FBCY (9 Jan 94), IBCS (22 May 05), CIC (7 Aug 16) Dr. Rick Griffith

Preparation for Elder Selection Single Message

NIV 50 Minutes

**Elder Roles**

Title

***1 Timothy 3:1***

**Topic:** Elders

**Subject:** Local church authority rests with the people

**Complement:** but elders should lead them.

**Purpose:** Listeners will see that elder leadership is the scriptural model and does not contradict congregational polity to help them choose elders the next two months.

# Introduction

Sheep
(15 slides)

### Interest & Background: [Believers are like dumb, directionless and defenseless sheep.]

### Need: Since we are like sheep, what do we need?

Need?

### Subject & Preview: Since we’ll deal with many texts this morning, we’ve included a sermon outline in your bulletin. Today we’ll ask the two basic questions on the outline:

Two questions

#### First, who has the ultimate say in the church according to the Bible? Is it the leadership or the congregation?

#### And second, what is the biblical pattern for church leadership? Is it leadership by a pastor and deacons, or some other form?

(Let’s first address this issue of ultimate authority in the church. Scripture says that…)

# I. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation.

MP

[The people themselves have the final say in church matters, with no person or organization above it except Christ.]

## The final authority in the local church is the people themselves.

### The ultimate authority for *church discipline* is the church itself—not even its leaders (Matt. 18:15-17). Notice how the final authority is the body of believers.

### *Selecting their own leaders* is the role of the people in the church rather than these being selected by some outside group (Acts 6:1-6). The apostles appointed only those elected by the congregation. (So if we have a problem with our leaders, we only have ourselves to blame since we selected them! This reminds me of what Dr Paul Meier tells couples in crisis: “Every couple deserves one another.” So don’t complain about your spouse if you chose him or her! And don’t complain about your leaders either.)

### The congregation itself has responsibility to *maintain true doctrine* and practice.

• Leader Selection

• Discipline

• Doctrine

#### The ordinances are given to the entire church—not just the leaders (1 Cor. 11:23).

#### Every Christian is to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1) and contend for the faith (Jude 3). In churches where the congregation has little say, the doctrinal teaching often goes like a see-saw based upon whether the preacher is liberal or evangelical.

By-Laws Congreg.

### Our By-Laws affirm congregational authority.

(But some of you are saying, “Isn’t this how all churches operate?” No…)

## There are at least two other forms of church government practiced today.

### The Episcopal form the church government has each church ruled by bishops who are not a part of their church congregation but exercise authority over several churches. This is practiced by Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Orthodox, and Catholics.

Presb 1

Presb 2

Episcopal

### Another form of church government is the Presbyterian, where elders who rule the church are called a session. They represent the church to higher bodies outside the local church: a presbytery, the synod in each locale, and finally the general assembly.

Presb 3

## What about our church?

Our Autonomy

### We believe in what has been called the autonomy of the local church—that each church is independent of any higher structure.

### We believe that Scripture does not show any church submitting to another church or individual, but only the unity between churches.

Quest
• MP2

(So far my comments have related to the ultimate authority in the local church. We’ve seen that this authority is in the people themselves—not in their elected leadership within the church or in any structure outside the church. Now let’s shift our focus to the second question: how should a local church be led biblically?)

# II. The biblical pattern is church leadership by elders.

II. Elders

#  [A group of godly, elected leaders called elders is to lead each local church.]

## Scripture supports a plurality of elders—so does our By-Laws.

Plurality
(9 slides)

## In fact, God has led His people through a group of elders for a long time.

Moses

### From the birth of Israel under Moses, elders led Israel. The word “elders” appears 160 times in the OT but “elder” only once [Isa. 3:2]! Sometimes there was a one leader like Moses or Joshua, but there *always* was a group of elders.

### Beginning in 600 BC until NT times, a synagogue could not be established until ten elders were willing to give it guidance.

Syna-gogue

### The New Testament church followed this same pattern of leadership by elders.

NT Elders

#### At Pentecost only apostles led the **Jerusalem** church, which was still the case in AD 35 in Acts 6. However, Acts 11:30 shows that soon after elders at Jerusalem administrated the relief monies sent to them (AD 47; cf. 16:4).

Acts 6

• Acts 11

#### Paul met with the elders of the church of **Ephesus** in Acts 20:17 [A.D. 57].

• Acts 20

#### In **Galatia** in AD 48 the pattern was for each church to select its own elders, who were ordained by apostles or other leaders. Acts 14:23 says… [read it]. Notice alternate translations in the NIV footnote include “Barnabas had elders elected.” This verse, along with Titus 1:5 written to **Crete**, *seems* to say apostles or their representatives chose the leaders. But the text only says who *appointed* or *ordained* them, not who *selected* them. They likely had the same practice as Acts 6 where the people picked them and the leaders commissioned them to the task.

• Crete

• Galatia

#### Paul also wrote the church at **Philippi** in Philippians 1:1, addressing “the overseers and deacons.” “Overseers” refers to the same group of “elders.” In fact, the NT refers to church elders by three interchangeable titles: “elder[s]” (used 20 times), “overseer[s]” or “bishops” in the KJV (used 6 times), and pastors (used once). While the Philippian church had deacons, they’re listed second to the elders, showing that they were subject to them.

• Philippi

#### Peter also wrote five provinces in modern-day **Turkey** and noted that they all had an elder structure: “to the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder.”

• 1 Peter

#### These fifteen locations are only those that we *know* had elders. Since no other form of early church leadership is stated in the NT, it is safe to say that Greece, Rome, and other places also had group leadership. Sometimes the Jewish term “elders” is used whereas other times they’re called the Gentile term “overseers.”

