

Eddy Craft

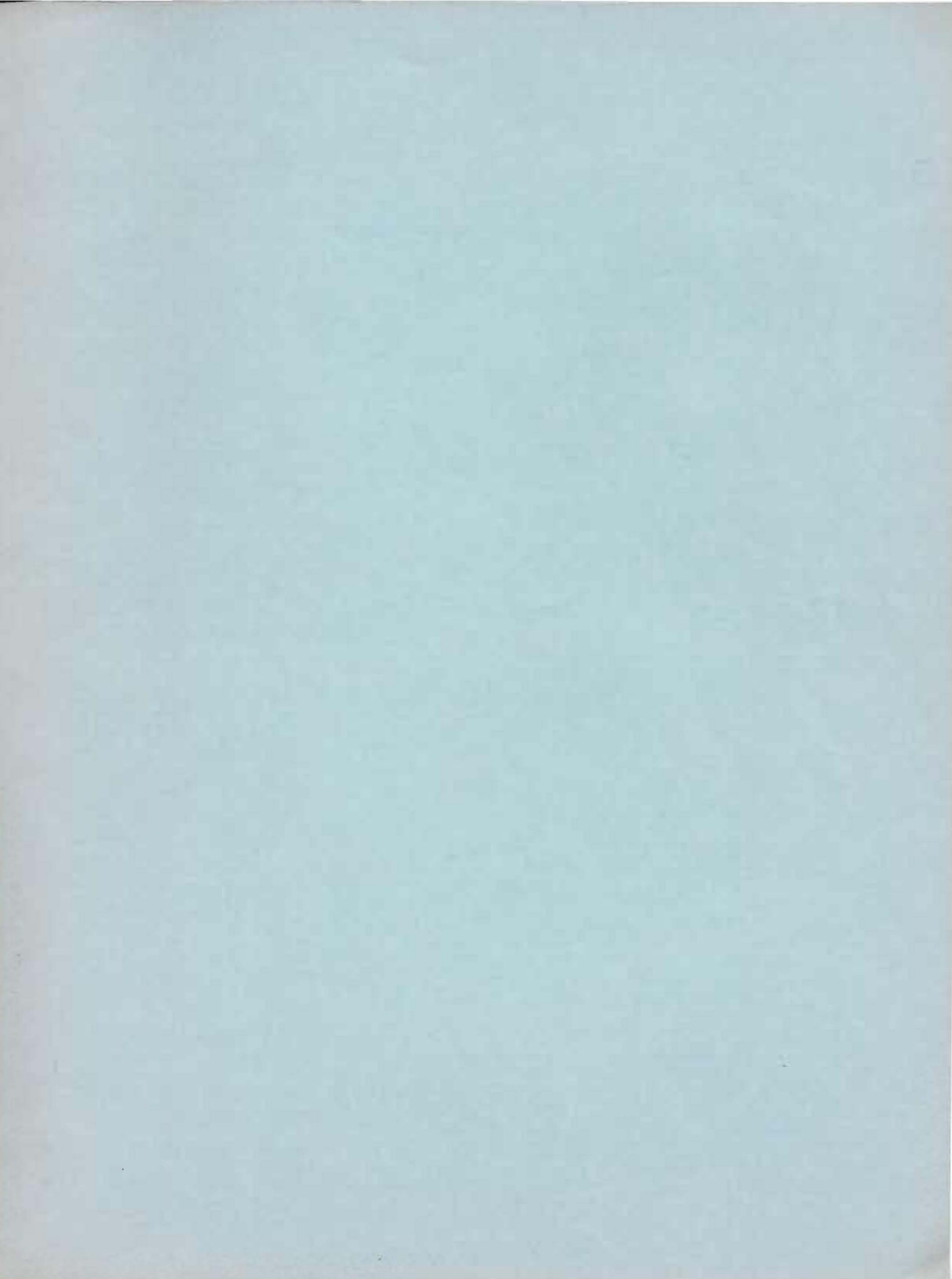


BIBLICAL VIEWPOINTS
LECTURESHIP
1985

THEME

~ ~ Leadership in the Church ~ ~





THE PREACHER AND HIS WAGES (Clayton Winters)

I. IT IS A PRINCIPLE OF DECENCY, HONOR, AND ETHICS TO PAY FOR SERVICES RENDERED

- A. Abraham refused the cave of Machpelah, worth 400 shekels of silver, unless he be allowed to pay the fair market value for it. (Gen. 23.)
- B. The Gentiles had a duty to repay a spiritual debt by physical means. (Rom. 15:27.)
- C. The apostle Paul showed the validity of this principle by six illustrations:
 - 1. The soldier: "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges?" (1 Cor. 9:7.)
 - 2. The husbandman: "Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof?" (1 Cor. 9:7.)
 - 3. The shepherd: "Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" (1 Cor. 9:7.)
 - 4. The lowly ox: "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." (1 Cor. 9:9.)
 - 5. Temple workers: "Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar?" (1 Cor. 9:13.)
 - 6. Gospel preachers: "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:14.)
- D. God strongly denounces those who would live in violation of this principle: "Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth." (Jas. 5:3,4.)

II. UNDER THIS PRINCIPLE, GOSPEL PREACHERS HAVE A RIGHT TO THEIR SUPPORT

- A. "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses, Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat." (Matt. 10:9,10.)
- B. "Have we not power to eat and to drink? Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas? Or I only and Barnabas, have not we power to forbear working?... If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?... Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preache the gospel should live of the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:4-6,11,14.)
- C. "Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit that may abound to your account." (Phil. 4:15-17.)
- D. "Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely? I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself." (2 Cor. 11:7-9.)
- E. "For what is it wherein ye were inferior to other churches, except it be that I myself was not burdensome to you? forgive me this wrong." (2 Cor. 12:13.)
- G. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward." (1 Tim. 5:17,18.)

III. REASONS WHY WE MAY UNDERPAY, OR REFUSE TO PAY, THE PREACHER

- A. We may not like the preacher. A lady in Erwin stopped contributing because she didn't not like the preacher's "white teeth and flashy smile." We may not like the store clerk, but we still need groceries.
- B. We may feel we ought to get by as cheaply as we can. I began work for a church for \$100.00 a month (less than half the wages of other local preachers). In 4½ years I was never offered a raise, nor even asked if I were able to get by. I started part time with two carpenters to be able to provide for my family. These men were hired by the congregation to put up a new church building. I continued the same work with them that I had been doing: the church paid them, but never offered me anything for my work.
- C. We may not understand the structure of the preacher's salary, thus believe he is being paid more than he really is.
 1. When you compare your check with the preacher's, please remember:
 - (a) Your social security is already paid, his is not.
 - (b) Your income tax is already paid, his is not.
 - (c) Your unemployment is already paid, his is not.
 - (d) Your hospitalization and life insurance is already paid, his probably is not.
 - (e) Your retirement is already paid, his is not.
 - (f) His average car expenses (20,000 miles x 21¢) are \$4,200.00 annually, or \$80.76 weekly.
 2. His contribution must be exemplary. (1 Tim.4;12.)
 3. He must never miss a gift-giving occasion for any member of the church (graduation, wedding, birth, etc.).
 4. His dress is usually expected to be exempliar of his profession (do you want him to perform your daughter's wedding or your husband's funeral in blue-jeans?).
 5. He is expected to do considerable entertaining.

IV. HOW TO DEFRAUD YOUR PREACHER

- A. Plan free or partial-pay meetings. I drove 1,400 miles for a meeting, and was paid \$100.00. It cost me \$200.00. Do you think any other member of that church invested that much in the meeting?
- B. Have a lectureship-type meeting, and suggest that each preacher donate his time and expense. This way you have a free meeting (free for you, but the preachers pay for it). I know of no preacher who would refuse to do this, especially if each member of the congregation would contribute an equal amount.
- C. Have an exchange meeting. This way the church gets a free meeting while the preachers bear the expense.
- D. Have a favorite preacher drive several hundred miles for a wedding. Pay the florist \$1,000, \$300 for the gown, rent the clothing for the wedding party for another \$300; then offer the preacher a \$20.00 "appreciation gift" and become offended if he accepts it.
- E. Have a favorite preacher travel many miles for a funeral (I was asked to drive a considerable distance for a funeral to lead singing at the funeral of a person I did not even know because "We like the way you lead singing at funerals.")
- F. Expect the preacher's wife to keep the visiting preacher and feed him twelve meals while the combined efforts of the rest of the congregation will take care of the other six.
- G. Expect the preacher to put in at least 16 hours a day for the same pay that you get for 8. No overtime pay, please; and be sure to drive by early in the morning to see how late he sleeps, but don't bother to check on the time he got to go to bed.
- H. Always remind him when you give him his check that he is overpaid, has not earned what he is paid, and that you still should be allowed to tell him just how he ought to spend it. This was you will be able to defraud him of the pleasure of enjoying what you do pay him.

