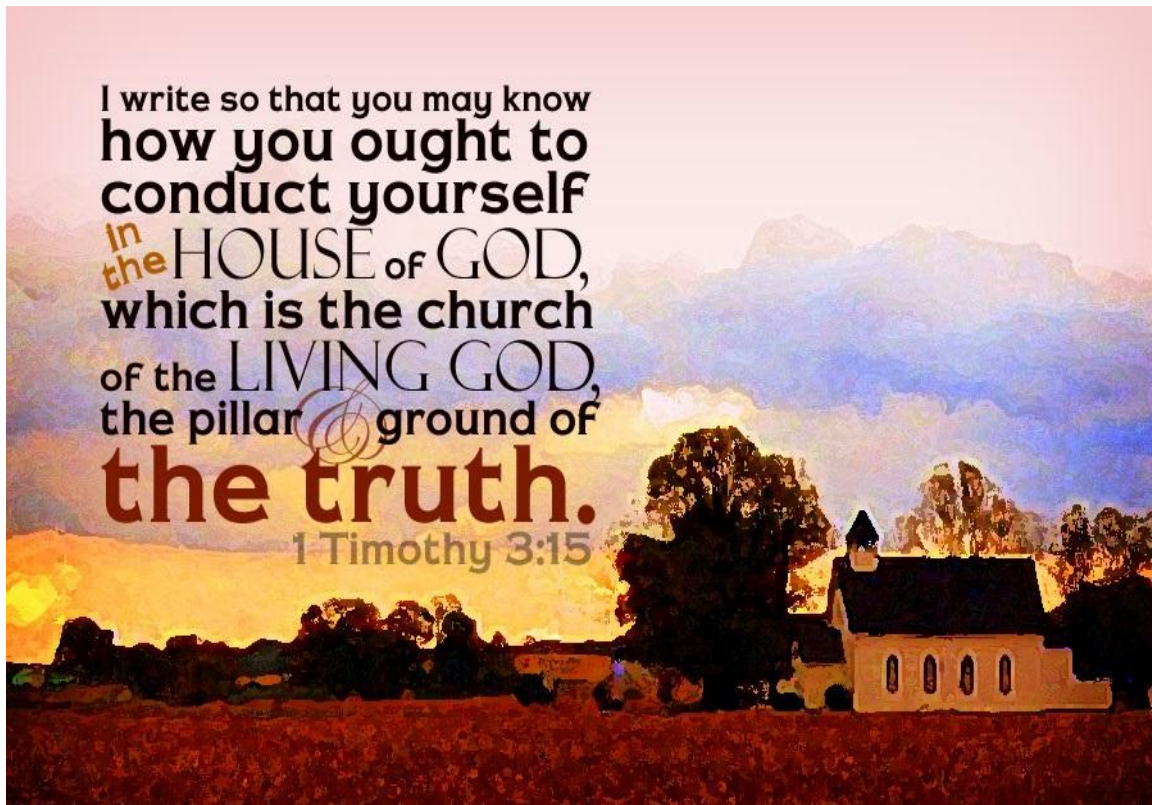


Leadership in the House of God



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Leadership in the House of God

Introduction: Every church is an expression of the House of the Lord in their locality (Rev 1-3). Jesus is concerned with how each local church operates. Paul sent Timothy into the church at Ephesus, and Titus to the churches on the island of Crete to help set them in order. This involved both how they conducted themselves in everyday life, as well as the establishing and functioning of leadership in each local church.

Titus 1:5 NASB *For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,*

1 Timothy 1:3 NASB *As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus...*

1 Timothy 3:1-15 *It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. (2) An overseer, then, must be...¹⁵ but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth....*

Over the last 2000 years we have seen many different forms of church leadership arise and handed down to successive generations. We need to examine the various ideas in light of God's word and amend patterns and structures to fit God's Biblical patterns.

Leadership within the Local Church Family

Some of the present day patterns for leadership that have been handed down to us contain non-biblical ideas. The clergy-laity distinction in some circles tends to foster an OT mentality of separation between the special class, “priests,” and the rest of the people. In the 1500s the Protestant Reformation restored the priesthood of all believers, yet many of the leadership models from that tradition have little Biblical basis. Many current Evangelical and Charismatic leadership patterns have a “one man” leadership style with a “pastor/minister” leading local congregations. Some are autonomous leaders with little checks and balances, while others have adopted some sort of a board (Deacon Board) to help keep the leadership in check. We need to examine every pattern in light of Scripture and seek to implement the New Testament patterns.

Wrong approaches towards leadership in God’s House

The church world tends to fall into two extremes of error regarding leadership, over glamorize it, or undervalue it. Both are like ditches on the side of a road and we need to stay out of both extremes.

Leadership pattern that runs throughout the Bible

When God was going to change something in His people, or take them forward it usually involved rising up, sending, or changing leaders. It can be said that “as goes the leaders, so goes the people.” This is seen throughout the Old Testament with leaders like Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, the Judges, the prophets, and the Kings.

The book of Hebrews portrays this theme

The background of the letter to Hebrews was that Christians were facing early Neronian persecution. Nero hated the Christians because he perceived them as a threat to his rule. Before he burned Rome and blamed it on the Christians, he led a systematic persecution of them by taking away property and various privileges.

Jewish religion was still tolerated. In light of this Jewish Christians were turning back to Judaism, and Gentile Christians were simply falling away to avoid the pressure. This was the main issue the writer of Hebrews was addressing (Hebrews 2:1, Hebrews 3:1-6, 12-13, Hebrews 10:23-25, Hebrews 10:32-39, and Hebrews 12:1-29). Throughout the letter he showed the superiority of Christ as the fulfillment of Judaism, as well as the dangers of falling away as he attempted to turn them back to Jesus.

At the end of the letter he affirms the important place of leadership in the process. He encourages the people to imitate, obey, submit to, receive the exhortation of, receive, and greet their leaders. Summed up it means to make plenty of room for leaders to work in their lives.

Hebrews 13:7-24 *Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith... (17) Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you...(18) Pray for us (leaders)... (22) But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation (from a leader), for I have written to you briefly. (23) Take notice that our brother Timothy (a leader) has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you. (24) Greet all of your leaders and all the saints.*

Leadership in God's House is a Family Team Function

Scriptures indicate that leadership in the Local Church is set among a group of leaders called Elders, with Deacons functioning closely with them

Philippians 1:1 NASB Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers (elders/bishops Acts 20:21 Tit 1:5-7 1985) and deacons.

Acts 14:23 NASB When they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Acts 20:17-28 NASB From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. (18) And when they had come to him, he said to them... (28) "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

Acts 15:22-23; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 3:1-12; 5:17-19; Titus 1:5; Hebrews 13:7,17,24; 1 Peter 5:1-2

The nature of the Godhead is a Family Team joined, living, and working together.

The Godhead exists in perfect unity manifested in Family Team— Eternal Father, Son, and Spirit

Eph 3:14-21 For this cause I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, (15) of whom the whole family in Heaven and earth is named (derives it's identity)...20) Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, (21) to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, forever. Amen.

And within the mystery of His Person, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, there is individual identity manifested in plurality and absolute unity. There is inexplicable submission. The Father sent the Son and the Son came. The Son returned to the Father and the Father and the Son sent the

Spirit. Within these three Persons that are co-equal, co-substantial and co-essential, there is evident submission and this serves as the highest lesson to us that God is a Family Team.

God's design for Leadership is to be a Family Team Experience

Why Family Team? - Many books and concepts of leadership and team are from business models, but God's people are a family. On example from a business model is "Get the right people on the bus." That is fine in a business model because you can put people off the bus, but trying to adopt that mentality in leadership you have to wrestle with the fact that you can't simply drop off your family from the bus you are on because you live with your family. They are not business associates who are together during a workday. They are family members joined together serving God on His mission.

God's first leaders (created in His image) were a family team

Genesis 1:26-27 NASB *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over...(27) God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

Adam and Eve were made in God's image (The Trinity is a family team). As a family team they exercised their leadership in "ruling."

All through the Old and New Testament you see teams of leaders working together as a family team leading God's people

The only thing in the creation order that was not good was aloneness. **Gen 2:18** NASB *Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone...Aloneness is never God's will.*

While on earth Christ began to build those God gave Him into family team. It was based on God's choice. (You may choose your friends but you don't choose your family, God does, both natural and spiritual).

Luk 6:12-13 NASB *It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. 13 And when day came, He called His disciples to Him and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles: Later in Jn 17:6 I have revealed Your name to the men whom You gave to Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.*

Team is based on God's choosing. In choosing the twelve Jesus chose people who would not have chosen the others to be on the same team. They were at different ends of the political spectrum. Some were rich and some were poor. They weren't chosen based on an affinity towards each other. It was based on God's choice.

