



**Slide #1**

In Part 1 of *Office of Elder*, we addressed the abilities of leading and teaching required of elders in the local church. Now we will delve into elder plurality and equality.

## Office of Elder *Part #2* Plurality & Equality

Ken Neff  
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**Slide #2**

Not only were there multiple elders in each church but also their ministry was identical. Plurality of elders in each church is supported from numerous texts, including Acts 14:23 and Titus 1:5. Equality of elders is based on 1 Timothy 5:17.

### NEW TESTAMENT ELDERS



2

### Slide #3

Plurality of elders will be considered in the first section of Part 2.

## Plurality of Elders

3

### Slide #4

In each church, having multiple elders is seen in a number of passages. On his first missionary journey when returning “to Lystra and to Iconium, and to Antioch,” Paul “appointed elders (plural) for them in every church (singular)” (Acts 14:23). It was a short period of time from when Paul established these churches (13:14, Antioch; 14:1, Iconium; 14:8, Lystra) to his return to appoint elders (14:23). In light of the requirement that an elder “not be a new convert” (1 Tim 3:6), we must remember the Paul went first into the synagogues of these cities (Acts 13:14; 14:1) to preach the good news and some Jews believed. From these Jewish believers, who were knowledgeable of the Law and Prophets, they could have in a short time incorporated the good news with their historical understanding of God. As such, this internalized truth would qualify them for becoming an elder. A second illustration of appointing a plurality of elders in each church takes place in Titus 1:5. Writing to Titus on the small island of Crete, Paul tells him to “appoint elders (plural) in every city (or town).” With the relatively small population on the island, the church in any town would not be large.

### PLURALITY OF ELDERS

PASSAGE	LOCATION	DATE*
JAM 5:14	"OF THE CHURCH" (in disperia)	AD 45
ACTS 11:30 GAL 2:1-10	JERUSALEM	AUTUMN AD 47
ACTS 14:21-23	"IN EVERY CHURCH" (Lystra, Iconium, Antioch)	JUNE-AUGUST AD 49
ACTS 15:2,4,6,22	JERUSALEM	AUTUMN AD 49
ACTS 20:17	"OF THE CHURCH" (Ephesus)	MAY AD 57
ACTS 21:17-18	JERUSALEM	MAY AD 57
PHIL 1:1	PHILIPPI	SPRING AD 62
1 PETER 5:1	"AMONG YOU" (in disperia)	AD 64
TITUS 1:5	"IN EVERY CITY" (of Crete)	SUMMER AD 66

\* Source: *A Chronological Table of the Apostolic Age* by Dr. Hoehner

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**Slide #5**

We will now consider the equality in elders in the second section of Part 2.

## Equality in Elders

5

**Slide #6**

Not only was there multiple elders in each first-century church, but also there was equality as addressed in 1 Timothy 5:17.

Remembering from Part 1 of *Office of Elder* that elders must have two abilities, being able to lead/rule and able to teach. These two skills are highlighted in 1 Timothy 5:17 as shown by the words in red. Notice, however, two different ways to translate this verse, particularly the two words in the last phrase: “preaching” and “teaching” in the New American Standard Bible opposed to “word” and “doctrine” in the New King James Version.

### 1 TIMOTHY 5:17

The elders who **rule** well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at **preaching** and **teaching**. (NASB)

Let the elders who **rule** well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the **word** and **doctrine**. (NKJV)

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## Slide #7

“The way we choose to look at things can be as significant as the things we are trying to see.”

A new perspective can provide new insights. This is no truer than when we are trying “to see” what elders are responsible to do in ministry.

The way we choose to look  
at things can be as significant  
as the things we are trying to see.

William R. Thurston  
President of GenRad, Inc

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## Slide #8

Three approaches are generally taken regarding 1 Timothy 5:17. We will address each one to understand the differing points of view relating to the various interpretations.

*Older Traditional View:* summary, as shown on Slide #8, sees only one kind of elder per church, called “the preacher.” “Able to teach” in 1 Timothy 3:2 refers to an ability. The “word” corresponds to “preaching” and “doctrine” to “teaching” by “the preacher.”

This view is in agreement with the next two positions that the elders in the passage are in the plural. The proponents of the Older Traditional view, however, understand plural elders to correspond to plural churches, not to a singular church. The conclusion is that each church has one elder and he is distinguished from other elders in other churches on the basis of superior ministry skills in leading and in preaching and teaching. This approach was widely

held beginning in the second century as addressed in Slide #4, Part 1 of *Office of Elder*. However, the view cannot account for the numerous passages that address a plurality of elders in a singular church (see Slide #4 above). Unfortunately this viewpoint supports “the mediator mentality”—the preacher is the sole guide for understanding the Scriptures for the church.

### FIRST TIMOTHY 5:17

21st Century Older Traditional View	21st Century Newer Traditional View	1st Century View
One Kind of Elder: One per Church One Preacher	Two Kinds of Elders: All Ruler One Preacher	One Kind of Elder: All Rule All Teach
"Able to Teach" = Ability	"Able to Teach" = Character Trait	"Able to Teach" = Ability
"Word" = Preaching	"Word" = Preaching	"Word" = Verbalization
"Doctrine" = Teaching	"Doctrine" = Teaching	"Doctrine" = Internalization
Comparison between Elders based on Diligence	Comparison between Elders based on Ability	Comparison between Elders based on Diligence

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*Newer Traditional View* points to two kinds of elders per church. All are leading/ruling elders, but only one of the elders is “the preacher,” the teaching elder. The “ability to teach” in 1 Timothy 3:2 concerns a character trait, referring to being “teachable.” The “word” corresponds to “preaching” by “the preacher” and “doctrine” to “teaching” by others in smaller-group settings.

