

DOCTRINAL DEEP DIVE

On Pastoral Numbers, Roles, and Pay (1 Timothy 5:17)

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

Οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν, μάλιστα οἱ κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ.	The well having ruled elders double honor let them be counted worthy, especially the ones laboring in word and teaching.
--	--

Observations:

1. Suggests _____ elders (same as pastors, overseers)
2. This does _____ teach two types of elders (ruling vs teaching), but rather different levels of elders
3. Suggests _____ of capacity, ability, responsibility, etc.
4. Some rule _____ – implies people rule at different levels
5. Some _____ intensely – implies others cannot or do not
6. Based upon _____ performance (perfect tense “having ruled well”)
7. Based upon _____ effort (present tense “laboring”)
8. Suggests some will get _____ honor / pay
 - a. Differences in **capacity** (based upon health, age, season of life, energy levels, economic pressures, etc.)
 - b. Differences in **ability** (God gives as He sees fit)
 - c. Differences in **urgency** (driven versus “job”) or intensity
 - d. Differences in **necessity** (needed more for what they do)
 - e. Differences in **competency** (training)
 - f. Differences in **responsibility** (assigned or appointed)
 - g. Differences in **maturity** (experience and spiritual growth)
9. Suggests the _____ of proper study (2 Tim 2:15) and proper teaching (Acts 6:2,4), and those that do so.

Compensation:

1. This passage does not teach that every pastor is paid full-time, or that every pastor is paid. Since it is based upon the ongoing process of leaders being developed and being appointed, there will be varying levels of compensation – some not at all.
2. The goal of a church is not to provide an income for a pastor. The goal of a church is to fulfill the great commission. Income is part of the process, a means to an end, not the end.
3. The responsibility of a pastor is to shepherd the flock, not to get paid by the flock.
4. The responsibility of the flock is to compensate as they are able, based upon 1 Tim 5:17. Focusing on compensating potential leaders will cripple a church’s efforts based on money.
5. Based upon the culture, compensation would be to offset the loss of income traded for efforts to study and teach. Appointing elders (Titus 1:5) would not expect nor mandate a man’s relinquishing of his means of livelihood or ability to provide for his family (1 Tim 5:8). A full-time pastor was likely the exception rather than the rule. Sharing with those who teach reflects this (Gal 6:6).
6. “Preach the gospel, live by the gospel” relates to those evangelizing (“preach the gospel”), not shepherding. (1 Cor. 9:14 “Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.”) They are distinct (Eph 4:11).
7. This is not suggesting a luxurious double full-time salary.
8. Honor can also mean greater respect. A greater weight of influence. Double honor is not just more pay, but more respect.

Application:

- Churches should work to develop multiple pastors. One leader can only do so much.
- Neither the church’s or pastor’s primary focus is compensation, but the great commission, including developing more leaders.
- Pastors will have differing levels of responsibility, ability, and effort.
- Pastors will have differing levels of honor (remuneration and influence) based upon levels of responsibility, ability, and effort.