

# Do Not Be Surprised at the Fiery Ordeal Among You

## An Expositional Journey Through **1Peter**

### **1Peter 5:1-4**

#### 50 The Weight and Reward of Shepherd/Elders, Part 3

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May 5, 2019

#### **1 Peter 5:1-4**

**1** Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,

**2** shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;

**3** nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.

**4** And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

To the Glory of God

Now, we are *continuing* to examine what Peter was talking about here in the first four verses of his magnificent Epistle. And as I told you last time, because this is such an important part of **1 Peter**, and because there is so much *mis-information* out there concerning Elders and their Role in the Church, that we need to “pitch our tents” and camp here on this Passage for a few weeks so we can “do justice” to it.

Now, according to the New Testament, Elders are responsible for the *primary* Leadership and Oversight of a local Church. And the way that Elders lead is two-fold:

1. What is believed and taught
2. How we live our lives

... which is *summarized* by two words:

- Ortho-*doxy* (right-believing)
- Ortho-*praxy* (right- living)

Now what we have to understand is that “right-living” flows out of “right-believing”. Every way in which we conduct our lives is based on what we believe to be true. Everything we “do” is based on “who we are”. And “who we are” is determined by “what we believe”. And that is *why* “what we believe”, and “what we are being taught”, and “who is teaching us” is so very important. We must know that human beings *do not* and *cannot* live (long term) contrary to the way they believe, because “what we believe” *fuels* “what we do”. And that Reality puts “Orthodoxy” (right-believing) at the *fore-front* of *everything* that is done in the local Church. In his book “*Biblical Eldership*”, Alexander Strauch writes:

“Elders lead the Church [1 **Tim. 5:17**; **Titus 1:7**; 1 **Peter 5:1&2**]; teach and preach the Word of God [1 **Timothy 3:2**; 2 **Timothy 4:2**; **Titus 1:9**]; protect the Church from false teachers [**The Acts 20:17, 28-31**]; exhort and admonish the saints in Sound Doctrine [1 **Timothy 4:13**; 2 **Timothy 3:13-17**; **Titus 1:9**]; visit the sick and pray [**James 5:14**; **The Acts 6:4**]; and judge Doctrinal Issues [**The Acts 15:6**]. In Biblical terminology, Elders *shepherd, oversee, lead, and care* for the local Church.”

Now what is not often talked about is the fact that the Office of “Elder” and “Pastor” are the same. These two terms are simply two different expressions of the very same Office. And there are at least three reasons to believe this:

- ✓ In **The Acts 20:28**, Elders are encouraged in the “pastoral” duties of “Overseeing” and “Shepherding”.
- ✓ In 1 **Peter 5:1&2**, Elders are exhorted by the Apostle to “shepherd” the flock of God that is in their charge, which is the *primary* Role of a Pastor.
- ✓ In **Ephesians 4:11**, the one time that the word, “Pastor” occurs in the NT, they are treated as being in the very *same* group with Teachers.

These verses suggest that the *primary* Role of the Pastor is to “feed the flock of God” through Teaching, which is the *primary* Role of Elders (**Titus 1:9**). So, the New Testament shows that “Pastor” is simply another name for “Elder.” And that means that an Elder is a Pastor, and a Pastor is an Elder. Now the Elders will migrate into their own particular duties based on their God-given giftings and anointings. Some will be more proficient at Counselling or Administration or Preaching, but they will all be “able to Teach”.

Now, in the early days of the Church, when the Apostles were still alive, there was another group of men who led. Some English versions call them “Overseers”, while others call them “Bishops”. And there is some confusion about these people due to different Greek words that were used to describe them.

The Reality is that these men were simply older and wiser Elders who took on more of a counselling Role in the early Church. But after the death of the Apostles and Christianity was established on the earth, these men and their duties very quickly became absorbed by the Elders. Near the end of Paul’s life, in **The Acts 20:17-35**, he referred to the Elders at the Church in Ephesus as “Overseers”. And, likewise, in **Titus 1**, the term “Overseer” is simply a synonym for the term “Elder” used in verse 5. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century English theologian, J.B. Lightfoot, taught:

“It is a fact now generally recognized by theologians of all shades of opinion, that in the language of the New Testament the *same* Officer in the Church is called indifferently ‘Bishop’ or ‘Overseer’ (from *episkopos*) and ‘Elder’ or ‘Presbyter’ (from *presbyteros*)”

So, that is who Elders are and what their Ministry is in the New Testament Church. But then at the end of verse 2 and verse 3, the Apostle Peter goes on to tell these Elders just *how* to accomplish the “Shepherding” and the “Oversight”:

**... not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.**

... and what Peter says here contains both *positive* and *negative* Commands:

- ✓ Not under compulsion, but voluntarily
- ✓ According to *the Will of God*
- ✓ Not for “sordid gain”
- ✓ With eagerness
- ✓ Nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge
- ✓ Proving to be examples to the flock

... and we will go over each of these in this mini-series.