This view also understands the elders in the passage are plural. But rather than multiple churches, individual churches are understood. Thus, there are multiple elders in each church. How the individual elders in a particular church are distinguished varies by ability. Proponents of this position hold that all elders rule (lead), but within the elders there is a particular elder recognized as “the teaching elder” or “the pastor-teacher.” While distinction among ruling elders is based upon superior ministry skills in leading, teaching elders or pastor-teachers are further distinguished since they “work at preaching” or, more appropriately, “do the preaching.” This newer view likewise supports “the *mediator mentality*”—the preacher as the sole guide to and giver of biblical truth for the church.

This approach has become increasingly popular in the evangelical community. However, those who hold this view do not account for the plural form of *those* or *the ones* in the second clause of the verse when the closest antecedent is *elders* (plural). If this plural form is taken into account, not only is there a plurality of elders in each church, but there is also a plurality of teaching elders in each church.

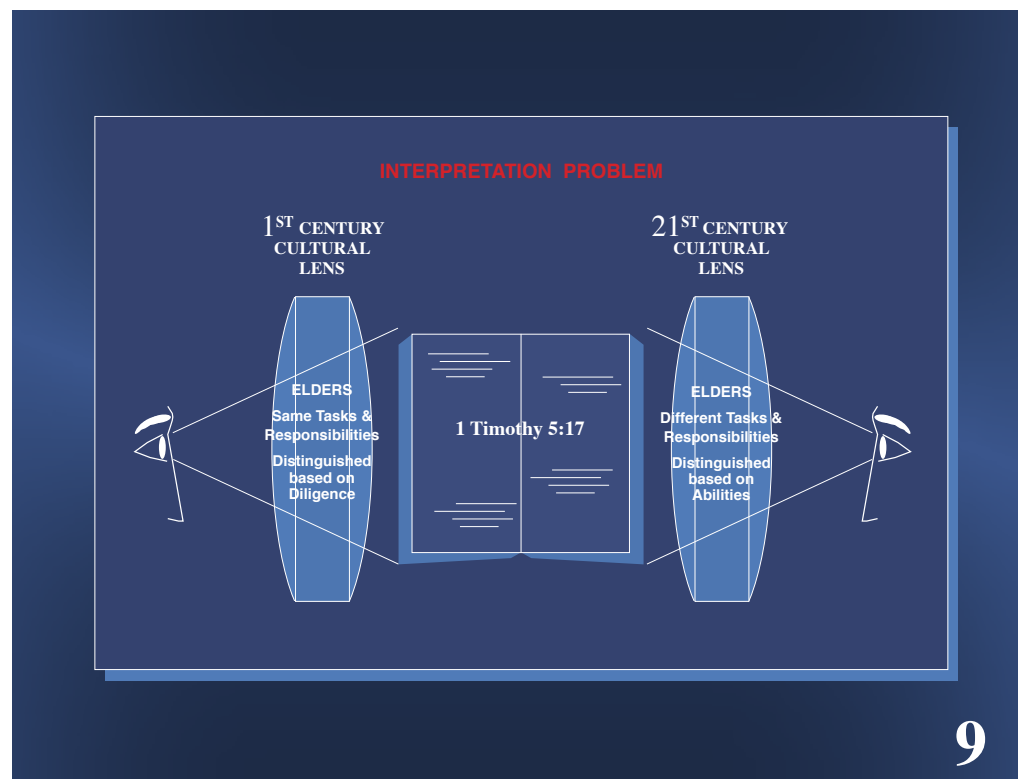
The *First-Century View* holds to only one kind of elder, yet multiple elders per church. All elders lead/rule and all teach. “Able to teach” in 1 Timothy 3:2 refers to an ability. The “word” corresponds to “verbalization of the word” and “doctrine” to “internalization of the word.”

The text addresses a plurality of elders in each church. There are elders (plural) in each church and all have identical responsibilities—to lead and to teach (see Part 1 of *Office of Elder*). In this case, all the elders are responsible for leading and authoritatively teaching the body of Christ. Consequently, understanding this text isn’t based on a difference between ruling and teaching elders. Rather, elders are only distinguished by their diligence in their responsibilities: “lead *well*” and “toil in the word and doctrine.” Critical to understanding this view is the divergence from the usual translation: “work at preaching and teaching.” The better translation is “toil in the word and doctrine,” which captures the intent of the text. The two terms *word* and *doctrine* will be discussed in detail in the following material.

One’s interpretation of a passage is important, but none is more important for a proper understanding of the functioning of the church than the passage under consideration.

## Slide #9

Remembering that there is *only one correct interpretation* of any passage, our problem is to determine which one is right since biblical clarity on ministry is crucial. Seeing through the first-century lens, 1 Timothy 5:17 tells us that all elders have the same tasks and responsibilities and are distinguished based on diligence in fulfilling those responsibilities. On the other hand from the twenty-first-century perspective, elders have different tasks and responsibilities and are distinguished based on abilities.



## Slide #10

The *only* passage that points to any distinctions among elders in the church is 1 Timothy 5:17. Let me say that again. The *only* passage that makes any difference between elders is 1 Timothy 5:17.

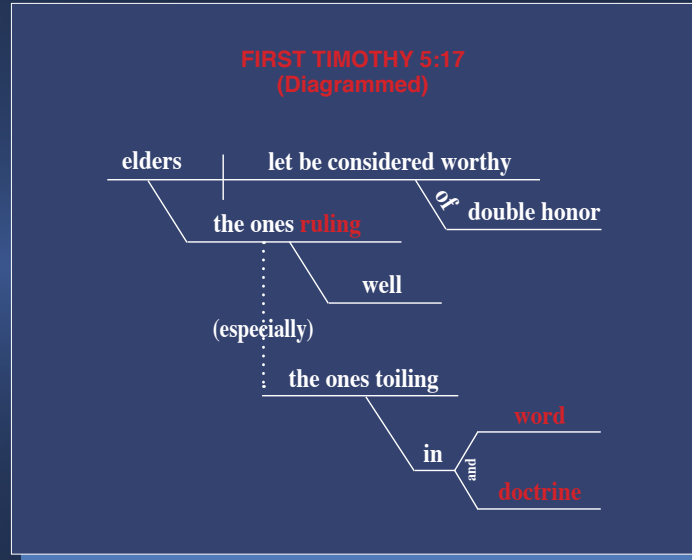
As addressed in Slide #8, some have taken this passage to suggest there is a distinction between ruling elders and teaching elders. And some even equate the more important teaching elders with the pastor-teacher. However, as the grammatical analysis shows, this passage distinguishes elders not by abilities, and thus ministry, but rather only by diligence in accomplishing similar ministries. This is a critical point because it means that all elders would have identical ministry activities.