CONCLUSION

- A. The greatest work on earth is that of preaching the gospel of Christ. (Rom. 10:14,15.)
- B. If we don't love the preacher enough to provide for him a decent salary, then surely we ought to love the gospel he preaches enough to do so.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH TO THE ELDERS (Eddy Craft)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Most of the time when we think of leadership, we think of the responsibility which the leaders have. While this is certainly important, we must not forget that the church also has a responsibility to the leaders.
- B. Some of the major topics of our day:
 - 1. Do the elders have any authority at all?
 - 2. The elders just rule by example.
- C. It seems that most of us just focus in on the elders and forget our responsibility to them. Is this just to get our minds off ourselves, because we are not doing what we should?
- D. One of the best ways to observe the responsibility the church has to the elders is by looking at some of the key *words* that define the elders' work.

II. IN HEBREWS 13:17 THERE ARE AT LEAST FIVE EXPRESSIONS THAT POINT OUT THE AUTHORITY OF ELDERS. SOME OF THEM ALSO EMPHASIZE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CHURCH

- A. Obey:
 - 1. The Greek word for obey is the passive form of the verb *peitho*, which in its active voice means, "to persuade."
 - 2. To obey them that have the rule over you literally means to be persuaded by those who have the rule over you. Many times we want it to be the other way. We want to persuade them or we will not cooperate.
 - 3. This word is used in other places in the New Testament. (Luke 16:31; Acts 17:4; 21:4; James 3:3.)
 - 4. This word carries with it the idea of trusting in one; allowing yourself to be persuaded by a person, showing that you believe in that person and accept his judgment.
 - 5. From this first word we are taught that we are to trust our elders, believe in them, and because of that obey them.
- B. Rule:
 - 1. The expression, "them that have the rule" is a single word in the Greek, (*hegoumenous*). It comes from the verb meaning "go before, lead, guide, rule."
 - 2. This word is used three times in Hebrews 13:7,17,24.
 - 3. An elder is one who leads or guides, not drives. This also implies the responsibility of the church. Will we allow them to lead or guide us.
- C. Submit (*hupēiko*)
 - 1. To yield, give way, to be submissive.
 - 2. This is the only place in the New Testament this word is used.
 - 3. Here we have the idea of yielding our stubborn wills to theirs. When we have a conflict of interests or wills, the members must give in to the decisions of the elders.
 - 4. The flock should retire or withdraw their objections before the authority of the elders.

5. Brethren, just think of the number of problems which would be solved if one would just study this context.

D. Watch (*agrupneo*):

1. To be watchful, vigilant. (Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36; Eph. 6:18.)
2. It is the elders business what the sheep are doing.
3. We often think it is none of the elders business where we go and what we do, but it is, and we have a responsibility to them. Will you make their work easier or harder?

E. Give an account (*apodiōmi logon*):

1. Other places word is used: Matt. 12:36; Luke 16:2; Acts 19:40; 1 Pet. 4:5.
2. We are accountable to the elders just like the elders are accountable to the chief Shepherd. (1 Pet. 5:4.) These words and expressions are not only helpful in understanding the qualifications of elders but also help us see the obligations of the congregation to these men.

III. IN I THESSALONIANS 5:12,13 WE HAVE SOME MORE WORDS THAT WILL HELP US WITH OUR RESPONSIBILITY

A. Know (*eidēnai*):

1. To recognize them for what they are, and respect them because of their office.
2. To know implies more than just being acquainted with them. To know their instruction in the word and to respect them.
3. The church should be very well acquainted with those who rule over her. The church should know them by the lives they live, by the truth they advocate.

B. Esteem (*ageomai*):

1. To lead the way; to take the lead.
2. To preside over; govern; rule.
3. Our responsibility then would be to follow or be under their rule.

IV. RECEIVE NOT AN ACCUSATION AGAINST AN ELDER EXCEPT IN THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES. (I TIM. 5:19.)

- A. Be very cautious of receiving evil reports against the overseers. None of them should be considered guilty of any alleged evil unless it be proved by two or more witnesses.
- B. Anyone whose business it is to correct and lead others will always have enemies; therefore, we should be very careful how we accuse an elder.
- C. There are many who are always finding something wrong with what the elders do (Pharisees found something wrong with Jesus, in their judgment, but they failed to prove it.)
- D. Unless the church members are able to prove by the word of God that an elder has sinned, they should keep silent. Those who do not behave under such conditions should be rebuked by the elders.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. No organization can fulfill its purposed design except every part work in its own place. We may take a watch as an example. It has a purpose to keep time. If every working part does not coordinate perfectly together it will not serve its design. So it is with the spiritual organization, the church. All units must work together in their placed positions in order to accomplish God's purpose.
- B. I have made every effort to make clear the truth on the responsibilities of the church to the elders. When the duties of the eldership are examined, the need for every qualification is clear. We cannot treat this matter as we please and claim to be obedient to God. We do not quibble about baptism as a condition of salvation; we know that we must obey it or be lost. Now why should we show less respect for the qualifications and duties of elders and of the church toward them? (1 Sam. 15:22.)

ELDERS AS DEFENDERS OF THE TRUTH (Glenn B. Ramsey)

TEXT: ACTS 20:28-31

INTRODUCTION

- A. Greatest, most urgent need of the church today is to have faithful, godly elders.
- B. Elders are to protect the flock from its enemies.
- C. Elders are to stop the mouths of gainsayers and false teachers.
- D. Elders are to take heed to themselves and to the doctrine. (See 1 Tim. 4:16.)

BODY OF LESSON

I. "TAKE HEED TO YOURSELVES" (ACTS 20:28)

- A. Personal life (purity, blamelessness, etc.). (Titus 1:7.)
- B. Personal study. (Titus 1:9.)
- C. Example of service. (1 Pet. 5:3; 1 Tim. 3:7.)
- D. Skill in instruction. (1 Tim. 3:2.)

II. "AND TO THE FLOCK"

- A. To protect. (Acts 20:28.)
- B. To feed (apt to teach, skilled in teaching). (Acts 20:28.)

III. "ACTION REQUIRED"

- A. Feed... taking the oversight. (1 Pet. 5:2.)
- B. Stop mouths of gainsayers. (Titus 1:11.)
- C. Rebuke as needed. (Titus 1:13.)
- D. Take care of own ranks (...from among yourselves). (Acts 20:29.)
- E. Watch for those within the congregation.
- F. Watch for false teachers from without the congregation.
- G. Must be aware of the methods and means of the adversary. (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 5:8.)

PROBLEMS THAT ELDERS FACE (Ray Frizzell, Jr.)

INTRODUCTION

I. THE MOST URGENT NEED FACING THE CHURCH IS FOR A SCRIPTURALLY SOUND, SPIRITUALLY STRONG, AND FULLY INFORMED LEADERSHIP

- A. God has assigned the task of oversight and direction within local congregations to elders. (Acts 20:28ff; 1 Pet. 5:1-4.)
 - 1. The God-given task of shepherding the flock can only be accomplished as scripturally qualified men (Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) accept the responsibility of this work.
 - 2. A strong, faithful eldership is the surest hope of a growing, triumphant New Testament church.
- B. When men are placed in positions of leadership, there are always challenges and problems that go with that job/work.
 - 1. Problems, questions and criticisms will arise within any active organization.
 - 2. In the work of tending the flock, elders can expect problems and difficulties to arise. (Acts 20:29ff.)
 - 3. A constant attention to and guidance by the word of God is the only thing that can keep us from being part of the problem instead of being part of the solution. (Acts 20:32.)

II. THOUGH ALL THE SPECIFIC PROBLEMS THAT ELDERS MIGHT FACE CANNOT BE

NOTED, THERE ARE THREE WORK CHALLENGES AND THEIR ATTENDING PROBLEMS WHICH CAN BE CONSIDERED. (ACTS 20:28; 1 PET. 5:2,3.)