But we must remember that, according to the Holy Bible, all of the other religions of the world are the invention of fallen angels (demons) who empowered unsaved and evil men to create False Teaching for three main goals:

1. To keep lost people lost.
2. To deceive saved people with false Teaching.
3. To defame the one, true, and living God.

... so God was faithful to *create* the Ministry of Elders in the Church so that by these men *shepherding* the flock of God, and by them *exercising Oversight* in the Church, false Teaching would be exposed, and God’s people could hear and believe and strive to obey Divine Truth, so that two things will happen:

1. God will be glorified.
2. Our Joy will be made full.

... and the *primary* Way that Elders do that is through Teaching.

Now, in His Wisdom, God set up this Ministry in such a way that not everybody could be an Elder. In fact, in **James 3:1**, James wrote that not everybody should even seek to be a Teacher in the Church:

**Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment.**

... so, to make sure that Elders really are the very best that a Church has to offer, there are three very strict Qualifications that a person must meet in order to be an Elder in the House of God:

1. The "Sex/Gender" Qualification
2. The "Doctrinal" Qualification
3. The "Moral" Qualification

... let's look at each one.

## 1. The "Sex/Gender" Qualification

Here in verse 2, the Apostle Peter gave Command for Elders to:

**... shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight ...**

... so, *inherent* in the Ministry of Elders is what is called "Spiritual Authority". In order for Elders to *obey* Peter and *shepherd* the flock of God and *exercise* Oversight in the Church, they *must* hold a *formal and official* position in the Church of Authority. Without this Authority, they could *suggest* and *plea* with people, but they could never *shepherd them* or *exercise Oversight*. So, without this Spiritual Authority, their task would be impossible. And yet, we find that the very same Holy Spirit moved along the Apostle Paul to say this in **1 Timothy 2:12:**

**But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.**

Now right of "jump street" we have to agree that in order for an Elder to obey Peter and "shepherd the flock of God and exercise Oversight", they have to have "Spiritual Authority". But then we would also have to agree that Paul clearly teaches here that Women may *NOT* "exercise authority" over a Man.

So, the clear conclusion is that since Women, *all Women*, are *forbidden* by the Lord of the Church to exercise Authority over a Man, *any Man*, then Women simply *cannot* fulfill their duty to "shepherd the flock of God and to exercise Oversight". And the only rational conclusion that we can come to is that since that is true, then Women are *forbidden* by the Holy Spirit from being Elders/Pastors/Shepherds in the House of God.

Now even though this was, indisputably, the one, single interpretation of this verse for the overwhelming majority of the 2,000-year history of the Church, it is NOT the interpretation with many within the Church of our day. Many today see this verse as simply an example of what they call "First Century Male Domination", and *not* as the inspired and inerrant Word of God. They teach that Paul was "*obviously, very chauvinistic in his approach to women, especially with all this misogynistic talk of Women being 'silent' and 'quiet'. And that, after 20 centuries, we have, thankfully, evolved into a more 'pluralistic' and 'egalitarian' society where the Goal, even in the Church, is 'Equality' rather than adherence to the Bible.*"

But is that true? Was Paul chauvinistic? Is Christianity "Male dominated, to the detriment of Women?" Is what Paul writes here patently "unfair", and thus, "unchristian"? Is it true that what Paul wrote here is merely symptomatic of what was wrong with the culture of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century, and it is something to *overcome* rather than to *obey*? Well, let's give the Apostle himself a chance to answer those charges. Look what Paul himself wrote in the next two verses:

### **1 Timothy 2:13**

**For it was Adam who was first created, *and* then Eve. And *it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression.***

Contrary to what many teach in the modern church, when the Apostle gave the Reason *why* Women *cannot* be Elders, Paul did *not* reference the Culture of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century at all. He did *not* discuss his own supposed "bigotry" or "chauvinism" or "misogyny". He also did *not* refer to any "inferiority" of the Woman at all. Paul did NOT teach that Men were "superior" to Women. In fact, Paul never mentioned any of the reasons that the Egalitarians and Feminists use today to suggest that somehow this verse either shouldn't be in the Bible in the first place, or why it should be ignored. Instead, Paul referenced what God revealed to Moses about the "Order of Creation". He said that Women cannot be Elders BECAUSE (For):

**it was Adam who was first created, *and* then Eve.**

So, this tells us several things:

- ✓ Paul believed the **Genesis** Record of Creation.
- ✓ There was a real, biological creature named "Adam", and a real, biological creature named "Eve".
- ✓ The fact that God created Adam *first* shows an implied "Leadership Role" that all the sons of Adam are to play in this life.