Look at the diagrammed text [Greek grammatical components are provided on the next slide] and notice that it says, *Let the elders, the ones ruling well, be counted worthy of double honor, especially the ones toiling in word and doctrine.* As we have already observed, the text addresses a plurality of elders in individual churches. In addition, *the ones* (plural) in the last clause agree with the antecedent *elders, the ones* in the first clause. Thus, there are elders (plural) in each church who are distinguished in the manner in which they lead and, additionally, elders (plural) who are further distinguished in the manner in which they minister in the word and doctrine. The student of the Scripture must decide if the second distinction is (1) for a separate set of individuals or (2) for a further identification of the same group (“the ones ruling well”) addressed in the main clause. The *first* option allows for two types of elders with differing ministries; the *second* option allows for only one type of elder with all having similar ministries. Let’s look at the text to get some indication of the best approach.

The key to the passage is the emphasis of the passage: to distinguish ministries of elders or to distinguish effort put forth by elders in ministry. A simple reading of the passage would support the latter—*how* they do what they do is the emphasis. Now, do the contents of the text support this?

## Slide #11

The analyses of the Greek grammatical components in 1 Timothy 5:17 provide further insight for understanding this particular text as diagrammed on Slide #10.



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## FIRST TIMOTHY 5:17 (Text)

ENGLISH	GREEK	IDENTIFICATION	ROOT
The (ones)	<i>ohi</i>	pl, nom, masc	<i>ho</i>
well	<i>kalos</i>	adverb	<i>kalos</i>
ruling	<i>proestotes</i>	pl, nom, masc, part, perf	<i>proistemi</i>
elders	<i>presbuteroi</i>	pl, nom, masc	<i>presbuteros</i>
of double	<i>diples</i>	sg, genative, fem	<i>diplous</i>
honor	<i>times</i>	sg, genative	<i>time</i>
let be deemed			
worthy	<i>axiousathosan</i>	3 per, pl, pres, pass, imper	<i>axioo</i>
especially	<i>malista</i>	adverb	<i>malista</i>
the (ones)	<i>ohi</i>	pl, nom, masc	<i>ho</i>
laboring	<i>kopiontes</i>	pl, nom, masc, part, pres	<i>kopiso</i>
in	<i>en</i>	preposition	<i>en</i>
word	<i>logo</i>	sg, dative	<i>logos</i>
and	<i>kai</i>	conjunction	<i>kai</i>
teaching	<i>didaskalia</i>	sg, dative	<i>didaskalia</i>

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## Slide #12

Looking again at 1 Timothy 5:17, we need to consider the terms *well* and *labor* in this context in order to distinguish elder responsibilities or to discern the effort put forth in ministry.

As set forth in Part 1 of *Office of Elder*, all elders are to rule, direct, or lead. The key in the passage is not whether they lead or not, but rather the *manner* in which they lead—a comparison not of activity but how that activity was accomplished. Additional honor is bestowed on those who *lead well*—*diligently and carefully*.

The logical extension of this emphasis is likewise carried into the latter part of the text—*especially those elders who labor*.

### 1 TIMOTHY 5:17

The elders who rule **well** are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who **work hard** at preaching and teaching. (NASB)

Let the elders who rule **well** be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who **labor** in the word and doctrine. (NKJV)

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## Slide #13

An analysis of the term *labor* will give us some perspective. The Greek word for work is *kopos*, which occurs fourteen times in the Epistles meaning to labor or to toil. Additional honor (note: it is not necessary to determine the meaning of honor for this discussion) is to be bestowed upon those elders (plural), previously addressed, that toil in the word. The emphasis is on the *effort* taken in the accomplishment of the task. Rather than differentiating among elders' tasks, the text addresses the way in which each elder accomplishes similar tasks. Those who perform their responsibilities well, with extra labor expended to accomplish them, are to be honored. Thus distinction is based not on gifts or abilities, but on diligence in ministry.

### LABOR (NT Epistles)

PASSAGE	1	TEXT	CONTEXT
ROM 16 6	X	Greet Mary, who has <i>worked hard</i> for you	TOILING
12	X	Greet . . . Yrphosa, who <i>worked hard</i>	TOILING
12	X	Greet Persis . . . who has <i>labored</i> in many ways	TOILING
1 COR 4 12	X	And we <i>toil</i> , working with our hands	TOILING
15 10	X	But I <i>labored</i> even more than all of them	TOILING
16 16	X	To everyone working and <i>laboring</i> with me	TOILING
GAL 4 11	X	Fear . . . that perhaps I have <i>labored</i> in vain	TOILING
EPH 4 28	X	Rather let him <i>labor</i> , working . . . with his hands	TOILING
PHIL 2 16	X	I ran not in vain, nor <i>labored</i> among you in vain	TOILING
COL 1 29	X	I <i>labor</i> , struggling according to working of Him	TOILING
1 THE 5 12	X	That you know those <i>laboring</i> among you	TOILING
1 TIM 4 10	X	For it is for this we <i>labor</i> and strive	TOILING
5 17	X	They who <i>labor</i> in word and doctrine	TOILING
2 TIM 2 6	X	The farmer <i>laboring</i> ought to be first to receive	TOILING

