

THE PASTOR'S SUPPORT

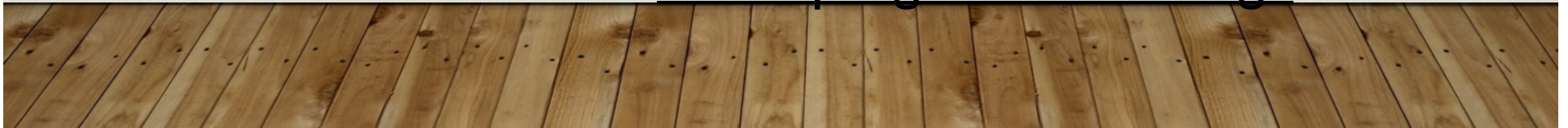
EPHESIANS 4:11-16

I. Jesus built His church.

Matthew 16:18, Christ promised it. "... I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Acts 1:8, Before He ascended, Christ commissioned and empowered it, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

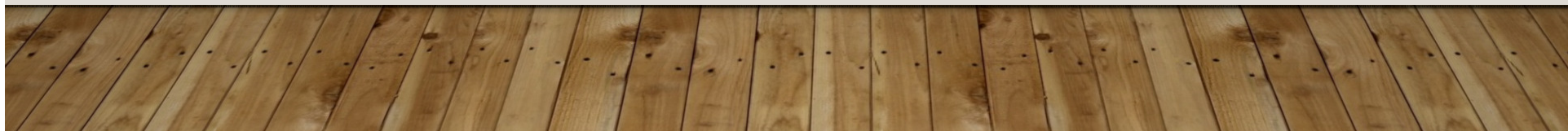
Acts 2:4, God powerfully and prominently manifested the Holy Spirit in the church and the church began functioning fully as intended, "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." The Church is God's program for this age.



2. How is the church supposed to function? I am thinking of the relationship of the pastor and church to each other, and particularly of the relationship of the church to the pastor tonight.

Three messages on the pastor's relation to the church: The Pastor's Position (the leader), Perspective (Undershepherd, Master's Slave, Steward for God, Accountable to God, Willing Worker), Character (Exceptional, Example, Blameless, Respected, Growing in his ministry, Holding fast the faithful Word).

That is an enormous responsibility and task. Humanly impossible. He needs your prayers. What God has ordained He will make succeed.

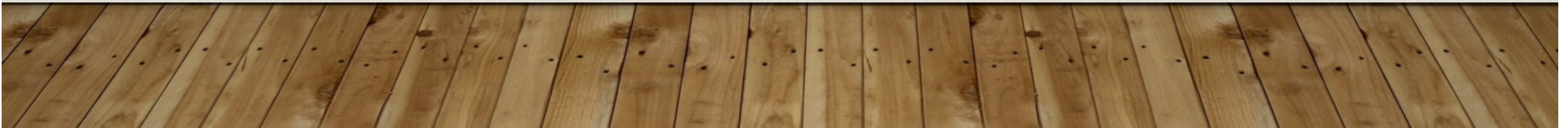


3. God instructs the congregation also.

CHALLENGE: Support your pastor willingly and lovingly

A. Accepting him as God's gift to your church, Eph. 4:8, 11

Ephesians 4:8, Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 4:11, And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

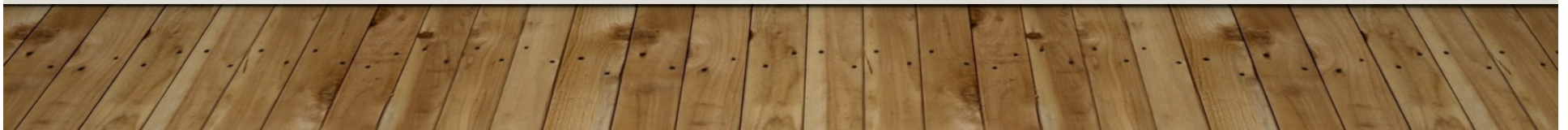


Accordingly, church members ought to regard their pastor(s) as a gift bestowed upon them by God Himself for their spiritual good and the advancement of the work of God in their community through their church.

