Section I: Language, Historical Situation, Scriptural and Theological Context [600 words/response]

1. Language of the Text
   First Required Response
   The paper not only deals well with the translation possibilities for presbuteros and renders a considered opinion as to its translation, but goes on to demonstrate an ability to engage critically the sources and commentaries consulted. (This is true throughout the paper.)

2. Historical Situation
   Second Required Response  B
   The paper deals well with the assumptions in the text about issues in the Christian community and expectations regarding the faith and life of presbyters. It deals well with the "crisis in leadership" being experienced by the church.

3. Scriptural and Theological Context
   Third Required Response
   The paper does an excellent job of dealing with the citations and the canonical and theological issues at stake in whether one or both are considered graphe. It appropriately acknowledges the complexity of the matter and its ambiguity without losing sight of the theological issues.
Fourth Required Response

The paper does an outstanding job of identifying the instructions given in 1 Tim 5:19-22 and dealing with them in regard to other church members. The answer covers the relevant material well, demonstrating an ability to use exegetical resources critically and constructively.

Section II: Presenting a Faithful Interpretation
1. Focus Statement [50 words]

The focus statement is clear and on target. It would have been helpful if the paper had delineated where II 2, Supporting the Interpretation, begins, but it was not hard to determine.

2. Supporting the Interpretation [1200 words]

The interpretive essay is well written and clearly covers the issues at stake. Once again the paper has demonstrated the ability to use biblical resource materials critically and constructively. The paper demonstrates a logical consistency and flow from one point to another that makes it easy to follow.

Section III: Application [2 pages]

The lesson plan offered is essentially a restatement of the content developed throughout the paper. It does not address the specific ministry context of a retreat for church officers. It would have been stronger if the lesson plan had been less didactic and more experiential.

Summary Statement (why exam is satisfactory or unsatisfactory)

The paper as a whole is thoroughly satisfactory. It demonstrates an excellent grasp of biblical exegesis and the ability to use appropriate resource materials well. The bibliography of works consulted is extensive and well-chosen. The paper is written in a clear style that communicates complex issues well. It could have been made stronger by a clearer focus on the ministry context and how best to communicate the material to church officers.

Comments to the CPM
January 2012
Book: 1 Timothy
CANDIDATE'S ID# 925263

READER'S EVALUATION SHEET IN OPEN BOOK BIBLE EXEGESIS

I. EVALUATION OF THIS EXAMINATION. The examination consists of three sections, designed to be completed over five days. All three sections must be answered. Section I has four required responses, one of which will instruct the candidate to choose between an option “A” or “B.” A single evaluation of either “Satisfactory” (S) or “Unsatisfactory” (U) must be given on the examination as a whole. If any required response is omitted from a section, then the examination must receive an overall evaluation of “Unsatisfactory.”

Each examination will be evaluated independently by two readers. If both overall evaluations are “S,” the conveners will record a final evaluation of “Satisfactory.” If both readers evaluate the exam overall as “U,” the exam receives a final evaluation of “Unsatisfactory.” If the two readers disagree in their overall evaluations, the exam will be given to a third reader. The conveners will record the final evaluation based on the two concurring overall evaluations.

II. THIS EVALUATION SHEET GOES TO THE CANDIDATE. Each reader’s comments should represent his or her considered appraisal of the paper. These comments are read by the candidate and the candidate’s Committee on Preparation for Ministry.

S

OVERALL EVALUATION

Rick Atkerson

Reader's Name (print)

Reader's Signature

☐ Note: Comments include a message for committee on preparation for ministry.

Section I: Language, Historical Situation, Scriptural and Theological Context [600 words/response]

1. Language of the Text
First Required Response

Very thorough treatment - satisfies the requirements of this segment very well.

2. Historical Situation
Second Required Response  B

This answer covers all the questions raised with very good discussion.

3. Scriptural and Theological Context
Third Required Response

Excellent answer. It immediately gets to the issue of the 2nd quote and discusses the matter fully - then (II) draws exemplary conclusions while living in the ambiguity of the precise nature of the source. Very well done.
Fourth Required Response
A very good answer that synthesizes all the requirements within each topical discussion in a totally satisfactory manner.

