

THE LAWS OF LEADERSHIP

1 Timothy 6:1-5

LAW #13 A Good Leader Has Learned to Live Comfortably under Authority

Truett Cathy the founder of Chick-Fil-A says: “*To be a good leader you must [first learn to] be a good follower. That is the very first thing.*”

(From Transforming Leadership by Leighton Ford, p. 148)

Richard Foster highlights the principle of today’s study when he says:

“*...submission is power because it places us in a position in which we can receive from others.*”

(From Transforming Leadership by Leighton Ford, p. 148)

Probably the greatest tragedy in Scripture of someone who never learned this law of leadership that we’re looking at today is Saul who became king of Israel.

Saul, from the very beginning always had to do things his way.

When the seventh day came and Samuel hadn't arrived, he forced himself to go in and make the sacrifice and then had to face the judgment that Samuel brought upon him.

Then he got one more chance.

The Amalekites in 1 Samuel 15, but he didn't obey once again. And we read these words in 1 Samuel 15:22:

Samuel replied:

***“Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.*”**

1 Samuel 15:23

“For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance like the evil of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected you as king.”

Now we've come to the final chapter in our little epistle of 1 Timothy and the last four studies are going to be in chapter 6.

We only have 5 verses to look at today in the first part of chapter 6 and we're coming now to law #13:

A Good Leader Has Learned to Live Comfortably under Authority.

Many of the heartaches, the trials and the traumas that you face and the circumstances that produce difficult interpersonal relationships is right here at this point. The would-be leader must learn first to be led before he earns the right to lead.

There are two things that will make you an effective leader and that must become a part of your attitude as far as being submissive to the authority that is over us.

The first one is meekness and the second one is a servant attitude.

Haddon Robinson wrote a little book called The Christian Salt & Light Company and in the book he describes meekness in this way:

A young soldier in the Peloponnesian War wrote to his fiancée about a gift that he had for her.

It was a white stallion. He described it as “*the most magnificent animal I have ever seen. He responds obediently to the slightest command. He allows his master to direct him to his full potential.*” And then he wrote, “*He is a meek horse.*” The soldier wasn’t saying that the horse was shy or even that he was like an old plow horse that allows people to beat him. He was an animal with great spirit, but that spirit was submissive to the rider.

Tied up in the word meek is the concept of power under control, the idea of being submissive to someone greater than ourselves. When we look at meekness as weakness, we discover that the examples in the Bible contradict this view, [as well]...

(p. 51)

So when we’re talking about being a servant and being meek we are talking about qualities that qualify a person for leadership. And he has learned to live comfortably under the authority that is over him.

Now I want you to examine this, there’s so much being said about “*I want my rights*” and “*I want to do this and I want to do that.*” It’s decaying our society.

And yet God makes it quite clear as we will see in our study today that there are lines of authority.

And when we live in view and in line with that authority we experience the happiness and the fulfillment that ought to be ours.

Let's begin with verse 1.

V.1 "Let all who are under the yoke as slaves consider their own masters worthy of all respect in order that the name of God and the teaching might not be brought into disrepute."

There are going to be three commands.

There's going to be a command in verse 1, and a command in verse 2 and a command in verse 3.

Now when Paul's talking about this whole business of slaves and slave owners, remember, he's writing to a culture that is filled with 60 million slaves in the Roman empire.

And these slaves, many of them have become Christians.

How does a Christian master or employer relate to a Christian slave? Remember Timothy is taking the responsibility for the church in Ephesus and Paul feels he has to address this issue.

And for you and me it doesn't matter what the authority is, that's over you, you have a responsibility and so do I before we ever earn the right to lead, we must learn how to live comfortably under this authority.

Whether it comes in your marriage relationship, whether it comes in your work relationship, whether it comes in the fact that it's just God to whom you learn to be submissive and comfortable with along with His authority, you apply it to yourself.

Now in verse 1 we have a situation where the employer is not a believer.

And in verse 2 he is a believer.

So let's look at it, command #1: *"Let all who are under the yoke as slaves consider their own masters worthy of all respect."*

This command is almost in every one of the epistles.

In Ephesians 6:5-6 Paul says:

"Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of [your] heart, as to Christ; not by way of eye service, as men-pleasers,

but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.”

Colossians 3:22-24: “Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance.”

And then Colossians 4:1: “Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness, knowing that you too have a Master in heaven.”

