

**Discipleship Night**  
*The Doctrine of Ecclesiology*

**What is the Church?**

The word "church" comes from the Greek word "ekklesia" which means  
" \_\_\_\_\_ " or " \_\_\_\_\_ ."

**Chart:** Local Church ("Visible") Contrasted with  
the Universal Church ("Invisible")

**Metaphors for the Church**

1. **F** \_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 5:1-2)
  
2. **The b** \_\_\_\_\_ **of Christ** (2 Cor. 11:2)
  
3. **A** \_\_\_\_\_ **images:** Branches on a vine (John 15:5),  
an olive tree (Rom. 11:17-24), a field of crops and a building (1 Cor.  
3:6-9), a harvest (Matt. 13:1-30)
  
4. **God's** \_\_\_\_\_ (Heb. 3:6)

## 5. **The B\_\_\_\_\_ of Christ**

- The whole body (1 Cor. 12:16-17)
- The rest of the body, distinguished from the head (Eph 4:15-16)

## **How should the church be led: 3 main kinds of church government**

### **1. E\_\_\_\_\_.**

- An archbishop has authority over many bishops.
- Bishops have authority over a "diocese," which simply means the churches under the jurisdiction of a bishop.
- Rector: the officer in charge of a local parish. Rectors often have an assistant called a "vicar."

### **2. P\_\_\_\_\_.**

- Each local church elects elders to a "session" (the pastor will be one of these elders).
- This session has governing authority over the local church.
- The members of the session (the elders) are also members of a regional "presbytery," which has authority over several churches in a region.

### **3. C\_\_\_\_\_ (Five Types).**

*#1. Si\_\_\_\_\_ Elder (S\_\_\_\_\_ Pastor).*

- Congregation elects the pastor and also elects the deacons.

- Pastoral authority varies from church to church, and will generally increase the longer a pastor remains in a church.
- The authority of the deacon board is often thought to be merely an advisory authority.

*#2. Plurality of Local Pastor-Elders ("R\_\_\_\_\_ the congregation").*

- Elders govern the church and have authority to rule (elder board).
- The "pastor" (or "senior or lead pastor") exists as one of the elders.
- Pastor has opportunity to lead within the group of elders.
- The pastor does not have authority on his own over the congregation.

*#3. Plurality of Local Pastor-Elders ("L\_\_\_\_\_ the congregation").*

- Elders lead the church but the congregation has ultimate authority on many matters (budget, appointing elders and deacons, buying property, etc.).
- The "pastor" (or "senior or lead pastor") exists as one of the elders.
- Pastor has opportunity to lead within the group of elders.
- The pastor does not have authority on his own over the congregation.
- *"Jesus-ruled, elder-led, deacon-served, congregation-affirmed."*

*#4. Corporate B\_\_\_\_\_.*

- Patterned after a modern corporation.
- Board of directors hires an executive officer who then has authority to run the business as he sees fit. No New Testament precedent exists.
- Deprives the pastor of sharing in spiritual authority.
- Pastor often has difficulty exercising spiritual authority over the members of the board, who in this system, would be his boss.

#5. P \_\_\_\_\_ Democracy.

- Takes congregational church government to its logical extreme.
- *Everything* must come to the congregational meeting.
- Decision-making is extremely difficult.
- Unfaithful to the NT pattern of elder leadership and guidance.

### **What are the Biblical offices of church leadership?**

***Church Officers Definition:*** A church officer is someone who has been publicly recognized as having the right and responsibility to perform certain functions for the benefit of the whole church.

#### ***Two Biblical Offices:***

#1. P \_\_\_\_\_ (*elder / overseer / bishop / shepherd are used interchangeably in the NT*)

#2. D \_\_\_\_\_ .

**\*\*\*See chart** for in-depth qualifications of pastors and deacons (“75. The offices of elder and deacon – qualifications and duties”)

## **Created to Work Together**

### **Acts 6:1-7...**

*Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, [you can see there are growing pains here in the early church], a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the spirit of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty, but we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."*

*.....And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.*

## **The Three non-negotiable shared commitments of both pastors and deacons**

### **#1. A P \_\_\_\_\_ of Leadership.**

**Alexander Strauch:** *It is a highly significant and often overlooked fact that our Lord did not appoint one man to lead His Church. He personally appointed and trained twelve men. Jesus Christ gave the Church plurality of leadership.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Strauch, 36