Section II: Presenting a Faithful Interpretation
1. Focus Statement [50 words]
This is a well-focused statement with a clear central theme.

2. Supporting the Interpretation [1200 words]
This excellent essay is completely consistent with the focus statement and is very well supported by exemplary exegetical work - both from within the framework of the exam and beyond. Nicely done.

Section III: Application [2 pages]
The lesson plan satisfies all requirements and looks to be a very helpful exercise for the given context.

Summary Statement (why exam is satisfactory or unsatisfactory)
This paper is far more than satisfactory, with every single segment being presented in an exemplary manner.

Comments to the CPM
Section I.

1. In the wider Pauline corpus the term πρεσβυτέρος is found in only a handful of places. Four of its occurrences are within the letter of 1 Timothy and its only other occurrence is in Titus. Two possibilities for its translation occur within the fifth chapter of 1 Timothy: "older person" (1 Tim 5:1—older man; 1 Tim 5:2—older woman) or "elder" (1 Tim 5:17, 19). Rather than seeing these two possibilities as strictly synonymous, it is important to recognize the specific connotations attached to the latter that are not reflected in the general sense of the former. "Elder" refers to an older person but, specifically, an older person in a position of leadership.

(Somewhat as an aside, the closely related terms πρεσβύτερον, πρεσβύτης, and πρεσβύτης, respectively refer to a council of elders, older men, and older women (cf. 1 Tim 4:14, Tit 2:2, Philemon 9, Tit 2:3). Given the meaning of all these related words, it is difficult to see why the Douay-Rheims version translated πρεσβυτέροι as "priests." One may speculate that it has something to do with having been translated from the Latin Vulgate (originally in the 16th century, and then reworked in the 18th century). Whatever the reason, it is worth noting that every other translation surveyed (16 versions) uses "elders" rather than "priests."

As James Dunn notes, the use of πρεσβυτέροι in 1 Tim 5:17 can be read in a sequence of narrowing circles from older men ("the elders") to those within that group who are the more natural leaders ("who rule well"), and then "especially" those who labor in word and teaching. The former are worthy of honor just for being older men, but those in the narrower circles are worthy of "double honor" for their ability to lead the
church. The general term thus gains a "technical" meaning in reference to church leadership.2

This understanding of πρεσβύτερος allows for its use in 1Tim 5:1 to refer to the wider circle. Rather than an older man in a position of leadership, 5:1 is referring simply to an older man. This translation is supported by how πρεσβύτερω is contrasted with "younger men" ( νεωτέρους) in the same way that "older women" ( πρεσβύτεραις) is contrasted with "younger women" ( νεωτέραις).

The relation between πρεσβύτερος and επισκόπος should be stated succinctly: The two words refer to the same office.3 Just as πρεσβύτερος refers to older persons who "rule well" (1Tim 5:17), so επισκόπος refers to overseers (literally those who over— επι—watch—σκοπεω, though traditionally called bishops). That the two terms refer to the same office is evident from Titus 1:5-7. "Paul directs Titus to appoint elders in every city (Tit 1:5) and then goes on to describe those same officers by the term bishops or overseers (Tit 1:7)."4 (Though one might argue that the repetition of the word "blameless" (ανεγκλητος) in Tit 1:6 and 1:7 means that two separate positions are meant, the use of the connecting postpositive γαρ ("for") in 1:7 weighs against separation.)5

2 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Luke Timothy Johnson, Letters to Paul's Delegates: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, The New Testament in Context, ed. Howard Clark Kee and J. Andrew Overman, (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1996), 221. Dunn speculates that elders may refer to a "lower-ranking function only beginning to take clear shape in the church" since Timothy has authority over elders in discipline (1Tim 5:19). Dunn, 809. This argument seems implausible because both elders and overseers undertake the exact same functions. There are two additional reasons. One is that it was the πρεσβύτερον that laid hands on Timothy and so had some kind of authority (1Tim 4:14). And the
Similarly, the immediate passage at hand indicates that the same office is meant. 1Tim 3:2 notes that a ἐπισκόπος should be an apt teacher and in 3:5 that he must manage well his own household if he will also care for the church. Then when the author comes to the question of payment for πρεσβύτεροι in 5:17, the exact same functions are listed—ruling well and laboring in word and teaching.⁶

Therefore, I would translate πρεσβύτεροι as “elders” because it is clear from the description—those who “rule well” and who “labor in word and teaching”—that a position of leadership is meant rather than simply “older men.”

