

We are Baptist

Two Offices

1 Peter 5:1-4 *The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

Qualifications for Overseers

1 Timothy 3:1-7 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

Introduction

As Baptists, we recognize two distinct offices that were given by God to the church. These are spiritual offices that require spiritual men to fill them. These offices are that of the pastor and the deacon. They were given to the church to help the church to function the way God designed it.

I. Pastor versus Plurality of Elder rule

At the end of this lesson is an article that was written by Matthew Morales for my Apologetics class. I encourage you to read it as he did a great job explaining the different church governments. I will provide a brief explanation here.

- A. The word “pastor” is **synonymous** with the words “bishop” and “elder” used in the New Testament.

1 Peter 5:1 *The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an **elder**, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:*

1 Timothy 3:1 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a **bishop**, he desireth a good work.*

- B. Three church governments:

1. **Episcopal** – Catholic

The Episcopalian model, or the Catholic model, is ruled by an archbishop or bishop from outside of the local church. In this model, the priesthood that makes decisions for the church does not exist within the context of the local church. The Episcopalian structure is based off a hierarchy of priests with varying authority over jurisdictions of churches. Since the Catholic church has an Episcopalian structure, one could clearly see the parallels of papal authority with Episcopalian leadership. (Matthew Morales)

2. **Presbytery** – Protestant

The Presbyterian model utilizes a leadership of multiple elders. A group or board of elders share equal governing power that make the decisions for the local church. Not only are Presbyterian churches run by a local group of elders, but they are also managed through regional presbyteries and the general session from outside the local church. In this system, the "general assembly" is a group of elders that are in charge of a large region or nation. Within the general assembly, there are several presbyteries (more groups of elders) who rule over churches in smaller regions. Then in the context of each local church, the board of elders who "rule" that church are comprised of elders sharing equal governing authority, including the preaching or head pastor. Interestingly, this model was a reaction to the Catholic Model during the Reformation. Therefore, this model did not originate from

biblical authority but rather as a rebuttal to a different system.
(Matthew Morales)

3. **Congregational** – Baptist

The Congregational model of church government insists on each local church being free from outsider ruling. In the congregational model, all governing authority rests with the local congregation, and although not always the case, a single pastor is considered the leader of the congregation.

Historically, Baptists have always been proponents of the Congregational model, and Baptists have typically followed a single elder or pastor leadership structure. Biblically, the Congregational model is demonstrated clearly throughout the New Testament accounts. (Matthew Morales)

- a. The church chooses the pastor.
- b. The church also has the power to remove the pastor under the guidelines set forth in the Constitution and By-Laws
- c. This form of church government keeps error from spreading to a group of churches if for some reason a church fails to stay biblical.

C. By accepting the **local church** view, we must accept single-elder rule over a plurality of elder rules.

- As I stated earlier in our studies the importance of local church versus universal church would affect how a church functions and what you believe. Not only does it better fit the Bible context, but it is also consistent with the theology of local church.

D. Evidences of **single-pastor rule** in the Scriptures:

1. James was the pastor in Jerusalem.

***Acts 12:17** But he, beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, Go shew these things unto James, and to the brethren. And he departed, and went into another place.*

2. Paul ordained elders for every church. The context shows that there was an main elder over each church.

Acts 14:23 *And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.*

3. In Revelations 2-3 the seven church letters were written to the pastors of those churches.

Revelation 2:1 *Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks;*

II. A Pastor's Role in the church

- A. He is the primary overseer of the church and is tasked with **leading** the church.

1 Peter 5:1-4 *The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*

1. Overseer – to have the care of the church
 - a. Guard the flock from dangers
 - b. Care for the flock when hurt
 - c. Make sure the flock is fed
2. This clearly signifies that he is the primary leader.

- B. He is to make sure the congregation is **spiritually fed**.

1. The Pastor therefore is the main preacher in the congregation. He does not have to do all the preaching, but he is tasked with making sure the church receives proper spiritual food.
2. Preaching becomes the main task of the Pastor.

3. The Pastor is not actually the one who takes care of all the physical needs of the church, but he is there to take care of the spiritual needs.

C. How the Pastor is to lead:

1. **Not by force**

- The Pastor is not to be a dictator or tyrant, but a leader! He is not to use force to compel people to follow. Obedience is a choice and is not obedience if it is forced.

2. **Not for riches**

- The Pastor is not for hire to the highest bidder. He is to go and serve where the Lord sends him, and for the good of the church.
- Not with covetousness. He is not to covet riches.
- The church should take care of their minister as stated in 1 Timothy.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*

- The Pastor does not seek riches or gain, but the will of the Lord to lead the people. At the same time, the people work hard to take extra care of the pastor and family, double honor, so that covetousness has little room to enter. It is a great balance that the Lord set up to protect and bless His church. The Pastor invests in the people, and the people invest in the Pastor.

3. **By Example**

- The Pastor is to be an example to the church of how a Christian ought to live!

III. Pastors Requirements

1 Timothy 3:1-7 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

- A. The Pastor must have a good **testimony** in the community and church!
 - 1. Good character! He is to be humble and godly.
 - 2. Good interaction with people! Not someone who is brawler or angry man, but someone who can work with people.
- B. The Pastor must have a **family life** that fits Scripture and is an example to the church.
 - 1. This requirement means that he is leading his family properly.
 - 2. How can he lead the church if he cannot lead his own family?
 - 3. He is to be married to one woman.
 - a) This means he is not to be divorced – Matthew 19 is clear that God allows divorce, but never intended for man to divorce. So why would He allow His pastors to be divorced?
 - b) Only because divorce is so accepted today is why some are accepting Pastors who have been divorced. One will not find this model the history of Priests in the O.T. or the early church.
 - c) A divorced pastor has not ruled his house well.
 - d) Just because God forgives everything does not mean that there are no earthly consequences.

Ex. – someone can be forgiven of murder, but still will be put in jail. If they killed a loved one of mine, I would need to forgive them, but would still expect them to spend the rest of their life in jail.

Ex. – someone can be forgiven of child molestation, but they will still not be allowed to live close to a school or work with children.

C. The Pastor must have **experience**.

1. Age does matter.

- Although no specific age is given for a Pastor, it just makes sense that he has life experience according to the requirements. He would be married, had time to have kids, not a novice, etc.

2. Just being a good preacher is not good enough.

- One may be able to preach and still not be a good pastor. There is a difference between a preacher and a pastor. A good preacher should be an evangelist! They play a key role in the church, but they are not the pastor.
- In the Jewish culture you were not considered a man until the age of 30. In our culture I think a church needs to make sure that their pastor is not a novice lest Satan is able to influence him and lead him away.

D. The Pastor must be a **man**.

1. Notice the statement “husband of one wife”.

2. God has also made it clear in Scripture that women are not to be Pastors.

- The problem we have today is pragmatism is ruling our lives instead of the Scriptures. We are allowing our culture to change our doctrines and this is why we are Baptists – we go by the Word of God, not the whims of mankind!

1 Timothy 2:11-12 *Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.*

1 Corinthians 14:33-35 *For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them*

ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.

IV. Conclusions

- A. We hold to the congregational church government which has a single pastor as the leader of the church.
- B. We believe the Pastor's role is to preach and oversee the church.
- C. We believe the Pastor should fit the qualifications laid out in Scripture.
- D. We believe that women are excluded from being Pastors.