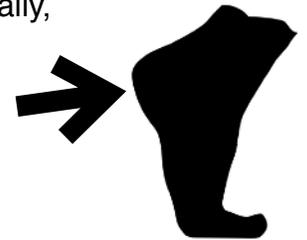


### Key Text: Romans 13:1

"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God."

The God of the Bible is presented as a God of order and design. (*1 Corinthians 14:40*) God's authority and design are illustrated in three areas of governance in life. They are; **The Home**, (*1 Corinthians 11:3*); **Civil government**, (*Romans 13:1-7*); & **Church Government** (*Hebrews 13:17*). The fact that God has designed life to have structure and authority is another evidence of His love and care. (*1 Corinthians 12:28*). Without healthy rule and government, there would be anarchy and disorder and the blessings of God would not be experienced or sustainable. This is why setting up church government within every local church was considered an important task as the church continued to grow. (*i.e. Titus 1:5*) One important benefit from a healthy church government is that every part of the "Body of Christ" receives what is necessary for growth in Christ-likeness and for doing good work. (*Colossians 2:19; Ephesians 4:15, 16*) A study of the new testament shows exactly how **ruling** and **servicing** within the Early Church is structured. First authority is established through **Christ**, then the **Twelve Apostles**, and after that through **Eldership** and **Deacons**. Finally, authority is given to **each member** of the church to accomplish the will of God.

**Remember any individual member who believes they do not need church government or another believer is in defiance to God's pattern. (1 Corinthians 12:21)**

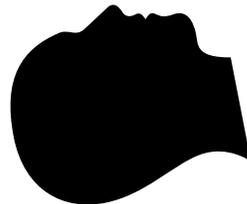


#### WHAT IS AN

An Elder is a Leadership within

main words used in the

an Elder. The first Greek word is "presbyteros" and it speaks of a person who is advanced in years and is not a "Novice". The second word is "episkopos" and it refers to a position as overseer, inspector, and guardian. This word episkopos is also translated as "Bishop". The last Greek word used is "poimen" which means to feed or shepherd. So, an elder is a mature spiritual leader, who is appointed by God as first accountable to oversee all ministry to a local gathering of disciples. There are multiple Elders within every New Testament Church but one Elder is always selected as Sr. Pastor or "Head" Elder. Elders are first responsible to preach the word, to care for the people of God and to guard against false doctrine. The Bible teaches that all elders should be eager to serve and that they should keep love as the motivation for service. (*Ephesians 4:11; Acts 14:23; 1 Peter 5:1-4; 1 Timothy 4:14-16; 5:17*)



#### ELDER?

Biblical name used for Senior Pastors and Sr. the New Testament Church. There are three

NT when describing the person, position, and work of

#### WHAT IS A DEACON?

A deacon is a servant or minister to the people of God. In the church, deacons have this title because they serve other believers with the same attitude Christ exemplified. In Jesus' day, this would have been the same title they used for housemaids and servants. (*Mark 10:42-45; Matthew 20:25-28; Philippians 2:1-8*) The three Greek words most used for deacon in the Bible are *diakonos*, *diakonia*, & *diakoneo*. This is meaningful because these words show that our word "deacon" is more than a just a title given out. It is also a FUNCTION that must be actively happening or the title doesn't apply. So, the distinction of deacon is an official way of recognizing a man or woman who has delegated authority from Elders to carry out ministry duties. In the church, Deacons have duties ranging from office administration to physical service and assistance for members in need. They can oversee specific ministries or provide support for pastors. The position of deacon is also how someone desiring to become an elder proves their qualifications (*See Acts 6:1-6; Romans 6:1-2; Colossians 1:23-25*)