2.B. The community assumed by 1Timothy included intellectual opponents of Paul, widows whose care had become problematic, and elders hastily ordained and in need of discipline.

First, given the polemical nature of Paul’s writings against “certain persons” (1:3) the teaching of these opponents is unclear. Allegedly, they desired “to be teachers of the law” (1:7) yet also purveyed “what is falsely called knowledge” (6:20). They forbade marriage and demanded “abstinence from foods” (4:3). To these intellectual vices is added a traditional moral vice: Some had considered godliness “a means of gain” (6:5) out of a desire to be rich (6:9) and a love of money (6:10).⁷

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⁶ Knight, 3. This is not to say that the two terms do not have different inflections, e.g. “elder” connoting maturity and “overseer” connoting more specifically the care of the church. Ibid.

⁷ It is possible these passages refer not to the excommunicated teachers, but to the elders responsible for the church’s funds. Thus leaders are not to be lovers of money (3:3). See Luke Timothy Johnson, The First and Second Letters to Timothy, The Anchor Bible, ed. David Noel Freedman, (New York: Doubleday, 2001), 287.
Though the opponents’ precise teachings cannot easily be made out, it is clear that
the text assumes these opponents were (once) part of the community. In fact, they are a
significant reason why Timothy was to remain in Ephesus. Thus they are placed within
his charge, giving him authority to instruct them to not teach different doctrine (1:3).
Moreover, their relation to the community is shown by the fact that Paul could give
instructions concerning them, specifically Hymenaeus and Alexander (1:20; cf. 2Tim
2:17, 4:14).

In addition to these doctrinal issues, the community seemed to also have
administrative problems, specifically with the care of widows. While 5:3-16 is too
complicated to parse here, for present purposes, suffice it to say that the administrative
confusion regarding the care of widows can (and should) be viewed as a failure of
leadership, even if the widows themselves were also to blame (e.g. 5:13).

Luke Timothy Johnson persuasively argues: “It is too seldom recognized by
readers [] that this community seems to have had a genuine crisis in leadership.”8 He cites
the fact that Timothy remained there as a trouble-shooter (1:3), and that Paul had to
intervene to excommunicate Hymenaeus and Alexander (1:20), suggesting a “lack of will
to exercise strong judgment in the community” just as in 1Cor 5-6.9 Understanding the
community this way helps make sense of the lists of qualifications for leaders in 3:1-12:
Within this understanding the lists appear as the products of a “real historical context of
failure” and the requisite virtues listed are “not purely formal but directed to a perceived
need.”10

(Atlanta: John Knox, 1987), 75.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid., 75-76.
This "crisis in leadership" argument also clarifies 5:17-22. Paul evidently had occasion to discuss charges brought against elders (5:19), and he was apparently concerned about some elders persisting in sin, perhaps "in the presence of all" (5:20). Further, Paul's warning to Timothy to not hastily ordain anyone suggests that "mistakes had been made along these lines."\textsuperscript{11}

A crisis in leadership would help explain why the passage moves quickly from advocating "double honor" for the elders to a discussion of the procedures for disciplining them (e.g. requiring two or three witnesses, showing impartiality, rebuking them in public so that others might fear). Simply, the role of the elders in the church is too important to allow lax discipline. Both their remuneration and their rebuke should reflect the centrality of the role they play. Not only do they represent the community to the outside world (thus the requirement in 3:7), but also they are responsible for the administration of the church's resources (such as the care of widows (5:3-16)) and for the labor of teaching (5:17). Evidently, the elders had failed in these responsibilities: False teaching had made headway in the church, the care of widows was a mess, and some elders were persisting in sin before the watching world.