During His last prayer on earth (the setting was Jesus with His leadership team) Jesus prayed 3 times for His church leaders to live in a family team dynamic like the Godhead (2 of the 3 times is was so the world would believe, there is a powerful testimony as God's people walk in family/team)

*John 17:11-24...Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, **that they may be one even as We are....**20..."I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; (21) **that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us**, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. (22) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, **that they may be one, just as We are one; (23) I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity(Gk into a unit)**, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.*

He started His church (Jerusalem) with a leadership team of 12 men and throughout the book of Acts and the Epistles you see Jesus establish teams of leaders. **Acts 14:23 NASB** When they had appointed elders (plural) for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord. This included the extra local teams of Paul.

Important Spiritual Reality: It's hard to build His dream if you can't walk in a family team.

Before Jesus commissioned them He prayed for their unity (John 17). **It is hard to be effectively commissioned until we're in submission in a family team.**

The nature of a Local Church is a family team

The story revealed in the Bible is the story of God's family together (with Him and each other) on God's mission. It is God's creating and revealing Himself through His redemptive activity among His people.

Beginning: Gen 1:26-27 Then God said, "Let **Us** make man in **Our** image, according to **Our** likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." (27) **God created man in His own image**, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Ending: Rev 19:7-9 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, **for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.**" (8) It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. (9) Then he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'"

God always highlights and turns His people to Family

- **God's Dwelling place is family oriented. *Psalms 68:5-6*** *A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, Is God in His holy habitation. (6) **God makes a home for the lonely...** Only the rebellious dwell in a parched land.*

A home for the lonely – Lonely (desolate, only like an orphan, no family)

Similar to Eph 2:19-22 “no longer strangers and aliens. but fellow citizens with the saints and are of God's household.”

Stranger – foreigner, alien, guest, without a share in, outsider.

Alien – one who lives in a place without citizenship, stranger, a sojourner, in a place for a time brief visit, not home.

“And are of God's Household” – His home, not a building, but a family.

- **Jesus was identified as a family member first.** His ministry flowed out of that. *Isaiah 9:6* *Child born, son given, wonderful counselor...**Eternal Father.*** Mat 3:17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Mat 7:5, Mar 1:11, Mar 9:7, Mar 12:6, Luk 3:22)
- **Last verse in OT God promising to restore family *Mal 4:5-6*** *Elijah turning the hearts of fathers to children and children to fathers*

400 years later John the Baptist comes ***Matthew 11:14*** *"And if you are willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah who was to come.*

- **Jesus now defined God's family as those who serve Him.**
MT 12:47-50 *"Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You." (48) But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" (49) And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! (50) "For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."*
- **God restores family that is sometimes divided because of Him.**
Luk 18:28-30 *Peter said, "Behold, we have left our own homes and followed You." (29) And He said to them, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, (30) who will not receive many times as much at this time and in the age to come, eternal life."*

Mar 10:28-31 *Peter began to say to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You." (29) Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, (30) but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses*

and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life. (31) "But many who are first will be last, and the last, first."

Mt 10:34-35 Sword destroys some family relationships but **Mt 19:29** receive one hundred times

- **There is multigenerational family training in God's house.** Titus 2 Older men Older women training younger men and women.
- **Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of adoption where we cry Abba Father"** (Rom 8:15 Gal 4:6).
- **Local churches are the household of God** **1 Timothy 3:15** *I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth*
- **Lord's Prayer instills a sense of family.** "Our Father" not just my father. Each person is unique and special but we are not an only child. He births us into a family that has other brothers and sisters.
- **Paul uses the term "our Lord" 53 times only once did he refer to Jesus as "my Lord"** Phil 3:8.
- **The term "brother(s)/sister(s)" (Gk adelph) is used in Pauline literature 139 times.**
- **Three times in NT Savior is used in conjunction with a people or group being saved, only once does it refer to the Savior of an individual** **Luk 1:46-47** *And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord, (47) And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*
- **44% of the letters of the New Testament are about how we should get along with one another. This contrasts with about 4% on spiritual gifts.**

75% Of last supper dialogue was about relationships with Godhead and each other.

- **In the ten commandments the first 4 are about relationship with God, and 6 are about relationship with others.**
- **Paul's ministry style is best visible in his relationship with his spiritual son Timothy as well as others he was joined to.** More than one-fourth of the 27 books in the New Testament are either written by Paul to Timothy or by Paul and Timothy to various churches (2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Philemon). This clearly signals that genuine Christianity is not about pulpits, meetings, suits and ties, microphones, entourages or air-conditioned limousines. It has everything to do with close teamwork in God's field.

- In giving instructions on what to look for in leadership Paul affirms that the church is God's household, and leadership operates in family dynamics.

1 Timothy 3:1-15 NASB *It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do....(4) He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (5) (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)... (15) but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.*

One of the major qualifications for leadership has to do with the way they rule in their home. Paul said that if they didn't know how to manage their own home well, they wouldn't be able to manage God's home, the church. You might say it like this, **"The way they treat their bride is how they will treat His bride, and how they run their home is how they will run His home"** (Titus 1:6-8, 1 Timothy 3:1-6).

- Paul acknowledges that the influence of motherhood and fatherhood is important for healthy churches

1 Thessalonians 2:7-11 *But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. (8) Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us...(11) just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children,*

- God wants spiritual fathers and mothers caring for his people because spiritual moms and dads foster the best spiritual families! They combine:

encouragement and provocation
care and challenge
sensitivity and directness
passion and objectivity
an atmosphere of approval and preparation for God's destiny

- The metaphor of the Church as the body of Christ speaks of family team 1 Corinthians 12:1-27; 1 Corinthians 14; Romans 12:4-10; Ephesians 4:16.

As in a human body, all the parts have a special family/genetic relationship. It is critical for all the parts and systems to flow together as a team for the overall body to function correctly. Rom 12:5 Amp *"Mutually dependent on one another"* Ephesians 4:25 *"members one of another."*

- **Christ began building His church with a family team of leaders.** He started His church (Jerusalem) with a leadership team of 12 men. Throughout the Book of Acts and the Epistles you see teams of leaders in Local Churches. **Acts 14:23 NASB** *When they had appointed elders (plural) for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord.*

Trans-Local Ministry is also designed to function as a family team

You see it with the different teams who worked with the Apostle Paul as he described his “fellow workers” and “fellow soldiers” and “fellow bond-servants.”

Philippians 4:2-3 *I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. 3 Indeed, **true comrade, I ask you also to help these women** who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with **Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers.***

1 Thessalonians 3:2 *and we sent **Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker** in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith, (NASB)*

2 Corinthians 8:23 *As for **Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker** among you; as for our brethren, they are messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ. (NASB)*

Colossians 1:7 *just as you learned it from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf, (NASB)*

Colossians 4:7-11 *As to all my affairs, **Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord,** will bring you information. 8 For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts; 9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your number...10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas' cousin Mark about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him; 11 and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision. (NASB)*

Philippians 2:25 *25 But I thought it necessary to send to you **Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier,** who is also your messenger and minister to my need.*

(Rom 16:1-16, 1 Cor 16:10-24, Phil 4:1-23, Col 4:7-18, 2 Timothy 4:11-22)

Purposes and Advantages of Family Team Ministry

1. Family team provides a living demonstration of the plurality and oneness of the Trinity.

Jesus prayed along these lines for His leadership teams. **John 17:21-23** NASB *that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. (22) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;...that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me.*

2. Family team ministry provides a living demonstration of the principle of the church as the body of Christ (God moving through a plurality, team, and a body. 1 Corinthians 12

3. It demonstrates the Biblical principle of more than one voice speaking the same thing which makes a more pronounced impact.

Deuteronomy (17:6), 19:15 NASB *"A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed.*

Matthew 18:16 NASB *"But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. 2 Corinthians 13:1* NASB *This is the third time I am coming to you. EVERY FACT IS TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES.*

4. A family team can more effectively find the mind of the Lord for direction.

The different giftings have different perspectives and when you put them together they present a much fuller picture of the mind of the Lord.

Acts 13:1-2 NASB *Now there were at Antioch, in the church that was there, prophets and teachers:...(2) While they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."*

The Acts 15 council at Jerusalem is another example of a team gaining a fuller perspective of the mind of the Lord regarding issues they were facing.

Acts 15:2 *And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue. (NASB)*

Acts 15:6 *And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. (NASB)*

5. Family team ministry is much more effective and will produce greater results.

Ecc 4:9-12 NASB *Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor. 10 For if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up. 11 Furthermore, if two lie down together they keep warm, but how can one be warm alone? 12 And if one can overpower him who is alone, two can resist him. A cord of three strands is not quickly torn apart.*

Deuteronomy 32:30 *"How could one chase a thousand, And two put ten thousand to flight, Unless their Rock had sold them, And the LORD had given them up?"*

6. Family team ministry puts you in a place of safety and balance in leadership.

Proverbs 11:14 NASB *Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory.*

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 *"Two are better than one... But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up"*

Romans 12:5 Amp *"we are mutually dependent on one another."*

Ephesians 4:25 *Therefore, laying aside falsehood, SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE of you WITH HIS NEIGHBOR, for we are members of one another.*

7. Family team ministry will help guard against the immoral traps set by the enemy which have snared so many individual leaders. You have the benefit of others who see and help cover blinds spots every leader has.

