

LEADERSHIP IN THE CHURCH

Acts 14:23

Introduction;

- 1. Our nation is in the midst of a presidential campaign.**
 - a. One party is going through the process of choosing its nominee.**
 - b. The other party will likely nominate the man who is now serving.**
 - c. The election will determine the direction of our nation for the next four years or longer.**
- 2. The church must also have qualified leaders to succeed in its work.**
 - a. No work is done unless someone initiates it and takes the lead.**
 - b. What is everybody's business becomes nobody's business.**
 - c. Success depends upon the quality of leadership.**
- 3. The church will progress only as far as our leaders take us.**

Discussion:

- I. WHAT IS GOD'S PLAN FOR LEADERSHIP IN HIS CHURCH?**
 - A. The church of Christ is built according to the Divine pattern.**
 - B. God has clearly outlined the leadership roles for His church.**
 - 1. "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11,12).**
 - 2. Christ is the head of the body (Col. 1:18).**
 - 3. The N.T. is the constitution of the church (2 Tim. 3:16,17).**
 - 4. Apostles and prophets belonged to the infancy of the church (1 Cor. 13:8-13).**
 - 5. Evangelists, pastors, and teachers continue because their functions continue.**
 - 6. Their qualifications indicate an abiding office.**
 - C. Evangelists are public preachers of the Gospel.**
 - 1. They labor under the Great Commission (Mark 16:15,16).**
 - 2. They are leaders because of their God given message:**

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

“Speak these things, exhort, rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you” (Tit. 2:15).

D. Pastors are shepherds over God’s flock (1 Pet. 5:1,2).

- 1. They are also called bishops or overseers (Acts 20:17,28).**
- 2. They are known as elders (Acts 14:23).**
- 3. They must meet God’s qualifications (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9).**
- 4. Members are to obey their elders in spiritual matters.**

“Obey those who have the rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account” (Heb. 13:17).

II. WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES THAT GOOD LEADERS MUST HAVE?

A. Leaders must know the Word of God!

- 1. Ignorance of God’s Will caused Israel’s destruction (Hos. 4:6).**
- 2. An elder must be “able to teach” (1 Tim. 3:2).**
- 3. He must be able “by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict” (Tit. 1:9).**
- 4. Preachers must “preach the Word” (2 Tim. 2:1-4).**

B. Leaders must be able to communicate!

- 1. The most effective leaders in every area of life are able to speak and write clearly.**
- 2. Preachers are usually trained in speaking, but not in writing.**
- 3. Elders are seldom trained in either speaking or writing.**

C. Leaders must love others!

- 1. One must “love his neighbor as himself” (Matt. 22:39).**
- 2. Leaders must reflect the love described in 1 Cor. 13.**
- 3. Too often leaders do not get along because they lack love.**

D. Leaders must have a zeal to save the lost!

- 1. The mission of the church is to take the Gospel to every soul (Matt. 28:19,20; 1 Tim. 3:14,15).**
- 2. Jesus came “to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10).**

3. Preachers who never leave their office neglect their duty.
4. Elders who build up bank accounts while souls die without the Gospel will be judged by God.

E. Leaders must have courage.

1. The Lord courageously opposed wrong (Matt. 21:12,13; 23).
2. Stephen laid down his life rather than compromise (Acts 7).
3. Elders sometimes must make tough, unpopular decisions.
4. Preachers must “declare all the counsel of God” (Acts 20:26, 27) and “convince, rebuke and exhort” (2 Tim. 4:2).

F. Leaders must be given to prayer.

1. Jesus set the example for us (Matt. 14:23; Mark 1:35).
2. Many problems are bigger than man can handle alone.

G. Leaders must have vision!

1. They must “lift up their eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest” (John 4:35).
2. There are more opportunities today for preaching the Gospel than ever before.

H. Leaders must be men of strong moral character!

1. One should be able to say of a leader in the church, “I would trust him with my life, or my wife.”
2. Elders must “have a good testimony among those who are outside” (1 Tim. 3:7).
3. Preachers must be good examples (1 Tim. 4:12, 16).

I. Leaders must have the desire to lead!

1. They are not to be “lords over those entrusted to them, but examples to the flock” (1 Pet. 5:3).
2. If a man does not “desire” the work for the right reason, he will do more harm than good (1 Tim. 3:1).

Conclusion:

1. Opportunities and obstacles go together in the Lord’s work.

“But I will tarry in Ephesus until Pentecost for a great and effective door has opened to me, and there are many adversaries” (1 Cor. 16:9).

2. Leaders are born (again) and then grow to maturity (John 3:5; 2 Pet. 3:18).