3. The first quote in 5:18a is from the LXX of Deuteronomy 25:4 and the second quote in 5:18b is the same as the text in Luke 10:7.\textsuperscript{12} The canonical questions pertain to what the author of 1 Timothy meant regarding the second quote. If the author meant to include the saying of Jesus in what "the scripture says," then this would suggest a later

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid., 75.
\textsuperscript{12} 5:19, in reference to the necessity of two or three witnesses, alludes to, but does not quote Deut. 19:15, and so will not be discussed further until Question 4.
date for the letter, and thus also an author other than Paul. Whether or not these latter suggestions follow, to conclude that “scripture” here includes the Jesus-saying demonstrates that already in the 1st century church certain writings were accorded authoritative status.

Philip Towner, arguing for an early date for 1 Timothy on the basis of other evidence, notes that at this earlier time the word “scripture (γραφή)” would have meant the Old Testament, and the saying by Jesus would have been offered as an additional authoritative proof. He recognizes, however, that the first quote is only separated from the second by the conjunction καὶ, thus suggesting inclusion in the introductory formula “for the scripture says,” and that the second quote corresponds exactly (except for γαρ) to Luke 10:7, thus suggesting a written source. Acknowledging these points, he points out that it “is not possible to know how Paul came by the saying [in 5:18b] ... if a written source is required, surely it is sufficient to posit that by this time various written collections of the sayings of Jesus had begun to circulate, and that Paul had access to the version that Luke eventually consulted.”

Positing such scenarios shows that this debate can become complex, but it is worth noting that Paul (also) quotes the Deut 25:4 passage in 1 Cor 9:9 and then cites a commandment from the Lord in 9:14, “that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.” Thus Paul was familiar with the principle put forth by Jesus regarding gospel workers and their wages, and it is possible that in 1 Tim he is recalling

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14 Even with an author other than Paul, there is a strong likelihood that the letter was composed within the 1st century. See Johnson (2001), 61.
16 Ibid., 366-67.
the words of Jesus as they circulated in the oral tradition and he was simply "careless in the shaping of his sentence." Thus, rather than Paul unilaterally expanding the scripture to include Jesus' saying, he just did not word his letter carefully enough.

More likely, as those who argue for a later date and for an author other than Paul note, the inclusion of the Luke passage in the definition of scripture indicates that the Christian community had already begun to consider certain documents as scripture. If so, the church's appeal to Luke as scripture would have happened with remarkable haste, assuming a date of around 80-90 CE for Luke.

These interesting canonical issues cannot be definitively resolved here, and so we should not allow them to obscure the theological import of 5:17-18. Importantly, the theological point here has a decidedly material shape to it. It is clear from the reference to the worker's wages, and the repetition of "worth" language in 5:17 and 5:18b (αξιουσθωσιν and αξιον) that the "double honor" includes material support. This is similar to the theological point Paul makes in 1Cor 9. The gospel, while offered free of charge, does place responsibilities on those who respond in faith to its message—to support the church's ministries, so that the gospel might continue to be offered free of charge to others. More specifically in 1Tim we see that the "labor" of ruling well, preaching and teaching, accords honor to elders, not only in the esteem of others but also in the necessities of life.

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17 Johnson (2001), 286.
18 This argument, as John P. Meier notes, does not account for the fact that γραφή refers to a writing and not oral communication. John P. Meier, "The Inspiration of Scripture: But What Counts as Scripture?" Mid-Stream 38 (1999): 71-78, 77.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid., 78.
21 Towner, 366.
4. The instructions in 1Tim 5:19-22 regarding the πρεσβύτεροι are fourfold: accusations against elders should not be accepted without two or three witnesses (19), elders who continue in sin should be rebuked before all (20), elders should be judged with impartiality, as before God (21), and elders should not have hands laid upon them hastily, lest by negligent ordination Timothy share in their sins (22).\textsuperscript{22}