DISCUSSION

I. PROBLEMS IN TAKING HEED TO SELF

- A. Elders must maintain their own spiritual health.
 - 1. Elders of a congregation are to lead in all phases of their work by deed and not merely by command -- "making yourselves examples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5:4.)
 - 2. Elders can succumb to the concept that they do the "directing" and thus are relieved of any obligation to participate in some work or program.
 - (a) One is not to serve out of a love for the status and the recognition of the office; such indicates pride.
 - (b) Elders must be "servant-leaders."
 - 3. When members of a church do not have proper respect for an elder, it is possible that he is to blame. (2 Cor. 13:5.)
 - (a) One's avowed purpose in serving Christ must be reflected in one's conduct in all relationships of life.
 - (b) An attitude of respect, so vital for effective leadership, is an earned emotion, not one bestowed with a title.
 - 4. An elder is still human, subject to making mistakes.
- B. Self-discipline is necessary relative to time management; the problem of time is very real!
 - 1. Leadership in the church is usually from men engaged in full time jobs to provide for their family.
 - (a) Employment that takes 8-10 hours of each day leaves little time for true shepherding of the church.
 - (b) It takes time to do the work of an elder, and how to make the best use of available time is ever present. (Col. 4:5.)
 - 2. The "time problem" also suggests the possibility of neglecting home/family responsibilities.
 - (a) What a tragic price to pay, if while leading the people of God, one neglects his own family. (1 Sam. 3:13; 8:3.)
 - (b) Any problem, for whatever cause, in one's family will affect one's ability to effectively lead a congregation.
- C. Elders must take care that no problems arise due to their failure to take heed to themselves.

II. PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN THE SHEPHERDING OF THE FLOCK

- A. The problem of "knowing the flock" to the degree that each member can be involved in faithful service is a constant challenge.
 - 1. The work of "feeding" or "tending" the flock brings to mind the work of "shepherding." (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2.)
 - (a) Shepherds know the sheep and the sheep hear their voice; he leads them in paths for their well-being. (John 10:3ff.)
 - (b) Elders must know each member, not just by name, but to the point of interests, talents, needs, and how to motivate.
 - 2. One of the heaviest problems which face elders is the responsibility to help each member become totally involved in the Lord's work.
 - (a) The picture of the body necessitates that each does his part, in accord with individual abilities. (1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 4:16.)
 - (b) Elders must lead in the task of "equipping the saints" for involved, faithful service. (Eph. 4:12.)
 - (c) To develop and nurture each one demands interest and knowledge of the talents of each one and the proper use of the same.
 - 3. To keep people faithful to the Lord, they must be involved and kept motivated; such demands dedicated, informed leadership!

- B. Communication is a major problem which most elderships face.
 - 1. Elders promote peace, unity and general understanding by keeping the membership adequately informed. (Acts 15:22.)
 - (a) There is no advantage in elders keeping secret any information that will ultimately affect the entire membership, or plans which they expect the members to support.
 - (b) Congregational progress cannot occur if elders appear to be acting too much in secret; keeping people correctly informed will prevent their being misinformed.
 - 2. Communication involves listening; elders must be attuned to those who look to them for leadership.
- C. In the area of shepherding, elders are faced with the problem of discipline of those who walk disorderly. (1 Cor. 5:1-11; 2 Thess. 3:6,14; Rom. 16:17.)
 - 1. Elders must promote the spirituality of all within the congregation and are to give account for every soul under their charge. (Heb. 13:17.)
 - 2. For the welfare of the church, the salvation of lost souls, and the proper influence upon the world, corrective discipline must be taken for unrepentant persons; elders are to lead in this action.
 - 3. Problems in the area of corrective discipline can be decreased by a more faithful teaching of God's will on this matter and by a more consistent practice of this Biblical teaching.
- D. Elders must protect the flock from false teachers and teaching.
 - 1. Who teaches and what is taught is of great importance -- in the pulpit, classroom, in gospel meetings, etc. (Acts 20:29,30.)
 - 2. Those who move into congregations often bring philosophies and teachings which are destructive in nature.

III. PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN EXERCISING THE OVERSIGHT

- A. The delegating of responsibility poses a problem for many elders.
 - 1. Delegation of responsibilities enables the elders to do the work of shepherding more effectively.
 - (a) Elders will have more time to truly "shepherd" the church.
 - (b) Members will become more involved and will feel greater responsibility and excitement as responsibilities are given.
 - 2. An intimate knowledge of the interests, strengths and weaknesses is vital to effective delegation of responsibilities to members.
 - (a) Persons and tasks need to be matched for effectiveness.
 - (b) There is no way that elders can do all the work.
 - 3. A good elder knows that by delegating tasks effectively, he really strengthens the confidence of the membership in him as a leader.
 - 4. The refusal to delegate not only overburdens the elders, but will undermine the congregation.
 - 5. Nothing is more out of order than an eldership jealous of its authority, secretive about what is being planned, and condescending in its attitude toward the congregation.
- B. Problems arise due to a tendency to react rather than act.
 - 1. Elders must lead in diligent, constant planning of programs in which members may share.
 - 2. Instead of merely being reactionary, elders should be out front in planning work, coordinating all activities, and training more people for increased opportunities of service.
- C. In exercising the oversight, problems may arise within the eldership which hinder the Lord's cause.
 - 1. If harmony and growth are to exist, elders must be mutually interested in a spirit of oneness of their purpose in serving together.
 - 2. There is a grave danger faced by any eldership if one among them is allowed to become the "ruling" or "chief" elder.

- (a) The will of God and the best interests of a congregation must take precedence over any personal preferences.
 - (b) Seniority of one's age or length of experience does not place one above his fellow-elders.
- D. Any elder who views his role as one of dictatorial lordship will have problems as well as be a problem.
- 1. Elders are not autocrats, but should rule in much the same way as a wise father rules his house. (1 Tim. 3:4,5; 5:17; Heb. 13:17.)
 - 2. The church needs men who have the attitude of servants, like that of the Chief Shepherd. (Matt. 20:25; 1 Pet. 5:4.)

CONCLUSION

- I. CHURCHES ARE COMPOSED OF CHRISTIANS WHO ARE HUMAN BEINGS, WITH INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE PROBLEMS
 - A. When a congregation lives harmoniously with few publicly known problems, it is not because none have existed; most likely, such evidences the leadership of elders capable of solving problems.
 - B. As individual members, we can help Godly elders by neither causing nor being a problem.
- II. MAY ALL ELDERS TAKE HEED UNTO THEMSELVES, SURVEY THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES, AND REMEMBER THEIR FUNCTION AND GLORY UNDER GOD

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL LEADERSHIP

(Charles E. Roney)

Christians are often found complaining about the church. A definite decline in membership in the church has been noted in recent years. Some state that teaching in the church is not as good or strong as it should be. All of these situations and others point to a problem of leadership. It has been said so goes the leadership so goes the company, so goes the leadership so goes the country, but, we have failed to fully comprehend that so goes the leadership so goes the church. I pray through this lecture we will have a better understanding of Biblical leadership.

To begin to understand leadership we must know what it is. Much has been written on the subject of leadership in general and from some of these writings I have gleaned some definitions on this subject. In his excellent book on leadership, Chuck Swindoll says, "effective leaders are those whose inspiring influence prompts others to follow." The American Management Association has made this conclusion on the subject, "An overwhelming majority of the two hundred managers who participated in the survey agreed that the single most valuable ingredient -- the 'paramount skill' -- was the ability to get along with people." The late general and President Dwight Eisenhower said leadership is unquestionably integrity. I don't know what are your ideas about leadership, but, I find each of these definitions quite Biblical on the subject. Webster said leadership is a noun, the office or position of a leader, the quality of a leader, capacity to lead. Biblical leadership always involves those with the ability to lead, a strong spiritual background, allowing God to work through them to aid them in everyday life as well as in their work as a leader for Him whether among a few or many, and people with a strong commitment to God and to the doing of His entire will in their lives.

Hebrews chapter eleven has many times been referred to as the roll call of faith. It outlines the work of ten people specifically described from Old testament times who acted as the result of faith in God. However, I believe these same ten people could also be looked to as leaders in their day. We can then not only learn from their faith, but, from their ability to lead as well.

