

Our Turn

Small Group Discussion Guide

Open:

1. If you were to come up with a list of those who have “worked hard for you” in your life who would the first couple of names be and who would head that list? What if anything do they all have in common?
2. Who in your life have you held in “highest regard” because of the work they have been involved in? Who are the top two or three?

Dig:

Over the past couple of months we have studied the responsibilities and qualities of men that could be added to our eldership to work hand in hand with our existing shepherds. We have been looking for men who meet the qualifications, and are able to carry out the responsibilities of those who care for God’s people. The two ideas should never be divorced. In addition to that study, it is also important for us to look at what **our** responsibilities are concerning our shepherds.

1 Thessalonians 5:12 says that we are to _____ our elders. The context is to literally know our pastors well enough to have an intimate appreciation for them and to respect them because of their value. Of course “knowing someone” is a two-sided street. What does this require from you and me?

- a. In reference to the immediate establishment of the relationship?
- b. In reference to the long term maintenance of the relationship?

As we build these relationships and hold the elders in esteem, there are some things that should develop naturally in the course of our relationship. However, in the event those don’t occur, Paul lays out our responsibilities to the elders.

Read these scriptures together and then go through these responsibilities as you process:

- a. The benefits of practicing this requirement.
- b. What kind of a detriment or deficiency exists if this is not a part of our relationship with the elders. (To us, the elders and possibly the congregation as a whole)

Scriptures: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, 1 Timothy 5:17-21, Hebrews 13:7-8, Hebrews 13:17-18

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| 1. Pray for them | 4. Remember their teaching |
| a. | a. |
| b. | b. |
| 2. Have confidence in them | 5. Make their work a joy |
| a. | a. |
| b. | b. |
| 3. Submit to them | 6. Imitate their faith |
| a. | a. |
| b. | b. |

When someone becomes a shepherd of God’s flock they are not taking a position of power but of ministry and service to God’s people. After working in full time ministry for almost 40 years I know their job can be and often is exhausting. Our tendency is to only come to them with our problems. Even though they want and need to know about our struggles, from our study it becomes clear there needs to be more interaction than that. We need to be actively involved with them and supporting of them. The image that comes to mind for me is Aaron and Hur and their support of Moses in Exodus 17:8-13, (please read). God calls men and puts them in leadership positions over His flock to protect and mature it... so let’s fulfill our responsibilities to them with a joyful heart as to the Lord.

Application:

Take some time to write a note to an elder (or even better each elder) to tell them about how you plan on following through on this lesson. Of course you could say that you have been and will be praying for him/them, but I challenge you to include some other points (if not all) of requirements listed in this study.