language means:

"bent,"

"favoritism,"

"leaning,"

"partiality,"

"presupposition,"

"intolerance,"

"twist,"

"an opinion, judgment, or evaluation favorable, or more often unfavorable,"

"conceived without proof or competent evidence but based on what seems valid to one's own mind,"

it is "a bias,"

"holding of such feelings,"

"hasty and incorrect notions,"

it is "to injure by an act of judgment,"

it has in it "hurt," "damage," or "impair."

"PARTIALITY" in the Webster's Dictionary means "inclination," used only in an unfavorable sense and only here.

It is:

"biased,"

"partisan,"

"fractional,"

"fragmentary,"

"biased favoritism,"

"a special liking or fondness."

When you take the 2 words and contrast them:

PREJUDICE has to do with ATTITUDE,
whereas PARTIALITY has to do with ACTION.

PREJUDICE is more INWARD; PARTIALITY more OUTWARD.

PREJUDICE is more PASSIVE; PARTIALITY more ACTIVE.

PREJUDICE has to do with THOUGHTS;
PARTIALITY has to do with DEEDS.

PREJUDICE, then, is the ATTITUDE and PARTIALITY is the ACTION.

We think of prejudice when we think of:

the press,

or of skin color,

or of status.

(Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun by Wess Roberts)

Decisiveness in leadership action carries a heavy burden. Often it means victory or defeat. We cannot hesitate to act, but neither can we prematurely precipitate decisions that will work to our disadvantage.

p. 71

(Temptations Men Face by Tom L. Eisenman)

Relationships are like a dance,
With visible energy racing,
back and forth between partners.
Some relationships are the slow,
dark dance of death.

COLETTE DOWLING

God give us grace to accept with serenity
The things that cannot be changed,
Courage to change the things which should be changed,
And the wisdom to distinguish the one from the other.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

p. 209

(The Leadership Style of Jesus by Michael Youssef)

I walked into an office one day and saw these words on a sign on the manager's desk:

To avoid criticism:

Say nothing. Do nothing. Be nothing.

I'm not sure even that works. In fact, I can't figure out any way to avoid criticism, especially as a leader.

p. 133

(Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey)

The ability to listen first requires restraint, respect, and reverence. And the ability to make yourself understood requires courage and consideration. On the continuum, you go from fight and flight instincts to mature two-way communication where courage is balanced with consideration.

p. 46

(The Heart of Godly Leadership by Hudson T. Armerding)

The guiding principle of many leaders seems to be expediency rather than truth, and public opinion determines whether they should contradict or stand by what they have said.
p. 81

We had some young men on campus whose hair was longer than I thought it should have been. They also began to dress in a manner more like the counterculture, which I deplored because to me the counterculture represented unpatriotic draft-resisters, flag-burners, and such like. When I read of their acts as they rioted and demonstrated, my blood pressure rose because I remembered fighting for the country they seemed to despise. Though I had fought for all citizens to have the liberty to disagree, I resented the way the counterculture went about disagreeing.

One day I was scheduled to speak in chapel. Just before the service, we gathered for prayer to ask the Lord's blessing. As we were about to pray, in walked a young man who had a beard and long hair, was wearing a sash around his waist, and had on sandals. As I looked at him, I was sorry he had come. Worse yet, he sat down right beside me.

When we went to prayer, I did not enter into the praying with a very good attitude. Then the young man began to pray, and his prayer went something like this: "Dear Lord, you know how much I admire Dr. Armerding, how I appreciate his walk with You. I am grateful for what a man of God he is, and how he loves You and loves Your people. Lord, bless him today. Give him liberty in the Holy Spirit, and make him a real blessing to all of us in the student body. Help us to have open hearts to hear what he has to say, and may we just do what You want us to do."

As I walked down the steps to go into the chapel, the Lord spoke to me about my attitude. After giving my message, I asked the young man to come to the platform. Later I learned that one of the students turned to another at that point and remarked that I was probably about to dismiss the young man from school as an example to the rest of the students. Thus everyone, including the young man, was surprised when I put my arms around him and embraced him as a brother in Christ. That dramatically ended the chapel service. Students stood and applauded; they cried and embraced each other. The situation was unprecedented and, under God, seemed to change the mood on campus to one of greater love and acceptance of one another.