Our Church
(5 slides)

### Our church also needs elder leadership (5 slides).

(So all NT churches had several elders per church. But what are they to do?)

Our Church
(4 slides)

## Elders have three basic responsibilities:

### First, elders are responsible for church administration.

Circles

#### This administrative role is seen in 1 Timothy 3:1 in the alternate title “overseer,” which is a word that combines two words: *epi*, “over,” and *skopeo*, “to look or watch.” Elders are to “watch over” the souls of those in the congregation.

• Admin

#### Look now down at verses 4-5 where it notes that elders need to know how to manage their own families well, because, as verse 5 says, “If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?”

#### 1 Timothy 5:17 also speaks of the administrative role of elders [read].

(This verse seems to distinguish between administrative elders, some of whom are not paid, and teaching elders who are paid. This leads us to the second role of the elders…)

### Second, elders should teach the flock.

• Teach

#### Here’s a key difference between elders and deacons. The qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3 for these two offices are quite similar: both need to be the husband of one wife, managing their families properly, having a good reputation, etc.

#### But a big difference is that elders should be “able to teach” in verse 2, while this is not required of deacons. Why? “Deacon” literally means “one who serves at the table,” in a servant capacity. So deacons assist the elders in everyday tasks in order to free up the elders for their teaching responsibilities. A parallel here is how “The Seven” chosen in Acts 6 helped the apostles devote their energies on the Word and prayer.

#### Some churches, in an attempt to be as close to the distinctions between the two types of elders in 1 Timothy 5:17 as they can, now call their paid pastors “teaching elders.” Whatever the term, let’s not forget that teaching is a responsibility of *all* elders—note that it says “teaching,” not preaching. Elders should be able to know and explain the Scripture at least one-on-one with people.

(So, elders are to administrate and teach…)

• Pastor

### The third responsibility of elders is to pastor the flock.

#### 1 Peter 5:1-4 emphasizes this shepherding role [read]. This is really their key role, because, since we are all sheep, we need pastoral care more than we need organization (though we certainly do need both).

#### Shepherding involves protecting the flock from false teachers (Acts 20:29), helping the weak (Acts 20:35), and tenderly admonishing or rebuking those in sin (1 Thess. 5:12).

#### This third responsibility of pastoring is intimately related to the second role, teaching. This is clear in Ephesians 4:11—the only passage in the Bible where the word “pastor” is mentioned, and here pastoring is tied right in with teaching.

#### I have heard that the Bible uses “elders” to mean the pastoral staff of a church. But this can’t be true unless every NT church began with a multiple staff! It would seem that the senior pastor should be among the elders since he does so much administration, teaching, and pastoring that it requires his full time.

3 Types of Elders

• Pastor-Teacher

#### We see the pastor-teacher most clearly in 1 Timothy 5:17 (explain slide).

(So, in the NT we actually see elders in each church, supplemented by deacons in others—presumably the larger churches. This was the case in Jerusalem until the work got too big for the leaders, so “The Seven” were chosen. Now let’s address a question which some of you may be wondering about—and one which I’ve thought about too in recent days…)

## How should the elders relate to the deacons? There are three models here that I’ve seen:

### The first model has deacons as the “bosses” to the pastors. This gives administration priority over pastoring in the church. I hope that our look at the NT this morning shows that this isn’t what the NT teaches.

Deacons

### Other churches follow model 2 where elders and deacons function as separate boards. The attempt here is to have elders handle “spiritual” matters and deacons the “physical” matters. I see some problems with this that I explained in our May 8 congregational meeting. If you want an updated copy of the study passed out that night, please come up after the service. My main contention is the lack of NT evidence that all the deacons functioned together as one group—plus it could set the stage for a power struggle between the two boards.

Separate

Two Boards

### Another option may be more in line with the Acts 6 pattern. It has various committees of deacons each independently reporting to the elders. This would be like “The Seven” who had primary responsibility for the Jerusalem food distribution, although they certainly did other ministries as well. We see Stephen and Phillip, both among “The Seven,” involved in preaching and evangelism.

The Seven

Yes, lah…

(One final word. It may appear to you that leadership by elders seems incompatible with our Baptist distinctive of congregational authority. But let me assure you…)

## Leadership by elders and congregational authority are not contradictory.

Contra-dictory

### The ancient Greeks struggled to balance leadership with giving the people a say…

Greek votes

### [read & animate cartoon]. Leaders must *listen* to the people—all the people!

# Conclusion

### So what have we seen today? Local church authority rests with the people but elders should lead them (M.I.).

MI
(3 slides)

### But how does all this relate to you and me?

#### Relating to congregational authority, my prayer has been that we all will better see from today’s texts that this is *our* church—not any leader’s church, not any other authority.

• Cong.

Apply…

##### Actually, it’s *Christ’s* church. But He’s delegated authority and responsibilities to each member.

##### You have an important part to play at this church! Do you know what your unique contribution is?

#### Relating to leadership by elders, we need a plurality of leadership—especially in relation to the pastoral functions. So we’ll be electing elders the next two months.

Elders
(11 slides)

##### In our church or any church it’s impossible for one man to meet all the special needs of each individual.

###### Rather than expecting the pastor to bear this responsibility alone, let the other leaders share your burden.

###### Elders will pastor you along with others in a shepherding role without the title “elder”—such as ministry staff, SS and cell group leaders.