The first instruction regarding witnesses was a longstanding aspect of Judaic legal procedure (Deut. 19:15). This principle was familiar to the Pauline communities (cf. 2Cor. 13:1). While 5:19 refers to formal charges (κατηγορία) against elders, it is not likely that the principle of two or three witnesses would apply only to elders.\textsuperscript{23} Instead, just as Deut. 19:15 refers to accused members of Israel generally, so too this principle should apply to all church members. To be accused of sin is a serious matter and those in charge of discipline should not quickly jump to formally examining an accused person without some corroboration.\textsuperscript{24}

Two textual issues arise in 5:20. The verse begins, Τοὺς ἁμαρτάνοντας, literally “the ones sinning.” Thus there is a question as to whether this phrase refers to elders or to all sinners.\textsuperscript{25} The latter view seems unlikely because that would require a very abrupt

\textsuperscript{22} The juridical nature of this passage resonates both with Judaic practice (Deut. 19:15-20), as well as Attic law. Williams notes several words from the juridical register—“in the presence of,” “solemnly charge,” “prejudice,” “partiality”—serve to evoke a judicial setting. For instance, Διαμαρτυρομαι (5:21) is a term taken directly from Attic law. Raymond F. Williams, 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus: A Commentary, The New Testament Library, ed. C. Clifton Black et al., (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 148.

\textsuperscript{23} Williams connects the principle of two or three witnesses to the fact that elders should be held in honor (5:17). Williams, 146. But this makes no sense of the fact that all Israelites, not just the highly esteemed elders, had this procedural right.

\textsuperscript{24} Of course, the principle of two or three witnesses must be recognized in some situations as flexible. For instance, if a church member is accused by a child of inappropriate conduct when the two were alone, the child should not have to find another person to back up his story before the church leaders (or the police) “accept” the accusation.

\textsuperscript{25} For the latter view, see Williams at 146.
change of subject matter. If then the text continues to refer to elders, the relation between elders and sin seems to have been an ongoing one, as suggested by the fact that ἀμαρτάνοντας is a present participle.

The next textual issue is who is the "all (πάντων)" before whom the sinning elders should be rebuked? Are the "rest" the other elders or the whole church? Each possibility has merit, but it seems the whole church is more likely. Just as 5:19 cites Deut. 19:15, so it is reasonable to maintain that 5:20 stays within the Mosaic framework. And in Deut. 19:17-20 the public nature of the judicial proceeding is clear. Moreover, the necessity for a public rebuke would suggest that private intervention was not successful and the sin has been continued. Such a procedure accords with Matt. 18:15-17 where a wrongdoer is to be approached privately and then if he continues doing wrong, to be brought before the whole church. Thus, "a process seems to be in view: accusation investigated; if upheld, dealt with quietly; if conduct not discontinued, public exposure." Such a process instills "fear" as members recognize that their refusal to repent would lead to similar public rebuke.

Just as God is an impartial judge (Rom. 2:11), so Timothy must not let personal relationships get in the way of enacting discipline. God, Christ and the elect angels are invoked because final judgment is in their hands. Timothy must then judge both as their

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26 J. N. D. Kelly, The Pastoral Epistles, Black's New Testament Commentary, ed. Henry Chadwick (London: A & C Black, 1960), reprint (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009), 127. Moreover, Kelly notes there were no formal penitential procedures for all sinners at this stage of the church and so the juridical tone of the passage would seem to refer primarily to leaders. Ibid.


28 Ibid.; Towner, 371; Kelly, 127 ("public exposure before the church suits the atmosphere of apostolic Christianity much better").

29 Towner, 371.

30 Dunn, 823.
representative and as one who will himself be judged by them.\textsuperscript{31} Similarly, the church recognizes in its discipline of members that it does so before its Judge.

