

The Lord's Leaders

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: I Timothy 3:1-7.

B. There is a wide variety of leaders in the Christian church today.

C. The subject of leadership was very simple in the early church—there were only elders and deacons.

II. The office of an elder is a very important task.

A. This is not an office of man.

B. The church began with the Lord Himself.

1. The apostles' task was to define and teach the truth about Jesus.

2. The Scriptures are the apostolic testimony of what Jesus was and is like.

C. The apostles were given to the task of teaching and prayer—they could not manage all the churches springing up so they appointed elders in them.

D. Christ is still in the midst of the churches today.

1. Every Christian is in the ministry and is to do the work of the ministry because he is connected to Christ.

2. Elders are not supposed to be doing all the work of the ministry.

E. Elders are to be watching over the ministry of the people and watch over this. It is a very noble task.

F. Elders are not to be the sole control of the church—eldership is expected to be the Lord leading people together.

G. The qualities of a bishop:

1. They are to have a good reputation.

2. They are to be a one-woman man.

3. Their characteristics: temperance, sensibility, self-control, hospitality, ability to teach, sobriety, not violent, not stubborn, not a lover of money.

4. There had to be a record of accomplishment in management of the household, the man could not have been a recent convert because of conceit, and he must be well thought of by outsiders so he does not fall into the devil's trap.

Application questions:

1. How would you explain the biblical role of an elder to someone who thinks elders run the church in its entirety?

2. Why is it dangerous to put a new convert in the position of an elder?

3. Which qualification for an elder stands out to you? Why?