Peter says in 1 Peter 2:18-19: “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 man bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.”

Even when you have a terrible employer it still is a responsibility to submit to that authority and to submit to that authority brings pleasure to God.

Authority is a major issue in Scripture.

Satan is the way he is because he rebelled against divine authority.

And that nature is within each of us the minute we're born. That nature is, *I do it my way, I do it on my terms.*

And if Jesus Christ came tonight, there'd be a lot of people who wouldn't make it to Heaven simply because they've never learned to submit to God's authority.

And to do that means you do it His way.

And there is only one way and that's through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Law #13 says that a good leader has learned to live comfortably under authority.

V 1.b "*So let all who are under the yoke as slaves consider their own masters,*" what? "*worthy of all respect.*"

Even though you can't respect the fact that he's not a Christian, you can respect the authority that is there over you.

It's respect toward the authority.

Now what's the purpose?

V 1.b *“In order that the name of God and the teaching might not be brought into disrepute (disgrace).”*

Do you realize that your conduct at your work and your conduct in relationship to authority can either bring credit or discredit to the Lord?

The way you handle the authority that is over you, is so crucial to your witness.

You can dishonor the Word of God.

You can bring disrepute (disgrace) on God by your relationship to authority.

Now we all know people who've done that.

You see, all respect forms the basis for a good witness at work for God.

Paul, when he's writing to the Jews in Romans 2:24 says:

“The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you.” In other words, here you are in the name of God and because of what the Gentiles see in you has been blasphemed, by your very life and your conduct.

Now, in verse 2 the difference between verse 1 and verse 2 is in verse 2 the employer is a Christian.

Here you're dealing with something else.

Verse 2 and command #2:

“And those who are having believing masters, let them not be despising them because they are brothers, but rather serve all the better, because those who benefit by their helpful service are believers and beloved.”

Whereas in verse 1, they are to be “worthy of all respect” in verse 2, you're “not to be despising them.”

That doesn't mean that you're angry at them.

The word really means “think little of.”

Don't think little of them.

Don't think differently of them simply because they're believers.

What would be the normal response of a slave who finds out that his master is a believer and he's a believer.

“Great, now I have a believing boss.

I don't have to work as hard.

You know, we're brothers now.

It's kind of like, we're brothers and we can saddle up and be real close and we can forget the authority structure.

That's a temptation.

When we're around people who are authorities over us and they're believers, we kind of expect because we're believers, we should get a concession.

And we just don't have to work as hard for them.

He's saying, "*don't be despising them because they're brothers.*" They are but what you're supposed to do is "*serve all the better.*" Why? "*Because those who are benefiting by their helpful service are believers and beloved.*"

So don't be despising them.

Notice how the guy is characterized. 3 words.

He's a brother, he's a believer, and he's beloved.

And so in your attitude toward him you ought to work harder because he is indeed a believer.

When it comes to submitting to authority, and functioning under that authority, the master example is Jesus Christ.

Mark 10:45

***“Jesus Christ came not to be ministered unto but to minister
and to give His life a ransom for many, (John 3:16) For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”***

He was submissive to no one and when he was finally crowded into a corner, he would rather torch himself and all the people who were with him rather than submit to the authority and suffer the consequences.

You can go through cult after cult after cult and you discover the same thing, they cannot relate to authority. You take the TV preachers, the common denominator, they are accountable to no one and just because they get caught, they can get themselves out of it and restore themselves rather than submit themselves to authority where there could be healing brought back into their lives.

You see the common denominator.

Here he is saying, when somebody is teaching a different doctrine, you can almost discover it by the relationship that authority has to it.

If Satan had a problem with authority then the people who are following his pattern, these false teachers, they're going to have a problem with authority.

Command #3: *“These things be teaching and exhorting.”*

What things? The things I just got through telling you about the relationship to authority.

Now Paul returns to the false teachers with a little word “If.”

V. 3a “If anyone is teaching a different doctrine, and is not giving assent” there is submission to the authority of the Scripture “is not giving assent to” what?

- 1. “The wholesome sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ,” and**
- 2. “to the teachings which are according to godliness.”**

They are following a different doctrine.

Listen to Galatians 1:6-9:

“I am amazed that you so quickly desert Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel...”

1 Timothy 1:3:

“Even as I urged you to remain longer in Ephesus when I was going to Macedonia, in order that you might instruct certain ones not to teach a different doctrine.”