8. Family team ministry provides strength and encouragement as we stand together in ministry with others. Their strength helps cover the other's weaknesses and vice versa.

Proverbs 27:17 *Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another.*

Hebrews 3:13 *But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.*

9. There is a natural flow of discipleship and training as more experienced leaders work with less experienced ones, and those more gifted in one area help others who are less gifted in that area.

Titus 2:1-6 NASB *But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine. (2) Older men are to...Older women likewise are to be...(4) so that they may encourage the young women...(6)MSG Also, guide the young men to live disciplined lives.*

Characteristics of Healthy Leadership teams

1. Members have the good of the church, and the team ahead of their own personal ministry.

This was the difference between Jonathan and his father Saul.

2. Members who are joined together by God, not just connected.

Unfortunately many leaders as well as members simply connect together but never join together. The Trinity does not simply associate or connect together. They are joined. Each is

such a part of the life of the other that they are seen as One, even though they are Three. Strong team members have a strong faith that God has joined them together. Their lives are interrelated by covenant and the reality that Jesus has joined them. There is a strong sense that they have a common destiny in God together. It works much like a hand on the body. There is a God designed destiny for the hand and the arm being together. Neither will fulfill its purpose without the other.

3. Members have faith and courage.

A faith that is willing to take chances in heroic ways much like we see in David and his mighty men.

4. Members who are relational.

Just like the Trinity walked open and honest before each other, God has called His leaders to walk the same way. Leaders are to walk as friends, open and honest (in the light) with one another, bearing each others burdens, and confessing faults to each others.

1 John 1:1-10...(3) what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ....(7) but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin....(9) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

It takes friendship because leaders need to have lives open to each other. Each member brings both strengths and weaknesses to the relationship. As we walk as friends we help cover one another and in walking together we become more than what we would alone.

5. Members have common vision.

Each member must possess a common vision God has birthed among them. *Amos 3:3 MKJV Can two walk together unless they are agreed?* Each should be able to articulate the vision and work together to see God's will come to pass.

Acts 4:32 CEV The group of followers all felt the same way about everything. None of them claimed that their possessions were their own, and they shared everything they had with each other.

This should be the characteristic of each team member. Not only the vision but the values we hold together in pursuing the vision.

6. Members who submit to one another in the fear of God. Ephesians 5:21

Mutual submission is the opposite of independence. Strong leadership teams walk submissively together. This submission extends beyond the scope of a professional ministry mindset in which

submission is only held in church matters “at the office.” This is a submission of life. There is not line of “personal and professional matters,” because we share a common life together in Christ.

7. Members possess discipline, preparation, and wisdom.

Members who do not underestimate the enemy. The enemy is always trying to destroy the church by destroying the team. An undisciplined team member plays into the hand of the enemy. It has been said that a team is only as strong as its weakest link. Leaders must be men who are disciplined in their personal lives, devotional life, marriage, finances, family, etc.

Because of the various issues faced in the lives of people, team members must be seasoned with wisdom, able to give wise counsel to people, and have wise counsel for the team.

8. Members who are servants.

Leaders must have a servant’s mindset. Their leading is built on the foundation of serving that Jesus demonstrated and instructed them to possess. Matthew 20:25-27; Mark 10:42-45, John 13.

9. Members who are leaders.

David’s mighty men were leaders in their own right. Leaders were people of initiative who do not misuse authority but earn respect by laying down their lives in integrity.

10. Members who are loyal and faithful to the team.

This is a very important quality and the one that is most often attacked by the enemy. Loyalty and faithfulness are the glue that holds the team together. It is captured in the idea of Covenant.

Psalms 15:1-4 CEV Who may stay in God's temple or live on the holy mountain of the LORD? (2) Only those who obey God and do as they should. They speak the truth (3) and don't spread gossip; they treat others fairly and don't say cruel things. (4) They hate worthless people, but show respect for all who worship the LORD. And they keep their promises, no matter what the cost.

This is greatly challenged when a team decision may not line up with a personal preference a member holds to. This is where loyalty and faithfulness are tested. Strong leadership teams defend each other, protect each other, and the teams decisions. Team member stand in defense of the team and present a strong united front. Any differences are handled among the team not among the congregation.

What Makes Leadership Teams Successful in God.

1. Teams succeed if they model themselves after the Godhead.
2. Teams grow best in an atmosphere of encouragement.
3. Teams need a servant spirit.
4. Teams work best with a clear leader.
5. Teams work best when they carry a variety of the four faces of Jesus - Lion, Eagle, Ox, Man (find it in the book of Revelation and Ezekiel. Rev 4:7, Ezekiel 1:10)
6. Teams work best when they understand the mandate God has given them.
7. Teams will never succeed unless every member understands I cannot make it on my own (No "I" in team.).

Challenges in Team Ministry

1. Our enemies (the flesh, demonic, and the world's system) oppose working together family team leadership.

The enemy knows that when there is unity, it expresses the nature of God and His anointing is released through them. That is why they do everything they can to disrupt and destroy it.

Psalms 133:1-3 NASB A Song of Ascents, of David. Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brothers to dwell together in unity! (2) It is like the precious oil upon the head, Coming down upon the beard, Even Aaron's beard (Aaron represented leadership), Coming down upon the edge of his robes. (3) It is like the dew of Hermon Coming down upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing--life forever.

2. This is why there is so much emphasis in the New Testament on walking in unity.

Ephesians 4:1-3...to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, (2) with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, (3) being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Phi 2:1-3 MSG... if being in a community of the Spirit means anything to you, if you have a heart, if you care (2) then do me a favor: Agree with each other, love each other, be deep-spirited friends.(NASB make my joy complete by being of **the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose**)

1Corinthians 1:10 MSG...I'll put it as urgently as I can: You must get along with each other. You must learn to be considerate of one another, cultivating a life in common.

2Corinthians 13:11 Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, **be like-minded**, live in peace. (Romans 14:15-19, Romans 15:1-6, 1Corinthians 6:1-5)

Christ dealt with the key challenges during His last week with His team.

During His last week the culture of ministry in the twelve met head on with the culture of family He was wanting to build.

What Jesus was after with leaders and His church is revealed in His last prayer in John 17. The Godhead is the pattern for leadership and God desires a family/team/relational life of oneness that the Godhead has. He prayed for it three times (Vs 11, 21, 22-23), and it is central for the proper leadership and testimony to the world (21 "that the world may believe You sent me; 23 "that the world may know that you sent me.")

Joh 17:11-24 "I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me, **that they may be one even as We are....** 18 "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world...20 "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; **21 that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.** 22 "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, **that they may be one, just as We are one;** 23 I in them and You in Me, **that they may be perfected in unity (Gk into one unit), so that the world may know that You sent Me,** and loved them, even as You have loved Me. 24 "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

This is how He sends His church/leaders into the world.

Joh 17:18 "As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world... 20:21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

Key challenges Christ faced with them:

1. Importance of Covenant in the midst of Covenant Breaking.

Our carnal nature is prone to covenant breaking (based on desire for independence and autonomy) therefore it is risky to walk in Covenant. Yet Jesus imparted values of Covenant in the midst of one of the twelve betraying Him, and later all of them betraying Him.

You have to die into becoming one: *John 12:23-25* *And Jesus *answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. (24) "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.*

Reality of betrayal: *Mat 26:19-21* *The disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover. (20) Now when evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. (21) As they were eating, He said, "**Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me.**"*

The first ethic of covenant among people is that you die into it.

1Co 15:36...That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies;

Pro 18:1 He who separates himself seeks his own desire.

Php 2:5-11 NASB Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. (8) Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself...

2. Entitlement mentality: What's in it for me? What do I deserve?

This can trip up leaders, especially when they sacrificed over the long haul.

