



1 Thessalonians 3:1-4  
From Sermon 10.31.21

Read *1 Thessalonians 3:1-4*

Review from Sunday's sermon: When the Church began to question, doubt, and dismiss the Word of God, it also began to dismiss the man/men of God—called to preach the Gospel. The public scandals of financial impropriety and sexual misconduct have only aided in cheapening the office of elder/pastor/teacher. With less expectation, the clergy has become too weak, too casual, too worldly, and too shallow. The Holy Spirit shows, through Paul, that the authentic man of God is consistently faithful in the pulpit, in private, and in public. There is no excuse for elders who get this wrong.

1. What historic event in the life of the Church took place on October 31, 1517? Martin Luther posted his 95 theses of argument on the church door in Wittenberg, Germany—launching the Protestant Reformation.

[Note: While the Reformation accurately addressed the abuses in church leadership/doctrine and returned the House of God to the Word of God, some changes came with a price. In many ways, a now empowered laity emasculated the office of elder. Discuss]

2. In what ways and actions is the faithful, biblical elder a...

...Prophet: Called to deliver the whole Word of God, regardless of its reception.

*See Colossians 1:28-29 & 2 Timothy 4:2*

...Priest: Commissioned to intercede on behalf of the people in prayer *See Colossians 1:9-11*

...Pastor: Commanded to shepherd, lead, and protect the flock of God. *See Acts 20:27-32*

3. Along with (and even beyond) character, skill, ability, and calling, what trait must be the foundational motivation in pastoring the Church of Christ? Love for those you shepherd.

*See 1 Corinthians 13:1-8*

4. What are some of the dangers a pastor/elder must protect the flock from? Various answers. But, include: the wolves (false teachers), the attacks and schemes of the enemy, their own sin, growing cold in the faith, spiritual starvation and dehydration (a lack of the Word).

5. How is delivering only feel-good, positive, prosperity messages one of the most unloving things a leader can do? It leaves the hearer vulnerable. It sets them up for failure. It doesn't provide the needed tools, preparation, and context for dealing with the inevitable problems, pains, and set backs of the Christian life. It misrepresents the God they claim to serve and trust.

6. What did religious leadership look like in the days of Jesus' earthly ministry? [The Pharisees & Sadducees] *See also Matthew 23:1-4, 13-15, & 23-28.* They were cold, indifferent, superior minded, and self-preserving...to name a few.

7. How has your view and expectations of your church leaders changed over the course of your Christian walk? Various personal answers

7a. What areas of your view of and relationship with them still needs some growth and change?