... and so, it is the "Order of Creation" that God Himself carried out, *sovereignly*, that is the *primary* Reason why Women CANNOT be Elders in the Church. Men are called by God to struggle against the lusts of their flesh, by the Power of the Holy Spirit, to submit to a *primary* Role in this life of "Servant-Leadership" where they *provide, protect, sustain, and cherish* their Wives and Children and the Church. And Women are called by God, to struggle against the lusts of their flesh, by the Power of the Holy Spirit, to submit to a primary Role in this life of "Servant-Helper", where they are to *support, help, implement, and obey* the vision of the Husband in the Home, and the Elders in the Church.

And, according to what both Moses and Paul taught, the Fall did NOT create this "Order" of "Male Leadership" and "Female Support". A careful analysis of the **Genesis** Record (and the *conclusions* drawn by Paul in the New Testament pertaining to Salvation) show us that God installed this Order BEFORE the Fall.<sup>1</sup>

And that Truth is critical for those who seek to use the Argument that "Salvation *eliminates* the Curse that God placed on fallen Man."<sup>2</sup> And they use **Galatians 3:13** as their "proof text" which says:

**Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE" —**

We rejoice that this Verse is true! This verse teaches that the Curse that God placed on all of Mankind (as a result of the Fall), and which was *emphasized* in the Law of Moses, has been removed from us in Salvation! And that is Good News, indeed. And we believe this verse

<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the Study on *Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*

<sup>2</sup> This Argument is used by Egalitarians to suggest that **Galatians 3:28** and other Passages teach that Men and Women are "Equal" in Christ (in Salvation)- thus *eliminating* the "Order of Creation". While it is true that Men and Women are equally Saved and have equal Benefits to Salvation and have equal Access to God- it is NOT true that Salvation eliminated the Divine Order of "Male Leadership" and "Female Support" in the Home and in the Church- precisely because this Order was established BEFORE the Fall and is, thus, NOT removed in Salvation. This view is called, "Complementarianism".

and celebrate it. However, the Divine Order of "Male Leadership" and "Female Support" did NOT begin with the Curse of God through the Fall. God created this Order BEFORE the Fall. Thus, it is still in force today, even in Salvation in Jesus Christ. So, whereas, a Woman can be *equally* saved as a Man, and whereas, she can receive *equal* Benefits of Salvation, and have *equal* Access to God, the Will of God for her to be in subjection to her Husband (if married) or her Father (if single) is still in force.

But the "Divine Order of Creation" of Male Leadership and Female Support in the Home and in the Church was designed by God based on the Sex of the individual. So, these are "sex-distinct" Roles to be followed in this life, *ordained* by God, Who alone is the Lord, the Giver of Life. Now look at the next thing Paul said as to *why* Women CANNOT be Elders in the Church:

***And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression***

Now for many centuries, this Statement by Paul was used as a hammer by evil men, even in the Church, to beat Women into Submission. So, let me say to you that Paul never authorized this Statement to be used that way. The only Men who use violence or coercion to keep Women under their thumb are evil and weak and ungodly men. They are cowards and should be ignored and rebuked. There is absolutely *nothing* in the New Testament that hinders any Woman from realizing her full potential in this life. There is *nothing* in the words of Paul or Jesus, or in any of my Teachings, that should ever make any Woman in this Church think she is a "second-class citizen".

Being Female is a gift from God. And a Woman is not, in any way, *inferior* to a Man. Conversely, the Bible does NOT teach that Men are *superior* to Women. But the Bible DOES teach that Men and Women are different. And those differences are *deep* and *profound*. And I'm not referring to simply our "plumbing". Men and Women are *not* the same on a basic and fundamental level. They never have been, and they never will be. God created them *uniquely* "Male" and "Female", on purpose. So, this has nothing to do with random and meaningless Evolution. And that means that the differences between Men and Women are "God-ordained". God *meant* to do this. And that means



that these differences are "God- blessed". And that means that the effort to *ignore* or *hide* or *minimize* or outright *fight against* the differences between Men and Women is evil, and is of the devil, and is *not* of God. And that means that the Will of God, and the Intent of the Bible, and the Effort of the Church, and the Striving of those who love Jesus, is NOT "Equality of the Sexes". No, the Goal is to be so radically transformed (by what God alone does for us) that we truly *enjoy* "being" and "doing" what God has said, infallibly, in Scripture.