These ten leaders include Abel who offered a sacrifice acceptable to God, Enoch who was

God's man all his life. Noah who preached and built an ark to the saving of his family, Abraham who was rich in possessions and rich toward God therefore, became the father of many nations; Sarah, the wife of Abraham, who was as submissive to God as she was to Abraham; Isaac, the son of promise, who became not only a great blessing to God, but, to his family as well; Jacob, the father of the Israelite nation, a leader in righteousness as well as with his own family; Joseph who with God on his side led at home, as a servant, in jail and in the king's palace; Moses the reluctant man chosen of God to lead his people from bondage to the promise land; and Rahab who stood out in Jericho for God and was saved in the destruction. From looking more carefully at the lives of each of these as the Bible gives it to us we can learn about their leadership to help us to lead. It was Abel who had respect of God through obedience, Enoch walked with God, Noah did all God commanded, Abraham prospered physically and spiritually with God's help, Sarah got her husband to listen to her, Isaac had the promise of God with him, Jacob had God with him through great blessings and sorrows he bore, Joseph prospered in all he did with God's help, Moses was able to do more than he could ever imagine with the help of God, and Rahab aligned with God to the salvation of her family. Should we not expect the same of God's leaders in the church today as was found in these people of old? We can go back to the old for much learning and admonition even in regard to leadership.

There is another area of concern to me in Biblical leadership that so often is not considered and that is common sense. Too often people have been placed in roles of leadership in the church that did not belong there because common sense was not used. The excuse given for placing them there is that they fulfilled all of the Biblical qualifications. If a person does not have the ability to lead they cannot be a leader. If a person is the most qualified leader in the congregation, but, the congregation will not follow him he cannot lead effectively for that congregation. I feel qualifications as listed in the Bible are important in selecting leaders, but, also common sense must be used in these appointments as well.

Common sense is also badly needed by leaders after they have assumed that role. If one knows the congregation, has an understanding of the history of the congregation, and has a sense about the direction in which that congregation ought to go, they can be a much more effective leader than one who is lacking this information or knowledge. Many decisions that leaders are called upon to make would best be made on the basis of common sense using the information we mentioned previously and a knowledge of the Bible as a background for making a good decision. Common sense goes a long way in a person being a good leader in any type of organization. I feel that more common sense needs to be used as far as leadership in the church is concerned.

From the background of looking at what is leadership, noting some examples of Biblical leadership, and discussing the need for common sense in leadership we move now to looking at some offices in the church, their qualifications, and responsibilities. We need to maintain a concern and interest in the leadership of the church for so goes the leadership so goes the church.

OFFICES AND QUALIFICATIONS

(Charles E. Roney)

There are many offices discussed in the New Testament, but, not all are in use today. We will confine this discussion to a study of ministers, teachers, elders, deacons, and committees. Each is dealt with in the Scriptures as far as qualifications and responsibilities are concerned. Hopefully a better understanding of these offices will help us to seek for these offices, qualify ourselves for them, and fulfill our responsibilities in them to the fullest.

While all would recognize the work of the minister to the church, some may not recognize there are qualifications given in the Scripture for this. Before looking at the qualifications, I would like to make some general observations. The primary work of the preacher is to

take heed to himself and the doctrine. (1 Tim. 4:16.) But, there are things to avoid as ministers, too. These are detailed as: profane and old wives fables (1 Tim. 4:7), vain babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge (1 Tim. 6:20), foolish and ignorant disputes (2 Tim. 2:23), and genealogies, contentions, and strivings about the law (Titus 3:9). The minister must exercise himself to godliness. (1 Tim. 4:7; 3:7.)

Now we need to take another look at the Scripture this time for the purpose of ascertaining the qualifications of ministers. The minister is to be faithful. (1 Cor. 4:1,2.) The minister is to likewise preach the gospel. (1 Cor 9:16.) Under this idea there are many supporting ideas given in Scripture such as: preach not yourself (2 Cor. 4:5), don't preach with persuasive words of human wisdom (1 Cor. 2:4), preach with great boldness of speech (2 Cor. 3:12), in preaching do not use flattering words (1 Thess. 2:5), preachers should declare the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:7), preaching should include exhortation, comforting, and charging (1 Thess. 2:11), preaching should instruct the brethren (1 Tim. 4:6), preachers should commit the word to faithful men who will be able to teach others also (2 Tim. 2:2), preachers should rightly divide the word of truth (2 Tim. 2:15), and preaching also involves convincing, rebuking, exhorting with all longsuffering and teaching (2 Tim. 4:2). Preaching is emphasized in all of these ways in the Scriptures and therefore this is the kind of preaching that God wants in the church. A preacher who cannot preach this way should remove himself from preaching or be removed by the leadership of the congregation.

In addition to talking about preaching, the Scriptures also give personal qualifications for preachers. These include: not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully (2 Cor. 4:2); give no offense (2 Cor. 6:3); not be pleasers of men (1 Thess. 2:4); not to be covetous (Thess. 2:5); patient, fasting, purity, knowledge, longsuffering, kindness, sincere love, honor (2 Cor. 6:4-8); gentle (1 Thess. 2:7); devout, just, blameless (1 Thess. 2:10); a good conscience (1 Tim. 1:19); speak the truth (1 Tim. 2:7); and righteousness, faith, love, patience, and gentleness (1 Tim. 6:11). Preachers need to make sure they measure up now and always and leaders selecting a minister for a congregation need to make sure he measures up.

Teachers is the next class we want to look at. Teachers are leaders in classroom as well as out. Teachers must teach self and others. (Rom. 2:21.) The responsibilities of teachers include that of equipping the saints for the work of the ministry, edifying the body of Christ, till we come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God. (Eph. 4:12,13.)

Teachers need to be aware that they will be under stricter judgment. (Jas. 3:1.) Teachers need to be mindful of false teachers. (1 Tim. 6:3.) Teachers are to teach in all wisdom (Col. 1:28), and teachers are to teach that denying ungodliness and worldly lust we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age (Titus 2:12). There are also qualifications for teachers in Scripture such as they should know what they are to teach (1 Tim. 1:7; Heb. 4:12), do and teach the commands of God (Matt. 5:19), and speak what the Holy Spirit teaches (1 Cor. 2:13). There needs to be on the part of the leadership in a congregation a greater accountability toward being qualified for the teaching work they are to do.

The highest office on earth in the church is that of elder. The greatest area of need as far as the eldership is concerned is helping good men have the desire for the office. (1 Tim. 3:1.) The early church helps us to see that more than one elder is needed per congregation (Acts 20:17), that elders are needed for every congregation (Acts 14:23), and that an elder only serves one congregation at a time (Phil. 1:1). The qualifications of elders are listed in 1 Tim. 3 and Titus 1 and in combination they are: not a novice, able to teach, knows how to take care of the church through ruling his own house well, husband of one wife, children in submission, children faithful, blameless, temperate, sober-minded, good behavior, hospitable, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous, a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick tempered, love of what is good, just holy, self-controlled, hold fast the faithful word, and a good testimony among those who are outside.

There are two basic responsibilities that elders of the church have. The first of these is

to take heed to yourself (Acts 20:28) and secondly to take heed to the flock (Acts 20:28). However, under the work of taking heed to the flock other duties are outlined in Scripture as oversee or shepherd (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2), watch and care for (Acts 20:29-31), support the weak (Acts 20:35), exhort and convince those who do not believe sound doctrine (Titus 1:9), examples to the flock (1 Pet. 5:3), give account of souls in their care (Heb. 13:17), and pray over the sick (Jas. 5:14). When these responsibilities are taken seriously, then the congregation will thrive because it will have good leaders.

Deacons are men appointed by the elders or by the congregation to fulfill various responsibilities that may be assigned to them on a regular basis or occasionally. According to 1 Tim. 3 they are to be proved, the husband of one wife, rule their children and house well, reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the faith with a pure conscience, and blameless. The wife of a deacon must be reverent, not a slanderer, temperate, and faithful in all things. The deacon should serve well and obtain good standing and great boldness in the faith. Deacons are men capable of responsibility in the church who have proven themselves to be worthy of this trust due to faithfulness to the church, to his family, and shown abilities to be of help to the church in certain areas of its work. Deacons are valuable in a congregation that want to get a lot done so that the elders and the preacher can be free to do their work.

Organization is the key in anything to get things done and so it is with the church. A part of the church organization is the assembling of committees to accomplish many tasks at the same time. The work of committees can be invaluable to a congregation in getting much done, developing future leaders in the church and giving more people an opportunity to be actively involved in the work of the church. The first committee in the church was appointed to deal with the needs of widows. (Acts 6:1-7.) We can take a good example from this in that committees can be formed to deal with permanent and temporary needs and to see what types of committees are needed, are you neglecting your widows? The qualifications for those who would serve on committees of the church are: good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit, full of wisdom, and full of faith. The results of this work was the word was spread and the number of disciples increased.