I was informed later that the young man in question had adopted his appearance in order to be able to reach some of his generation who were alienated. Whether or not this was the case, I needed to learn not to reject someone whom God had cleansed. If God has accepted another believer, I should do so as well. I should not reject him simply because of his style of life.

pp. 189-90

LAW #12 OF LEADERSHIP says:

"PREJUDICE AND PARTIALITY HAVE NO PLACE IN LEADERSHIP"

When was the last time you spent time in prayer before the Lord asking Him specifically to reveal your prejudices and where you are partial or showing favoritism to certain individuals?

Now knowing that this is sin, perhaps this is the reason the Lord has not poured out His blessing upon your life because you have never dealt with these issues.

May I urge you to take time before the Lord and seek His face with just these 2 WORDS on your lips:

1. "PREJUDICE,"
2. "PARTIALITY."

v.22 Lay hands [of ordination] on no one hastily; neither be a partner in others' sins; keep yourself pure.

In this 22nd verse we have 3 commands.

They are COMMANDS #5, 6 and 7 in the series of 8 commands that are included here in the passage.

COMMAND #5:

"LAY HANDS [OF ORDINATION] ON NO ONE HASTILY."

COMMAND #6:

"NEITHER BE A PARTNER IN OTHERS' SINS."

COMMAND #7:

"KEEP YOURSELF PURE."

In these 3 commands Paul is going to address the issues of HASTE, CONVICTIONS, and CONFESSION:

- 1.DO NOT GET IN A HURRY
- 2.CONDEMN RATHER THAN CONDONE SIN
3. CONFESS YOUR OWN SINS

COMMAND #5:

"LAY HANDS [OF ORDINATION] ON NO ONE HASTILY."

This is the present tense here in the imperative. We could translate it:

"be laying hands of ordination on no one hastily."

Someone has said:

Haste makes waste.

And still another:

Satan rushes men but God leads them.

Psalm 27:14

Wait for the Lord;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the Lord.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

One way to avoid painful situations involving the disciplining of an elder is to be careful about who is ordained in the first place.

Wiersbe says:

Only God knows the hearts of everyone (Acts 1:24). The church needs spiritual wisdom and guidance in selecting its officers. It is dangerous to impulsively place a new Christian or a new church member in a place of spiritual responsibility.

p. 74

Barclay says:

Before a man gains promotion in business, or in teaching, or in the army or the navy or the air force, he must give proof that he has earned it and that he deserves it. No man should ever start at the top. A man must give proof that he deserves a position of responsibility and leadership. This is doubly important in the Church; for a man who is raised to high office, and who then fails in it or brings discredit on it, brings dishonour, not only on himself, but also on the Church. In a critical world the Church cannot be too careful in regard to the kind of men whom she chooses as her leaders.

p. 136

Lenski says:

"Wait," Paul says, "until everything is duly and fully ascertained; wait also until thou art sure that he will make a capable, sound, well-informed teacher. Admit to the eldership and ordain only such a man."

p. 688

Instead of being very careful in observing potential candidates for a period of time, we often make decisions about these matters on the spur of the moment.

J. Vernon McGee says:

Instead, today we often develop what I call Alka-Seltzer Christians and Alka-Seltzer churches--it's all fizz, foam, and froth, a lot of emotion, and a lot of talk about love, love, love. It is important that love be displayed in a church, but it needs to be anchored in the Word of God. Our mistake is that we often interpret some sort of experience as being the test of spiritual maturity. We've got the cart before the horse. The Word of God is the test, and experience can prove the truth of it.

p. 454

COMMAND #5, then, is:

"LAY HANDS [OF ORDINATION] ON NO ONE HASTILY."

COMMAND #6 follows:

"NEITHER BE A PARTNER IN OTHERS' SINS."

This too is a present imperative and could be translated:

"neither be sharing or participating in others' sins."

When we fail to take disciplinary action against someone who has sin in his life, we become partners with him.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary points out:

Taking part in the premature ordination of an errant elder would be sharing some of the blame for the negative consequences.