Action Point
• Elders

##### Let’s all make the process of choosing elders as smooth as possible.

###### Pray for this four-step process [explain it].

###### Secondly, vote!

##### We have nothing to fear in bringing in more leaders. There’s no fear when we recognize that God Himself is sovereign and leading us, and that God has given us godly leaders to direct us.

Prayer

### Prayer

(Bulletin Insert Filled-In)

22 May 2005, IBC Dr. Rick Griffith

Family Talk on Church Leadership

1 Timothy 3

Two questions:

1. Who has the ultimate say in the church according to the Bible?

2. What is the biblical pattern for church leadership?

I. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation.

A. Congregational Authority is seen in…

1. Church discipline (Matt. 18:15-17)

2. Selecting leaders (Acts 6:1-6)

3. Maintaining true doctrine (1 Cor. 11:23; 1 John 4:1; Jude 1, 3)

B. Episcopal

C. Presbyterian

II. The biblical pattern is church leadership by elders.

A. Scriptural support for a plurality of elders:

B. Three basic responsibilities of elders:

1. Administration (1 Tim. 3:1, 4-5; 5:17)

2. Teaching (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17)

3. Shepherding (1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20:29, 35; 1 Thess. 5:12; Eph. 4:11)

C. How should the elders relate to the deacons?

D. Elder leadership and congregational authority are not contradictory.

Conclusion

\* Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation but these people should be led by elders.

Action Points:

(Bulletin Insert full page)

22 May 2005, IBC Dr. Rick Griffith

Family Talk on Church Leadership

1 Timothy 3

Two questions:

1. Who has the ultimate say in the church according to the Bible?

2. What is the biblical pattern for church leadership?

I. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

A. Congregational Authority is seen in…

1. Church \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Matt. 18:15-17)

2. Selecting \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 6:1-6)

3. Maintaining true \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 11:23; 1 John 4:1; Jude 1, 3)

B. Episcopal

C. Presbyterian

II. The biblical pattern is church leadership by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

A. Scriptural support for a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of elders:

B. Three basic responsibilities of elders:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 3:1, 4-5; 5:17)

2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17)

3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20:29, 35; 1 Thess. 5:12; Eph. 4:11)

C. How should the elders relate to the deacons?

D. Elder leadership and congregational authority are not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Conclusion

\* Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ but these people should be led by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Action Points:

From www.biblicaleldership.com

5. These leaders in the congregations of the early church were elders.

The point here is that the eldership was not one alternative leadership form among many in the early church. It was universal as far as we know, and there were always more than one in each church as far as we know. Consider these texts that show how widespread was the practice of having elders in each church.

Jerusalem: Acts 15:22, "Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church to choose men and to send them to Antioch." Ephesus: Acts 20:17, "And from Miletus [Paul] sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church." All the towns of Crete: Titus 1:5, "This is why I (Paul) left you in Crete, that you might amend what was defective, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you." All the churches James wrote to when he said, "To the twelve tribes of the dispersion": James 5:14, "Is any among you sick? Let him call the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord" (assuming that there are elders in every church). All the churches in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia that Peter wrote to: 1 Peter 5:1, "So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed." Finally, all the churches Paul founded on the first missionary journey (and presumably the other journeys as well): Acts 14:23, "And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting, they committed them to the Lord in whom they believed."

The universal extent of elders in the early church becomes even more obvious when you realize that the term "elder" is the same person designated by "bishop" or "overseer" (cf. Titus 1:5,7 and Acts 20:17,28) or "pastor" (Eph. 4:11; cf. Acts 20:28 and 1 Peter 5:1-2 where elders are given a shepherding function). It is hard to escape the conclusion that God's will for the local church is that it have a group of elders as its primary leaders.

First Baptist Church of Yucaipa Dr. Rick Griffith

January 9, 1994 Single Message

NIV 30 Minutes

Family Talk on Church Leadership

1 Timothy 3

**Topic:** Church government

**Subject:** Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation

**Complement:** but these people should be lead by elders.

**Purpose:** Listeners will agree that leadership by elders is not contradictory to congregational polity so as to prepare them for the government change to elders in March.

Introduction

1. The snow drifts blanketed the landscape—and covered all the vehicles, making travel very difficult that frigid, Sunday morning many years ago. Due to the terrible inconvenience of getting to church, most of the congregation decided just to stay in the warm comfort of their homes rather than brave the dangers of the elements en route to the morning worship service.

 The pastor had the same problems—in fact, he suspected that if he was able to *make* it to the church he might be preaching only to himself! The snowfall made using his car impossible, and he had no snow skis or snow shoes. How could he make it to the church?

 Then an ingenious idea hit him. He lived next to the river and the church building was next to that same river. So he fastened his ice skates on tightly and sure enough, the river had frozen solid. By ice skating to church he was able to make it safely and in time.

 But as the morning progressed, rumors spread through the deacons who showed up that—yes—their own pastor had skated to church! Afterwards the deacons hastily met to put the young minister under the spotlight to check and see if the allegations were indeed true.

 To their surprise the deacons discovered that *the pastor himself* had “broken the Christian Sabbath.” Then one insightful deacon asked the pastor, “When you ice skated to church, did you enjoy it?” The minister assured him that he had *not* enjoyed it, so all the deacons agreed that it was alright.

2. I laughed myself when I first heard this story. But when I realized that it was a true story I sobered up a bit. One of the things that bothered me most was how it ended up being “the pastor versus the deacon board.”