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP

The Bible states that anyone desiring the office of an Elder/Pastor or Deacon/Servant desires something that is good. This desire must be stirred up by the right motivation though, like “loving-service” instead of recognition or greed. (**1 Peter 5:2**) If a “fleshy” or “worldly” motivation is driving a desire to lead, then a person is not ready for Biblical leadership. (**1 Samuel 16:7; Acts 8:21; Philippians 1:15,17**) The Bible also teaches that proper desire must be accompanied with the right qualities. These qualifications for ministry are clearly listed in scripture and they are not mentioned as optional. Specifically, we have Paul’s teachings in **Acts 20:17-32; 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1**. We have Peter’s teachings in **1 Peter 5** and we have James statements in **James 5:14,15**. In total, there are 37 different qualifications given for church leadership. Here is a summary of the main qualifications and they have been grouped into four categories:

**THE CHURCH IS NOT A BUSINESS, which explains why Spiritual qualifications and ministry qualifications are a MUST. IF the church was just a business then many talented people would be able to oversee things as long as it was PROFITABLE and regardless of their personal morality & spiritual condition.**

- **Spiritual Qualifications:** i.e. Born again, Obedient to the Lord in Baptism, Baptized and Filled with the Holy Spirit, Full of Faith and Wisdom.
- **Character Qualifications:** i.e. Personally and in public he should be; Blameless, Temperate, Sober, Just/fair, Holy, Hospitable, not self-willed, not Angry/abusive, not a slanderer, Faithful in all things.
- **Domestic Qualifications:** i.e. Manages his own house well, Be faithful to one wife, Both Children and Spouse are not to be a hindrance for ministry.
- **Ministry Qualifications:** i.e. Called by the Holy Spirit, Able to teach and exhort, Abides in the Word of God(A Student of the Bible), Able to shepherd the flock, Not a novice or beginner.



### A SIMPLE ROADMAP TO BECOMING A LEADER IN THE BODY OF CHRIST.

1. Be Born Again.



2. Be Full of the Holy Spirit and Faith.



3. Be in fellowship with other believers.

5. Be proven in small things...  
i.e. Serving in small areas faithfully.



4. Be proven to be in submission to the Holy Spirit and Established authority.



6. Make your growth in the four areas of qualifications evident to all.



7. Be Willing and Faithful to serve as a Deacon when called upon by Eldership.

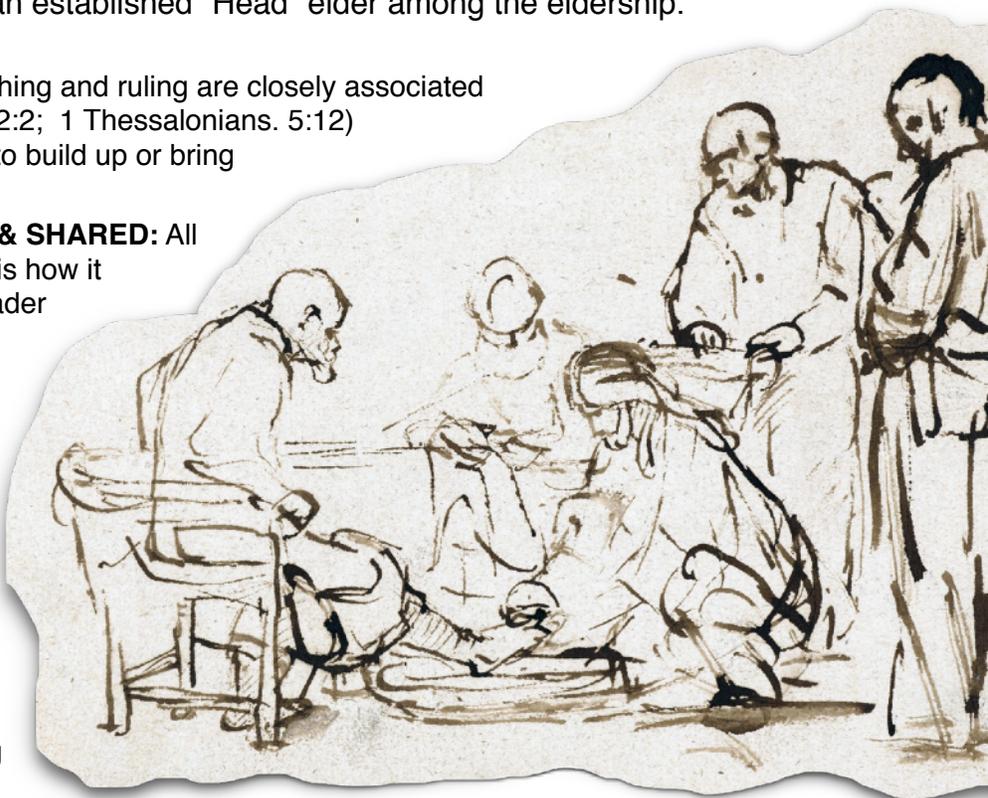
8. At the leading of the Holy Spirit and with the affirmation of established leadership, accept the ordination of Elder.