Guthrie says:

The second half of this verse, neither be partaker of other men's sins seems to mean that whoever lays hands upon an unworthy man must take responsibility for the man's sins.
p. 107

Barnes says:

In no way are we to participate in the sins of other men. We are not to be engaged with them in doing wrong; we are not to patronize them in a wicked business; we are not to be known as their companions or friends; and we are not to partake of their unlawful gains.
p. 186

Lange says:

Timothy gave to each man, in the laying on of hands, evidence of his own esteem; and should it appear afterward that he was, through haste, deceived in the person, then he would reproach himself as in some measure answerable for the consequences of others' sins.
p. 65

COMMAND #5 expresses the consequences of haste:

Be laying "HANDS [OF ORDINATION] ON NO ONE HASTILY."

COMMAND #6 helps us understand the dangers in making haste:

"NEITHER BE [sharing or participating] IN OTHERS' SINS."

This brings us then to COMMAND #7 in this verse:

"KEEP YOURSELF PURE."

This too is in the present tense and we could translate it:

"be keeping yourself pure."

That is, "PURE" in the sense that you are:

1. STAYING AWAY FROM THE SINS OF OTHERS
2. CONFESSING YOUR OWN SINS REGULARLY

1 Timothy 4:12

Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

One cannot deal with sin in another's life if one's own life is not pure.

Hiebert says:

On the contrary, "keep thyself pure," so that he will remain fit to rebuke the sins of others. "Pure" must not be limited to moral purity, chastity, but refers rather to his purity of intention and singleness of life.
p. 104

Guthrie says:

The rather abrupt personal charge to Timothy, keep thyself pure, must primarily be understood in the general sense of honourable and upright behaviour. It is as if the apostle had said--make sure you appoint 'pure' men and keep yourself 'pure' in the process.
pp. 107-8

GUARD YOUR PURITY!

. . . keep thyself pure.

1 Timothy 5:22

Two theological students were walking along a street in the Whitechapel district of London, a section where old and used clothing is sold. "What a fitting illustration all this makes!" said one of the students as he pointed to a suit of clothes hanging on a rack by a window. A sign on it read: SLIGHTLY SOILED--GREATLY REDUCED IN PRICE. "That's it exactly," he continued. "We get soiled by gazing at a vulgar picture, reading a coarse book, or allowing ourselves a little indulgence in dishonest or lustful thoughts; and so when the time comes for our character to be appraised, we are greatly reduced in value. Our purity, our strength is gone. We are just part and parcel of the general, shopworn stock of the world." Yes, continual slight deviations from the path of right may greatly reduce our usefulness to God and to our fellowman. In fact, these little secret sins can weaken our character so that when we face a moral crisis, we cannot stand the test. As a result, we go down in spiritual defeat because we have been careless about little sins.

After a violent storm one night, a large tree, which over the years had become a stately giant, was found lying across the pathway in a park. Nothing but a splintered stump was left. Closer examination showed that it was rotten at the core because thousands of tiny insects had eaten away at its heart. The weakness of that tree was not brought on by the sudden storm; it began the very moment the first insect nested within its bark.

With the Holy Spirit's help, let's be very careful to guard our purity. --H.G.B.

Whatever dims thy sense of truth
Or stains thy purity,
Though light as breath of summer air,
Count it as sin to thee.

--Hale

THOT: Purity in your heart produces power in your life.

(From Our Daily Bread, August 16)

PERSONAL PURITY

Do not . . . share in other people's sins;
keep yourself pure. 1 Timothy 5:22

Our society has become increasingly aware of the danger of polluting our air and other resources. We who are Christians have a responsibility to be concerned about such things. But there is another form of pollution that has always needed attention--the moral filth that contaminates our inner being and destroys the purity of heart and mind. That's why Paul told Timothy, "Keep yourself pure." Holiness of life is important because it helps us maintain unbroken fellowship with God, and because it serves as a preserving influence in society (Matt. 5:13-16).

We can learn a lesson in purity from a member of the animal kingdom--the ermine. The fur of that little creature is well-known for its whiteness. The ermine has such a deep, instinctive desire to remain unblemished that it will allow itself to be captured and killed rather than let its feet or beautiful coat of fur be soiled. Those who hunt it know this. Finding an ermine's den, they will smear every opening with slime or filth. The ermine will yield itself to death rather than be defiled.

Are we as determined to keep our lives pure from the sin and moral filth that surrounds us? Remember the example of our lovely Lord. He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). The provision He has made for us is His own blood, which cleanses us from all sin. We also have the indwelling Holy Spirit, who guides us and keeps what God has cleansed. As we learn to yield to Him, personal purity becomes practice. --P.R.V.