3. Lately our own deacons here at First Baptist have taken another look at our church structure of pastor and deacon board—partly because the Pastoral Search Committee has interviewed prospective candidates to be our senior pastor. To refresh myself on how we function I poked around the church offices this week and secured a copy of the 1954 church constitution. (It was hard to find and I was told that’s because no one looks at it anymore.) When I read page 11 I could see why—it says that trustees must bring any purchase for congregational approval if it exceeds $100!

4. The deacons wrote us all in the November 28 Enfolder, “The Deacon Board is committed to presenting a revised constitution to the church for discussion no later than March 1, 1994.” To provide a biblical basis for any changes I’ve been asked to focus upon church government this morning.

5. Since we’ll deal with quite a few texts on this matter this morning, we’ve included a sermon outline in your Enfolder. So let’s ask two basic questions this morning on the outline:

a. First, who has the ultimate say in the church according to the Bible? Is it the leadership or the congregation?

b. And second, what is the biblical pattern for church leadership? Is it leadership by a pastor and deacons, or some other form such as elders?

6. Let’s first address this issue of ultimate authority in the church. Here I believe our church constitution is on target because Scripture says that…

I. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation.

 [The people themselves have the final say in church matters, with no person or organization above it except Christ.]

A. But where does the Bible say that authority is in the local church as a democratic body?

1. The ultimate authority for *church discipline* is the church itself—not even its leaders (Matt. 18:15-17). Notice how the final authority is the body of believers. Saucy, 116

2. *Selecting their own leaders* is the role of the people in the church rather than these being selected by some outside group (Acts 6:1-6). The apostles appointed only those elected by the congregation. In like manner here in the USA we can’t really complain about the government since we elect our own leaders in a democracy.

3. The congregation itself has responsibility to *maintain true doctrine* and practice.

a. The ordinances are given to the entire church—not just the leaders (1 Cor. 11:23).

b. Every Christian is anointed by the Spirit (1 John 2:20, 27) and is to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1) and contend for the faith (Jude 1, 3). Have you ever noticed that in churches where the congregation has little say, the doctrinal teaching often goes like a see-saw based upon whether the preacher is liberal or evangelical?

(But some of you are saying, “Isn’t this how all churches operate?” No…)

B. There’s at least two other forms of church government being practiced today.

1. Under the episcopal form the church government each church is ruled by bishops who are not a part of their church congregation but exercise authority over several churches. This is practiced by Episcopalians (Anglicans), Methodists, Orthodox, and Catholics.

a. Appeal to rule by bishops is made in Scripture to James, who they say was the head of the Church in Jerusalem. They claim James was the first bishop because he gave a decision in Acts 15:13 allowing uncircumcised Gentile converts into the church.

b. But if you look closely you’ll see that he actually functioned as a presiding officer rather than an authority over them. Besides, he was an apostle and the apostles did not designate successors.

c. Appeal to rule by bishops is also made to Timothy and Titus too in their ministry to several churches. But their ministry was over a huge area in contrast to the bishops of later years who presided over a single locality. Also, their responsibility was only temporary rather than a long-term position.

d. Appeal to rule by bishops is also made by saying that the apostles ordained others to succeed them as the only valid ministers, so that each bishop chooses his successor. But nothing in the New Testament indicates that apostles chose successors. Their office was unique, only for the founding of the church. Actually, the entire church succeeds the apostles because of the priesthood of believers.

2. The last form of church government is the presbyterian form, where the church is ruled by elders who represent the church, and are responsible to four higher bodies outside the local church: the session, the presbytery, the synod, and finally the general assembly.

a. Presbyterians, like those of the episcopal system, point to James in Acts 15 as support for their organization. Acts 16:4 notes that what the church at Jerusalem decided was imposed by Paul upon other churches. They claim that this system of representation to a higher body developed into other districts later on.

b. But note also these factors:

1) The decision of the church at Antioch to send representatives to Jerusalem was purely voluntary, so Antioch didn’t look to Jerusalem as an authority.

2) And Paul and Barnabas didn’t visit the Jerusalem church as inferiors to superiors. In fact, the problem of false doctrine in Antioch *started in the Jerusalem church!* They went to Jerusalem to make sure that the theology of the false teachers was not the theology of the whole Jerusalem church.

3) What we actually see here is not one church submitting to another, but rather the unity between churches. Even though each congregation is autonomous before God, the Lord expects cooperation and fellowship among local churches.

4) By the way, you may wonder how First Baptist Church of Yucaipa can be part of the Baptist General Conference and still be autonomous. Well, the BGC is not about higher and higher forms of authority, but a fellowship of independent Baptist churches where no church can dictate what the others can or can’t do.

(So far this morning my comments have related to the ultimate authority in the local church. We’ve seen that this authority is in the people themselves—not in their elected leadership within the church or in any body outside the church. Now let’s shift our focus to the second question: how should a local church be lead biblically?)

II. The biblical pattern is church leadership by elders.

 [A group of godly, elected leaders called elders is to lead each local church.]

A. In fact, God has lead His people through a group of elders for a long time.

1. For Christmas my father-in-law, Kurt Ahlstrom, got one of those computer Bibles. Since I knew I was going to preach on this issue of elders I decided to punch in “elders” in the plural and “elder” in the singular “elder” to find the number of occurrences in the OT.

2. From the birth of Israel under Moses until the birth of the church, Israel was lead by elders—the word “elders” is used some 160 times but “elder” only once [Isa. 3:2]! Sometimes there was a one leader too like Moses or Joshua, but there *always* was a group of elders.