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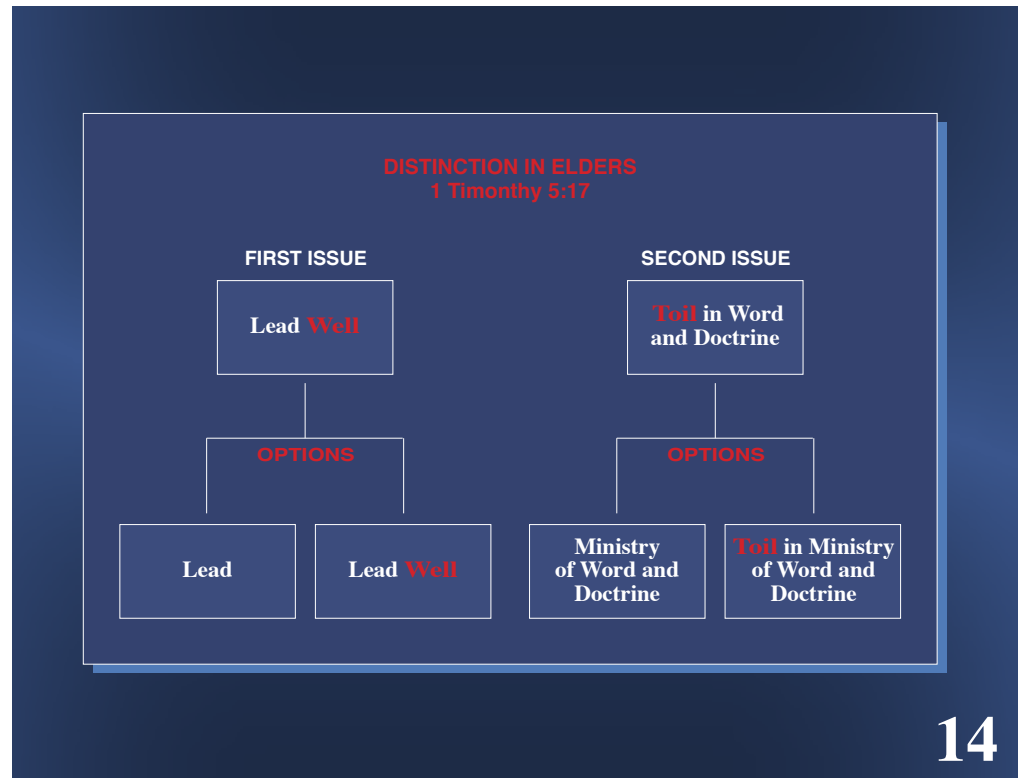
1 Labor *kapiaw*

13



#### Slide #14

First Timothy 5:17, the *only* instance in the New Testament, indicates that there can be distinctions in elders in two different ways. First, some elders “lead,” while other elders “lead well.” The distinction is the manner in which they lead. Second, some elders “minister in word and doctrine,” while other elders “toil in ministry of word and doctrine.” Again, distinctions in elders come from differences of effort, not ability or giftedness. Diligence of labor is the issue of 1 Timothy 5:17, which assumes all have the same abilities.



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#### Slide #15

If there are distinctions by elders for *toiling in the word and doctrine*, we should understand to what the terms *word* and *doctrine* refer particularly since there is great disagreement.

The typical English translation “especially those whose work is preaching and teaching” is somewhat misleading. In fact, this translation does not indicate a comparison of effort, but rather supports the typical practice in most churches today — “especially those *who do* the preaching and teaching” compared to “those *who don’t*.” A better translation would be “especially those who *toil* in the word (*logos*) and doctrine (*didaskalia*).” This translation points to a comparison of effort that is consistent with the former conclusions—distinctions among elders come from differences of effort, not ability—diligence in ministry, not different ministries.

The better translation also brings to our attention a change from “preaching and teaching” to “word and doctrine.” The traditional translation seems to make a distinction in verbal communication by those who stand before the congregation. So what do *word* and *doctrine* mean in the better translation.

**1 TIMOTHY 5:17**

The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at **preaching and teaching**. (NASB)

Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the **word and doctrine**. (NKJV)

15



## Slide #16

An analysis of the term *word* provides perspective. Notice on this slide that the word *logos* occurs twenty times in the Pastoral Epistles. In seven instances, it refers to the revelation of God. Using the phrase *this is a faithful saying* five times, Paul indicates content that is embodied in the written Scriptures. The remaining eight times relate to an utterance spoken or heard. So what does *word* mean in the better translation?

What *word* doesn't mean how "preaching" is viewed by the church today. Remember, "preaching" in the New Testament is associated with the heralding ministry of the evangelist, which we addressed in Part 1 of *Distinctions in Corporate Gifts*.) Here in this text, the *word* obviously brings to mind the ministry of the apostles—a ministry of the word of God that was not to be neglected (Acts 6:2). It is a verbalization of the truths of God.

				WORD (Pastoral Epistles)		CONTEXT		
PASSAGE		1	TEXT	A	B	C		
1 TIM	1	15	X	This is a faithful saying . . . that Jesus came	X		X	X
	3	1	X	This is a faithful saying: . . . if . . . he desires	X			
	4	5	X	It is sanctified by the word of God and prayer				
	6	X	X	Nourished in the words of faith and of doctrine	X			
	9	X	X	This is a faithful saying and worthy of acceptance	X	X	X	X
	12	X	X	Be an example to believers in word, in conduct	X			
	5	17	X	They who labor in word and doctrine	X			
	6	3	X	Does not consent to sound words, of Jesus Christ	X			
2 TIM	1	13	X	Sound words, which you heard from me [Paul]	X		X	X
	2	9	X	The word of God is not bound				
	11	X	X	It is a faithful saying: [quotation]	X			
	15	X	X	Rightly dividing the word of truth				
	17	X	X	Their message will spread like cancer	X		X	X
	4	2	X	Preach the word!				
	15	X	X	He has greatly resisted our words	X			
	TITUS	1	3	Manifested His word through proclamation				
	9	X	X	Holding fast the faithful word as been taught	X		X	X
	2	5	X	That the word of God be not blasphemed				
	8	X	X	In sound speech, that cannot be condemned	X			
	3	8	X	This is a faithful saying . . . that maintain works		X		
		20					8	5 7

1 Word *logos* A Verbalization—Utterance  
B Written—Content  
C Revelation of God

16

## Slide #17

Let's look at the second term *doctrine*. Occurring twenty-two times in the Pastoral Epistles, Paul used the term referring to the "act of teaching" in five instances and in four times concerning "instruction." Notice, however, the remaining thirteen occurrences relate to a "system of thought." Distinct from "teaching," which is verbal, doctrine is nonverbal relating to an internal development of a godly system of thought—"doctrine" or "the teachings."