Mt 19:27-20:28 *After the leaders watched Him deal with the rich young ruler. (27) Then Peter said to Him, "**Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?**" (**benefit of eternal rewards**) (28) And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. (29) "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name's sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life. (30) "But many who are first will be last; and the last, first. (**But on the earth what Kingdom works like**) (20:1) "**For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. (2) "When he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard.... (13) "But he answered and said to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? (14) 'Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. (15) 'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?'***

3. Rivalry: Who is the greatest among us?

Mat 20:18-28 "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, (19) and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up." **(20) Then the mother of the sons of Zebedee came to Jesus with her sons, bowing down and making a request of Him. (21) And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She *said to Him, "Command that in Your kingdom these two sons of mine may sit one on Your right and one on Your left."** (22) But Jesus answered, "You do not know what you are asking....**(24) And hearing this, the ten became indignant with the two brothers.** (25) But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. (26) "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, (27) and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; (28) just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

This carried over to the Last supper Luk 22:13-32 ...and they prepared the Passover. (14) When the hour had come, He reclined at the table, and the apostles with Him.... (21) "But behold, the hand of the one betraying Me is with Mine on the table. **(22) "For indeed, the Son of Man is going as it has been determined; but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!"** (23) **And they began to discuss among themselves which one of them it might be who was going to do this thing. (24) And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest.** (25) And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' (26) "But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant. (27) "For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? But I am among you as the one who serves. (28) "You are those who have stood by Me in My trials; (29) and just as My Father has granted Me a kingdom, I grant you (30) that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

The family nature of the oneness of the Godhead is expressed in their desire to glorify each instead of glorifying self. They understand that their glory is in the other's glory.

Mat 3:16-17 After being baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, 17 and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Luk 3:22-23)

Joh 8:28 So Jesus said, "When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

Joh 8:54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing; it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, 'He is our God';

Joh 13:31-32 Therefore when he had gone out, Jesus *said, "Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him; 32 if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately.

Joh 14:10 "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.

Joh 16:13-15 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.

Joh 17:1-5 Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You... 4 "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. 5 "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Heb 5:5-6 So also Christ did not glorify Himself so as to become a high priest, but He who said to Him, "YOU ARE MY SON, TODAY I HAVE BEGOTTEN YOU"; 6 just as He says also in another passage, "YOU ARE A PRIEST FOREVER ACCORDING TO THE ORDER OF MELCHIZEDEK."

Php 2:3-9 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 **Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,** 6 who, although **He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,** 7 **but emptied Himself,** taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

Rom 12:9-10.... 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; **give preference to one another in honor;**

1Th 5:11 **Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing**

4. Jealousy and Envy: Peter and John rivalry after the resurrection.

John refers to himself as the "disciple Jesus loved" **John 20:2-4 NASB** So she *ran and *came to Simon Peter and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and *said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." 3 So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. 4 **The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first;**

Joh 21:17-23 ...Simon, son of John, do you love Me?"...(19) Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He *said to him, "Follow Me!" (20) Peter, turning around, *saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" (**hoping it would be John**) (21) So Peter seeing him *said to Jesus, "Lord, and what about this man?" (22) Jesus *said to him, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me

Parable of the landowner Mt 19:27-20:28... (15) 'Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?'

Story of independence versus team: People who try to do leadership alone will hopefully come to the same conclusion as the brick layer who tried to move 400lbs of bricks from the top of a building to the sidewalk alone. On an insurance claim form, he explained what happened: "It would have taken too long to carry the bricks down by hand, so I decided to put them in a barrel and lower them by a pulley which I had fastened to the top of the building. After tying the rope securely at the ground level, I then went up to the top of the building. I fastened the rope around the barrel, loaded it with the bricks, and swung it out over the sidewalk for the descent. Then I went down to the sidewalk and untied the rope, holding it securely to guide the barrel down slowly. But, since I weigh only one hundred and forty pounds, the five-hundred pound load jerked me from the ground so fast that I didn't have time to think of letting go of the rope. And as I passed between the second and third floors, I met the barrel coming down. This accounts for the bruises and lacerations on my upper body. I held tightly to the rope until I reached the top, where my hand became jammed in the pulley. This accounts for my broken thumb. At the same time, however the barrel hit the sidewalk with a bang and the bottom fell out. With the weight of the bricks gone, the barrel weighed only about forty pounds. Thus, my one-hundred-forty-pound body began a swift descent, and I met the empty barrel coming up. This accounts for my broken ankle. Slowed only slightly, I continued the descent and landed on the pile of bricks. This accounts for my sprained back and broken collarbone. At this point, I lost my presence of mind, completely and let go of the rope. And the empty barrel came crashing down on me. This accounts for my head injuries. As for the last question on the form, **'What would you do if the same situation arose again?' please be advised that I am finished trying to do the job alone.**"

The Last Supper Dialogue – Solidifying the Foundation for a family team

During the Last Supper (John 12-17) Jesus laid the foundation of conduct and attitude among the twelve that would enable them to walk in family/team.

43% of the instruction was about their relationship with the Trinity, 32% of the instruction was about their relationship with each other, and 19% was about their mission to the world.

a) First Ethic Covenant

Joh 12:23-25 And Jesus *answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. (24) "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. (25) "He who loves his life loses it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life eternal.

1Co 15:35-36 But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?" (36) **You fool! That which you sow does not come to life unless it dies;**

Pro 18:1 He who separates himself seeks his own desire, He quarrels against all sound wisdom.

The thing that causes people to break covenant is when their selfish desires go against their covenant responsibility. They follow their perceived self-interest instead of what they agreed to. If they think it is too painful to fulfill their covenant responsibility then they break it (the reason of most divorces).

Last Supper - Jesus met and gave final instructions on team, covenant, and their future in the context of someone getting ready to betray that covenant, then later all of them would deny (betray) Him.

Luk 22:15 And He said to them, "I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer

Mat 26:19-21 The disciples did as Jesus had directed them; and they prepared the Passover. (20) Now when evening came, Jesus was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. (21) **As they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me."** (John 18:15-27, Mt 26:70-72)

b) His first act of instruction was foot washing.

Foot washing wasn't a ceremony but a practical act of everyday serving that He wanted them to exercise toward each other.

John 13:12-15 So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? (13) "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. (14) **"If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. (15) "For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.**

He was instilling in them a sacrificial type of love that must exist among them if they are going to walk together as a family team.

John 13:34-35 (34) "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (35) "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

John 15:8-17..."Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love... (12) "This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you. (13) "Greater

love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends....(17) "This I command you, that you love one another.

c) He concludes the Last Supper Instruction with a prayer that the same unity that exists in the Godhead would exist among them.

***John 17:1-26 NASB** Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said,... (21) **that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us**, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. (22) "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, **that they may be one, just as We are one**; (23) I in them and You in Me, **that they may be perfected in unity**, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.*

Leadership In The Local Church: Elders And Deacons

Kingdom of God.

Kingdom is a governmental word.

The word “Kingdom” comes from the Greek word “Baselea” which means “a royalty, rule, a realm, royal power or dominion.” It is simply the King's Domain. Another way to express the idea of Kingdom is government. The Kingdom is the government of God.

Romans 13 talks about the idea of God’s government/authority expressed on earth through delegated authority. The church is the primary place in the earth that willingly receives the government of God. There is delegated government there ruling that helps prevent chaos.

Government (Leadership) within the organization of the Local Church.

There appears to be one office listed in local church government **Elder (Bishop)**, with the function of **Deacon** closely connected with it.

***Philippians 1:1** Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers (elders/bishops) and deacons: (NASB) 1 Tim 3:8-13*

Acts 14:23; 20:28; 15:22-23; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-2; 1Thessalonians 5:12

Biblically (OT and NT), ‘elders’ were:

- a. Family men! Heads of families and tribes, e.g. Exodus 3.16, 24.1, 1 Kings 8.1
- b. Governmental men! Rulers and judges, e.g. Joshua 20.1-4 **Dt 19:12, Prov 31:23**
- c. Men who fight! Leading God’s people out into battle, e.g. Joshua 8.10
- d. Men who seek God! Joshua 7.2-7, Acts 13.1-3
- e. Men who bring counsel and wisdom! e.g. 1 Kings 12.1-8
- f. Older men who have wisdom 1 Timothy 5:1
- g. Designated leaders of local churches Acts 14:23, Acts 15:2,4, 6, 22-23, Acts 20:17-18, Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 5:17, Titus 1:5, James 5:14

Elders stood alongside Moses (Numbers 11:16). Elders accompanied Joshua in conquest (Joshua 7:6). The Sanhedrin contained elders (Matthew 26:3), and the local synagogues were ruled by elders.

Evolution of Eldership - The calling and idea of Eldership evolved throughout the OT into the NT. Elders evolved from family leaders in tribes (Elders stood alongside Moses Numbers 11:16. Elders accompanied Joshua in conquest Joshua 7:6, **to the Elders in the city gates** (Prov 31:23 Dt 19:12 Rt 4:2, 4:11), **through the Intertestament period with Elders ruling the synagogues** (The Sanhedrin contained elders Matthew 26:3, and the local synagogues were ruled by Elders), **to the Local church**

Lack of leadership in the OT is seen as a judgment from God Isaiah 3.1-3, Ezekiel 7.26.

Three New Testament terms (Greek words) to designate the office of Eldership.