## FIVE PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

There are Five principles of Ruling within church government. These are general principles and can be deduced from NT Teaching as a whole. Together, these principles provide a good test of Biblically-based Church Government. When these principles are maintained, there is unity along with great "anointing" or Blessings from God. **Psalms 133:1-3**

- ◆ **IT IS RELATIONAL:** All authority is derived from a close relationship with Christ and is exercised in his name and Spirit; (See Acts 4:13; Romans 13:1; Acts 19:15-17; John 15:5-8) It's always about "Who" you know...JESUS!
- ◆ **IT IS SERVICE-ORIENTED:** Christ's humility provides the pattern for Christian service (Mt. 20:26-28);
- ◆ **THERE IS MUTUAL SUBMISSION:** Clearly designated leaders are **cooperative** rather than **hierarchical** (Mt. 18:19; 23:1-12; Acts 6:5; 15:28). Godly leaders are not monarchs or dictators, they are part of a Body and demonstrate mutual submission to others. **Does the Bible teach a plurality of eldership?** Yes. But there has always been an established "Head" elder among the eldership. (Acts 1:15)
- ◆ **IT IS DISCIPLESHIP BASED** - teaching and ruling are closely associated functions (1 Timothy 4:6; 2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Thessalonians. 5:12) Authority has a purpose and that is to build up or bring individuals to maturity in Christ.
- ◆ **ALL AUTHORITY IS DELEGATED & SHARED:** All authority comes from God, and this is how it progresses from one established leader to another. **In God's system of Governing, authority is not democratic, is not taken by force, is not earned by birth, it is given by God and it can be taken away!** Ministry must also be shared, it is not a solo gig... established leaders must have assistants who are meant to help out and countless helpers further the effectiveness of ministry. (Acts 6:2-3; See how Silas & Timothy freed Paul to focus on the preaching of the Word...Acts 18:5;).



## WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM THE BODY OF CHRIST IN RESPONSE TO ELDERS AND DEACONS?

Every member of the body of Christ has a responsibility to one another, but what is a congregation's responsibility toward an Elder or Deacon? If leaders are expected to Preach & Teach the word, provide Guidance and Care in life, and also Guard against false doctrine...what is the Church expected to do in return?

- ◆ Honor leaders and if possible support them from the tithes and offerings gathered. (Leviticus 276:30-33; Deuteronomy 25:4; 1 Timothy 5:17-19)
- ◆ Call for them when you are sick. (James 5:14,15)
- ◆ Adhere to the doctrine they teach. (Acts 2:42)
- ◆ Submit to and obey decisions made out of reverence for the Lord. (Hebrews 13:17)
- ◆ Expect to be corrected and comforted by leadership. (1 Timothy 5:20)
- ◆ Pray for your Leaders. (Ephesians 6:18-20)
- ◆ Do not entertain slander or accusations against a leader without witnesses. (1 Timothy 5:19)