B. Know him who is over you, 1 Thes. 5:12

1 Thessalonians 5:12, And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

I. "Are over you," has the sense of "to be at the head of, rule, manage, conduct," and then "be concerned about, care for, give aid" (BAG).



2. They are over you “in the Lord.” It is a spiritual relationship. There is a God ordained relationship between the pastor and individual members of the congregation. Recognize it. Do not violate it.

3. “And admonish you.” Let the pastor admonish you (from the Scripture). God has given this responsibility to your pastor.

4. Get to know them. “Know,” οἶδα (oida), “to know, be intimately acquainted with, understand, experience,” (BAG).

C. Esteem him for his work’s sake, | Thes. 5:13

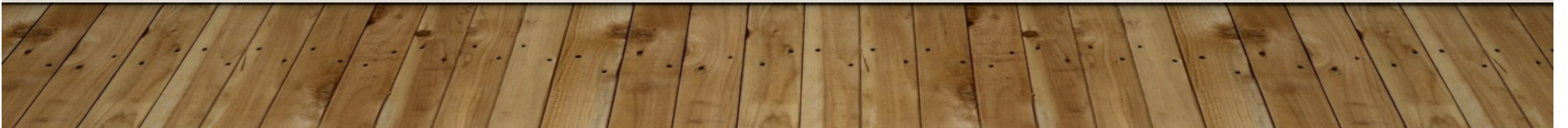
| Thessalonians 5:13, And to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves.

1. Esteem him very highly. Even though he is not perfect.

2. In love. For God. For the work of God. For the gift God gave you.

3. For his work's sake. Do not frustrate the work of God with your own undercutting of it by sowing discord in the congregation.

4. Be at peace among yourselves. We wrestle with the world, the flesh, and the devil. In this, it is especially the flesh and the devil.

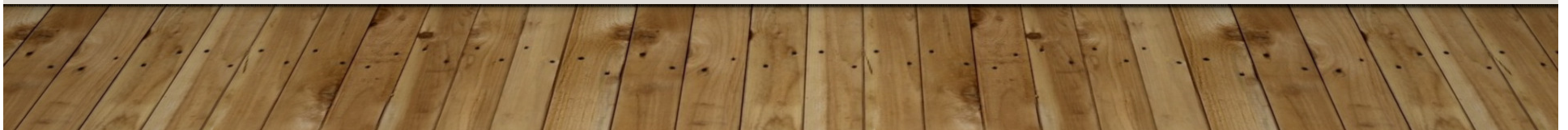


D. Obeying him as your ordained leader, Heb. 13:17

Hebrews 13:17, Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

1. Admonishes his readers to obey those who have the rule over them. Did you bristle at the word "rule"?

2. This obedience concept may be softened somewhat by the fact that 'rule' actually has a stronger connotation for leading than ruling (rulers are to lead).

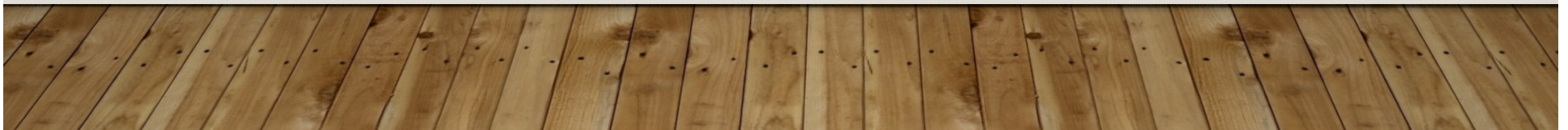


"To rule," ηγεομαι (hegeomai). Its root meaning is "to lead," and it is sometimes translated "governor," Matt. 2:6; "chief," Luke 22:26.

"Obey," (peiyw, peitho) is the passive meaning of the word which in the active voice means to "convince, persuade, appeal to."

*Thus, rulers ought to be leading by persuasion. Pastors ought to be leading the congregation and the people ought to be being persuaded (obeying).