*In the Bible, there's always a **plurality** (see Acts 6:3-6, Acts 14:23, Phil 1:1, and James 5:14).*

**Brian Croft:** *Although not explicitly stated by Paul to Timothy, it is consistently applied all throughout the New Testament that there is to be more than one Elder and Deacon in each local church. Other than the passages that describe the qualifications of an elder or deacon, there are numerous examples of both these offices serving with other qualified men sharing the responsibilities, not to mention the burdens and responsibilities of these two offices are too great for one man to carry alone.*

## **#2. A shared commitment to personal and spiritual \_\_\_\_\_.**

**John Piper:** *Banish professionalism from our midst, Oh God, and in its place put passionate prayer, poverty of spirit, hunger for God, rigorous study of holy things, white-hot devotion to Jesus Christ, utter indifference to all material gain, and unremitting labor to rescue the perishing, perfect the saints, and glorify our sovereign Lord.<sup>2</sup>*

## **#3. Strong F\_\_\_\_\_ leadership.**

**1 Timothy 3:4-5** - *"He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?"*

**1 Timothy 3:12** - *"Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well."*

**Warren Wiersbe:** *"If a man's own children cannot obey and respect him then his church is not likely to respect and obey his leadership."*

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<sup>2</sup> Brothers, We Are Not Professionals, p. 4

## **The Pastor (Elder/Overseer/Bishop/Shepherd)**

### **1 Timothy 1:3-7...**

*The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer (elder/pastor), he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.*

### **1 Peter 5:1-4...**

*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; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*

### **Four Primary Functions of the Biblical Pastor**

**#1. K \_\_\_\_\_ the flock.**

**#2. L \_\_\_\_\_ the flock.**

**#3. F \_\_\_\_\_ the flock.**

**#4. P \_\_\_\_\_ the flock.**

## The Deacon

### 1 Timothy 3:8-13...

*Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.*

### **Three Primary Responsibilities of the Deacon**

**Deacons are to be the lead servants of the church.** They are to model for the church what it looks like to serve Jesus, whatever that looks like, and to serve others.

**#1. A \_\_\_\_\_ the pastor.** In Acts chapter 6 we see that one of the responsibilities of a deacon is to help the pastors care for and shepherd the flock.

**#2. Help out with the w \_\_\_\_\_ gathering.** This may look like serving the Lord's table or helping with the offering.

**#3. Ministries of m \_\_\_\_\_.** This is caring for the single mom, the widow and the orphan. Deacons care for and make sure that physical needs are being met for the hurting and the broken in your congregation.

## How Should Church Officers Be Chosen?

1. **One solution:** Selection by a \_\_\_\_\_ (Roman Catholic, Episcopal, and Methodist churches do this).

2. **The other solution:** Selection by the local \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Five Reasons why church officers should be affirmed/recognized by a congregation.**

1. New Testament **e**\_\_\_\_\_ for selection by a local congregation (Acts 1:23, Acts 6:3, Acts 15:22, 2 Cor. 8:19, Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5 – note: the word “appoint” may also mean to install”).

2. In the New Testament, final governing **a**\_\_\_\_\_ seems to rest with the whole church, not a group outside the church (Matt. 18:17, 1 Cor. 5:4); the Epistles are written to churches, not to elders (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 2 Cor.1.1, etc.).

3. Greater **a**\_\_\_\_\_ by selection from a congregation (1 Tim. 5:19).

4. Historically, false **d**\_\_\_\_\_ seems to be adopted by theologians of the church first, the pastors second, and the informed laity who read their Bible daily and walk with the Lord, last!

5. Government works best when it has the c\_\_\_\_\_ of those governed: (Ex. 4:29-31; 1 Sam. 7:5-6; 10:24; 2 Sam. 2:4; 1 Kings 1:39-40; and note the mistake of Rehoboam in 1 Kings 12:1, 15).

**Summary:** Although Scripture does not explicitly command one specific system of choosing church officers, it would seem most wise to have a system whereby the **entire church** has a significant role in the selection of church officers.

### **The Lord's Supper: Four Views**

**\*\*\*See Chart:** "80. Four Views on the Lord's Supper."

### **Baptism: Infant vs. Believer's Baptism?**

**Watch video and discuss:**

The Baptism Debate: Should Babies Be Baptized?

### **Sources:**

Grudem, Systematic Theology

Piper, Brothers We Are Not Professionals

Strauch, Biblical Eldership