The "laying on of hands" in 5:22 almost certainly refers to ordination.\textsuperscript{32} Just as Timothy was earlier instructed regarding the requirements of bishops and deacons (3:1-12), so he is reminded to take care in the ordination of elders. Given the awful judgment that awaits sin (5:21) and the unrepentant failure of other elders (5:20), Timothy must not act hastily in appointing new elders. If he were to negligently appoint an unqualified person or leave an unrepentant sinner in leadership, he would in some sense be responsible ("share in") the other's sin.\textsuperscript{33} The laying on of hands places great responsibility both upon the appointee and appointers. Like Timothy, the church must keep itself—including and especially leaders—pure.

Section II.

Focus Statement: The church maintains faithful order when it honors its leaders in both esteem and remuneration and when it recognizes that truly honoring leaders before God includes the church's responsibility to hold its leaders accountable through just procedures of church discipline, undertaken in the presence of God.

Though 1Tim 5:17-22 does not mention "order" it is imperative to understand the passage's instructions within the context of the entire letter. Within the letter, the importance of the church and its faithfulness is established through powerful language.

\textsuperscript{31} Kelly, 127.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid. Kelly notes the same phrase was used to refer to Timothy's ordination in 4:14. Moreover, he notes that those who see it as a general restoration of sinners (i.e. those who read the sinners in 5:20 as sinners generally) cannot account for the fact that there is no evidence of a formal penitential procedure in the late first or early second century church and that it is difficult to even imagine one having formed at this nascent stage. Ibid.
\textsuperscript{33} Towne, 374-75.
Biblical Exegesis

The church is "the household of God...the pillar and bulwark of the truth" (3:15). As such the church stands in a "double relation" to the well-ordered family and to Israel.34 This image of the church as a well-ordered household is reinforced by the requirement that overseers/cllers35 and deacons manage their own households well (3:4, 12).36 The importance of this analogy for the author of 1Timothy is evinced by the rhetorical question in 3:5—"if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church?" And like Israel, the church in its discipline, seeks to be a well-ordered people, "purg[ing] the evil from [its] midst" (Deut. 19:20).

The church has long recognized that to be well ordered requires faithful overseers to guide the church in its mission. These overseers "must be above reproach" (3:2), and just as Christians continue to follow the Mosaic command to honor their parents (Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:2), so the church honors its elders. The honor called for in 5:17 is often rendered as "double honor," but it might be better understood as a "twofold" honor. Rather than denoting double pay for elders who rule well and teach, it seems more plausible that alongside the esteem that faithful elders receive should be added honor in the sense of remuneration.37

The question of which elders should be remunerated for their service must take into account the historical circumstances of the 1Timothy community. Whether or not the elders in question would have been engaged in what we might consider "full-time" paid ecclesial work today, it is clear that their administration of the church and their

34 Dunn, 809.
35 I will use these terms interchangeably, on the assumption that the argument that πρεσβυτέρος and ἐπίσκοπος should be understood as referring to the same office is correct. See note 3, supra.
37 Witherington III, 274. He notes that δυσλεκτική is easily rendered "twofold."
responsibilities in the word and teaching were such that they deserved to receive some material sustenance from the community.\(^\text{38}\) Accordingly, the author cites scriptural authority for the proposition that ministerial work—whether as a ruling elder or also as a teaching elder—deserves “honor” (Deut. 25:4; Luke 10:7; cf. 1Cor 9:9, 14). This principle binds the church today, as it too recognizes the importance of such work for its own life and, by extension, for the life of the world to which it ministers.

The honor accorded elders is in direct proportion to their importance for the church’s life. Similarly, this importance to the church’s life is proportionally related to the seriousness with which the church approaches questions of elders’ character and conduct. Thus, the passage shifts quickly from honoring elders to recognizing that honoring elders does not require, but positively prohibits, turning a blind eye to their faults. For even as the church honors elders and entrusts them with responsibility it recognizes its responsibility before God to keep itself pure (5:20).

In undertaking this serious task of discipline, the church is wise to adhere to just procedures. It recognizes the way that legal structures can be abused to render the innocent guilty and that overzealousness in prosecution too often stems from a will to power (thus, Satan, the Accuser). More pointedly, the church remembers that in exercising judgment it stands before its own Judge (5:21).