Dear Lord, look down upon me,
Forgive me when I sin;
Make my heart a welcome place
For You to dwell within.

--Hein

Purity in the heart produces power in the life.

(From Our Daily Bread, August 11)

(Rediscovering Holiness by J. I. Packer)

In The Great Divorce C. S. Lewis pictures a man with a lizard on his shoulder, representing lawless lust. The lizard whispers in his ear about how essential it is to his continued well-being. When the angel asks, "Shall I kill it?" the man's first response is to say no. (One thinks of Augustine's prayer: "Give me chastity, but not yet.")
p. 107

We are all invalids in God's hospital. In moral and spiritual terms we are all sick and damaged, diseased and deformed, scarred and sore, lame and lopsided, to a far, far greater extent than we realize. Under God's care we are getting better, but we are not yet well.
p. 40

(When You Can't Come Back by Dave Dravecky & Jan Dravecky with Ken Gire)

That afternoon after we got settled in my room, Dad started crying. There was something he wanted to tell me, but the words had to be brought up from the depths of his heart. And bringing them up wasn't easy.

"I'm so tired of seeing you in so much pain, son, with that dead limb hanging from your body. . . . Just get it off and be done with it."

Telling me that was the hardest thing I think my father had ever done. Mom was real quiet, off to the side. It was too painful for her to say it, but she knew he was right.
p. 115

In summary, Paul gives 3 commands here in this 22nd verse. He is warning Timothy not to get in a hurry by laying the hands of ordination on someone who has not been carefully observed for a period of time, lest he find himself participating in this man's sins. And to be effective and fruitful in ministry, it is necessary for him to be keeping himself pure by continually confessing his own sins.

v.23 No longer drink only water, but be using a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

This is COMMAND #8 in a series of 8 commands, and it is a very personal one.

The command makes both a negative and a positive statement:
NEGATIVELY:

"NO LONGER DRINK ONLY WATER."

"BUT":

POSITIVELY:

"BE USING A LITTLE WINE FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR STOMACH AND YOUR FREQUENT ILLNESSES."

Paul is qualifying Timothy's concept of purity so that he can have some medicinal help for his physical ailments.

Hiebert says:

The words imply that Timothy was a total abstainer from wine. Perhaps the reason was that by his example he sought to deter others from the use of this enslaving and destructive drink. Paul advises him to drink "a little wine" as well as water. The purpose of Paul's counsel was hygienic. It was apparently the best known remedy for Timothy's troubles.

p. 105

Hendriksen ties this 23rd verse together with the passage by saying:

The precept, "Keep yourself pure" was of a personal nature. This leads to another remark which is also personal: **No longer drink water (only), but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.**

Timothy was a conscientious person. He did not want to be accused of being the kind of individual who "lingers beside his wine" (I Tim. 3:3). Hence, he had formed the habit of drinking nothing but water. However, in the Orient the water is often far from "safe." Those who have been there--including, for example, those who were there while serving in the armed forces--know this. If one insists on drinking nothing but unboiled water, attacks of dysentery may result. In fact, something worse might happen! Consequently, for the sake of helping Timothy to overcome his stomach-troubles and related ailments, which seem to have been coming to him "thick and fast," Paul advises him to stop being purely a water-drinker. Timothy must use some wine, not much wine, but some wine. That will do him good physically. Paul is here speaking of wine as a medicine, not as a beverage, as Wuest correctly observes.
pp. 185-86

Barclay says:

Here is a sentence which shows the real intimacy of these letters. Amidst the affairs of the Church, and the problems of administration, Paul finds time to slip in a little bit of loving advice to Timothy about his health.
p. 137

Barclay points out further:

Here we have a great truth which the Christian and the worker for Christ forgets at his peril, the truth that we dare not neglect the body. No man ought ever to be too busy to look after his own health. And often a man will find that his spiritual dullness and flatness and aridity comes from the simple fact that his body is tired and neglected. No machine will run well unless it is duly cared for; and neither will the body. We wish to do Christ's work as well as we can; we will not and cannot do it well unless we are physically fit to do it.
p. 138

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

I didn't go to religion to make me happy. I always knew a bottle of Port would do that. If you want a religion to make you feel really comfortable, I certainly don't recommend Christianity.