These false teachers are stubborn. They're *"teaching a different doctrine."* They are prideful, *"not giving assent to the wholesome sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the teaching which is according to godliness."*

Let's talk about that a moment. *"A teaching according to godliness."*

Let me make a statement and see if I can back it up.

There is no such thing as a godly rebel.

Think about that for a minute.

There's no such thing as a godly rebel.

No one can become godly and resist divine authority.

It just goes with the territory.

Listen to Hudson Armerding in his book

The Heart of Godly Leadership:

In summary, the meek person is God-centered rather than self-centered, committed to service rather than success, and investing in the eternal rather than the temporal. And he has become this way because he has responded to our Savior's invitation: "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me..."

Matthew 11:29

(p. 136)

V. 3d “A teaching according to godliness.” Godliness is something that all of us long for in our lives.

There is no such thing as instant godliness.

As there is no such thing as a godly rebel, there’s no such thing as instant godliness.

The little book of Titus teaches us that faith in the Lord Jesus Christ plus food from His table, the Word of God, equals godliness.

And you’re as godly today as you have been exposed to the Word of God since you’ve become a believer.

1 Peter 2:2-3: “As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.”

May I ask you a question? Have you been in the Book today and you have grown a little.

If you haven’t been in the Book today, other Christians are getting ahead of you because they’ve been in the Book and they’ve been studying today.

And if you want to continue to be a little babe, that’s your option.

If you want to learn to grow and to mature in the faith, then you're going to take in the word of God.

Truth equals godliness.

A different gospel doesn't equal godliness.

And that's what Paul is saying here.

Faith plus food equals fruit. True and genuine godliness.

Robert Clinton, no relationship to Bill, wrote a book called *The Making of a Leader* and he says: *Leaders who have trouble submitting to authority will usually have trouble exercising spiritual authority.*

(p. 101)

This challenge occurs throughout their ministry, becoming more subtle as the leader begins to mature.

When it comes to dealing with authority, the Old Testament is very strong about the consequences of when we don't.

In Leviticus 26:19-21 we read this:

"I will break down your stubborn pride and make the sky above you like iron and the ground beneath you like bronze. If you remain hostile toward me and refuse to listen to me, I will multiply your afflictions seven times over, as your sins deserve."

God is not in the business of allowing His kids to be rebels.

Let's go to verse 4 and 5.

V. 4 “He is conceited, without understanding; but is having a morbid craving for controversy and a dispute about words, from which comes envy, strife, abusive speech (hurting the good name of another), false suspicions,”

V. 5 “constant irritation of men corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, thinking that godliness is a way of gain.”

These false teachers are characterized in 5 ways:

They are “*conceited*,”

They “*crave for controversy*,”

They are a “*constant irritation*,”

They are “*corrupted in mind*,”

And they are “*bereft of the truth*.”

Let's just break those words down for just a second and see if we can put some flesh on these guys who are teaching this different doctrine.

First they are *conceited*. That word means “puffed up.”
That’s a word that means, “smoke, fume, filled with a lot of
hot air, inflated.”

“Without understanding” they are “*conceited*” “*but he is
having a morbid craving.*”

That’s the word for sick, ailing, or being diseased.
And having this *morbid craving*, he’s having it for two
things.

“Controversy and a dispute about words.”

Anything to stir up a controversy.

He’s *conceited*, he’s “*without understanding*,”
he’s “*having a morbid craving for controversy and a dispute
about words*” from which comes 5 things.

Five things flow out of it and none of them are pretty.

“From which is coming”:

Envy, that is, filled with malignant ill will;
strife, or wrangling, unwilling to admit defeat;
abusive speech, kind of a defiant irreverence, or blasphemy;
false suspicions he is a person who is suspicious of
everybody and everybody’s an adversary;
and then constant irritation, that’s in verse 5.

V. 5 “*Constant irritation of men [who are] corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, thinking that godliness is a way of gain.*”

When you come to the word “*constant irritation*” this means that their conflict is with everybody.

They’re just a pain to everybody they’re around.

Because they just won’t accept somebody else’s position.

They’ll always take the other side.

Notice the two things that are said about them.

“*They are corrupted in mind*” and “*they’re bereft of the truth.*”

They’re “*without understanding*” in verse 4 and in verse 5 they are “*bereft of the truth.*”

They really don’t know the first thing about truth.

They’re a constant irritation.