There is much work to be done in any congregation of the Lord's church. This work can be done or it can be ignored. We can obtain the services of proven people in the congregation to do this work or we can just let them sit on the pew. Leadership in the church needs to be improved among ministers, teachers, elders, deacons, and committees. Each needs to be qualified to do the task before them and desire that work. Let us be diligent in our service to the Lord and let's get going and get organized to do the Lord's work.

HOW WIVES COULD BE OF HELP TO THEIR HUSBANDS WHO ARE LEADERS

(Elsie N. Roney)

Leadership is an asset in every phase of our way of life for it to be successful. Our nation would have no sense of direction without leaders, business endeavours cannot succeed without proper leadership, the church cannot function as it should without leaders because God commanded men to be leaders and the home without leadership cannot be as God requires it to be nor carry on the work successfully which He has placed in the hands of those in that home.

Important as it is and necessary as it is for God's work the leaders *must* meet certain qualifications before they can be acknowledged as leaders. God always calls leaders who have made the proper preparation before they can be leaders in God's work. Where does this preparation take place? Primarily in the home but of course some is given in the church but God commands men to be the head of the home and also to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4.)

A man cannot be elders or leaders in the church without a woman. One of the requirements is that they have a wife (one) and children. Wives can encourage their husbands to acquire

the requirements God sets out for him to have or she can keep him from being an elder if she is not willing to be as she should be and do what is required of her.

So we see the necessity of the home being as it should be for the home is where the church gets its leaders. The years spent in the home will greatly influence what they become in later years. I believe being an elder is the highest honor any man can receive in his life. It shows to all who know him that he has served God faithfully and so has his family. It announces to all that he has spent years of study, dedication and service to our Lord. It shows he not only has lived an exemplary life before others but plans to continue to do so as long as God lets him live. Women who are wives of leaders should also feel that she is honored to have lived her life, encouraged and helped her husband to develop as he should and together have children obedient to them and hopefully aware of the honor that is theirs to have such good and exemplary parents.

Women, how many of you are elders' wives? How do you feel about it? Do you thank God every day for the growth and development your husband has made so he could be a leader in the greatest work on earth? Or do you feel "put down" when extra time must be used to make some of the important decisions they must make? You know I am grateful that God gave that place to men. In the first place I fear I might not be able to qualify or secondly, I would shake with fear when I realized the responsibility that is theirs. Hebrews 13:17 tells us that we "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: For they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: For that is unprofitable for you." They deserve our honor and respect and probably more than they get.

Since much of the necessary preparation for leadership comes from the home, how many parents do you hear encouraging their children to live so they can be elders or training their girls so they can be elders' wives? Will you exert every effort to be such a good example that they will learn from you that they will want to be just like you when they get older? That will encourage more to have that desire. However, whether or not they are ever chosen the training will make them more useful in God's service and if the need arises for another elder to be selected they can readily accept and fill the place because they have been trained by their parents and their encouragement, his wife or the example of a present elder. Wouldn't that be a great background for the great and important work of an elder or leader? You can serve God more faithfully even if you are not used as an elder.

Women, thank God for the honor he has extended you by you preparing yourself to be a good elder's wife. God always expects and deserves our best and certainly the leadership should be examples of "the best" to those who are following them. What a joy it would be for a little boy who has looked to a leader and when he becomes a man is a leader himself because of the example you set before him. You may not be aware that he is watching you but that surely can happen. Or a younger elder's wife tell an older elder's wife, "I tried my best to pattern my life after you." How rewarding that can be. It can make up for many discouragements you had had.

Since leadership is required by God and preparation must be made to fill that place let us all do all we can to encourage our young men and women to so live that they can be accepted both by God and their fellow workers to fill this place of honor when they are needed.

May God help us to strive as hard as we can to be one of the leaders or wives of the greatest work on earth with greater rewards and satisfaction than any other endeavor can give. Remember our lives are watched from above, by God, by our fellowman on our level and the devil below because leaders are not exempt from his efforts to try to make them fall for his way of life if followed will make them unworthy to do the work for which they have been chosen. May God help all leaders and their wives to do their very best in following God's directions, in leading those who are looking at their lives and setting a good example to others whose lives they touch.

CHOICE

What do you choose to do today?
In fact, does it really matter?
Who will know what I do with my day?
Whose opinion of me do I try to flatter?

It matter a lot if we stop to think
That God gave us the option of choice
He set forth goals we finally would reach
Of punishment or a place to rejoice.

Now God doesn't want us to know the score
Of following the bad as well as the good
But he gives us instructions from each phase of our life
And the choice to live as we would.

So, when we remember that "choice" is a blessing of God
That we may our own lives and destiny shape
Should it not move useach day to learn more of His word
So the choice of eternity we would puruse and take?

God had done all we need for us
Even given us a well defined plan
So we can't blame Him if all doesn't go well
For the choice of our life is in our hands.

Elsie N. Roney

HOW WIVES COULD BE OF HELP TO THEIR HUSBANDS WHO ARE LEADERS (2)

(Elsie N. Roney)

We have emphasized the need of leadership and preparation for this leadership and the importance of both. God commanded it and gave the necessary preparation which must be made to be pleasing to him. The home, the church and good examples to follow are needed for this to become a reality.

We also noticed the important role woman plays in this endeavor. Paul told Titus in the first chapter of Titus, verse 5 to "ordain elders in every city." In verse 6 he says he must be "the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly" and verse 8 says he must be "a lover of hospitality." The wife must be co-operative for this to be done as it should.

1 Timothy chapter 3, verse 2 says he must be the "husband of one wife, given to hospitality" in addition to some others but we are noticing in particular the ones which directly are for women. Verse 4 says "one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity." The next verse gives a good logical reason for this in verse 5, "(for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" The wife of a leader should be well acquainted with Eph. 5:23-28 and understand what it means for the home to be what it should be.

2 Timothy 3:8-13 gives the qualifications the deacon must have but we shall notice particularly the ones for the women. You might want to read the entire scripture of the above. Verse 11 says "Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things." Verse 12 says "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well." Unfortunately some women are not willing to conform to these qualifications and if that is the case her husband cannot be a deacon. He cannot be head of his house and rule his house well if his wife slips around his back ignoring his wishes and permits things to be done which he would not condone. It all bears down to this, ladies, we can help our husbands to be leaders or our unwillingness to cooperate and prepare ourselves as this scripture tells us will keep him from serving even though he may

have the other qualifications. Needless to say the wife of an elder, or leader, must be a faithful Christian or he would not qualify to be an elder. Also, she must be faithful to do her part in teaching and setting the right example before her children so they will conduct themselves as God directs or the husband could not meet God's qualifications for him. The example of faithfulness which she sets before her children and husband will also reflect and encourage others in the congregation to be faithful.

We find in these scriptures at least 3 things necessary for a woman to be a leader's wife. She must be a faithful Christian, a wife and mother, and help her husband to be hospitable. he can't very well be hospitable if his wife is cold and indifferent in the matter.

The qualities embodied in a woman must be in an elder's home for him to function as God directs. Of course, she could and more than likely has helped him attain the other qualities God required of the man. Wives, are you living as you should and lending your support and encouraging your husband so he can serve in the capacity to lead or is he denied this privilege of serving in the greatest work in the world because you do not live up to the qualifications we have studied. Young women, take note of the way you should live your life so that your husband would be able to fill this place of honor and not be the reason for him not being able to serve. This is a serious matter and should be considered fully.

What then, can wives do, assuming the above is as it should be, to help her husband? There are many practical ways we can mention which every wife and mother should have and especially the elder's or deacon's wife. She is not the elder but she can really make a difference in the kind of elder he is and the service and leadership he can offer. Being a faithful Christian, a loyal and loving wife and a mother who is interested in instilling the truths of God in her family she can also be an example for good to all who know her. We will mention a few words of encouragement here. I hope you will add others which you think of helping.

1. She must remember her husband is the elder but that being true places her in the limelight and scrutiny of others, also.
2. Her husband must never doubt her love and loyalty to him and his work.
3. Realizing he is also head of the home as he is a leader of God's people in the church she must be willing to "submit" to him and carry out his instructions he gives to her and the children.
4. She must show her husband that she knows they are now "one flesh" and must work together in what is best for all. A man who loves his wife as Christ loved the church will never require more than she can do of her nor fail to lend his help and encouragement in every way he can. He will lift the heavy end of the load and assist in every way he can.
5. She can help tremendously by having a clean, happy and open door atmosphere in the home thus promoting happiness and hospitality.
6. Provide privacy if someone comes to the home to talk with her husband unless she is invited to stay. There may be times when she can be very helpful by staying but should make the guest feel comfortable by suggesting that she will leave.
7. She should be very careful of what she says especially about plans or upcoming events. This information may not come from her husband but may be construed to mean that he discusses elder's decisions with her and she tells it. An open heart and closed mouth can often be necessary.