C. S. Lewis

p. 39

v.24 The sins of some men are known to all (conspicuous), going ahead to judgment; and in the case of certain individuals, they are following after.

The certainty of God's judgment upon sin is clear here in this passage.

Paul warns about this in:

- 1.Romans 1 - where God gives them over to judgment,
- 2.1 Corinthians 11 - they are to examine themselves,
- 3.the book of Hebrews - "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,"
- 4.the book of Romans - "The wages of sin is death."

Guthrie says:

It is best to regard verse 23 as parenthetical and to make these last two verses resume the thought of verse 22. A distinction is drawn between men whose sins are clearly evident and those whose sins are not immediately apparent but who will ultimately be pursued by them (they follow after).

p. 108

Wiersbe says:

In other words, the church must carefully investigate the lives of potential leaders to make sure that there is nothing seriously wrong. To ordain elders with sin in their lives is to partake of those sins! If simply saying "Good-bye" (God be with you) to a heretic makes us partakers of his evil deeds (2 John 10-11), then how much more guilty are we if we ordain people whose lives are not right with God?
p. 74

Hiebert says:

Some sins are open and manifest to all and are like heralds going before the sinner proclaiming his guilt. "And some men also they follow after." In other cases the sins of men are concealed; they lag behind and are revealed only after the culprit has been thoroughly examined. The "judgment" here is not the final judgment of God, although that lies in the background, but rather the trial which Timothy must hold before candidates are appointed. The final revelation of a man's sins before the bar of God would not help Timothy now in his evaluation of a man's character.
p. 106

Hendriksen says about verse 24:

In verse 24 Paul is speaking about sins, namely, the sins of men who are unfit for office. In verse 25 he is speaking about noble deeds (or excellent works), namely, the noble deeds of men who are fit for office.
p. 186

Hendriksen continues by saying:

In the case of other men the situation is different. Their sins follow them (literally follow after them, or follow them up). When their case is considered in order that a decision may be reached, they are found, after thorough examination, to be unfit for office. Before their case comes up, Timothy and perhaps several presbyters consider these men to be possible candidates for office. After thorough examination and the rendering of a judgment, things take on an altogether different aspect. The sins of these men have now been uncovered, so that, the judgment having been rendered, there is no longer any doubt about their unfitness for office.
p. 187

(Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey)

John Wesley's mother taught her son, "Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, takes off your relish for spiritual things, whatever increases the authority of the body over the mind, that thing is sin to you, however innocent it may seem in itself."

Further, I believe God is the true name and source of the collective unconscious and is therefore the ultimate moral authority in the universe. The daily prayerful study of His revealed word is the single most important and powerful discipline in life because it points our lives, like a compass, to "true north"--our divine destiny.
pp. 323-24

(Jumping Hurdles, Hitting Glitches, Overcoming Setbacks by Steve Brown)

How difficult it is for us to admit our mistakes, and how much easier it would be on us and others if we would.

I have a friend who drove twenty miles in the wrong direction to keep from admitting to his wife that he had taken a wrong turn. (Well, actually, it wasn't a friend; it was me.)

p. 132

Do you know what sin is? Sin is all the arrogance of an alley cat spitting in the face of Almighty God. Sin is taking your life and your soul, which belong to Him, and using them for yourself. You may be saying, "Well, I'm human. I make a few mistakes, but I'm reasonably good." You're simply missing the point.

Sin separates you from yourself. Are you having trouble sleeping at night, tossing and turning, and you can't deal with it? You've got a sin problem.

Sin separates you from other people, too. Are you always smiling, trying to be loving, sweet, kind, and pure?

Then at night, when you look in the mirror and take off your mask, do you know your image doesn't reflect reality? You've got a sin problem.