1. Greek "Presbuteros" Elder - speaks of "senior" or maturity and experience, an older man **This speaks of the man.**

2. Greek "Episkopos" Bishop/Overseer - Greek "epi" - over, "skopeo" - to look or watch. This term speaks of the leaders responsibility to watch over, protect, care for, and feed the flock. **This speaks of the office.**

In the Scriptures this term is used in the same sense as an Elder Titus 1:5,7; Acts 20:17,28; 1 Timothy 2:1

3. Greek "Poimen" Pastor/Shepherd - one who is a feeder. **This speaks of what He is doing.**

The Scriptures show us the inter-relatedness of these three words. They are different aspects of the same leadership position.

*Acts 20:17-28 "take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost made you **overseers (episkopos)** to feed (poimen) the church of God.*
*1 Peter 5:1-2 "I exhort the **elders (presbuteros)**...**feed (poimen)** the flock of God which is among you, exercising **oversight (episkopos)** not under compulsion,..*
*Titus 1:5-7 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint **Elders (presbuteros)** in every city as I directed you...For the **overseer (episkopos)** must be above reproach,...*

Functions of Eldership.

Around A.D. 400, famous North African leader Augustine described a leaders job: "Disturbers are to be rebuked, the low-spirited to be encouraged, the infirm to be supported, objectors

confuted, the treacherous guarded against, the unskilled taught, the lazy aroused, the contentious restrained, the haughty repressed, litigants pacified, the poor relieved, the oppressed liberated, the good approved, the evil borne with, and all are to be loved."

1. They are first and foremost servants of the people of God: Luke 22:25-27; John 13:1-20
Jesus washing the disciples feet

2. Ruling: 1 Timothy 5:17 *The elders who manages/ rules (Greek "to set over, superintend, preside over, protect) well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.*

1 Timothy 3:4-5 *He must be one who manages/rules his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (5) (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?).*

Elders form the government of the local church. They have authority that comes from God. Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4. They are men of knowledge, experience, and wisdom to whom the members of the Body can appeal to with vital questions and issues facing the church (Acts 15:2, 6; 16:4). They made judgments and decisions which were to be followed. They did not do so, however, without the input of the congregation (Acts 15:4, 22).

3. Leading and guiding the church forward: Hebrews 13:17

4. They perform duties similar to a natural shepherd: Feeding, teaching, leading, guarding, going after the lost & straying sheep, and seeing that their needs are met (1 Timothy 3:1-2; Hebrews 5:12-14; Hebrews 13:7; John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2). For a spiritual shepherd, both the physical/material needs (Acts 11:30) and the spiritual needs (James 5:14) of the flock are to be met. They feed (teach) the flock; they are able, skilled teachers (I Timothy 3:2; I Timothy 5:17; Acts 20:30). They must be "men of the Word" who can persuade, encourage, and build up the Body in their teaching of sound doctrine, and who can refute and disprove those who are in opposition to sound doctrine (Titus 1:9).

5. They are guardians of the flock: Hebrews 13:17 The word "overseer" (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2) can also be rendered "guardian; one who watches over protectively." To "rule" (I Timothy 5:17) can also signify "to watch over with concern; care for, guard, render aid."

6. They help to equip the members for works of service: Ephesians 4:11-13

7. They are examples to the flock: 1 Timothy 4:12; I Peter 5:3; Hebrews 13:7 They lead spiritual lives; their lives are lived in harmony with the teaching of the Lord. They show the way to the flock of God through their own example.

These are the duties of elders as set forth in the New Testament writings. This is what God expects from His shepherds. Each of us probably have additional expectations, some of which may grow out of the above duties. May we use caution, however, lest we bind duties and responsibilities upon these men that God has not. Let us remember: It is the Holy Spirit who creates elders (Acts 20:28), and through the inspiration of that same Spirit of God their duties are clearly declared unto us.

Some of the ways you can express the functions/responsibilities of an Elder are: Making decisions; responsible for all that goes on in the church; leading guiding and setting direction/vision of the Church; rule or make decisions on a variety of issues including discipline of members; serving and not being served.

Eldership is about function as much as a position or an office.

Eldership is not for life, it is only as God enables them to continue the function of eldership.

Scriptures indicate a plurality of Eldership.

They work as a team (see previous sections of family/team leadership)

1. Acts 14:23 "Elders in every city"
2. Acts 15:4-23 "Elders in Jerusalem"
3. Acts 16:4 "Elders in Jerusalem"
4. Acts 20:17 "Elders of Ephesus"
5. 1 Timothy 5:1, 17-21 "Let the Elders rule"
6. James 5:14 "Call for the Elders of the Church"
7. 1 Peter 5:1 "The Elders which are among you"
8. Titus 1:5-11 "Ordain Elders in every city"
9. Hebrews 13:17 "Obey them that rule"

As in any team, including leadership team, there is a leader. You see it in the Trinity where the Father seems to be the head even though they are all equal **1 Corinthians 11:3-15** *But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ.* Elders tend to have different measures and areas of responsibility according to calling. Elders are equal in value but not in authority or gifting. As Elders lead as a team there will be a leader among them who leads the team.

The New Testament clearly teaches that overall church eldership is male.

Women can and should participate fully in the life of the church, and in ministry and leadership of many sorts, but the final governmental authority in the church is to be by a team of male elders. When instructing Timothy of what to look for in elders, Paul appeals the order of government in the natural home as a parallel to the order of government in the church.

1 Timothy 3:1-15 NASB...(2) *An overseer, then, must be above reproach...* (4) *He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity* (5) *(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?),...*(15) *but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to*

conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

The general word for “men” or “brethren” includes both sexes in Greek. Throughout Acts and the Epistles these words are used to include us all equally in our salvation. However, it is interesting to note that when decisions are being made and elders are being appointed, the scope is narrowed to the male brothers, e.g.

1. In Acts 1 where a new apostle was being chosen Peter stood up amid a mixed group (1:15) but only men were considered (1:21).
2. In Acts 6 when the seven are chosen to be in charge of serving at tables only the males are addressed and the choice has to be from among them. This does not appear to prevent women from serving in the church but they are not appointed to be in charge.
3. In Acts 15 the Jewish/Gentile controversy was debated before the apostles and elders and the decisions were made by them. Then they, with the whole church, chose men to communicate their decision to the churches.
4. The qualifications for an elder in Timothy and Titus can only be applied to men.
5. There is not mention of any female elders in the New Testament
6. Wherever apostles are mentioned and there are 20 named in the New Testament, they are always men. Junias is mentioned as an apostle (Romans 16:7), but it is absolutely impossible to tell whether this is a male or female name.

Government within the church – both in the local church and in the apostolic team - thus seems to have been always exercised by men, both in practice and teaching. We believe this combination of doctrine and the practice of the church is unassailable, being both prescriptive for and descriptive of the church's life.

Authority between the Apostolic Teams and Local Elders

While the elders are the governing authority in a local church there is also indications of an authority exist with the extra local Apostolic as well.

In Acts 15 when debating the Gentile issue it mentions **6 times the Apostles and Elders deliberated and decided an issue.**

Acts 15:1-41 NASB *the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the **apostles and elders** concerning this issue... (4) When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the **apostles and the elders**, and they reported all that God had done with them ... 6. The **apostles and the elders** came together to look into this matter. (22) Then it seemed good to the **apostles and the elders**, with the whole church, to choose men...(23) and they sent this letter by them, "The **apostles and the brethren who are elders**,*

*Acts 16:4 NASB,,,delivering the decrees which had been decided upon **by the apostles and elders** who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe.*

Paul, as an Apostolic father gave strong input to local churches, ordained elders in local churches, as well as exercise authority in discipline.

1Co 4:15 *For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.*

1 Corinthians 5:4-5 NASB *In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, (5) I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*

1 Corinthians 11:16 NASB *But if one is inclined to be contentious, we have no other practice, nor have the churches of God.*

There is a primary authority in local churches that lies with the elders but also an aspect of it between the elders and their apostolic connections. Autonomous eldership without outside apostolic connection is a problem. An apostle attempting to override the local elder's authority is also a problem. There is an authority that lies somewhere between the two.

What is a Deacon?

Through the two thousand years of church history, movements have taken Biblical terms like "elder" and "deacon" and applied them to positions and people. Unfortunately the definitions that go along with the Biblical terms are varied. This is especially true for deacons. In much of recent history (the past 150 years) the role of deacons has been greatly reduced and limited when compared to what we see in Scripture. Contrary to tradition, deacons are much more than people who do simple serving task like counting money or practical needs in the church. We want to recapture the idea of Biblical Deacons.

Background

1. Background of the New Testament Church through the Intertestament Period

It is often called the "four hundred silent years" because there was no oral or written revelation communicated directly by God that we consider the Bible. There was, however, written history of the people of God during that time. This is the period between the prediction of Elijah's coming (Malachi 4:5) and the angelic announcement of the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:11-20). In the history we can see God preparing His people, and the world for the advent of His Son and the Birth of the church.