I hope these can be helpful to you and you will add your suggestions to these. If an elder's wife is a faithful Christian, a loyal and loving wife and mother, a good example to others and always standing by her husband's side, whether bodily or in his mind, there's no way to measure the good this man can do as he carries out his duties and thereby earn the honor and respect his work has given him.

LEADERSHIP IN MISSIONS (Scott Richards)

INTRODUCTION

1. Prior to his ascension, Jesus told his disciples to go preach the gospel. (Matt. 28:19,20; Mark 16:15.)
2. Jesus also told them that "the field is the world." (Matt. 13:38; Acts 1:8.)
3. The church today needs to revive an evangelistic spirit.
4. It is my hope that this lesson will encourage the congregations in this area to take a leading role in the world wide spread of the gospel.

DISCUSSION

- I. THE CHURCH TODAY NEEDS ELDERSHIPS THAT WILL TAKE THE LEAD IN SENDING OUT MISSIONARIES.
 - A. Antioch was a first century congregation which was a leader in world missions.
 1. They were an active congregation.
 - (a) Disciples were called "Christians" first here. (Acts 11:26.)
 - (b) They had several "prophets and teachers" there. (Acts 13:1.)
 2. They realized the need to send the gospel to the rest of the world. (Acts 13:1-3.)
 3. Paul's missionary journeys began here.
 - (a) When Paul returned from the first journey, he rehearsed with the congregation what had occurred. (Acts 14:26-28.)
 - (b) The second journey began here. (Acts 15:36-41.)
 - (c) Second journey ended here, and the third journey began here. (Acts 18:22,23.)
 - B. The church needs congregations like Antioch today.
 1. Elders must recognize our responsibility to take the gospel to the entire world.
 - (a) The gospel is a treasure to be shared with others. (2 Cor. 4:6,7.)
 - (b) People are lost without the gospel. (Rom. 10:13-17.)
 - (c) Salvation can be found in no other but Jesus. (Acts 4:12; 1 Cor. 3:11.)
 2. Congregations with a broad view of the church's mission.
 - (a) The gospel was intended for all men. (Mark 16:15.)
 - (b) There is no place for prejudice. (Gal. 3:27,28.)
 - (c) There is no place for provincialism. (Eph. 2:19.)
 - (d) Paul became all things for all men. (1 Cor. 9:22.)
- II. LEADERSHIP IN MISSIONS REQUIRES COMMITMENT, FAITH AND SACRIFICE
 - A. It requires commitment to Christ and the work.
 1. Christ must be first. (Matt. 10:34-39.)
 2. Commitment to a chosen field or missionary is also necessary.
 3. The Philippians were loyal in their support of Paul. (Phil. 4:16; 1:5.)
 - B. It requires faith in God.
 1. The Israelites were commanded to gather manna every morning while in the wilderness. (Ex. 16.)
 - (a) They were not to gather more than they needed for the day. (v. 16.)
 - (b) If they gathered too much, it spoiled. (v. 20.)
 - (c) They were to trust in God's providence. (v. 4.)
 2. We must trust in God's providence today as well. (2 Cor. 9:8-10.)
 3. We have opportunities to do much good; what we need is faith in God that he will provide us with the physical resources. (Luke 6:38.)
 - C. It requires sacrifice for the cause of Christ.
 1. Jesus is our example of sacrifice. (Phil. 2:5-8.)
 2. He sacrificed in order to "seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke 19:10.)
 3. Our cause is the same as Christ's, and we must sacrifice also.
 - (a) Paul said he was "crucified with Christ." (Gal. 2:20.)
 - (b) To live for Christ is to die to this life. (2 Tim. 2:11.)
 - (c) Our lives are to be a sacrifice. (Rom. 12:1.)
 - (d) Like Paul, we are "ambassadors for Christ." (2 Cor. 5:20.)

CONCLUSION

1. The church today in America is "at ease in Zion." (Amos 6:1.)
2. We have grown complacent about our mission.
3. Like Antioch, we need congregations to send forth missionaries.
4. Congregations that are committed to spreading the gospel of Christ.
5. Elders have the faith that God will provide the means to send.
6. Christians who will sacrifice for the cause of Christ.
7. People need to hear the gospel in its simplicity.
 - (a) Hear -- Rom. 10:17
 - (b) Believe -- John 3:16
 - (c) Repent -- Luke 13:3
 - (d) Confess -- Matt. 10:32,33
 - (e) Be baptized -- Mark 16:16

LEADERS IN THE CHURCH: THE RESPONSIBILITY TO FAMILIES

In his inaugural address of 1961, President John F. Kennedy made the now-famous statement: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." Could we amend that statement to say this: "Ask not what the church can do for your family but what your family can do for the church"?

There is truth in that statement. We should not be the kind of people who are always expecting to receive something from the church. Instead, we should be seeking to find ways of serving the church. Our families can make valuable contributions to the church, in terms of service and energies.

But on the other hand, should we say that the church has no responsibilities to the families of the congregation? Or does God expect the church to help the family units of the church to be what they should be? Let us look at the word of God for answers to this question.

The question might be put this way: Whose job is it to make sure the children are raised properly? Or, whose job is it that husbands and wives live the way they should?

The Family's Responsibility To Direct Itself

First, we must realize that God places primary responsibility upon the family itself to make sure it is living in the proper way. This can be clearly seen in many passages from scripture. Take, for example, Deut. 6:6,7: "And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." Here, Israel is plainly told that they have the responsibility to teach their families in the ways of God. Not only do they teach their children at every opportunity, but the whole family is involved in the teaching process. Whose job is it to instruct the family in the will of God? It is primarily the family's job.

The psalmist was also impressed with this truth, for he stated God's desire for families in Ps. 78:5-7: "... he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generations to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." If families fulfill their responsibilities of teaching the word of God to their children, then God will be remembered and glorified. But if families neglect this God-given task, who can expect the children to live by the covenant of Almighty Jehovah?

But the family's responsibilities are not just with child-rearing. There is also advice given to husbands and wives that must be heeded. Paul gives such advice in Eph. 5. In verse 22, Paul tells wives to "submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." Likewise, to the husbands, Paul says in verse 25, "love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." Therefore, here is another obligation that relates

to families: Husbands and wives must do whatever is necessary to make their marriage relationships what they ought to be in the sight of God.

Therefore, again we ask: Whose job is it to make sure families have what they need? Primarily, the family is responsible for making sure it is living in the way it should. When things go wrong, they cannot look around and blame others; it was their duty to keep things going as they should.

Unfortunately, many families in our society have neglected their duties. This is easily seen, just by recalling accounts of many of our own friends and acquaintances. Statistics are easily obtained, which all point to the decline of the family unit in American society. Consider what one writer observed about this tragic occurrence: "We have lived with the claim that one in every four United States marriages eventually ends in divorce - long enough to become somewhat complacent. We are disturbed when we discover that in some densely populated area divorce is now running as high as seventy percent... We are alarmed when we learn that approximately half a million teenagers run away from home each year. These and other statistics, along with our everyday observations, convince us that considerable change in family life and values is taking place." (Batsell Barret Baxter, *Up Reach* March/April, 1982, p. 17) No one will deny that the family unit in our nation is in danger. The question now is this: Since the family has not lived up to its God-given responsibilities, is there any hope, any help still available.

The Church's Responsibility To Help The Family

We are all familiar with the general commands to preach the word of God to anyone and everyone. Paul stated it clearly in 2 Tim. 4:2, when he urged Timothy to "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." And just what is the word that is to be preached? Is it simply those things that relate to the doctrines of worship and salvation? Or does it not also include all of what God has said regarding the family, and how families should live? Preaching the word will at times mean preaching about family life.

Also we are familiar with Paul's command in Gal. 6:1: "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." And just what are the errors that Paul has in mind here? Just the errors which relate to how a person worships, attends the assemblies, or believes? Or would it not also include the errors concerning how a person is teaching (or failing to teach) his children; or how a person is nurturing (or failing to nurture) his marriage? Restoring people from error would also include the error of failing to follow God's advice on the family.

