

# Biblical Leadership

More and more these days, I find that the church leadership patterns are moving away from the Biblical position, choosing to have leadership teams rather than the biblical pattern of Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers found in Ephesians 4:11. You may say, "Well what's wrong with that?" Well to begin with it is God Himself who sets the precedence not the church. When we drift away from the scriptural norm we are on dodgy ground. Secondly you may notice in v11 that these ministries are a gift from the Lord for the equipping of the saints to work the future ministry. Now are we to say to God we don't want your gift, we can do fine without it. Or do we know better than God how to prepare the saints along with edifying them.

The Apostle Paul gave these instructions for churches, when he informed us in 1Cor 11:2

**"Keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you."**

Now why would he have said that if it was not the pattern that had been laid down by the fathers, or if it was not the requirement of the Lord? This was nothing new, it was the tradition of the fathers, as you can see in Numbers 18:6

**"Behold, I Myself have taken your brethren the Levites from among the children of Israel; they are a gift to you, given by the Lord, to do the work of the Tabernacle of meeting."**

Leaders are consecrated by the Lord; they are prepared from the womb, they don't just start when they begin preaching and teaching. God the Holy Spirit is fashioning them all their lives because they have an important part to play in God's Kingdom to equip the saints to work in the ministry.

This is why we read in James 3:1

**"My Brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgement"**

Now this word 'teacher' in the Greek is *Didaskalos* and it means like a Jewish scribe, a leader or guide. The second portion of this verse indicates what will happen to those who do this job and are not anointed, they will be judged most severely. The Greek word is '*Krima*' and means a solemn judgement, and that is why in the Old Covenant we read of the ministers consecration right through the whole of Leviticus 8 God was preparing them for ministry so they could bless the saints.

Now for some strange reason some people get it into their head that they are to start a work of God. Now while that may well be a true calling, to lead those people afterwards is not, unless you are called to the ministry because of the reasons we have just discussed. But we now see leadership teams of five and six people who run the church, and treat the pastor or teacher or evangelist as the hired help, and not as the gift they all where meant to be to

the church. I have even been in churches where these people believe that they are capable of running the church without

**This Godly gifting of Pastor, Teacher, Evangelist. Is it any the wonder that churches do not become what God intended them to be? Because these are the most important of positions in the church.**

Another error often seen is to take on the pyramid structure of leadership consisting of Bishop, Pastor, Elders, and deacons. All want a little piece of the power ruling over God's heritage which is forbidden in 1Peter 5:1-5. Many of these are ruled from their wives who are the power behind the throne.

This also is not Biblical, there is nothing wrong with a plurality of elders, but unless your church is over a thousand strong the Biblical pattern of three is the correct pattern 'Teacher, Pastor, Evangelist. Some churches have as many as fifteen elders in a church of thirty people. Let us look at this whole thing again from the Bible pattern. Galatians 2:9

**“And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship”**

This verse clearly displays the leadership pattern in the Early Church; James, Peter, and John. James was the over all leader of the group or Teacher, Peter was the Pastor, and John was the Evangelist. Now this is not to say that they could not do other jobs. It merely states that these were their main callings. Now if we read

2Timothy 4:5 we see;

**“But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry.”**

Now Paul urges Timothy to do the work of an evangelist which is his calling, but at this time Timothy was covering the role of Pastor at Ephesus and Paul was writing to him from his prison cell, urging him to complete his calling because he was a evangelist and without them nobody has anything to do. We are all called to share our faith, but this ministry is Holy Ghost powered and it will bring many into the church. You see the **Teacher** reflects the Word of God, the **Pastor** the Love of God, and the **Evangelist** reflects the power of the Holy Spirit and that is why they are so important to the church and why God gave them as a gift.

Now let us discuss these ministry roles in more depth, if we turn to Acts 15 we can see these roles being distinguished for the first time. The first real problem to hit the Early church was a pastoral one, there were more Gentiles than there were Jews, infact they were coming in so fast they had to call a council meeting to discuss how to deal with the problem, and more especially how to deal with the Gentiles.

You see they had not known the ways of Judaism and many Jewish believers wanted to circumcise them. So all the apostles gave their opinions then they left it for the leading Apostle James (The Teacher) to give his ruling on the matter, which was “We should write to them to abstain from things polluted by idols, from sexual immorality, from things strangled, and from blood.”(Acts 15:20).

**That is the church leadership as God intended it to be, we do not need to immerse ourselves in petty politics by having layers of beaurocracy to no end, God's way is always best and successful. Now let us get to gripps with these terminologies, a Pastor and an Elder is the same thing. An Elder comes from the Greek word**

**'Presbuterous' which means overseer and 'Episcopos' designates his office and means the same thing. It's were we get the word 'Episcopal' from**

**Having said that a Bishop is also an overseer, and also comes from the Greek word 'Episkopos' which is supervisor or overseer. Pastor comes from the Greek word 'Poimen' which means shepherd or feeder, so you see they are all the same thing.**

**And we have no grounds on which to make levels of leadership from these because they are all the same. However a Deacon comes from the Greek word 'Diakonos' and the Hebrew word 'Shumashim' and they were the people who looked after the synagogue to clean it, and prepare it for each service, they had no authoritive role at all in the church.**

**If we persist in trying to make a political regime out of God's Kingdom we will fail as a church, and we become Ecclesiastically governed just like the Catholic Church who take all their directives from the Mother Church and they are voted in by the Cardinals. As believers of the Highest God, we should take our directives from the Word of God through His Holy Spirit; therefore leadership teams are unbiblical and work against the plan of God. We need to value the work of the Pastor or Rabbi and not be so quick to demean his station.**

**Now you may have noticed that I have left Apostles and Prophets out of this group and my reasons for doing so are explained in another teaching on Apostles.**