3. This does not mean that God expects you to blindly follow whatever your leaders teach and exhort you.

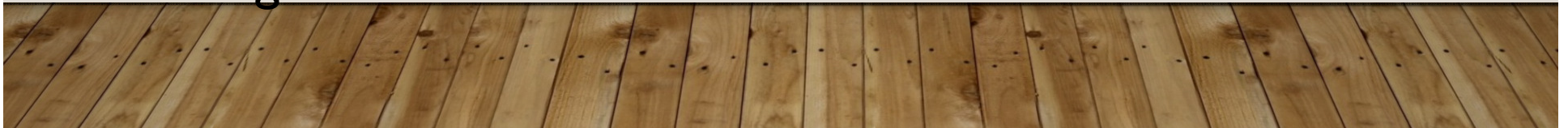


4. You should be slow to reject the teaching of your pastors and to break with them and the congregation. *Church members ought to be persuaded easily, but persuaded nevertheless.

5. Members will find it in their best interest to submit to their leaders for their own good and the good of the church as a whole. This clearly applies to the direct teachings of the Scriptures, but presumably applies to the overall regulation of the church's affairs as well.

E. Following his faith, Heb. 13:7

Hebrews 13:7, Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.



I. Supplementing the previous concept of obedience to the leaders, he here tells us to follow their faith.

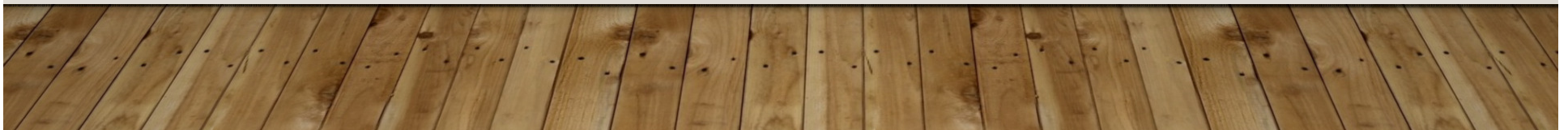
Faith can be:

a. The pastor's active belief and trust in God.

Matthew 9:29, Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.

b. The content of what he believes and teaches from the Word of God.

Jude 1:3, Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.



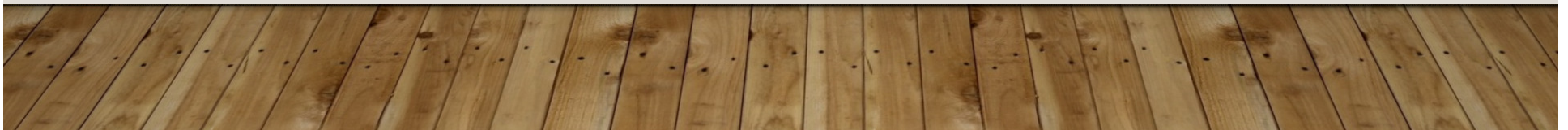
2. Note also how he says you should consider the end of the pastor's conversation or conduct as you follow his faith.

3. Now think of Paul in 2 Timothy 4:6-8 just prior to his own death.

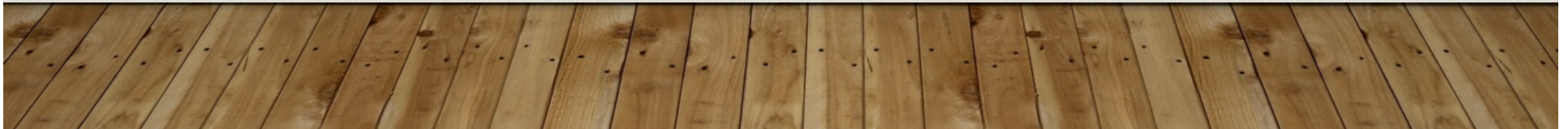
|| Timothy 4:6-8, For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. _____

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.



Paul expressed great satisfaction with his life lived for Christ. He was ready to depart and meet the righteous judge. Before you reject what the pastor teaches and preaches, think on this carefully: is he teaching, preaching, and practicing what Paul taught, preached, and practiced? If he is, he is headed in the right direction, and you should follow him.



Conclusion:

1. I can understand how you could think these are hard words. They may go contrary to your accustomed thinking. I present them as God's Word. Evaluate them carefully. Let the Word of God renew your mind for your good and the good of Christ's church.

2. I have three messages on the Pastor's responsibility that I preach at pastor's meetings. If both pastor and people meet their responsibility faithfully, Christ will bless His church.