As members of the household of God, elders are entitled to be formally accused (κατηγοροῦν) by two or three witnesses. It is clear that this principle is a protective

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\(^{38}\) Interesting, Johnson also notes that “if elders are paid sufficiently, they will be less tempted to cupidity.” Johnson (2001), 288. He makes this point because he surmises that one problem in the Ephesian church was that elders were supplementing their income with community funds. Thus, Paul’s promise to deal with those who consider “godliness a source of gain” (6:5). \textit{Ibid.}
measure, to safeguard elders from slander or unsubstantiated accusations.\textsuperscript{39} Because an elder "must be well thought of by outsiders" (3:7) a formal charge against him could be damaging to the elder's ministry (there would now be a question as to whether he was blameless), as well as to the whole church (since the world appraises the church based on its leaders). Not only was the accused to be saved from undergoing a formal procedure absent two witnesses, but also Timothy was instructed to not even receive the allegation, thus confirming "its inaccuracy to the local community of believers."\textsuperscript{40}

Whether Τους αμαρτανοντας should be understood as elders who were guilty of the accusation, and as such should be publicly rebuked, or as those who persist in sin even after a private intervention, is not an easily settled question.\textsuperscript{41} Interpreting the phrase either way may change the nature of how, and for what sin(s), an elder should be rebuked. But the fact remains that an elder's sin, especially sin that goes against the qualifications of 3:2-7, must be taken seriously and that honor cannot be divorced from accountability. Though it is unclear whether the passage comports entirely with Jesus' instructions in Matt. 18:15-17 it seems that the church is wise to keep in mind the procedures laid out by Jesus in rebuking an elder. Just as the safeguard of 5:19 protects the elder from accusations that will affect his reputation whether they are accurate or not, so Matt. 18 provides opportunity for private confrontation before bringing the fault to the attention of the wider church.

In the same spirit the church should appropriate the instruction to rebuke an elder "in the presence of all" (5:20). It remembers that discipline is not meant primarily to

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 337.
\textsuperscript{41} See ibid., 337-40.
punish, let alone to embarrass, but instead to build up the body and redeem the offender. Acknowledging the importance of this posture, the church nonetheless recognizes that there may be times when public rebuke before the whole church is necessary.

The foregoing procedures are understood as undertaken in the presence of God. While procedure itself may help ensure justice, those in a position to judge must also ensure their own impartiality and must avoid prejudice (5:21). These qualities may be interior to the individuals, but can also be encouraged through procedures such as recusal for judges with an interest in or close relationship with an accused, or requiring all evidence to be brought forward before a decision may be rendered.\textsuperscript{42} Just as the church takes discipline seriously because it seeks to keep itself pure (5:20), so it takes fair procedures seriously because it disciplines before a just God (5:21).

Recognizing the difficulty and seriousness of church discipline, the church is wise to “not ordain anyone hastily” (5:22). This authority is conferred upon the church so as to ensure good order. The failure to use it properly may lead the church to “participate in the sins of others” (5:22).\textsuperscript{43} This phrase reflects the well-known principle that if someone places another in charge of a task and the appointee fails, the first person can and often should be held responsible. Thus the church’s responsibility for its leaders’ accountability begins before the leaders are even ordained. Accordingly, the church thoroughly examines potential leaders and avoids “recent convert[s]” (3:6), praying for wisdom in the knowledge that the sins of some remain hidden (5:24).

As the church orders its life before God, for the sake of Christ, it give thanks for the gifts of leadership given to its members. It honors those gifted by supporting their

\textsuperscript{42} Towner, 373.
\textsuperscript{43} Dunn, 823.
ministry, and it honors God by enacting discipline as it seeks to keep itself pure until the
day of Christ Jesus.
Section III.