But there are specific suggestions from God's word on how the church can serve the family. In Titus 2:1-6, Paul urges the church to speak "things which become sound doctrine." And what does this sound doctrine involve? In this passage, the emphasis is upon the older women instructing the younger women in matters of domestic relations, and with the younger men receiving similar instructions. Is this a matter for the church to be concerned with? According to Paul, this, too, is a matter of sound doctrine.

One might consider Israel's commission in Deut. 31:12,13. Every seven years, Moses told the people, they were to gather together for a feast, and to read the law publicly. Why go to all this trouble of reading the law in public? "And that their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God..." Moses knew that not every family would be diligent about their responsibilities to teach their children. Thus, to provide a "second line of defense," the nation at large was to take on a certain amount of teaching responsibility. Is this unlike the situation the church today faces?

No, we are not for a moment suggesting that the church of our Lord Jesus Christ is merely a "family enrichment center." The church is much more than that. But is it wrong for a family to expect to find some help for their families from the church? Are leaders of the church ill-advised to plan activities that will strengthen families?

Leaders of the Lord's church have this responsibility: To look out for the best interests and

welfare of the families which make up its membership. They will realize that raising the family is not primarily the church's responsibility; that still belongs to the family itself. But they will also realize that the church can and should help the family be what it should be, by any scriptural means available.

As a result of this study of the Bible, we consider it most appropriate for the church to:

- Provide "Sunday School" and other types of instructional activities for the children of the congregation. This should never be the sole source of the children's learning about God, but it is a valuable supplement. And for some, it may be their only means of learning God's will.
- Provide marriage and family enrichment opportunities, to inform and encourage families toward better relationships.
- Be interested enough to offer advice and counselling to families of the congregation, when such is needed.

By making these things available, we are in a very real way helping to "preach the word."

The church has something that people want! In *U.S. News & World Report*, June 16, 1980, a poll of U.S. families found that 61% of the families surveyed considered their family the most important thing in their life. But the survey also found that over half of the families felt that their relationships had gotten worse. These people want good family relationships. The church has the message that these families need, Jesus Christ. Will we not preach the good news in its entirety, and tell people what the Lord can do for their families?

THE ELDERSHIP

(Kenneth G. Chambers)

INTRODUCTION

- A. Brethren I stand before you both honored and frightened. Honored that I have been selected and invited to have part in this Biblical Viewpoints Lectureship. A program that I have been pleased to be a part of for the past five years. One that I will pray for often.
- B. Frightened - at the subject because of the importance it plays in the church. Frightened with a respectful fear of my heavenly Father whose Word I represent in this lectures.
- C. *The Eldership* is a subject that has been thoroughly discussed by most able men both orally and written. Therefore, it is with reluctance that I attempt this discourse. Yet, because of its importance I accept this challenge with the hope of being able to help some recognize its value to God's kingdom.
- D. I assure you that I will not present any new material, but merely reaffirm and call attention again to that which has often been presented on other occasions. Therefore it is with much gratitude that I express my sincere thanks to those brethren who have so ably written on the subject. I have tried to correctly represent the sources used in preparation for this lesson in a selected bibliography.
- E. The subject of *The Eldership* is of the utmost importance to every member of the church, because:
 - 1. It is a Bible subject. The Bible is God's Word and our guide.
 - 2. Many misunderstandings are held, many errors are taught about it.
 - 3. The effect it has on the church both locally and universally.
- F. The subject is often the topic of discussion leaving a multiplicity of questions, such as:
 - 1. Can one who has only one child serve as an elder?
 - 2. What if he has children who have become unfaithful?
 - 3. What if his wife is deceased and he has scripturally remarried?
 - 4. What does apt to teach mean, public teaching or teaching by example?
 - 5. Does each individual have to meet all of the qualifications? or just the group?I am sure you are aware that we cannot deal with and will not answer every question

raised concerning this great office. But I promise you that our study will be profitable to the subject.

- G. I want you to know that I have *no personal vendettas* to air in this study.
- H. We will discuss the subject tonight from the following aspects:
 - 1. The eldership is an official office.
 - 2. It is an office with authority.
 - 3. Duties of the eldership.
 - 4. Qualifications of the individuals holding this office.
 - 5. Practical suggestions for elders.

DISCUSSION

I. THE ELDERSHIP IS AN OFFICIAL OFFICE

- A. Those who wish to deny and destroy the authority of the eldership endeavor to do so by denying the right of the office to exist at anytime other than the apostolic time. Their claim is, the term elder means older person.
- B. The term eldership means the office of an elder (McGarvey, p. 10).
- C. Most all translators translate 1 Tim. 3:1 "office" KJV, modern language, AS; RSV; NAS; Living Oracles; Confraternity; Phillips and others. I do not say this to recommend a particular translation but to show the translators recognize the official office of the elders. I recommend and use the KJV and AS.
- D. This word *episkope* means "ownership." (1 Tim. 3:1; 4:14.)
Presbuteros: "elder"
Presbuterion: "eldership"
Council of elders, of Jews: Luke 22:16; Acts 22:5. Christian church council -- church fathers used to refer to group as office. Arndt-Gingrich, p. 699 - neuter-nouns not just older men.
- E. The instruction to appoint men to the office is evidence that such was an official office.
 - 1. Acts 14:23 - "When they had ordained them elders in every church" *cheirtoneo* - choose or appoint by raising the hand.
 - (a) 2 Cor. 8:19 - "Chosen of the churches" unknown brother of Titus. How is not determined.
 - (b) Josephus represents Alexander Bals - the Syrian King who claimed jurisdiction over Judea as writing to Jonathan brother of Judas Maccabaeus "We therefore do ordain thee this day high priest of the Jews."
 - (c) An appointment to office.
 - 2. Titus 1:5 - "Ordain elders in every city" - *katastema* most common word for appointing to office:
 - (a) Joseph as governor over Egypt. (Gen. 12:33,34; Acts 7:10.)
 - (b) David as ruler over Israel. (2 Sam. 6:21.)
 - (c) Rulers over household servants. (Matt. 24:45.)
 - (d) Judge in civil court. (Lev. 12:14; Acts 7:27.)
 - (e) Jewish high priests. (Heb. 5:1; 8:3.)
 - (f) Titus was to appoint elders in every city - the term elders designates the office to which they were appointed (see McGarvey, pp. 12-13).
- F. The office of the elders or eldership was and is a perpetual office.
 - 1. The qualifications and instructions given to Timothy and Titus - 2nd generation from apostles.
 - 2. History reveals that such existed - we know that apostasy came in the exalting of one elder above others.

II. THIS OFFICE OR ELDERSHIP IS ONE OF AUTHORITY

- A. It is sad that we have those today as in years gone by who want to strip the eldership of its authority.
- B. Naturally elders have no authority to change God's law. (Deut. 4:2; Pro. 30:6; 1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18,19; Gal. 1:8,9; Jude 3.)
- C. Neither are they to be tyrants - taskmasters, etc.

- D. This authority can quickly and accurately be determined by noting the terms by which this office is referred or called.
1. Elders or Presbyters - older yes, but also.
 - (a) This term is an office or work.
 - (b) Elders are overseers. (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2; Heb. 13:7,17,24.)
 - (c) "*Episcopos*" means "overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly..." Thayer, p. 243.
 2. Elders are to "feed the church."
 - (a) "Feed" is the Greek "*poimaino*."
 - (b) This means: To feed, tend, rule, govern, shepherd, manage, direct.
 - (c) Opposers deny the authority found in "feed."
 3. Elders are to "watch."
 - (a) This is the Greek "*gragoreo*."
 - (b) Elders are God's "watchmen" -- guardians of the flock.
 - (c) Opposers say they have no authority.
 4. An elder must "rule" his own house well. (1 Tim. 3:4,5.)
 - (a) "Rule" is the Greek *proistami*. This means to be over, to rule, to superintend, to preside over.
 - (b) Question: Is there any authority in this word or applied to father?
 - (c) "Ruling" well his own house in a qualifying factor in "taking care" of the church involves "ruling" well. (1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Thess. 5:12.)
 - (d) An elder's children must be in subjection to his "rule."
 - (1) "Subjection" is the Greek *hypotaga* which means "subordination."
 - (2) This word clearly recognizes the *authority*.
 5. Elders are "over you in the lord." (1 Thess. 5:12,13.)
 - (a) "over you" is the Greek *proistami* - which means to be over, to superintend, to preside over.
 - (b) It is the same word translated "rule" in 1 Tim. 3:4,5. Obviously it contains authority.
 6. Elders are to "tend" or "feed" the flock. (1 Pet. 5:1-4.)
 - (a) This is the Greek *poimaino* which means to feed, tend, rule, govern shepherd, manage, direct.
 - (b) This word carries with it authority.
 7. Elders are to "rule." (Heb. 13:17.)
 - (a) This is the Greek *hageomai* which means to lead, preside, govern, rule, to be a chief officer. (Acts 7:10.)
 - (b) Christian are to *obey* these rulers - The word for obey *peitho* means to yield, to assent, to obey, to follow.
 - (c) Note this passage in the Amplified New Testament. "Obey your spiritual leaders and submit to them continually recognizing their authority over you..."
 - (d) Christians are to "submit" to the elders. The word *hupеiko* means to yield, to give way, to be submissive.
 8. An elder is a "steward." (Titus 1:7.)
 - (a) This is the Greek "*oikonomos*" and means administrator of God's house.
 - (b) One cannot be an administrator without authority.
- E. Having noted the words that show the work of the elders as an office of authority, we now turn our attention to the duties they must perform.