More importantly, sin separates you from a holy and righteous God, the One who is the only source of meaning and joy in this world. And you can't bridge that gap apart from Christ.

p. 19

(Looking Back, Moving On: Applying Biblical Principles of Freedom to Your Life by Boyd Luter)

The first of these, found in 1 John 1:8, is the consistent human tendency to self-deception in regard to sin. This pattern can helpfully be termed "internal spiritual denial." It is classically evidenced in many churches when, during a time set aside for confession of sin during the service, or before taking the Lord's Supper, we can't think of anything to confess.
p. 61

(The Existence and Attributes of God by Stephen Charnock)

He fills hell with his severity, heaven with his glory, his people with his grace.
p. 175

(The Heart of Godly Leadership by Hudson T. Armerding)

For example, some wrongly insist they are part of the believing community, but seek to justify sexual practices forbidden by the Scriptures. This rationalization seems to be based upon two assumptions: first, that God made some human beings with different sexual desires and will not condemn them for seeking the satisfaction of those desires; and second, that the Bible condemns only promiscuous or exploitative sexual relationships but not long-term, responsible ones, even if they are homosexual.

Such an approach to Scripture is based on an incomplete view of all that the Bible teaches on the subject and on an assumption about human nature which fails to recognize the effects of sin upon it. Thus this view seriously falls short of the truth.
p. 53

v.25 Likewise also, the good works are known to all (conspicuous), and those that are otherwise not able to be hidden.

Now the apostle plays the other side of the record:

In verse 24 he talks about the sins,
and in verse 25 he talks about "THE GOOD WORKS."

Whereas some sins are conspicuous and others are hidden, so likewise "THE GOOD WORKS": some are conspicuous and some are hidden, but they will not be permanently.

Barclay summarizes it by saying:

Here we are told that we must neither grow angry at the apparent escape of others, nor embittered at the apparent thanklessness of men, but that we must be content to leave all things to the ultimate judgment of God.
p. 140

(You Can Make a Difference by Gary R. Collins)

Recently I heard the story of a businessman who went with his wife for a few days of relaxation at an oceanfront hotel. One night a violent storm lashed the beach and sent massive breakers crashing against the shore.

Next morning, the businessman got up early and went for a walk to see what damage had been done during the night. As he strolled, he saw that the beach was covered with starfish that had washed ashore in the waves and now were several feet from the water. Once the morning sun broke through the dissipating clouds, the starfish would dry out and die.

Farther along, the strolling vacationer encountered a young boy who was picking up starfish, one at a time, and throwing them back into the water.

"Why are you doing that?" the man asked when he got closer to the boy. "Can't you see that one person will never make a difference in getting these starfish back into the water?"

"That's true," the boy said as he bent over, picked up another starfish, and tossed it into the ocean.

Then he smiled. "But I sure made a difference to that one!"

pp. 201-2

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The 3-fold ministry of the elder is to be:

1. ruling well
2. preaching
3. teaching

LESSON #2: There is a double honor for the elder in that he is to be honored here and ultimately to be honored over there.

LESSON #3: The elder is to be cared for physically in order that he might be free to minister spiritually.

LESSON #4: Witnesses are necessary before a charge can be entertained.

LESSON #5: Public review is necessary so that the fear of sin's consequences might fall upon those who are witnesses.

LESSON #6: Prejudice and partiality have no place in leadership.

LESSON #7: Do not be hasty in making decisions about leadership.

LESSON #8: We become partners in crime when we bind ourselves together with those who have unjudged sin in their lives.

LESSON #9: Our physical condition ought to be a concern to us because it affects the ministry.

LESSON #10: Some sins are conspicuous and others are only revealed after examination.

Numbers 32:23

But if you fail to do this, you will be sinning against the Lord; and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.

Proverbs 28:13

He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

(The God-Players by Earl Jabay)

Accepting responsibility for what we have done amiss is surely a first and needful step out of the darkness of sin into which we have plunged ourselves. It is deeply disturbing to come to realize that our malfunctioning lives are of our own creation; that our mistakes were our mistakes; that what we are now reaping is only what we have earlier sown. Necessary and beneficial though this is, however, it is only the beginning of a solution to our problems.