2. Divine Preparation for the coming of Christ and the Birth of the Church

a) Preparation through the Greek language - God was at work preparing the world for a common language which became the vehicle of communication for clarity and preciseness to proclaim the message of the Savior. As a result, the books of the New Testament were written in the common language of the day, *Koine* Greek. It was not written in Hebrew or Aramaic, even though all the writers of the New Testament were Jews except for Luke, who was a Gentile. Koine Greek had become the second language of nearly everyone.

b) Roman Peace and stability – Rome brought stability often called “Pax Romana” in the civilized world.

c) Roman Roads - The Romans built a system of roads, which, with the protection provided by her army that often patrolled them, contributed greatly to the measure of ease and safety by which travelers could make their way back and forth across the Empire.

d) The rise of the Synagogue System – It was the cradle of the early church

The rise of the Synagogue system

1. The seventy years of exile and the intertestament period gave rise to the synagogue system.

Since the temple and the sacrificial system had been destroyed, the exiles congregated into assemblies or synagogues to facilitate their identity and life as the people of God. Even after the return and restoration of the Temple and Jerusalem, seen in Ezra and Nehemiah, God’s people were still scattered across the empire. Through the Intertestament period the Synagogue system continued to develop as local gatherings of God’s people.

2. Through the synagogues God’s people became a nation within a foreign nation and a city within a foreign city. Wherever the Jews emigrated synagogues sprouted up.

3. The Synagogue became a cradle for the early local churches. It had a structure similar to local churches in terms of leadership, discipline, education, and instruction. After Jesus’ announcement that He was going to build His church (called out assembly) in Matthew 16, He made a further statement in Matthew 18 that pointed to the Synagogue pattern. The Synagogue had prescribed ways to administer discipline among the gathered people of God. As Jesus touched on how discipline was the work among God’s people He used an important phrase “where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am in their midst.”

Matthew 18:15-20 *"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. (16) "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you... (17) "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. (18) "Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have*

*been loosed in heaven....(20) "For where two or three have **gathered together** in My name, **I am there in their midst.**"*

The Greek word translated with the phrase “gathered together” is “sunagō.” – to gather together is the root of Synagogue. The Grk. verb sunagō is the basis for the noun sunagōgê, or synagogue. The verb sunagō occurs frequently in the LXX to describe the gathering of the Israelite people for worship or learning. In the Jewish Synagogue it took ten members present to compose a congregation, now Jesus was saying it was just 2 or 3. Local churches become the local gatherings (synagogues) of God’s people.

Not only are local churches the gathering places for the continued life and identity of God’s people in every city, but they are the place of His presence as the Temple. After Jesus's death, the veil of the temple was torn, and God’s presence (Holy Spirit) left. A short time later God’s presence descended on the day of Pentecost among a gathered people in the upper room in Jerusalem. Now, as Jesus promised, His presence will come among His new temple, the church, wherever two or three are gathered in His name.

1Corinthians 3:16 *Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

Ephesians 2:20-22...(22) *in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.*

1Peter 2:4-5...(5) *you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.*

This is probably why Paul felt directed to go to the Synagogues first. He wanted to announce to them the fulfillment of what they were hoping for was fulfilled in Christ.

4. The synagogue system provided a backdrop of understand for the early church. When the first church in Jerusalem faced the challenges in Acts 6 about taking care of the widows they instinctively drew from the Spirit and their background of the synagogue system to find their way forward.

The Pattern for the Acts 6 ministers/deacons - In the Synagogues there were some appointed to serve on behalf of the people for such things as the collection and distribution of relief etc. They were chosen from among the people and brought before the governing body of the synagogue for ratification. This was probably the pattern they had in mind for choosing of the seven to oversee the distribution of food for the people. Most see these as the first deacons of the church.

Acts 6:2-6 NASB *So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve (Gk 1247 Diakonos) tables. (3) "Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task...(5) The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and*

Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. (6) And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.

Evolving of the idea of Deacons in local churches

1. The use of the Greek words

The use of the three Greek words translated as the English words deacon, minister, or servant.

a) Diakoneo G1247 --"To be an attendant, to wait upon."

It is used of someone as waiting on a table (Luke 22:24-27) or in a general way of serving someone in any way as in (Matthew 4:11; 27:55; Acts 19:22) or in the sense of helping or supporting someone (Matthew 25:23; Romans 15:25) or in the ministry of a church official (1 Timothy 3:10). so it can be used to serve and minister as in the office of a deacon.

b) Diakonia (G1248) --"Service or attendant as a servant."

It is used generally of all manner of service (Hebrews 1:4; Ephesians 4:12; Acts 6:4); it is used specifically for the preparation of a meal (Luke 10:40); it is used for the service or function of all new testament ministries (I Timothy 1: 12; Acts 20:24; I Corinthians 12:5; Colossians 4:17); it is used in the sense of aid, support or distribution especially of alms and giving to the poor (Acts 11:29; Romans 15:31; II Corinthians 8:4); and it is used of specific ministry in the body of Christ (Romans 12:7). This word is translated several ways. It is translated serving, ministry, ministration, relief, office, service, administrations, ministry.

c) Diakonos (G1249) --"A waiter, attendant, servant or minister."

In the New Testament it refers to the servant of someone (Matthew 20:26; 23:11; John 12:26); it refers to a helper or encourager (I Thessalonians 3:2; I Timothy 4:6); and it refers to an official of the church (Philippines 1: 1; I Timothy 3: 8) . This word is translated minister, servant and deacon. It is interesting that the apostles and other prominent Christians were seen in this capacity (Colossians 1:23; Ephesians 3:7; II Corinthians 3:6).

The words used in Scripture (in the NASV) from the Greek word "Diakonos" are "Deacon" used 3 times (1Tim 3:8, Phil 1:1), "Minister" used 20 times (Mk 10:43-45), "Servant" used 7 times (Mk 9:35)

2. Two ways the word is used.

When we put all of these words together with their references in the New Testament, it is clear that they are used primarily in two ways, **an unofficial way** and **an official way**.

a) Unofficial way - In the general or unofficial sense, they refer to any kind of servant ministries. At times they refer to the ministry in the home, of civil rulers, of angels, of various servants and of all believers regardless of their calling in the body of Christ. It is in this sense that every born-again believer is to have the heart attitude and characteristics of a servant. Every believer in order to be great in the kingdom, must learn to be skillful in service.

b) Official way - These words are also used in an official way. It is very clear from certain passages that when these words are employed they are referring to a certain group of people who have proven themselves as having a specific grace to do the job and were thus designated "deacons" or literally "servants" Romans 16:2, Phil 1:1, 1 Tim 3:8.

3. In the official way Deacons were closely associated with Elders

The main two verses where the Greek word is translated into English word Deacon in KJV NIV and NASV.

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:
1Timothy 3:8 Deacons likewise (like the Elders) must be...

4. The great error in the church of minimizing a Deacon's role to practical serving

Over the last 2000 years of church history various movements have taken Biblical terms like "elder" and "deacon," and applied them to different positions and people. Unfortunately, the applications of the terms are varied. This is especially true for deacons. In much of recent history (the past 200 years) the role of deacons has been greatly minimized when compared to what we see in Scripture. In many Charismatic and Evangelical circles the term "deacon" has been applied to people who took care of serving the practical needs of the church (give them a title and they will feel better about serving). Others saw them as groups who provide leadership in the practical business areas of the church. In the worst case scenarios some saw them as groups who help keep the spiritual leaders in check.

Five New Testament facts revealing that the idea of deacons has been minimized and Biblical patterns need to be restored.

1. Acts 6 group (most of the orthodox church see this group as the first deacon ministry in the church) administrated the feeding of over 5000 people each day. This was no small task. We used to help serve an Christmas time outreach in Mexico in which we fed around 5000 people and it took weeks of preparation. Can you imagine doing it daily with no Wal Marts? It was nothing short of an administrative miracle.

2. Stephen, who was part of this group preached, moved in signs and wonders, and initiated significant breakthroughs in the Spiritual realm.

Acts 6:8 NASB And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people

3. Philip lead significant spiritual breakthroughs and is the only person in the New Testament identified as an Ephesians' 4 evangelist. He was also later a leader in the church in Caesarea

Act 8:5 Philip went down to the city of Samaria and began proclaiming Christ to them.

Act 21:8 On the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him.

4. Phoebe was identified as a significant enough deaconess among churches that Paul appealed to the Romans to both receive and support her.

*Rom 16:1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a **servant (Diakonos)** of the church which is at Cenchrea (2) that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and **that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you**; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.*

5. The qualifications for elders and deacons reveal a very high standard.

Of the twenty five qualifications listed for elders and deacons seen in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 Titus 1:5-9 Acts 6, seven of them applied to both (Not addicted to wine, not fond of sordid gain, tested, above reproach, husband of one wife, good managers of children and household, and a good reputation).