III. THE DUTIES OF THE OFFICE OF THE ELDERSHIP

- A. They must exercise the God given authority of the office. (Heb. 13:17.)
1. They are not to be cruel and heartless, lording it over God's people, but they are to be as fathers, with wise heads and loving hearts ruling the Lord's people.
 2. Somebody must take the lead; some one must direct the work; some one must carry out the discipline of the congregation.
 - (a) These duties belong to the elders.
 - (b) The elders are the ones through whom God decides cases and enforces his laws in the church.
 3. God has never, in any age, left the decisions of questions and difficulties that arise among his people to the vote of the majorities.

- (a) The majority vote includes the young, the thoughtless, the untaught, the inexperienced, and the incompetent to decide important matters.
- (b) Such a course as this would be to govern the church by impulse, favor, passion, prejudice, and not by the law of God.
4. The New Testament is the law of the church, and the elders are the Scriptural representatives of God to enforce this law according to the will of God.
- B. They must provide the proper leadership and guidance that is necessary for spiritual development. (Jer. 23:4; 1 Pet. 2:-4.)
 1. In our study of the terms used to describe the office of the eldership, when considering the authority of this office, we noted that two terms used for the office were, *pastors* and *shepherds*
 2. The imagery or analogy here is of a Palestinian work.
 - (a) The Palestinian pastor or shepherd did not perform his expected tasks in the realm of retirement.
 - (b) He had to be before his sheep, leading them, guarding them, and ever in search for grass and water for their present need.
 - (c) Always on lookout that he could keep his flock far removed from the perils of thieves or the presence of ravenous beasts ever on the prowl for their prey.
 3. The upward direction of the individual member and congregation collective is determined by the expressed faith of elders' plans including the future.
 - (a) When elders are lacking in foresight, unmindful of the fact that adequacy for present needs is not substantial for future growth, their inhibited thinking produces paralysis in active development.
 - (b) Competent programs will include planning for every segment of the various departments into which the work of the church is divided, materially as well as spiritually.
 - (c) Wisdom in future planning for growth and expansion is in harmony with God's design, as well as common sense thinking for financial economy.
 - (d) There is no justification for elders being unmindful of the needs for adequate facilities, and proper planning for future growth and development of the Lord's church. They must cultivate perseverance and optimism along these lines to be approved by God.
 4. Elders of the churches of Christ have the charge from God and the challenge of a needful world, for planning not only adequate programs for the current needs of their respective congregations, but for the development of future generations yet unborn. A church can accomplish no more than is planned for them by the elders who direct and lead their work.
- C. It is the duty of the Elders to teach and exercise discipline in the church. (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:1-5; Heb. 13:17.)
 1. They are to teach the word of God, or feed the flock with the sincere milk of the word.
 2. They must not only preserve the word of God intact, but they must resist the introduction of innovations.
 3. The congregation is to honor them as fathers, obey them as God's shepherds.
 4. Elders must be courageous and faithful in performing their duty in disciplining the church.
 5. A lack of an efficient eldership which fails to appreciate its responsibilities is a source of much trouble in the congregation.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS OF THE ELDERS

- A. The qualifications must be met. (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11.)
 1. Take heed to self. (Acts 20:28.)
 2. The Bible qualifications are a must. Titus 1:7 - "For a bishop must be..." 1 Tim. 3:2 "A bishop then must be..."
 3. God has not left it up to man to decide what the qualifications should be - they are revealed by the Holy Spirit.
 4. A man should feel certain that he is qualified before he will accept the work.
 5. The congregation should be as certain as possible that a man is qualified before it appoints him.

- B. Apt to teach. (1 Tim. 3:2.)
 - 1. Able by sound doctrine to exhort and convince the gainsayers. (Titus 1:9.)
 - 2. One who cannot teach does not qualify - feed the flock. (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2.)
- C. Example. (1 Pet. 5:3.)
 - 1. "Being examples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5:3.)
 - 2. "Take heed to yourselves." (Acts 20:28.)
 - 3. "Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation (behaviour)." (Heb. 13:7.)
 - 4. Elders are to practice liberal giving (Acts 20:35); "Not for filthy lucre." (1 Pet. 5:2.)
 - 5. Examples of faith; Bible knowledge; optimism and enthusiasm; purity; diligent work; family life.

V. PRACTICAL ASPECT OF THE ELDERSHIP. ELDERS SHOULD:

- A. Oversee the congregation, including the work programs.
- B. Carefully plan and keep in operation an effective work program.
- C. Keep in close contact with the persons responsible for each program.
- D. Have regular business meetings, and special meetings as needed; keep members informed.
- E. Constantly strive to improve their abilities; have good library, attend workshops and lectureships, etc.
- F. Do a portion of the actual teaching work.
- G. Provide for a thorough study of the "eldership" periodically for self, membership and future elders

CONCLUSION

- A. We have learned that the office of the eldership is a Biblical office possessing divine authority.
- B. We also noted that this office is one that is to be filled only with qualified men.
- C. We noted some practical suggestion. We must never lose sight of the practical in the area of the Lord's work.
- D. May God bless us to take more seriously this work and our role in it. Also, may our attitude toward those who serve in this office be respected and honored for their work's sake. (1 Tim. 5:17.)

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Note: These materials were used in preparation of this lesson. They will serve as excellent reading material for all who serve as elders and those who esteem to one day serve in this capacity.

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PROBLEMS CAUSED BY PREACHER AND ELDERS (Wesley Simons)

INTRODUCTION

1. Problems do not just happen.
2. Problems stem primarily from two sources.
 - (a) Misunderstanding of scripture.
 - (b) Attitude problem.
3. Paul warned of problems in the leadership. (Acts 20:28-31.)

I. HERE ARE SOME OF THE PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY PREACHERS AND ELDERS

PROBLEMS	BIBLE ANSWERS
1. Anti-Orphan Home	James 1:27
2. Anti-Located Preacher	1 Cor. 9:6-14
3. Anti-Literature	John 8:32
4. Anti-Classroom	1 Cor. 3:1-3
5. One cup	Luke 22:17-22
6. Eating in Building	1 Cor. 11:20-22
7. Versions of the Bible	2 John 9,10
8. Wearing veil	1 Cor. 11:1-16
9. Holy Kiss	Gal. 2:9
10. Marriage-Divorce-Remarriage	Matt. 19:9

II. WHAT CAUSES THESE PROBLEMS?

1. Thinking too much of man. (1 Cor. 4:6.)
2. Wanting to have one's own way. (3 John.)
3. Failing to reason correctly. (1 Thess. 5:21.)
4. Failing to practice church discipline. (2 Thess. 3:6.)
5. Failing to love truth. (2 Thess. 2:8-12.)
6. Riding hobbies. (2 John 9,10.)

III. THE CURE

1. Put *qualified* men in the eldership. (1 Tim. 3:1-7.)
2. Have preachers who will preach *sound doctrine*. (Titus 2:1.)
3. Both must have the right attitude. (1 Cor. 13:1-3.)

CONCLUSION

1. *Truth* is the *most important* thing relative to the salvation of the soul. (John 8:32; Acts 20:32; James 1:21; 1 Pet. 1:22-25.)
2. We must *safeguard* that truth with the right attitude. (1 Pet. 3:15.)
3. Are you part of the problem, or are you part of the solution?
4. May *God* help us to be *good leaders* for Him.

