

FOUNDATIONS

LESSON 65: ELDERS AND DEACONS

“So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³ not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.” -1 Peter 5:1-3

Main Idea: *God provides Elders and Deacons to lead and serve His church.*

ELDERS

I. Etymology- Elders

- A. Greek: πρεσβύτερος, α, ον (Acts 21:18, 1 Timothy 5:17, James 5:14)
- B. Transliteration: presbuteros; Phonetic Spelling: (pres-boo'-ter-os)
- C. Definition: elder (presbyter)
- D. Common Usage in Jewish and Roman Culture: mayors, council members or older/senior citizens

II. Purpose and Nature of Eldership

- A. Local Church government/oversight
- B. Office of Leadership

III. Types of Contemporary Church Government (Polity) (Col 1:18, Exodus 25:40)

- A. No church government, which is not actually possible, but some Christians try to gather in homes or coffee shops, calling it a church, but trying to avoid any form of hierarchy
- B. Corporate hierarchy-Pastor as CEO, then a corporate org chart of pastoral staff/employees
- C. Episcopal hierarchy- Hierarchy: Male head, archbishops, congregation
- D. Presbyterian hierarchy- Christ, Elders (extra-local), congregation
- E. Congregational hierarchy- Hierarchy: Congregation, Board, Pastor

IV. Eldership Prescription of Church Government

- Exodus 25:40, Proverbs 11:14, Proverbs 15:22, Proverbs 24:6, Titus 1

V. Elder Qualifications

- A. Desires noble task (1 Timothy 3:1)
- B. Above reproach (1 Timothy 3:1-2)
- C. A husband of one wife (1 Timothy 3:2)
- D. Sober-minded, self-controlled and respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)
- E. Hospitable (1 Timothy 3:2)
- F. Able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2)
- G. Sober, gentle and peaceable (1 Timothy 3:3)

FOUNDATIONS

- H. Not a lover of money (1 Timothy 3:2-3)
 - I. Manages household well (1 Timothy 3:4-5)
 - J. Spiritually mature and humble (1 Timothy 3:6, Titus 1:5)
 - K. Respected by outsiders (1 Timothy 3:7)
- VI. Role of Elders- What Elders Do** (James 5:14, 1 Peter 5:2; Ephesians 4:11-12)
- A. Pray and Hope in God (James 5:14, 1 Timothy 4:10)
 - B. Guide (Proverbs 11:27; 1 Peter 5:2)
 - C. Shepherd or Pastor (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Peter 5)
 - D. Guard (sound doctrine-1 Timothy 4:16; from wolves - 2 Corinthians 11:13-15)
 - E. Govern/Oversee (1 Timothy 4:11)
 - F. Grow (1 Timothy 4:15)

DEACONS

- I. Etymology- Deacons**
- A. Greek: διάκονος, οὔ, ὁ, ἡ (1 Timothy 3:8, 1 Timothy 3:12)
 - B. Transliteration: diakonos
 - C. Short Definition: a waiter, servant, administrator
 - D. Definition: a waiter, servant; then of any one who performs any service, an administrator.
- II. Purpose and Nature of Deacons**
- A. Serving Office (Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-6)
 - B. To care for the tangible needs of the church
 - C. To enable the elders to devote to prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-6)
- III. Deacon Qualifications**
- A. Full of the Spirit (Acts 6:3)
 - B. Sincere (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - C. Sober and Content (1 Timothy 3:8)
 - D. Hold the mystery of the Faith (1 Timothy 3:9)
 - E. Tested Servants (1 Timothy 3:10)
- VII. Role of Deacons- What Deacons Do**
- A. Broad Role (i.e., non-specific job description)
 - B. Assist the Elders in ways needed