3. In the time of Jesus, a synagogue could not be established until ten elders were willing to give it guidance. [Optional: There is one big difference between the NT elders and the elders of the synagogues, though. Synagogues had a single man who was called “the attendant of the synagogue.” He was a paid professional operating separate from the leadership team who received a salary for taking care of the scrolls (Luke 4:20), teaching the children, blowing the trumpet to start and end the Sabbath, presiding over funerals and mourning feasts, and administering punishments—even beatings (Mark 13:9). He often lived at the synagogue and sometimes was not godly.]

4. The New Testament church followed this same pattern of leadership by elders.

a. At Pentecost we find only apostles leading the church, but Acts 11:30 indicates that soon after there were elders at Jerusalem along with the apostles (A.D. 47; cf. 16:4).

b. The pattern was for each church to select its own elders, who were ordained by apostles or other leaders. Read with me Acts 14:23 [read it]. This verses, along with Titus 1:5, *seem* to indicate that apostles or their representatives selected leaders. But the text only says who *appointed* or *ordained* them, not who *selected* them. Most likely they followed the same practice as in Acts 6 where the congregation picked them and the leadership commissioned them to the task. Notice the alternate translations in the NIV footnote that “Barnabas ordained elders” or “Barnabas had elders elected.”

c. Eight years later Paul met with the elders of another church—the church of Ephesus—in Acts 20:17 [A.D. 57].

d. Then another 3 years later he wrote the church at Philippi. Read Philippians 1:1 and notice that it is addressed to “the overseers and deacons.” Here “overseers” means the same as “elders.” In fact, the New Testament refers to church elders by three interchangeable titles: “elder[s]” (used 20 times), “overseer[s]” or “bishops” in the KJV (used 6 times), and pastors (used once). While the Philippian church had deacons, they’re listed second to the elders, showing that they were subject to them.

e. Each Jewish church certainly had a group of elders ministering among them, for James 5:14 exhorts the sick to call for the elders of the church.

(So Scripture is clear that there are to be several elders per church. But what are they to do?)

B. Elders have three basic responsibilities:

1. First, elders are responsible for church administration.

a. This administrative role is seen in 1 Timothy 3:1 in the alternate title “overseer,” which is a word combines two words: *epi*, “over,” and *skopeo*, “to look or watch.” This means that elders are to “watch over” the souls of those in the congregation.

b. Look now down at verses 4-5 where it notes that elders need to know how to manage their own families well, because, as verse 5 says, “If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?”

c. 1 Timothy 5:17 also speaks of the administrative role of elders [read].

(This verse seems to distinguish between administrative elders who are not paid and teaching elders who are paid [read]. This leads us to the second role of the elders…)

2. Second, elders should teach the flock.

a. Here’s a key difference between elders and deacons. The qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3 for these two offices are quite similar: both need to be the husband of one wife, managing their families properly, having a good reputation, etc.

b. But a big difference is that while elders are to be “able to teach” in verse 2, this is not required of deacons. Why? “Deacon” literally means “one who serves at the table,” in a servant capacity. So deacons assist the elders in everyday tasks in order to free up the elders for their teaching responsibilities. A parallel here is how the “Seven” chosen in Acts 6 helped the apostles devote their energies on the Word and prayer.

c. Some churches, in an attempt to be as close to the distinctions between the two types of elders in 1 Timothy 5:17 as they can, now call their paid pastors “teaching elders.” Whatever the term, let’s not forget that teaching is a responsibility of all elders—note that it says “teaching,” not preaching. Elders should be able to explain the Scripture at least one-on-one with people.

(So, elders are to administrate and teach.)

3. The third responsibility of elders is to pastor the flock.

a. 1 Peter 5:1-4 emphasizes this shepherding role [read].

b. Shepherding involves protecting the flock from false teachers (Acts 20:29), helping the weak (Acts 20:35), and tenderly admonishing or rebuking those in sin (1 Thess. 5:12).

c. This third responsibility of pastoring is intimately related to the second role, teaching. This is clear in Ephesians 4:11—the only passage in the Bible where the word “pastor” is mentioned, and here pastoring is tied right in with teaching.

d. I have heard that the Bible uses “elders” to mean the pastoral staff of a church. But this can’t be true unless every NT church began with a multiple staff! It would seem that the more *mature* pastors may be included within an elder board, so that the board can have as much time as possible to pastor the flock.

(Now let’s address a question which some of you may be wondering about—and one which I’ve thought about too in recent years…)

C. Where did we get the concept of a single pastor and deacon board?

1. It’s in our constitution, but the constitution doesn’t provide a biblical basis for this structure, so I can only give an educated guess here.

a. Turn back to 1 Timothy 3. Notice that the elder or overseer in verse 1 is singular. Now jump to verse 8 and you’ll see that “deacons” is plural. This is how a single pastor and deacon board was argued a hundred years ago by the Baptist scholar Augustus Strong who wrote the Strong’s Concordance.

b. This isn’t convincing though because “elders” is plural in the parallel passage in Titus 1:5-6. It’s as if Paul’s saying, “You need another elder? Choose this type of man…”

2. There are pragmatic reasons to reconsider this type of system too.

a. As a former, single pastor with a board of deacons, I saw how difficult the system was from the pastoral side. Rather than being part of the leadership team, I was always on the outside looking in—even though the decisions affected me dramatically and even though as a full-time staff member I was often most educated to contribute.

b. Experience in church after church has shown that the single pastor with deacon board structure often is an adversarial type of relationship—the pastor versus the deacons like we saw in our story of the ice skating pastor. I even found this cartoon up in the pastor’s office while preparing this sermon!

c. However, some pastors in this system don’t *lack* authority—they have *too much* authority, no accountability to anyone, and their hands in too many areas. Even our own church constitution presently reads, “[The pastor] shall be consulted in all matters affecting the life and policy of the church.” This is impossible in a church our size!