This nonverbal option better fits the context, with *word* relating to instructing by the elders and *doctrine* relating to the accumulation of a scriptural frame of reference as a result of diligent study. The *word* refers to what one says; *doctrine* refers to what one thinks. *Doctrine* issues into *word*.

				DOCTRINE (Pastoral Epistles)		CONTEXT		
PASSAGE		WORD			TEXT	A	B	C
1 TIM	1	10		X	That is contrary to sound doctrine	X		
	2	12	X		Suffer not a woman to teach			X
	4	1		X	Seducing spirits, and doctrine of devils	X		
	6		X	X	Nourished in words of faith and doctrine	X		
	11	X		X	These things command and teach			X
	13		X	X	To reading, to exhortation, to doctrine	X		
	16		X	X	Take heed of yourself and to the teaching	X		
	5	17	X	X	They who labor in word and doctrine	X		
	6	1	X	X	That . . . doctrine be not blasphemed	X		
	2	X		X	These things teach and exhort			X
	3		X	X	Doctrine which is according to godliness	X		
	2	2	X		Able to teach others also			X
2 TIM	3	10		X	Carefully followed my doctrine	X		
	16		X	X	Scripture is . . . profitable for doctrine		X	
	4	2	X		Exhort with long suffering and doctrine		X	
	3		X	X	Endure sound doctrine			X
TITUS	1	9		X	Word . . . in accordance to the teaching	X		
	9		X	X	May be able by sound doctrine to exhort	X		
	11	X		X	Teaching things which they ought not			X
	2	1		X	Speak . . . which become sound doctrine	X		
	7		X	X	Show yourself . . . with purity in doctrine	X		
	10		X	X	Adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour	X		
		5	2	15				

1 Teach *didaskw* A System of Thought  
2 Teachings *didache* B Instruction  
3 Teachings *didaskalia* C Act of Teaching

17

### Slide #18

Before treating this idea as an obscure concept, observe the grammatical construction of these two terms combined together in other nearby texts.

These three texts provide clarification to 1 Timothy 5:7. Note the critical words highlighted in Red.

#### WORD & DOCTRINE (Pastoral Epistles)

##### 1 Timothy 4:6

In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the **words** of the faith and of the sound **doctrine** which you have been following

##### 1 Timothy 6:2c-3

Teach and exhort these things. If anyone teaches differently and is not consistent with sound **words** of our Lord Jesus Christ and with **doctrine** according to godliness

##### Titus 1:9

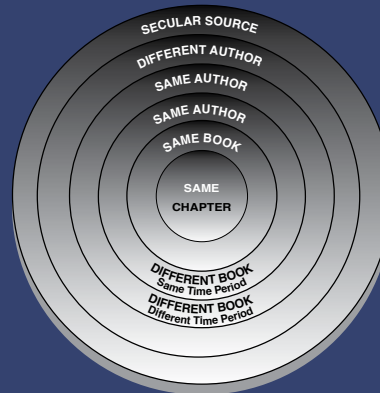
Holding to the faithful **word** according to the **doctrine**, that he may be able both to exhort by sound **doctrine** and to convince the ones contradicting

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### Slide #19

The order of importance for a word study is illustrated here. The closer a supportive text is to the original text lends greater weight to understanding words usage. In relation to 1 Timothy 5:17, 1 Timothy 4:6 and 6:2c-3 are in the same book, while Titus 1:9 is different book by the same author. Seen together, they should provide clarification to the terms *word* and *doctrine* in the context under discussion.

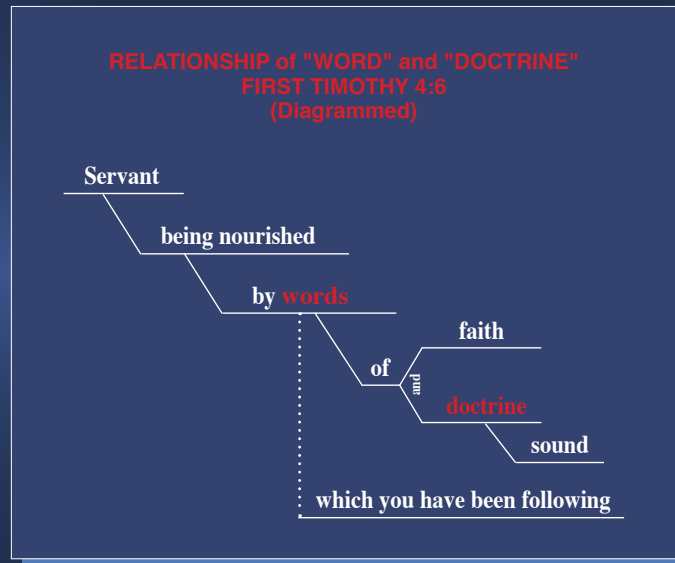
#### CONTEXT (Order of Importance)



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## Slide #20

In the diagram of the grammatical structure of 1 Timothy 4:6, God's servant is being nourished by "words," which he had heard (verbalized words). Translated as a prepositional phrase, "of sound doctrine," the genitive form indicates the source of the words. The source of those words was from "the teachings," the developed teachings of the church from the apostles and prophets.



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## Slide #21

The analyses of the Greek grammatical components in 1 Timothy 4:6 brings additional insight into the text.