Male and Female Deacons

Reasons in favor of Female Deacons

a) It's Biblical – seen clearly in two passages

I Timothy 3:8-11 *Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, 9 but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. 11 Women (some see this as deaconess) must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. 12 Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.*

The previous verses of I Timothy 3 cover requirements for elders. Verse 8 begins the requirements for the office of Deacon. Verse 11 literally reads “the women.” Some translations say “their wives.” This is a possible interpretation, but a strained one. First, it requires the addition of the possessive pronoun “their,” which is not in the text. Also, another important question for that interpretation is “Why are Deacons’ wives being scrutinized and not Elders’ wives?” This is a glaring inconsistency. Finally, if this text means “Deacons’ wives”, what church screens Deacons in this way? The character of Deacon’s wives surely isn’t more important than

that of Elder's wives? A more natural and less strained understanding of this text is that these women were Deacons. This is consistent with Romans 16:1-2 where Paul refers to Phoebe as a Deacon.

Clark Commentary *1Timothy 3:11...I believe the apostle does not mean here the wives either of the bishops or deacons in particular, but the Christian women in general. The original is simply: Γυναίκας ὡσαυτως σεμνάς. Let the women likewise be grave. Whatever is spoken here becomes women in general; but if the apostle had those termed deaconesses in his eye, which is quite possible, the words are peculiarly suitable to them. That there was such an order in the apostolic and primitive Church, and that they were appointed to their office by the imposition of hands, has already been noticed on Romans 16:1 (note). Possibly, therefore, the apostle may have had this order of deaconesses in view, to whom it was as necessary to give counsels and cautions as to the deacons themselves; and to prescribe their qualifications, lest improper persons should insinuate themselves into that office.*

Gill Commentary - *Some instead of "wives" read "women", and understand them of deaconesses, such as were in the primitive churches; whose business it was to visit the poor and sick sisters of the church, and take care of things belonging to them; but it is better to interpret the words of the wives of the deacons, who must be as their husbands, "grave" in speech, gesture, and dress, of an honest report, a good behavior, and chaste conversation; which will reflect honor and credit to their husbands:*

Romans 16:1-2 *I commend to you our sister **Phoebe, who is a servant (1249 diakonos) of the church** which is at Cenchrea; that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.*

b) Jesus had women who came and ministered to and with Him **Mark 15:40-41** NASB *There were also some women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the Less and Joses, and Salome. (41) When He was in Galilee, they used to follow Him and minister (1247 diakoneō) to Him; and there were many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.*

Proper interpretation of Scripture is important in the subject of Deacons. There are two great dangers in Biblical interpretation. The first danger is to say "Yes" where God has said "No." The other great danger, however, is to say "No" where God has said "Yes". This is as grave a danger as the slippery slope of liberalism. If God has said "Yes" to women Deacons, then so should we.

c) It was the historic practice of the church.

Church history demonstrates that the practice of having women Deacons is seen by many of our forefathers to be exceedingly biblical.

It is well documented that women served as deacons for the first 1000 years of the church. Though the practice waned around the time of the Great Schism between East and West, John Calvin reinstituted Deaconesses as part of his reforms of medieval church polity. Informed by the example of the Early Church and by Scripture, Calvin was a proponent of the office of Deaconess throughout his life.

d) Deacon as an office or a function

A common belief is that, Acts 6:1-7, Philippians 1:1, and 1 Timothy 3:8-13 show that the apostles established the offices of deacon and deaconess as an office of authority and rulership within the early church. A careful study of the New Testament scriptures containing the Greek word diakoneo and its derivatives diakonia, and diakonos, clearly shows that these words are tied to the functions of individuals not a title or office. There obviously was authority that went along with certain functions like the Acts 6 group but no indication that it was some sort of permanent office that had inherent authority.

Acts 6:3 NASB *"Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task."*

e) The results of Deacons taking their place alongside of Elders

When we see deacons released into their roles and responsibilities it enables the elders to be released into the fullest of their function. We see it in the early church in Acts 6. The leaders gave themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. The result was that the "word kept spreading, disciples increased, and many other priest/leaders became obedient" as the apostles had a chance to bring the word to them. As the deacons were released we also see two of them, Stephen and Philip, begin to move in great power and outreach.

Acts 6:2-8...*It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. (3) "Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. (4) "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." (5) The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. (6) And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them. (7) **The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.** (8) And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.*

f) Qualifications for elders and deacons

1 Timothy 3:1-7 and **Titus 1:5-9** and Acts 6 show the moral, domestic, and spiritual qualifications of those who are elders and deacons in the church. One of the major qualifications has to do with the way they rule in their home. Paul said if they didn't know how to manage

their own home well that they wouldn't be able to manage God's home, the church. You might say it like this, ***"The way they treat their bride is how they will treat His bride, and how they run their home is how they will run His home."***

Comparisons of Qualifications for Elders and Deacons

There are 12 qualifications of deacons (If you take the position that those set aside in Acts 6 were Deacons) and 25 for elders and 7 qualifications apply to both (1. Not addicted to wine, 2. not fond of sordid gain, 3. tested, 4. above reproach, 5. husband of one wife, 6. managers of children and household, 7. good reputation).

g) The interaction yet distinction between elders and deacons

While we still are in the process of learning how to see New Testament Deaconhood restored, one way to show the relationship between elders and deacons is to see the relationship between a husband and wife in a home. Paul says local churches operate like a natural household 1 Timothy 3:15. The husband is the head (leader) but the wife has a co-leader who carries great responsibility and administration in leading the home. The husband carries the final responsibility for the decisions (headship), yet the wife is full involved and leads with him.

How the church responds to the leadership

1. Submitting to the leadership of the elders Hebrews 13:17.
2. Following their example Hebrews 13:17.
3. Expressing love and appreciation, praying for them, and helping them 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13.
4. Being generous towards them, so that they don't have to live under unnecessary financial pressure Galatians 6:6, 1 Corinthians 9:9, 1 Timothy 5:17-18.

Ordination Of Elders Deacons

1. A simple way to sum up the NT examples of ordination, there are three elements to it.

a. There is a grace and calling of God. The person him or herself feels a sense of call from God.

b. It is recognized by a church body (Hard to say you are a doctor if you can't get patients). The church recognizes the gifting and character qualities in the person.

c. It is confirmed by proven leadership both local (if they are set in place) and extra local and/or Apostolic ministry. (Acts 6:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9).

It is recognition by proven leadership, both local and extra local, and the church body of what they have the calling, grace, and character to do. They should have already been doing elder type things without the title. Recognition is recognizing what is already being done.

2. *The number of Elders and Deacons in a local church takes into account both who has the calling, and the need of the local church.* It is local church based and doesn't transfer from one body to another.

3. *Setting in or ordination.* This is a special time of recognition and setting apart the qualified leaders to do the work at hand. It is a time of impartation and recognition 1 Timothy 4:4.

The Five fold Ascension Gift Ministries of Ephesians 4:10-12

Ephesians 4:10-12 NASB *He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) (11) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service (KJV work of the ministry), to the building up of the body of Christ;*

These ministries are gifts Jesus gives to equip His church so the church will do the “work of the ministry”

Jesus walked in the full expression of the five gifting while on earth (Apostle Heb 3:1, Teacher Matthew 19:16, Evangelist Luke 19:10, Prophet Mark 6:1-6, Pastor John 10:11-14).

Definition of each gift

1. Apostle comes from the Greek word “Apostolos which means “A sent one or commissioned.” The Greek background of the word was a leader of a colony or fleet that is sent from the motherland to establish colonies in other places. The Apostolic gift desires to see the church built on Christ and built together as the Temple of the Lord in everyplace God sends them. He is a master builder 1 Corinthians 3:10. 1 Corinthians 12:28; Acts 14:23; 15:12; Galatians 2:4-14. Apostles typically work towards appointing and training leaders; starting and or establishing foundations in the churches; strengthening existing churches, Formulating doctrine; sorting out problems; and facilitating mission and breakthrough.

Apostles understand that local churches are “Christ body the fullness of Him who fills all in all” *Ephesians 1:23*. God is going to fill the earth with His glory and Apostles realize that the building and establishing of local churches in every geographic area are key to this happening.

2. Prophet comes from the Greek word “prophētes,” which means, “Inspired, to bubble up, foretell, and forth tell.” The prophetic desire is about God’s people being immediately

connected and responding to Christ. Prophets typically work alongside apostles in foundational ministry . Ephesians 2:20; Acts 15:32. They receive revelation to direct, warn, inform, edify, exhort, and console God's people. Ephesians 3:3-5; Acts 15:32; 11:28; 13:1,2; 21:10,11. Sometimes prophets receive revelation to foretell future events. Acts 11:27-28

3. Pastor comes from the Greek word "Poimen" which means, "One who feeds and cares for the sheep." Pastors desire to see people cared for and the church caring for one another. He wants the saints to be well fed and have plenty of personal attention. He, like the others, work to equip the church so she will be more pastoral.