Not until one begins to see himself in the light of God's law, can one have the beginning of an awareness that one has done something wrong. Paul says: ". . . what the law does is to make man know that he has sinned" (Romans 3:20, TEV). The law of God is a mirror in which we are at last able to see ourselves as we truly are ". . . if it had not been for the law, I should not have recognized sin or have known its meaning. [For instance] I would not have known about covetousness--would have had no consciousness of sin or sense of guilt--if the Law had not [repeatedly] said, You shall not covet . . ." (Romans 7:7, The Amplified Bible). What is true of coveting would hold for any of the commandments of God.

p. 77

(The Grace Awakening by Charles R. Swindoll)

John Henry Jowett wrote words many years ago that still sting with relevance:

Sin is a blasting presence, and every fine power shrinks and withers in the destructive heat. Every spiritual delicacy succumbs to its malignant touch. . . . Sin impairs the sight, and works towards blindness. Sin benumbs the hearing and tends to make men deaf. Sin perverts the taste, causing men to confound the sweet with the bitter, and the bitter with the sweet. Sin hardens the touch, and eventually renders a man "past feeling." All these are Scriptural analogies, and their common significance appears to be this--sin blocks and chokes the fine senses of the spirit; by sin we are desensitized, rendered imperceptive, and the range of our correspondence is diminished. Sin creates callosity. It hoofs the spirit, and so reduces the area of our exposure to pain.

pp. 140-41

(Jumping Hurdles, Hitting Glitches, Overcoming Setbacks by Steve Brown)

Now the proper good of a creature is to surrender itself to its Creator--to enact intellectually, volitionally, and emotionally, that relationship which is given in the mere fact of its being a creature. . . . In the world as we now know it, the problem is how to recover this self-surrender. We are not merely imperfect creatures who must be improved: we are . . . rebels who must lay down our arms. The first answer, then, to the question why our cure should be painful, is that to render back the will which we have so long claimed for our own, is in itself, wherever and however it is done, a grievous pain.

C. S. Lewis
The Problem of Pain

p. 75

(Success, Motivation, and the Scriptures by William H. Cook)

One sentence turned Dwight L. Moody on. A speaker said, "The world has yet to see what God can do with one life totally yielded to Jesus Christ." Terrible in speech, poor in grammar, but with a heart hungry to be used, Moody said to himself, "By the grace of God I'll be that man."

pp. 104-5

(Looking Back, Moving On: Applying Biblical Principles of
Freedom to Your Life by Boyd Luter)

You can call a spade, a spade until you are blue in the face, but a person entrenched in denial will continue to call it a pickax or a garden hoe if it helps stave off the onslaught of the discomfort zone. Only the Lord can dissolve that kind of stubbornness.

I know this because I was a much-decorated veteran of the wars of denial before I resigned my commission two years ago. I was a master of this sad combination of spiritual resistance, pride, and fear of change.

It took divine intervention to move me toward righting my wrong attitudes. In fact, I'm now convinced that my experience of the recovery process was right in line with the expectation of divine intervention that Paul lays out in Philippians 3:15.

p. 162

(Transforming Leadership by Leighton Ford)

There is a prayer written by my friend Lloyd Ogilvie that I often use, praying it quietly just before I speak. It sums up what we have been saying in this chapter, recognizing that when we ask and trust him Jesus Christ will indeed communicate through us:

Lord, here's my mind, think your thoughts in me. Be my wisdom, knowledge, and insight. Here is my voice. You told me not to worry about what I am to say, but that it would be given me what to say and how to say it. Free me to speak with silence or with words, whichever is needed. Give me your timing and tenderness. Now Lord, here is my body. Release creative affection in my face, my touch, my embrace. And Christ, if there is something I am to do by your indwelling presence, however menial or tough, control my will to do it.

Lord, I am ready now to be your manifest intervention in situations to infuse joy, affirm growth, or absorb pain and aching anguish. I plan to live this day and the rest of my life in the reality of you in me. Thank you for making it so!

pp. 249-50

STUDY #12 - 1 Timothy 5:17-25

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: The 3-fold ministry of the elder is to be:

1. ruling well
2. preaching
3. teaching

LESSON #2: There is a double honor for the elder in that he is to be honored here and ultimately to be honored over there.

LESSON #3: The elder is to be cared for physically in order that he might be free to minister spiritually.

LESSON #4: Witnesses are necessary before a charge can be entertained.

LESSON #5: Public review is necessary so that the fear of sin's consequences might fall upon those who are witnesses.

LESSON #6: Prejudice and partiality have no place in leadership.

LESSON #7: Do not be hasty in making decisions about leadership.

LESSON #8: We become partners in crime when we bind ourselves together with those who have unjudged sin in their lives.

LESSON #9: Our physical condition ought to be a concern to us because it affects the ministry.

LESSON #10: Some sins are conspicuous and others are only

revealed after examination.