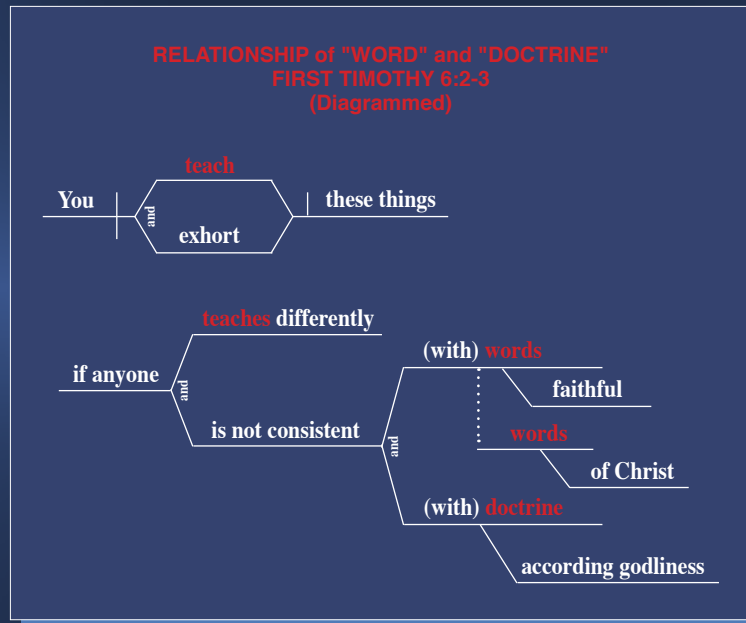
### FIRST TIMOTHY 4:6 (Text)

ENGLISH	GREEK	IDENTIFICATION	ROOT
servant	<i>diakonos</i>	sg, nom	<i>diakonos</i>
being			
nourished	<i>entrephomenos</i>	pres, pass, part, nom, sg, masc	<i>entrepho</i>
by the	<i>tois</i>	pl, dative	<i>ho</i>
words	<i>logois</i>	pl, dative	<i>logos</i>
of the	<i>tes</i>	sg, genative	<i>he</i>
faith	<i>pisteos</i>	sg, genative	<i>pistis</i>
and	<i>kai</i>	conjunction	<i>kai</i>
of the	<i>tes</i>	sg, genative	<i>he</i>
good	<i>kales</i>	sg, genative, fem	<i>kalos</i>
teaching	<i>didaskalias</i>	sg, genative	<i>didaskalia</i>
which	<i>he</i>	sg, dative, fem	<i>he</i>
you have			
followed	<i>parekolouthekas</i>	2 per, pl, perf, act, ind	<i>parekoloutheo</i>

21

## Slide #22

The diagram of the grammatical structure of 1 Timothy 6 shows that what is taught must be consistent with the words of Christ and doctrine. Verbal instruction must be consistent with the teachings (system of thought or doctrine.) Doctrine again issues into words.



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## Slide #23

The analyses of the Greek grammatical components in 1 Timothy 6:2c-3 allows for additional understanding of the text.

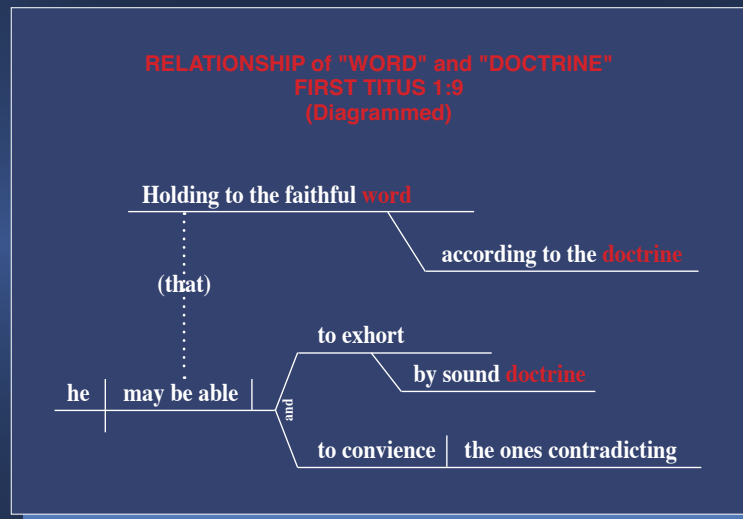
### FIRST TIMOTHY 6:2-3 (Text)

ENGLISH	GREEK	IDENTIFICATION	ROOT
These things	<i>tauta</i>	nom & acc, pl, neut	<i>ohutos</i>
teach	<i>didasde</i>	2 per, sg, pres, imper, act	<i>didasko</i>
and	<i>kai</i>	conjunction	<i>kai</i>
exhort	<i>parakalei</i>	2 per, sg, pres, imper, act	<i>parakaleo</i>
If	<i>ei</i>	particle—introduces condition	<i>ei</i>
anyone	<i>tis</i>	interrogative pronoun	<i>tis</i>
teaches	<i>heterdidaskalei</i>	3 per, sg, pres, ind	<i>heterdidaskaleo</i>
differently	<i>kai</i>	conjunction	<i>kai</i>
and	<i>proserchetai</i>	3 per, sg, pres, ind	<i>proserchomai</i>
consents	<i>me</i>	negative particle	<i>me</i>
not	<i>hugiainousin</i>	pl, dat, masc, part, pres	<i>hugiaino</i>
to wholesome	<i>logois</i>	pl, dative	<i>logos</i>
words	<i>tios</i>	pl, dative	<i>ho</i>
the (words)	<i>tou</i>	sg, genative	<i>ho</i>
of the	<i>Kuriou</i>	sg, genative	<i>Kurios</i>
Lord	<i>henon</i>	pl, genative (pronoun)	<i>ego</i>
of us	<i>Iesou</i>	sg, genative	<i>Iesous</i>
Jesus	<i>Xristou</i>	sg, genative	<i>Xristos</i>
Christ	<i>kai</i>	conjunction	<i>kai</i>
and	<i>te</i>	sg, dative	<i>he</i>
to the	<i>kat</i>	preposition (with acc.)	<i>kata</i>
according	<i>eusebeian</i>	sg, acc	<i>eusebeia</i>
godliness	<i>didaskalia</i>	sg, dative	<i>didaskalia</i>
teaching			

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## Slide #24

When Paul pens his letter to Titus, he instructs that a characteristic of an elder must be that he is “holding to the faithful word according to the doctrine” (Titus 1:9). The prepositional phrase (“according to the doctrine”) shows the word’s relationship to doctrine—with respect to or in alignment with doctrine. Doctrine, the teachings, again issues into words. Internalized truth issues into verbalized truth.