(One last concern is that some of us are afraid of the term “elder rule,” and with good cause. First Peter 5 warns against elders “lording it over” the flock, and I’ve experienced this personally. As I finished up college I believed God was calling me to become a missionary to Asia with Campus Crusade. When I mentioned this to my elder board, they weren’t convinced. Even though the congregation was very positive about this, the elders did not believe in congregational authority. As it turned out, the elders refused to support me and some people left the church over this issue. It may appear to you that leadership by elders seems incompatible with our Baptist distinctive of congregational authority. But let me assure you…)

D. Leadership by elders and congregational authority are not contradictory.

1. Susan and I had the wonderful opportunity to see first-hand how elders can function in a congregational form of government while we lived in Dallas during seminary.

2. I remember that our church had a position that speaking in tongues was limited to the first century. Some people who wanted to become members did not have this conviction, so they never became members. The elders then presented to the congregation to drop this part of our doctrinal position. I saw congregational authority in action as different members stood up to voice their concern about such a change. Through this incident and the vote that followed, the elders realized that they did not represent the congregation in this matter, so the issue was dropped.

3. Our own deacon board here at First Baptist noted in their November 28 letter in the Enfolder that some pastoral candidates have said our deacon board actually functions as an elder board. This is certainly true in their administrative capacities, but remember that biblically those deacons who wish to be elders in the new system must assume pastoral responsibilities and be “able to teach.” God has provided us with a wonderful deacon board to lead this church. The fact that some will become “elders” is not going to all-of-a-sudden make them heavy-handed with us. Another big difference to come is that our new senior pastor will serve on the elder board as well. Yet all of our leaders will be selected by the people, preserving congregational authority.

Conclusion

M.I.1. So what have we seen this morning? Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation but these people should be lead by elders.

2. But how does all this relate to you and me?

a. Relating to congregational authority, my prayer has been that we all will better see from today’s texts that this is *our* church—not the leadership’s church, not the Baptist General Conference’s church, not any other authority. Actually, it’s *Christ’s* church. But He’s delegated authority and responsibilities to each member. You have an important part to play here at First Baptist! Do you know what your unique contribution is?

b. Relating to leadership by elders, some of us still need to get used to this idea of a plurality of leadership—especially in relation to the pastoral functions.

1) In a congregation this size it’s impossible for one man to meet all the special needs of each individual. Rather than expecting the pastor to bear this responsibility alone, let the other leaders share your burden. Right now we call them deacons—and soon some will be called elders—but whatever they’re called let God use them in your life. Please feel free to come up and share with them any need for prayer after the service.

2) Let’s all make the transition from deacons to elders as smooth as possible. My prayer has been that God would use this message to help us see that this decision is not simply a pragmatic one, or a trendy one, but a biblical one. Let’s support the leadership 100% in this change.

3) I hope we also see that leadership by elders is not contradictory to congregational authority so we have nothing to fear in making the upcoming constitutional change by March 1, subject to ratification by the congregation later this year. There’s nothing to fear when we recognize that God Himself is sovereign and leading us, and that God has given us such godly leaders to direct us.

3. Prayer

 (Enfolder Insert full page)

January 9, 1994 Dr. Rick Griffith

Family Talk on Church Leadership

1 Timothy 3

Introduction

Two questions:

1. Who has the ultimate say in the church according to the Bible?

2. What is the biblical pattern for church leadership?

I. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

A. Congregational Authority is seen in…

1. Church \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Matt. 18:15-17)

2. Selecting \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 6:1-6)

3. Maintaining true \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Cor. 11:23; 1 John 4:1; Jude 1, 3)

B. Episcopal

C. Presbyterian

II. The biblical pattern is church leadership by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

A. Scriptural support for a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of elders:

B. Three basic responsibilities of elders:

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 3:1, 4-5; 5:17)

2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17)

3. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20:29, 35; 1 Thess. 5:12; Eph. 4:11)

C. The pastor and deacon board

D. Elder leadership and congregational authority are not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Conclusion

\* Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ but these people should be lead by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Action Points:

Contrasting Elders and Deacons

Compiled by Rick Griffith

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Elders | Deacons |
| Meaning | Elder: a mature man of GodOverseer: “one watching over” | “servant”“one serving at the table” |
| Responsibilities | Overall administrationTeaching (and prayer)Pastoring | Delegated service/administration? (possibly Acts 6, but their duties are never spelled out in Scripture) |
| Frequency in Scripture | 187 times | 2 times |
| Function as a board? | Yes (178 times in Scripture) | Unknown (7 men did in Acts 6, but only for a given task) |
| Members | Lay and pastors | Lay only |
| Required? | Mandatory | Optional (at least in small churches?) |
| General Qualifications | Character + teaching ability | Character |
| Qualification Lists | 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9 | 1 Tim. 3:8-10; Acts 6:3 |
| Specific Qualifications | Above reproach/blamelessHusband of one wifeTemperateSelf-controlled/disciplinedRespectableHospitableAble to teach/holds firmly to the trustworthy message to encourage sound doctrine & refute opposersNot given to much wineNot violent but gentleNot quarrelsomeNot a lover of money/ pursuing dishonest gainManages his family wellChildren obey him with proper respectNot a recent convertGood reputation with outsiders-----Children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedientNot overbearingHospitableLoves what is goodUprightHoly | Husband of one wifeWorthy of respectKeeps hold of the deep truths of the faithNot indulging much wineNot pursuing dishonest gainManages his family wellTestedSincere-----Full of the SpiritFull of Wisdom |
|  |  |  |

Pertinent Issues on Elder Structure

Compiled by Rick Griffith

1. What structure makes for the best communication between the elders and those responsible to them (e.g., deacons)?

2. Should deacons function as a board or in smaller groups with delegated responsibilities from the elders? What about departments all subject to the elder board but not called deacons?

