



**Faith Baptist Church of Cabot, Arkansas**  
**Pastor's Mid-Week Bible Study**  
**January 27, 2010**

**Lesson Seventeen - The Impartial Pastor**  
**1 Timothy 5:21-25**

I charge *you* before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality. Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure. No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities. Some men's sins are clearly evident, preceding *them* to judgment, but those of some *men* follow later. Likewise, the good works of *some* are clearly evident, and those that are otherwise cannot be hidden.

### Introduction

The passage before us continues in the context of verses 17-20 where we learned (1) that elders who rule well are worthy of double honor, (2) accusations are only to be received against an elder with two or three witnesses and (3) sinning elders are to be publicly rebuked. Timothy had been left by Paul at the church in Ephesus to help correct errors there. As a result, Timothy was working directly with the church's elders. Paul now has some personal counsel for Timothy dealing with them.

### Exegesis

#### ❖ Be impartial

- The importance of the charge

The Apostle Paul emphasizes the counsel of these verses by calling forth the witness of the heavenly court – God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the angels. Timothy's actions with the elders are being watched by heaven. This is how important the calling, ordination and ministry of elders is in the church.

- The implication of the charge

Timothy is to show no favoritism in dealing with the elders. When it came to the application of verse 20, his personal relationship with an elder, an elder's popularity among the people nor an elder's financial or political position were to sway Timothy from faithfulness to his own responsibility. Sin in the lives of the church's leadership had to be dealt with.

#### ❖ Be pure

- In association with others

Because of the importance of righteous leadership in the church, no man was to be ordained hastily. Since ordination is a sign of acceptance and approval, to ordain a man as an elder without knowing him and his character (1 Timothy 3:1-7) would make Timothy complicit in the sins that might follow.

➤ In yourself

Timothy is to keep himself pure by avoiding hasty ordinations as well as by maintaining a personal testimony. This church obviously needed the leadership of a Godly man who, though certainly not perfect, would model pure motives and righteous deeds.

Why does Paul at this point address water, wine and Timothy's health? First, it appears that in his desire to model righteousness for the people, Timothy drank only water. Second, it is clear that Timothy had some health problems, likely arising from the stress of dealing with the elders, heresies and moral issues in the church. Third, Paul prescribes a "little wine" (emphasis on "little") for Timothy's health, assuring him that its medicinal use for his stomach problems was acceptable.

❖ Be cautious

➤ Sin is not always immediately obvious

Sometimes a man's sins are obvious leading into his judgment. Other times they are hidden in one's motives and by one's craftiness until their judgment reveals them. Thus we see the reason for Paul's admonition not to be hasty in ordination.

➤ Good works are clear

Even the good works of a modest man are noticed. One does not have to "toot his own horn," he simply must live righteously.

### Application

1. Favoritism is a real struggle for pastors and others in church leadership. Neither feelings of friendship or dislike must get in the way of the impartial preaching and application of God's Word.
2. The hasty ordination and calling of pastors continues to plague churches. Take the time to first seek Jesus, the head of the church, and then to seek out the character of the man. Churches should not be looking for a quick fix to get them on the church growth fast track, but rather for a long term spiritual shepherd. Seek the right kind of man and you will get the right man.
3. Much is made about the drinking of wine (you can read the message on "Why I Don't Drink Alcohol" at [www.forevertruth.org](http://www.forevertruth.org)) and some use this passage to justify its usage. But this passage is about its medicinal use by a man who abstained from its use as a beverage. Pastors should be careful to maintain a lifestyle that does not cloud the focus of the Gospel; a life of purity for the sake of the Savior, the saints and sinners.
4. Sin cannot be hidden forever. And confession is always better than judgment.