

GOD WANTS THE CHURCH TO HAVE ELDERS

Text: Titus 1:5

INTRO: God has given us the Bible as a guide in all spiritual matters. We are accustomed to emphasizing the importance of following the NT pattern for the work & worship of the church. In this lesson, we want to examine some thoughts re God's pattern for the oversight and organization of the church.

I. GOD WANTS THE CHURCH TO HAVE ELDERS.

- A. It is obvious to the reader of the NT that churches can exist for a time without elders. Most congregations must do so while men are in the process of maturing properly to becoming qualified, Titus 1:6.

READ ACTS 14:21-23

- B. It is also quite obvious that God wants each congregation to reach a state of maturity in which elders are appointed to take the oversight of the work of the church, Titus 1:5; Acts 14:23; 11:30; Phil. 1:1; Acts 15:6; 20:17.

This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work (1 Tim. 3:1).

II. GOD WANTS THE CHURCH TO HAVE SCRIPTURALLY QUALIFIED ELDERS.

READ TITUS 1:5-9; 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7, 11

III. GOD WANTS THE CHURCH TO HAVE ACTIVE, WORKING ELDERS.

Therefore **take heed** to yourselves & to all the flock, among which the HS has made you overseers, to **shepherd** the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28).

Obey those who **rule** over you, & be submissive, for they

watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy & not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. (Heb. 13:17).

READ I PETER 5:1-4

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church & let them **pray** over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. (James 5:14).

IV. GOD WANTS THE CHURCH TO RESPECT & COOPERATE WITH ITS ELDERS.

READ HEBREWS 13:7, 17

READ 1 THESS. 5:12-13

READ I TIMOTHY 5:17-20

CONCLUSION: Every church that is concerned about following the NT pattern must of necessity be concerned with qualifying & appointing men to scripturally oversee the work of the church. Sometimes a congregation does not have men who meet the qualifications necessary to fill the office of bishop, but it should be a goal and aim of every saint to work toward & pray for the realization of such a worthy goal for each congregation of God's people.

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