

BASIC CHRISTIANITY – Organization of the Church – Lesson 6

ELDERS and DEACONS

1. The first mention of elders is found in Acts 15. The APOSTLES and ELDERS came together to consider a spiritual matter. (Acts 15:4-6)

(4) And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them. (5) But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." (6) Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter. (Acts 15:4–6)

2. What was lacking in the churches of Titus 1:5? ELDERS

For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you (Titus 1:5)

- a. Note that there is a plurality (more than one) elder in the church. (1 Peter 5:1)

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: (1 Peter 5:1)

3. The Holy Spirit made the elders to be OVERSEERS of the church, just as a SHEPHERD would watch his flock. (Acts 20:28-31; 1 Peter 5:2)

(28) Therefore take heed to yourselves and to 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) For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. (30) Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. (31) Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. (Acts 20:28–31)

Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; (1 Peter 5:2)

4. According to 1 Timothy 3:1, a MAN must desire the position of a bishop (overseer) and in so desires a GOOD WORK.

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

5. A bishop must have a good reputation and be BLAMELESS. (1 Timothy 3:2)

A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; (1 Timothy 3:2)

- a. A bishop should have been married only ONE time.
- b. A bishop must be the head of his family (including children) and RULE well. (1 Timothy 3:4-5)

(4) one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (5) (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); (1 Timothy 3:4-5)

- c. The elder's children must be FAITHFUL. (Titus 1:6)

if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. (Titus 1:6)

6. We must be SUBMISSIVE to the elders because they watch out for our SOULS. (Hebrews 13:17)
 - a. It is up to us to be sure the elders serve with JOY and not with GRIEF.

Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. (Hebrews 13:17)

7. The word "deacon" means a SERVANT.
8. Deacons must also be BLAMELESS. (1 Timothy 3:10)

But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. (1 Timothy 3:10)

- a. Deacons must have only ONE marriage and RULE their homes well. (1 Timothy 3:12)

Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (1 Timothy 3:12)

9. An example of the work of deacons can be found in Acts 6:1-6. The SEVEN men (v.3) that were chosen were to care for the needs of WIDOWS (v.1)

(1) Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. (2) Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. (3) Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; (Acts 6:1-3)

MINISTERS, PREACHERS, EVANGELIST

10. How shall they HEAR without a preacher? (Romans 10:14-15)

(14) How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? (15) And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:14-15)

11. List the duties of a preacher according to 2 Timothy 4:2: (1) PREACH the WORD
(2) CONVINCE (3) REBUKE (3) EXHORT

Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. (2 Timothy 4:2)

12. A preacher is to speak the TRUTH in Christ. (1 Timothy 2:7)

For which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. (1 Timothy 2:7)

MY WEEKLY CHALLENGE: NEW DISCOVERIES THROUGH DAILY BIBLE READING

13. What new thing did I learn from my daily bible reading last week? _____

14. It is up to me to preserve the UNITY within the church. (1 Corinthians 1:10; Ephesian 4:1-6)

Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. (1 Corinthians 1:10)

(1) I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, (2) with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1–3)

ABOUT THE BIBLE:

15. The New Testament contains 27 books.

16. List the five (5) categories of the New Testament:

(1) GOSPELS (2) HISTORY (3) PAUL'S LETTERS (4) OTHER LETTERS (5) PROPHECY

JEWELS FROM JAMES:

17. Christians must not practice their faith while showing PARTIALITY. (2:1)

My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with partiality. (James 2:1)

18. Who has God chosen to be rich in faith? (2:5) THE POOR

Listen, my beloved brethren: Has God not chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? (James 2:5)

19. What is the “royal law”? (2:8) YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF

If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you do well; (James 2:8)

20. Does it do any good to claim to have FAITH while not having WORKS. (2:14)

What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him?
(James 2:14)

21. If we do not help those in need, then our faith is DEAD. (2:15-17, 26)

(15) If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, (16) and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? (17) Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. (James 2:15–17)

QUESTION OF THE WEEK:

22. _____