Now I have spent the better part of the last 15 years talking about this to as many people as would listen to me. I have numerous Teachings on "Biblical Manhood and Womanhood" because I see it as the "seminal Issue" of our day. Almost every social ill that is radically changing our culture and the church (for the worse) springs out of the fact that Men no longer understand what it means to be a "strong and godly Man", and Women no longer understand what it means to be a "strong and godly Woman". And even the Church, for the most part, *ignores* the clear Teaching of the Bible about this Issue. And so, because we refuse to believe and obey the Bible, we have other things to deal with like:

- Rampant Divorce
- Ungodly Remarriage
- Sexual Promiscuity
- An Epidemic of Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Unwanted and Abused Children
- Abortion
- Infanticide
- An Epidemic of Violence against Women
- Feminism
- Egalitarianism
- Weak, Emasculated Men
- Violent, Brutal Men
- Homosexuality
- Transgenderism

... and whatever other sick perversion will rise up from the bottomless pit next. All because we either don't know or don't care what the Bible teaches about the God-ordained distinctions between Men and Women.

Now let me say this before I go any further. Every single one of these "Social Maladies" are the results of decades of lazy, ungodly, and apathetic Men, who either don't understand how to fill their God-ordained Role in this life, or they rebel against it. And so, don't you dare think you can fix this problem by simply voting for the right politician. Until God the Holy Spirit grants us an Awakening so that Men will repent and be saved, and begin to obey the Bible, and walk into the Role of being the Priests and Prophets of their Homes, and as Elders in the Church, this is going to get progressively worse and worse.

Men were created by God to lead. And if godly and loving Men would simply stand up and lead, the nation and the Church would be rescued from a thousand years of darkness. But as long as Men sit and complain about how dark it is getting and we don't lead, we will continue to slouch into Gomorrah. I cannot tell you how many godly Women have come to me with tears in their eyes asking me to pray that their Husbands would simply lead. Because every single godly Woman who has ever walked the earth *longs* for her Husband to *love* her and to *protect* her and to *provide* for her and to *lead* her.

We need to remember that God wants Women to be happier and fulfilled more than anybody else. But if Women are to ever reach the zenith of their own inherent Femininity, they must first not regret being born Female. And so, they must stop trying to be a Man. And then they must realize that they *cannot* and they *will not* ever reach the fullness of their God-given Womanhood, *away* from Men, outside the arms of a godly and loving Man, whether that is a Husband or a Father or a Brother or a Son or an Elder.

When Paul wrote that Women *cannot* assume the Role of Elder in the House of God, he was *not* relegating Women to simply clean and wash. He was teaching the Church that the very thing that makes Women so lovely and so sweet and so kind and so merciful, the very qualities that make a Woman tender and beautiful, the very issues that allow for a Woman to bring forth life, are the very things that make her susceptible to deception. Sadly, when Paul said:

**... but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression**

... this has been used by wayward Men to teach that the Fall was Eve's fault. And many Women were treated brutally by Leaders in the

Church for many centuries because of this. In actuality, Paul was teaching just the opposite. By teaching that Eve was deceived, the Apostle was placing the *primary blame* of the Fall squarely on the shoulders of Adam.

So, while Eve sinned because she was deceived, tricked, fooled, Adam was not. So, Adam sinned because he wanted to, because he was not satisfied with living in the Garden, and walking with God in the cool of the day brought Adam no Joy. Adam fell with his eyes wide open. In fact, on close examination of **Genesis 3:6**, Moses tells us that Adam was “**with her**” when Eve ate the forbidden fruit. That means that Adam was standing there the entire time, watching satan deceive his wife, and yet, he made no move to protect her or rebuke satan. Also, when God adjudicated the entire situation, He dealt with Adam first, showing again that Adam was responsible. But look closely at what Moses wrote:

### **Genesis 3:9-12**

**Then the Lord God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" He said, "I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself." And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"**

...now look at how Adam responded to God.

### **Genesis 3:12**

**The man said, "The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."**

In actuality, Adam is blaming God for what happened. He is telling God, “*You never asked me if I wanted a Wife. You told me it was not “good” for me to be alone. You’re the One Who created her from my own body and brought her to me. So, this is really all Your fault, God. I mean I tried, but Eve wouldn’t listen. So, it’s either her fault or Yours, but it sure isn’t mine!*” But now look at God’s Response:

### **Genesis 3:17-19**

**Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';**

**Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return."**

So, what was the *primary* Issue that God had with Adam?

**Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';**

... because Adam *followed* his wife and ate, rather than *lead* her and *protect* her and *teach* her. Later, when the Apostle Paul was teaching about Salvation, he wrote:

**Romans 5:12**

**Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned —**

... and that "one man" through whom Sin (and Death) entered the world was Adam. And then, Paul said:

**1 Corinthians 15:22**

**For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.**

So, the New Testament, in general, and the Apostle Paul, in particular, taught that both "Sin" and "Death" (*physical* and *spiritual* Death) entered the world through Adam, and what *he* alone did (and didn't do), rather than through *anything* that Eve did.

And this is important because it then shows us that when Paul said that Eve was "deceived" and "fell into transgression", he was only referring to her own *personal* sin, and *not* to the damnation of the entire human race (the Fall). But what Adam did (and did not do), however, not only damned his *own* soul, but it is his "fallen nature" that is now transferred to every one of us (from the seed of our father). This is *part* of the Doctrine of "Original Sin".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The Doctrine of Original Sin has two parts: 1) That every human now has the "fallen nature" of Adam transferred to us at the moment of conception by way of the seed of the father. Thus, as soon as children are able to manifest that fallen nature (sin), they will. Thus, we are not "sinners" because we sin. We sin because we are already sinners, in our nature. 2) That we are all

Again, the point here is that neither Paul nor Jesus nor any other Biblical writer gives credence to the notion that Women are, somehow, *inferior* to Men. They aren't. But they *are* different. And they are different, *on purpose*. And it is that God-given and God-blessed *Distinction* between Man and Woman that Paul and the rest of the Bible seeks to *preserve* and *celebrate* and *encourage*. And that is *why* the New Testament prohibits Women from holding the Office of Elder/Shepherd/Pastor. But we need to understand that the Bible *doesn't* prohibit Women from Teaching, or from serving the people of the Church in 10,000 *other* ways, that will not interfere or hinder or outright eliminate her ability to carry out her Primary Calling in this life, to bear and nurture Children.<sup>4</sup>

Yet we must understand that, in the Bible, it isn't just Women who are called to be Humble, or to Submit, or to be in Subjection. It is God's Will that *all* saved people live lives of Submission and Subjection and Humility. For example, **Ephesians 5:19-21** says:

**speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.**

... the Apostle Peter told all of us to humble ourselves to the various "Human Institutions" that flow out from Government when he said:

### **1 Peter 2:13-20**

**Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but *use it* as bondslaves of God. Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. For *this finds* favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. For what credit is there if, when you**

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*personally guilty* of the Sin of Adam at the moment of conception. So, every single human is under the Judgment and Wrath of God before we are ever born.

<sup>4</sup> Not all Women are called to marry. In that case, the Woman is free to utilize her giftings and abilities to further the Gospel in many creative ways.

**sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer *for it* you patiently endure it, this *finds* favor with God.**

... godly Wives are told to *humble themselves* to their Husbands:

**Ephesians 5:22-24**

**Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.**

... godly Children are to obey and honor their Parents:

**Colossians 3:20**

**Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.**

... and the people of the Church are to be humble toward the Leaders of the Church:

**Hebrews 13:17**

**Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.**

We must remember, dear friends, that we don't need the Bible to only find out "what" God wants us to do, but also "how" He wants us to do it. Doing God's Business, in the way that God reveals in Scripture *assures* that what we do will give God the Glory and bring us the Joy. So, "how" we carry out God's Business is *as important* as "what" we do.

The pressure that many Leaders in the modern Church feel today to measure up with the way that Society is going (in regards to Men and Women) will *never* bring about the Goals of God as stated in the Bible. And that is because God is *not* concerned, and the Bible is *not* concerned, and we should *not* be concerned with the "Man-made goal" of "Equality between the sexes". The Goal of God is to be glorious as God. And, in the Bible, what should be our Goal is magnifying the Worth and Beauty and Value of Jesus Christ. And the way we do that is by

struggling against the lusts of our flesh (by the Power of the Holy Spirit) to be humbly and joyfully submitted to the Authority of the Word of God in our daily life, all to the Glory of God!

But as true as that is, nobody should ever get the notion that Elders are Men, who rule by fear, and push their weight around, and who ride the backs of God's people so they can profit themselves. No, Men, who stand in the Office of Elder should be the most humble, the most loving, and the kindest people in the Church. Elders tremble before God because of the enormous Weight and Responsibility that comes with their Calling. And may God ever make that to be so.

Amen. Let's pray.

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