4. Evangelist comes from the Greek word "Euaggelistēs," which means "A messenger of good, one who proclaims good news." Evangelist desire to see the lost saved, the gospel preached, and the kingdom expanded in society. Evangelists not only do the work themselves but desire to equip the church to be evangelistic.

5. Teacher comes from the Greek word "didaskalos," which means "Instructor or teacher." A teacher desires for people to know the word of God, and be disciplined by the truth. A teacher wants to see people living their lives based on God's word and become doers of word not just hearers. Teachers have a gifted insight into God's Word and an ability to convey God's message. They has a concern for exactness, and also the ability to bring various parts of truth into a comprehensive, understandable whole.

Overlap of the Five fold gifts with Elders and Deacons

It seems God calls certain elders to possess and functions in one of these gifts and at times there seems to be an overlap of ministry. Ephesians 1:1; Galatians 1:1; 2 Timothy 1:11; I Peter 1:1, 5:1.

Does every local church leader called and gifted in one of these gifts?

Scriptures do not dogmatically indicate that all local leaders will possess one of these Five Fold gifts. There does seem to be an overlap of these gifts existent in some Elders and Deacons.

- The early leaders in Antioch were identified as Prophets and Teachers Acts 13:1.
- Peter identified himself is both an Elder and an Apostle 1 Peter 5:1-5.

- Paul identified himself as both an Apostle and Teacher 2 Timothy 1:11.
- Philip who was one of the first Deacons in the church in Jerusalem was recognized as an Evangelist Acts 6:5; 8:26-40; 21:8.
- Stephen, who was also one of the first Deacons in Jerusalem also had a significant breakthrough ministry Acts 6:8.

Shepherding God's Flock is at the heart of Eldership

The New Testament metaphor for Eldership is Shepherds, assigned to oversee God's flock

Acts 20:17-21 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church... **28-31 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God** which He purchased with His own blood. (29) "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; (30) and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. (31) "Therefore be on the alert.

1Peter 5:1-8 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, **(2) shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight** not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; (3) nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. (4) And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

Shepherding is an important part of the Post Resurrection Commissions

1. The four Post Resurrection Commissions

a) Preach the gospel and baptize. Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. (16) "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.

b) Proclaim repentance for forgiveness of sins. Luke 24:47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

c) Make disciples (followers of Jesus) baptizing them and teaching them to obey every command of God. Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (19) "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

d) Shepherd (tend and feed like a shepherd takes care of a flock) the young (lambs) and old (sheep). *John 21:15-17*...Jesus *said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He *said to him, "**Tend My lambs.(feed, hay, straw, promote in every way the welfare of)**" (16) He *said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He *said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He *said to him, "**Shepherd My sheep.(to tend a flock, rule govern)**" (17) He *said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus *said to him, "**Tend My sheep.**"

Fulfilling the Post Resurrection Commissions (Great Commission) requires more than meetings, crusades, and various mission activity. The aspects of making disciples, teaching them to obey all Jesus commanded, and tending and feeding sheep (and lambs) require the ongoing life in the local church. This is where eldership is extremely important.

2. The calling on shepherds can be summed up in tending and training God's sheep

It is a process of joining people together in a flock, and taking care of both young and old, just like a natural shepherd would take care of his flock.

3. The prophet Ezekiel received a prophetic picture of this aspect of the Great Commission being fulfilled.

Ezekiel 36:37-38 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "This also I will let the house of Israel ask Me to do for them: I will increase their men like a flock. (38) "Like the flock for sacrifices, like the flock at Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the waste cities be filled with flocks of men. Then they will know that I am the LORD."

It began with the church in Jerusalem.

Acts 2:41-46 So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls. (42) They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.. (44) And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;..(46) Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,

Ezekiel saw that this process would spread into other waste cities. As the gospel spread across the face of the earth flocks of God's people were planted (churches) in other cities where they were tended and trained. *Ephesians 1:23, Ephesians 3:10-11*

Description of the tending and training of the flock of God from 1 Thessalonians

1 Thessalonians 4:1-3 NASB *Finally then, brethren, we request and exhort you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us instruction as to how you ought to walk and please God (just as you actually do walk), that you excel still more. (2) For you know what commandments we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. (3) For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;*

1 Thessalonians 5:11-15 NASB *Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing. (12) But we request of you, brethren, that you **appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, (13) and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. (14) We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. (15) See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people.***

Four Elements of Tending and Training from 1Thessalonians 5:11-15

It takes everyone working to encourage and build up each other Vs 11.

We need to appreciate the work of Elders who have a charge over the flock Vs 12.

1. Admonish the unruly

Admonish comes from the Greek word “noutheteo” which means “to warn, caution, to urge to duty, remind of obligation, to put sense into.” The idea is to come alongside and put some sense into their heads. One writer says, "It is the idea of coming to someone who is following a path that ultimately ends in serious consequences and instructing them about the inevitability of those consequences."

Unruly comes from Greek word “Atakos” which means “Disorderly, out of ranks, deviating from prescribed order.” It was used in Greek society of those who did not show up for work.” Atakos was also used in a military sense. When used in a military sense it had the idea of a soldier who was out of line, a soldier who was out of rank, a soldier who was guilty of disorderly conduct, who was insubordinate, non-submissive, disobeying orders, not following through on his duty. He was out of step. It eventually came to mean anybody who doesn't do his duty, anybody who doesn't follow through on his responsibility. Moffit(?) translates it "loafers."

2. Encourage the Fainthearted

Encourage comes from the Greek word “Paramutheomai” which means “To calm, console, encourage, inspire with courage.” It has the idea of coming alongside to console, to comfort, to strengthen, to reassure, to cheer up, to refresh, to soothe.

Fainthearted comes from the Greek word “oligopsuchos” which means “feeble-minded, lacking courage, timid full of fear.”

The term “Oligopsuchos,” comes from two Greek words meaning soul and small, the small souled. Small souled people tend to hate change, fear the unknown, and worry about everything. They want a risk-free life with absolute security. They're usually melancholy and have no spirit of adventure.

3. Help the weak

Help comes from the Greek word “Antechomai” which means “Hold to support, be along side” (like an ankle splint). The Greek word further means “to hold firmly to, to hold tightly to, to cling to, to support, or to hold them up.”

Weak comes from the Greek word “Asthenēs” which means “The feeble, liable to yield break or collapse.” They are the morally and emotionally weak. Paul uses this word in the New Testament most often to refer to susceptibility to sin. These are the weak people that you barely picked them up out of the hole of sin and get them dusted off and they're back in it again. These are the people that find it so terribly difficult to do God's will. These are the people who keep falling into the same sins over and over and you work so very hard and there they go again.

4. With Patience

All caring for and walking with God's people is done with patience. Paul says it is a fruit of walking with the Holy Spirit is patience Galatians 5:22, and that love is patient 1 Corinthians 13:4. In tending and training God's people we must be patient and gentle. We bear with people like God has been patient and gentle with us Colossians 3:13.

Gentleness and Patience go together

Ephesians 4:1-3 NASB *walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'*

Ephesians 4:23-32 NASB *and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, (24) and put on the new self...(32) Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.*

Philippians 4:4-5 NASB *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! (5) Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.*

Colossians 3:12-13 NASB (12) So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, **put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; (13) bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.**

Titus 3:2-4 NASB **to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men.** (3) For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. (4) But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared,

1 Timothy 3:3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, **but gentle, peaceable,** free from the love of money.

2 Timothy 2:24-26 NASB The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be **kind to all,** able to teach, **patient** when wronged, **25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition,** if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, **26 and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.**

2 Timothy 4:2 NASB preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, **with great patience and instruction.**

2 Timothy 3:10-11 NASB Now you **followed my teaching, conduct, purpose, faith, patience, love, perseverance,** (11) persecutions, and sufferings, such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me!

1 Peter 3:4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of **a gentle and quiet spirit,** which is precious in the sight of God.

James 3:17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

1 Thessalonians 5:13-15 NASB Live in peace with one another. 14 We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, **be patient with everyone.**

James 5:19-20 MSG My dear friends, **if you know people who have wandered off from God's truth, don't write them off. Go after them. Get them back** 20 and you will have rescued precious lives from destruction and prevented an epidemic of wandering away from God.

2 Peter 1:5-7 NASB Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, (6) and in your knowledge, self-control, **and in your self-control, perseverance,** and in your perseverance, godliness, (7) **and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.**

Jude 1:22 And have mercy on some, who are doubting