“*Corrupted in mind, bereft of the truth.*”

That’s Satan’s masterpiece.

2 Corinthians 4:4:

“In whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not.”

Ephesians 4:18-19:

“Being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; they’ve become callous.”

2 Timothy 3:8:

“Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so those men oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected as regards to the faith.”

“Corrupted in mind” and “bereft of the truth.”

Why?

They hear the Bible. They hear the message.

Why are they “bereft of the truth?”

How could a person be sitting here in this room today listening to the word of God and still be “bereft of the truth.”

The only answer to that is in the parable of the sower and the seed.

In Matthew 13:3-9 and Luke 8 Jesus tells that story and he says:

The sower sows the seed and what happens when he sows the seed? Some of it falls on the road and it doesn't germinate cause it's on real hard ground. And because it falls on the road the birds swoop down and take it.

And if you have a hard heart today, and you're having a hard time with authority, it's probably like the seeds that are falling on your heart but they are not going to germinate because Satan's birds are grabbing them up before you get very far away.

That's what it means to be "*bereft of the truth.*"

A heart so hard that the Word of God can't get in and take root.

And as a result, there's never really any encounter with truth that changes the life.

And then look at the last part of verse 5.

"Thinking that godliness is a way of gain."

There is the first century prosperity gospel, right there.

Thinking that through godliness you can take advantage of others.

There were many false teachers in various places who made money a real issue in the ministry.

Listen to Titus, he's on the Island of Crete.

Titus 1:11: *"Who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach, for the sake of sordid gain."*

1 Peter 5:2

"Shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising authority not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness."

Be faithful and don't let ministry be mixed up with money.

And that sets the stage for next week's study.

Because a proper relationship to money is a key to being an effective leader.

As we close today are you the kind of leader that's effective because you've learned to be submissive to authority?

There are 10 lessons that come out of this study.

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: "A Good Leader Has Learned to Live Comfortably Under Authority"

Law #13

LESSON #2: Before a leader can be effective in the exercise of authority, he must first learn how to submit himself to authority.

LESSON #3: Authority over us must be treated as worthy of all respect in order that the name of God and the teaching might not be brought into disrepute.

LESSON #4: The name of God and the teaching can be affected by our response to authority.

LESSON #5: When authority is exercised over us by Christians, we need to remember that they are brothers, believers, and beloved.

LESSON #6: Our motivation for service should be intensified when we are serving Christian employers.

LESSON #7: The false teacher is conceited and has a craving for controversy.

LESSON #8: Any teaching that does not result in godliness is not good teaching.

LESSON #9: The false teachers are without understanding and bereft of the truth.

LESSON #10: A walk with God does not necessarily guarantee material gain.

STUDIES IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

PART II - 1 TIMOTHY 4-6

"The Laws of Leadership"

Key verse 4:12: *"Let no one look down on you (think little of) because you are young; but keep on becoming an example of the believers in word, in behavior, in love, in faith, in purity."*

LAW NUMBER Thirteen - A Good Leader Has Learned to Live Comfortably under Authority

1 Timothy 6:1-5

Key verse 6:3

Notes

v. 1 Let all who are under the yoke as slaves consider their own masters worthy of all respect in order that the name of God and the teaching might not be brought into disrepute.

v. 2 And those who are having believing masters, let them not be despising them because they are brothers, but rather serve all the better, because those who benefit by their helpful service are believers and beloved.

v. 3 These things be teaching and exhorting. If anyone is teaching a different doctrine, and is not giving assent to the wholesome sayings of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the teaching which is according to godliness,

v. 4 he is conceited, without understanding; but is having a morbid craving for controversy and a dispute about words, from which comes envy, strife, abusive speech (hurting the good name of another), false suspicions,

v. 5 constant irritation of men corrupted in mind and bereft the truth, thinking that godliness is a way of gain.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read 1 Timothy 6:1-5 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. What two reasons does Paul give for slaves being submissive to their masters, according to verse 1?**
- 3. Describe the believing slave's relationship to a believing master, according to verse 2.**
- 4. How does Paul describe those who are in opposition to his teaching, according to verse 4?**
- 5. What are they "craving," according to verse 4?**
- 6. List the five fruits of "controversy" in verses 4 & 5.**
- 7. In what two ways are they described, according to verse 5?**
- 8. What are they thinking about godliness, according to verse 5?**

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?