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## Slide #25

Additional insight comes from the analyses of the Greek grammatical components in Titus 1:9.

### TITUS 1:9 (Text)

ENGLISH	GREEK	IDENTIFICATION	ROOT
Holding to the	<i>antechomenon</i>	sg, acc, masc, part, pres	<i>antecho</i>
the	<i>tou</i>	sg, genative	<i>ho</i>
according to the	<i>kata</i>	preposition (with acc.)	<i>kata</i>
teaching	<i>ten</i>	sg, acc	<i>he</i>
faithful	<i>didachen</i>	sg, acc	<i>didache</i>
word	<i>pistou</i>	sg, genative	<i>pistos</i>
in order that	<i>logou</i>	sg, genative	<i>logos</i>
able	<i>hina</i>	conjunction	<i>hina</i>
he may be	<i>dunatos</i>	sg, nom	<i>dunatos</i>
both	<i>e</i>	3 per, sg, pres, subj	<i>cimi</i>
to exhort	<i>kai</i>	conjunction	<i>kai</i>
by	<i>parakalein</i>	pres, infin, act	<i>parakaleo</i>
the	<i>en</i>	preposition	<i>en</i>
teaching	<i>te</i>	sg, dative	<i>e</i>
—	<i>didaskalia</i>	sg, dative	<i>didaskalia</i>
sound	<i>te</i>	sg, dative (article)	<i>e</i>
and	<i>hugiainouse</i>	sg, dat, fem, part, pres	<i>hugiaino</i>
the ones	<i>kai</i>	conjunction	<i>kai</i>
contradicting	<i>tous</i>	pl, acc	<i>ho</i>
to convince	<i>antilegontas</i>	pl, acc, masc, part, pres	<i>antilego</i>
	<i>elegchein</i>	pres, infin, act	<i>elegcho</i>

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## Slide #26

Again reviewing these three texts:

