

Online Grace Bible School

With

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**Online Grace Bible School
Phase 6
My Church, My Family**

1) Leadership in the Church**1) God appoints leaders in His Church**

- ✓ God gives leaders as gifts to the church. They are not self-appointed, nor man-appointed but God-appointed. How does He appoint them?
- ✓ 1 Tim.3:1. There is not a striving for this work, but a God-given desire, (*orego* = an internal desire so strong that there is no other option).
- ✓ John 2:17. One house will consume each of us; either our body, our home, our business or the church. We will willingly give ourselves to whatever house consumes us.
- ✓ It is a 'good work'. Because he will be looking after the most important thing to God on earth, Acts 20:28.
- ✓ This inward desire will be tested by the character requirements for an elder. 1 Tim.3:1-7.
- ✓ Character vs gift. Our gifts will take us where God wants us to go; our character will keep us there.
- ✓ First he must judge himself. Then he must be judged by those who know him best.

2) Local church leadership is plural

- ✓ In the NT church leadership is always *plural*, i.e. 'elders' (Acts 14:23; 20:17; 1 Thes.5:12-13; 1 Tim.5:17; Tit.1:5; Heb.13:7&17; James 5:14; 1 Pet.5:1-4). God does not want anyone to be alone in leadership.
- ✓ His way seems to be to send or call a man. Then He raises up a team around him. E.g. Nehemiah. Gideon.
- ✓ NT leadership is characterized by interdependence. The focus is not on one man to make it all happen, but on Jesus, the Chief Shepherd. We don't need another hero. No superstars needed.
- ✓ Plurality does not necessarily mean equality in gifting, e.g. 1 Tim.5:17-18. But equality in government.
- ✓ The plan is for elders to function as a team of shepherds who relate to each other in a long-term ministry.

The benefits of plurality are:

- ✓ Protection. A person alone in leadership will break spiritually, physically and emotionally if other strong leaders are not around him. Team leadership *preserves* ministries.
- ✓ Provision for shepherding the whole flock, Deut.33:30. Multiplied effectiveness.
- ✓ Encouragement and strength, Ecc.4:9-12.
- ✓ Reiteration of truth, Deut.19:15; Matt.18:16.
- ✓ Provision for checks and balances, Prov.27:17.
- ✓ Provision for training younger ministries.
- ✓ Less likelihood of spiritual abuse and control, 3 Jn.9.

3) The function of leadership is to shepherd the flock

- ✓ There are 2 major functions, Jn.21:15-17. To 'feed' and to 'tend' the sheep (v16). *Boskō*: to feed, nourish, provide food for. *Poimanō*: to tend as a shepherd. Also includes caring, guiding, guarding, protecting, etc.
- ✓ To lead. They are the eyes of the body. Deacons release elders to perform their function. See Acts 6.
- ✓ They are to pray for them, instruct them, counsel them, weep with them, rejoice with them, oversee the flock, watch out for their souls, give account for them, watch against savage wolves, etc. Acts 14:23; 1 Thes.5:12-13; 1 Tim.5:17; Heb.13:7; Jas.5:14, etc.
- ✓ 1 Pet.5:1-7. Not by constraint but willingly. Not as being lords. Authority vs authoritarianism.

4) Responsibility of people to leaders

- ✓ 1 Thes.5:12-13. Esteem them highly, because of their office and their work.
- ✓ Obey them, Heb.13:17. When people don't like decisions, personalities, etc. they think they have the right to gossip and slander their leaders. Some complain, openly disagree, seek to turn others against them, highlight their weaknesses and overlook their sacrifices, etc.
- ✓ Don't listen to evil reports about leaders. People who are emotionally unstable, insecure or just downright wicked will try to ruin elders.
- ✓ Those (leaders) who sin, rebuke them publicly. The rest will fear.

2) Building Up Through Love

There is a seven-fold unity in the Church:

- ✓ One Body. Acts 2:47. The unity we have is an organic, living unity. Like the human body.
- ✓ One Spirit. The human spirit cannot be localized in any one organ, limb or gland. In a sense it is present in all the members of the body. So too with the Spirit of God, Rom.8:9; 1 Cor.12:13.
- ✓ One Hope. We all have a long term vision (eternity) in a short-term world.
- ✓ One Lord. Christianity is Christ. He is Lord. Christians gather around His Lordship. *'Is Christ divided?'* No! He is indivisible. Divisions arise when we do not make Him the focus.
- ✓ One Faith. There is only one faith, i.e. in Christ as our righteousness.
- ✓ One Baptism. We are baptized into Christ. We have all been incorporated into Him.
- ✓ One God. God is not the Father of all (e.g. *'You are of your father the devil...'*) but of all those who are in Christ.

Our unity is a reality. We are to maintain this God-given unity in the bonds of peace.

Eph.4:7. But there is also diversity. This is expressed by the various gifts God distributes throughout the body.

- ✓ When Jesus was on earth everything He did was through His body. Now? We are His body.
- ✓ Jesus possessed the fullness of the anointing of the Spirit, i.e. without measure. We each receive a 'measure' of the fullness (from metron meaning 'a determined amount', or 'that which is measured off.')
- ✓ We determine the way God wants us to serve by discovering our gifts, Rom.12:4-5.
- ✓ Yet not one member has meaning except in the context of the whole body.
- ✓ Eph.4:8-10. Jesus first descended into 'the lower parts of the earth' for redemption. (This phrase just means the earth, or the womb of a mother, Psa.139:15). He descended to save us.
- ✓ Then He ascended to equip us.
- ✓ Eph.4:11-12. Special gifts of leadership are mentioned for the purpose of equipping the saints for the work of ministry. The word 'equipping' is a translation of the Greek word *katartismos*.
- ✓ The picture is of something we want to use but something has to be done to it first, e.g. setting a dislocated bone. It carries the idea, therefore, of: 1) To repair (E.g. see Matt.4:21); 2) To prepare *'Now may the God of peace ...make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ...'* (Heb.13:20-21).
- ✓ Christ is bringing us to maturity. *'...to a perfect man'* i.e. lit 'into a full-grown, fully developed new man', functioning with Christ as the Head and the Church as the body and each member taking its part. The Body corresponding to Head.
- ✓ Eph.4:16. *'...from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love'*. This life flows through the Body of Christ.
- ✓ A joint has a ball on one end of a bone and a cup on the other. The surfaces are smooth so that there is no friction. This illustrates the way we are meant to fit in with others in body.
- ✓ Life flows through these connecting links in the body. The life of the body passes at these points of contact, supplying nourishment and energy and resulting in growth. Thus, the body builds itself up in love.