3. What criteria should we use to determine which pastors are elders? Ordination? Age? Experience? Position in the church?

4. Do we all have the same understanding in our interpretations of the elder qualifications? Husband of one wife? Above reproach/blameless? Children believe (what age children?)?

5. How will deaconesses fit within our revised structure?

6. How will the men’s ministry fit within our revised structure?

7. How will the trustees fit within our revised structure?

8. Should we make a distinction between administrative and teaching elders (cf. 1 Tim. 5:17)? Should this be equal to lay (unpaid) elders and salaried pastors, respectively?

9. How can the authority of the elder board be kept in check so as to assure congregational authority? What type of decisions should require congregational approval?

10. How can authority structures within the pastoral staff be reconciled with being co-equal elders? In other words, can we avoid associate staff being equal with the senior pastor in the elder meetings but subordinate the rest of the week? Should only the senior pastor be an elder? or should we do away with authority structures within the staff (e.g., no senior pastor)?

Introducing the Speaker (1994 message at First Baptist)

Other issues not addressed in the message that may be better said by someone else in an introduction to my message:

1. Why do we need to address this issue? (Because we are anticipating a change in the next few weeks and need to evaluate the biblical reasons for doing so)

2. Why is Dr. Griffith the one to give this message instead of someone else?

a. First, the deacons have asked him to give this message.

b. Second, his family returns to Singapore for him to resume teaching at Singapore Bible College in only two weeks, so this is his last chance to give some input in this matter.

c. Third, he is a former pastor who now teaches in this area of church matters.

d. Fourth, since he’s a Baptist missionary and not a pastor at this church, he has no vested interest in a change of church government. Perhaps this helps him be more objective.

e. Fifth, Dr. Griffith has his Master of Theology degree in Pastoral Ministries and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition from Dallas Seminary, so he has some special training to address this timely issue.

# Study Questions (Step 1)

# Context: What did the author record just prior to this passage?

# Purpose: Why is this passage in the Bible?

# Background: What historical context helps us understand this passage?

# Questions

# Tentative Theme/Thrust Statements (Step 5)

Text

# Possible Illustrations (Step 6)

### Lately I’ve been reading the book *Unuseless Japanese Inventions.* Since life is so full of transitions, the ever-creative Japanese have come up with several new inventions to help us with the various transitions in life…

Unuseless

#### To transition from flat shoes to high heels, you teenage girls will want to buy Training High Heels. The book notes, “With miniature stabilizing wheels attached to the pointy heels of either shoe, you can walk without fear of tipping over. When confidence and poise have been achieved, the wheels are removed and the young graduate can go solo” (p. 141).

Cat

Heels

#### Perhaps your cat needs to transition from hot food to cooler nibbles, so one ingenious soul invented the cat tongue soother. The ad notes that, “due to an evolutionary oversight, cats can’t blow on their food to cool it down. They can now! This simple device allows cats to chill their chow with paw power” (p. 28).

#### But what about transitions from home to work? For those whose heads bob up and down on a jerky commute, just try the Commuter’s Helmut (p. 153). It keeps your head still and even has a note for others to wake you up at your stop. Wearing this might even save embarrassment during boring sermons too!

Helmut

#### But what if the transition is from Orchard Road to your home—in a downpour? Try the nifty shopper’s umbrella. Its special hooks allow you to carry many shopping bags—all dry too!

Umbrella

#### The classic is the Solar Powered Flashlight (p. 180). Think how much money this will save you in battery expense—if it were not so completely useless to have a torch for the daytime!

Flashlight

### Lately IBC has been in transition, so we have some inventions to help us during this time as well—except we’re going to look at God’s inventions in his Word.

IBC Transitions

#### It’s healthy for any church in transition between pastors to reconsider its goals, vision, and structure. Our own deacons here at IBC have taken another look at our church structure of Pastor and Deacon Council—partly because the Pastoral Search Committee is investigating prospective candidates to be our next senior pastor and we want to have things in place by the time he comes.

#### Pastor Luis and our deacon chairman, Barron Witherspoon, and both have agreed that it would be good to have what I call a “family talk on church leadership.”

### Text

#### Appeal to rule by bishops is also made to Timothy and Titus too in their ministry to several churches. But their ministry was over a huge area in contrast to the bishops of later years who presided over a single locality. Also, their responsibility was only temporary rather than a long-term position.

#### Appeal to rule by bishops is also made by saying that the apostles ordained others to succeed them as the only valid ministers, so that each bishop chooses his successor. But nothing in the New Testament indicates that apostles chose successors. Their office was unique, only for the founding of the church. Actually, the entire church succeeds the apostles because of the priesthood of believers.

## There are at least two other forms of church government practiced today.

Episcopal

### The Episcopal form the church government has each church ruled by bishops who are not a part of their church congregation but exercise authority over several churches. This is practiced by Episcopalians (Anglicans), Methodists, Orthodox, and Catholics.

#### Appeal to rule by bishops is made to James, who they say was the head of the Church in Jerusalem. They claim James was the first bishop because he gave a decision in Acts 15:13 allowing uncircumcised Gentile converts into the church.