1 Timothy 4:6

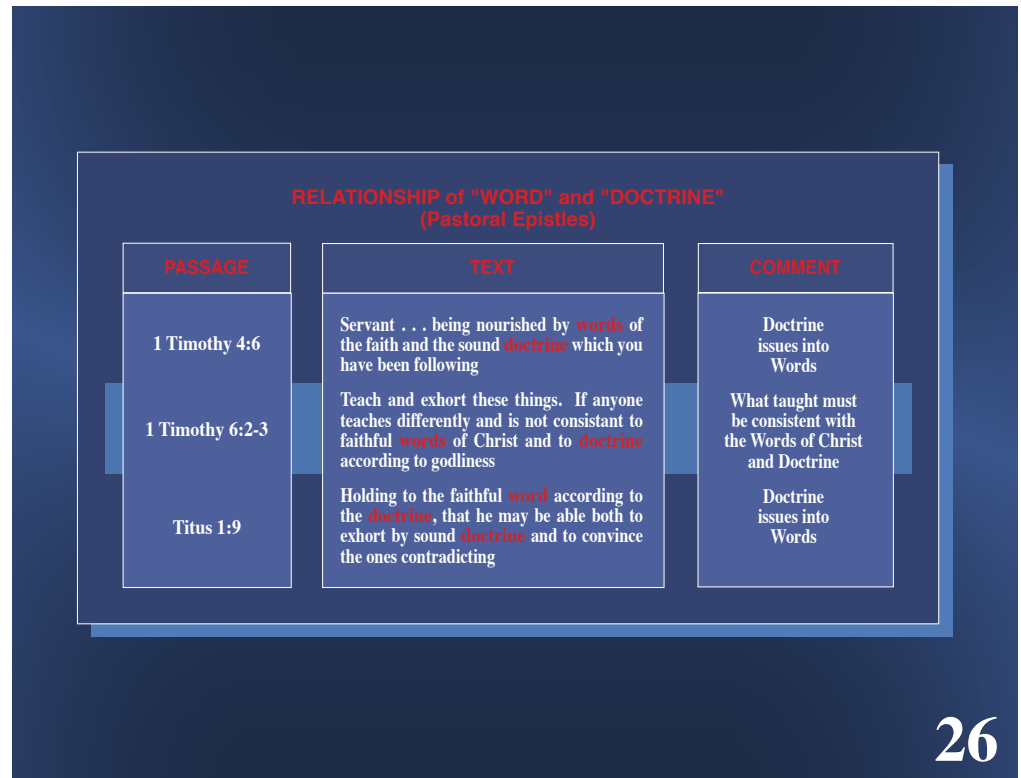
Doctrine issues into Words

1 Timothy 6:2-3

What taught must be  
consistent with the Words  
of Christ and Doctrine

Titus 1:9

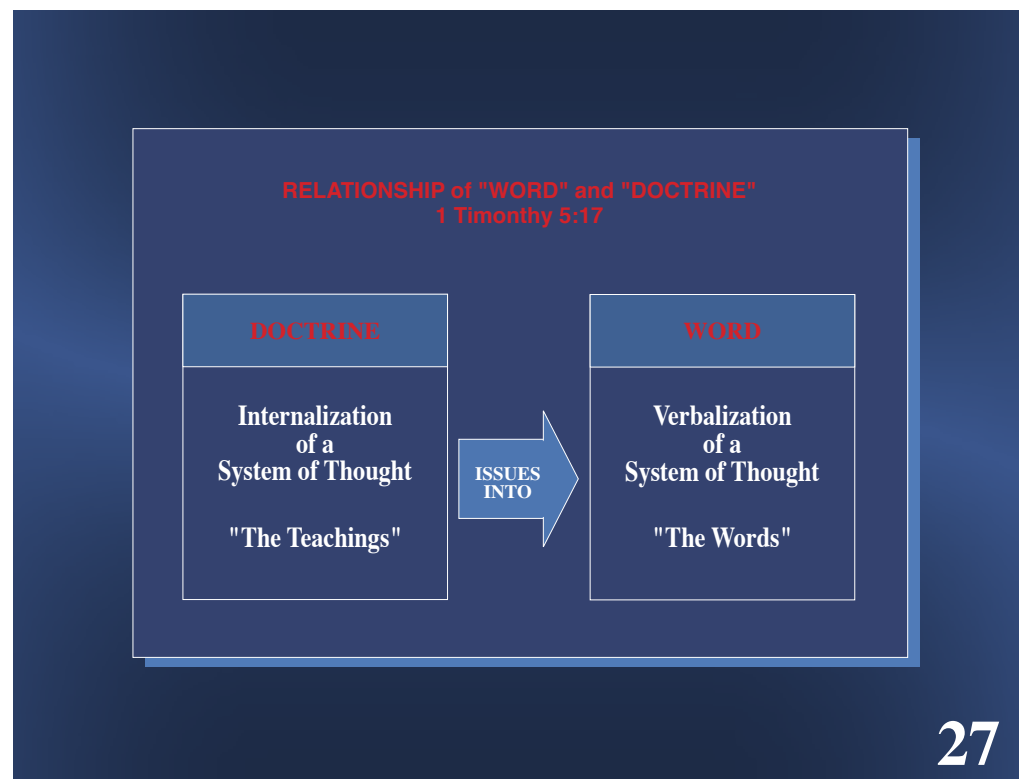
Doctrine issues into Words



## Slide #27

First Timothy 4, 1 Timothy 6, and Titus 1 support the relationship between *word* and *doctrine* in 1 Timothy 5:17: an internalization of a system of thought issues into a verbalization of that system of thought. "The teachings" issue into "the words."

The responsibilities of all elders are to lead and to teach. The words taught are from the process of developing an internalized system of biblical thought. As addressed in Slide #13 in Part 2 of *Distinction in Corporate Gifts*, to properly understand or interpret the Scripture in the process of developing an internalized system of biblical thought, two factors come into play: (1) illumination by the Spirit and (2) diligent study by the believer. Addressing church leadership Paul taught, "Be diligent to present yourself approved of God as a workman . . . accurately handling the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15) and in turn James warned, "Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment" (Jam 3:1). Elders cannot properly teach what they have not processed through study to develop an internal system of biblical thought.



Slide #28

We have addressed the similarities and distinction in elders.

Nevertheless, similarities *always* concern the *responsibilities* of the elders, all being able to lead and able to teach. Distinctions in elders *only* concern *diligence* in the performance of those responsibilities.

## Similarities & Distinctions in Elders

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Slide #29

Since all elders have the same responsibilities, there is only one type of elder.

Notice from these sources cited, this is not a recent or new concept:

80 years ago

A.T. Robertson wrote:

*A doubtful distinction in "elders" at this time.*

75 years ago

Richard Lenski wrote:

*All were required to have this ability.*

60 years ago

Henry Thiessen wrote:

*It is possible to explain these statements as describing differing qualities in the same man.*

### NO DISTINCTIONS IN RESPONSIBILITIES (Comments on 1 Timothy 5:17) Page 1 of 2

Those who work hard or toil...in preaching and teaching (most probable meaning) or those who teach and preach and not merely preside (**a doubtful distinction in "elder" at this time**).

A. T. Robertson  
*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol IV, The Epistles of Paul, 588. © 1931

"Especially those toiling in connection with word and teaching" does not mean that some elders did not teach, for **all were required to have** (and thus to use) **this ability**.

Richard C. H. Lenski  
*St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy*, 681-82. © 1937

There is some ground for the view that there were two kinds of "elders"...but it is possible to explain these statements as **describing differing qualities in the same man**.

Henry C. Thiessen  
*Introductory Lectures in Systematic Theology*, 419. © 1949

29



### Slide #30

One additional source:

50 years ago

Edmond Hiebert wrote:

*Both functions are seen combined in the elders.*

These resources agree with or allow for the conclusion that all elders are similar in that all are to lead and to teach, just as described in 1 Timothy 5:17.

### NO DISTINCTIONS IN RESPONSIBILITIES

(Comments on 1 Timothy 5:17)

Page 2 of 2

One function of elders is seen in the words "that rule well"...A second function of the elders is indicated in the words "expecially those who labor in the word and in teaching." This does not mean, as some suppose, that there are two kinds of elders, ruling elders and teaching elders. The qualifications required in the man to be appointed to the office show that **both functions** were to be **united in one person** (3:2,4,5). They were to be "**apt to teach**" as well as **able to rule well**. In the New Testament **both functions are seen combined in the elders.**

D. Edmond Hiebert  
First Timothy, 101. © 1957

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### Slide #31

Similarities in the office of elder concern all elder's abilities and thus responsibilities of being able to lead and able to teach.

However, there are distinctions in elders, but not regarding abilities.

Distinctions in the office of elder concern diligence and effort in performing their responsibilities: leading "well" or "toiling" in word and doctrine.

How elders perform their responsibilities is the issue for the church. Elders as workmen/teachers must "be careful how [each one] builds" on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (1 Cor 3:10), because "the quality of each man's work" will be evaluated by God (v 13).

Part 3 of *Office of Elder* further addresses the responsibilities of the elders.

### OFFICE OF ELDER

#### SIMILARITIES

#### ABILITIES

All Able to **Lead**  
&  
All Able to **Teach**

#### DISTINCTIONS

#### DILIGENCE

Leads **Well**  
&  
**Toils** in Word  
and Doctrine

31

**Slide #32**

We have found that a close look at 1 Timothy 5:17 though the first-century lens provides a solution to the interpretation problem of that verse. All elders have the same tasks and responsibilities and they are distinguished based on diligence.