I. Types of Biblical Leaders

a. Three terms: διάκονος, επίσκοπος, πρεσβύτερος
   i. Interesting thing about each biblical leadership term is that none
      has a primarily ecclesial or spiritual meaning. Each is a re-
      purposed secular word.
   ii. διάκονος, from which we get “deacon,” originally meant “servant”
      1. Accordingly, the deacon position has traditionally been
         understood in terms of service (today anything from
         vacuuming the sanctuary to administering funds to the
         poor)
   iii. επίσκοπος, from which we get “bishop,” originally meant and is
      literally, “oversee”
   iv. πρεσβύτερος, from which we get “elder,” originally meant
      “…‘elder’! Or more specifically, “an older person”
   v. The tricky part about understanding the relationship between these
      last two terms is that it is not altogether clear whether they were
      meant to denote different leadership offices, or whether they were
      used somewhat interchangeably
      1. I am of the mind that they were used interchangeably, cf.
         Tit 1:5-9
         a. If I am right, then that leaves us with, broadly, two
            offices—elders and deacons
         b. If I am wrong, it is typical to see the difference
            between bishops and elders in a hierarchical way;
            that is, bishops tend to “oversee” a larger
            population, perhaps an entire parish, instead of a
            single church

b. Two grades of elder?
   i. Within the designation πρεσβύτερος, 1Tim 5:17 can be read to
      indicate that there is a gradation: some elders “rule well” but others
      also “labor in word and teaching”
   ii. Accordingly, our denomination has recently shifted its language
      for pastors from “Ministers of Word and Sacrament” to “Teaching
      Elders”
      1. “Elders” are now known as “Ruling Elders” (sorry, deacons
         you are still deacons)
      2. This shift in terminology is interesting because it clarifies
         how in larger church gatherings elders and “ministers” have
         a similar say (i.e. at presbytery, synod, and General
         Assembly they have equal votes and we try to ensure there
         are an equal amount of ruling elders as teaching elders)

c. Other leaders — ἀποστόλος, προφητής
   i. We also find the designations for apostles and prophets, but there
      are other issues involved in understanding these terms, so let’s turn
      to our passage for today
II. Honor and Discipline in Order
   a. Twofold honor
      i. In that culture, older persons as such would have been accorded greater honor
         1. Within that group, those who were able to rule well and to teach would have been given greater honor
      ii. In addition to being esteemed, they were also cared for financially
   b. Honor does not mean utter deference
      i. In some cultures or groups, honoring someone in a leadership position may mean deferring to their behavior even if it is questionable
         1. E.g. Wall Street bankers—compliance officers knowing that the bets the bosses are making are too risky or dishonest, but they defer to the leaders, maybe from fear
      ii. But in the church we do not understand our leaders as above the commands of God; in fact, we see it as honoring them to call them out on their sin
         1. How can it honor someone to point out his or her faults? Because we know that sin ultimately harms us and separates us from the full life Christ promised (Jn. 10:10)
   c. Biblical leaders were sinners too!
      i. Community envisioned by 1Tim had suffered a crisis of leadership
         1. False teachers, administration of widows was a mess, elders persisting in sin
      ii. Paul needed to address this crisis by giving Timothy instructions for disciplining wayward elders
      iii. This is in part why we as Presbyterians like to emphasize “order” so strongly—we are wary of giving charismatic individuals too much power or discretion, recognizing that sin plagues all of us
   d. Discipline can be neither shirked nor done carelessly
      i. The church has a responsibility, both in ordaining teaching and ruling elders, and in their continuing leadership, to hold them accountable for their sin (5:20, 22)
      ii. Yet when the church does engage in discipline it does so with sensitivity and care
         1. Avoinds frivolous accusations (5:19)
         2. Considers Jesus’ instructions in Mt. 18 (which go back to Deut. 19, which 1Tim 5:19 also refers to)
         3. Sets up just procedures (see Book of Order, Rules of Discipline) so as to avoid capriciousness or partiality (5:21)
   e. Church remembers that it honors and disciplines before God (5:21)
      i. In honoring leaders, we thank God for the gifts God has given them, and us through them
      ii. In disciplining leaders, we seek to do so justly, remembering that we will be accountable before God
Works Consulted


Biblical Exegesis