#### But if you look closely you’ll see that he actually functioned as a presiding officer rather than an authority over them. Besides, he was an apostle and the apostles did not designate successors.

### The last form of church government is the Presbyterian, where elders rule the church. They also represent the church to four higher bodies outside the local church rule the church: the session, the presbytery, the synod, and finally the general assembly.

Presbyterian

Presbyterian

#### Presbyterians, like Episcopals, also point to James in Acts 15 to support their organization. Acts 16:4 notes that what the church at Jerusalem decided was imposed by Paul upon other churches. They claim that this system of representation to a higher body developed into other districts later on.

Presbyterian

#### But note also these factors:

##### The decision of the church at Antioch to send representatives to Jerusalem was purely voluntary, so Antioch didn’t look to Jerusalem as an authority.

##### And Paul and Barnabas didn’t visit the Jerusalem church as inferiors to superiors. In fact, the problem of false doctrine in Antioch *started in the Jerusalem church!* They went to Jerusalem to make sure that the theology of the false teachers was not the theology of the whole Jerusalem church.

##### What we actually see here is not one church submitting to another, but rather the unity between churches. Even though each church is autonomous before God, the Lord expects cooperation and fellowship among local churches.

##### By the way, you may wonder how IBC can be part of Singapore’s Southern Baptist Convention and still be autonomous. Well, the SBC is not about higher and higher forms of authority, but a fellowship of independent Baptist churches where no church can dictate what the others can or can’t do.

##### I’ve been active in 10 churches in my 34 years as a Christian. Of these 10 churches, 8 have followed an elder model—including 4 that I’ve helped move in this direction.

### But why can’t we simply just call our present deacons “elders” and be done with it? Can’t we just exchange the present “deacon” hats for “elder” hats? Well...

Change titles?

#### The qualifications are different: Those who qualify as deacons may not qualify as elders—especially if they can’t teach or give pastoral oversight over the flock. Deacons administer budgets and programs, which certainly involve people, but the greater challenge is shepherding people in crisis.

• Qualif.

#### Their roles are different too: Deacons are more administrative while elders shepherd the flock.

• Roles

#### Being an elder is also far more demanding than being a deacon. While deacons administrate a limited ministry area, elders are the highest church authority and shepherd the entire flock. Even a man *qualified* to be an elder must have the *time* to invest in this ministry.

• Time

#### Obviously, one’s age is a factor in becoming an elder or else the term *elder* would be meaningless. Whereas Scripture give no minimum age, elders should be among the older men in a congregation. In contrast, nothing in the term “deacon” indicates an age requirement, although such men should be mature for their age.

• Age

# Possible Applications (Step 6)

## Where did we get the concept of a single pastor and deacon board?

### It’s in our constitution, but the constitution doesn’t provide a biblical basis for this structure, so I can only give an educated guess here.

#### Turn back to 1 Timothy 3. Notice that the elder or overseer in verse 1 is singular. Now jump to verse 8 and you’ll see that “deacons” is plural. This is how the Baptist scholar Augustus Strong (who wrote the Strong’s Concordance) argued a single pastor and deacon board a hundred years ago.

#### This isn’t convincing though because “elders” is plural in the parallel passage in Titus 1:5-6. It’s as if Paul’s saying, “You need another elder? Choose this type of man…”

### There are pragmatic reasons to reconsider this type of system too.

#### As a former, single pastor with a board of deacons, I saw how difficult the system was from the pastoral side. Rather than being part of the leadership team, I was always on the outside looking in—even though the decisions affected me dramatically and even though as a full-time staff member I was often the most informed to contribute.

#### Experience in church after church has shown that the single pastor with deacon board structure often is an adversarial type of relationship.

#### Also, some pastors in this system don’t *lack* authority—they have *too much* authority, no accountability to anyone, and their hands in too many areas. Even our own church constitution presently reads, “The pastor is the overseer and shall have charge of the welfare of the church” (8.4.a). This is impossible in a church our size!

Outlines (Steps 2-5)

Title

Passage

Exegetical Outline (Steps 2-3)

# Exegetical Idea (CPT):

# I.

# II.

# III.

Purpose or Desired Listener Response (Step 4)

The listeners will

**Homiletical Outline** (Cyclical inductive form)—Steps 5-6

# Subject:

# Introduction

### Interest & Background: [Believers are dumb, directionless and defenseless sheep.]

### Need: Since we are like sheep, what do we need?

### Subject & Preview: Since we’ll deal with many texts this morning, we’ve included a sermon outline in your bulletin. Today we’ll ask the two basic questions on the outline:

#### First, who has the ultimate say in the church according to the Bible? Is it the leadership or the congregation?

#### And second, what is the biblical pattern for church leadership? Is it leadership by a pastor and deacons, or some other form?

(Let’s first address this issue of ultimate authority in the church. Scripture says that…)

# I. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the congregation.

## The final authority in the local church is the people themselves.

### The ultimate authority for *church discipline* is the church itself—not even its leaders (Matt. 18:15-17). Notice how the final authority is the body of believers.

### *Selecting their own leaders* is the role of the people in the church rather than these being selected by some outside group (Acts 6:1-6).

### The congregation itself has responsibility to *maintain true doctrine* and practice.

#### The ordinances are given to the entire church—not just the leaders (1 Cor. 11:23).

#### Every Christian is to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1) and contend for the faith (Jude 3).

(But some of you are saying, “Isn’t this how all churches operate?” No…)

## There are at least two other forms of church government practiced today.

### The Episcopal form the church government has each church ruled by bishops who are not a part of their church congregation but exercise authority over several churches. This is practiced by Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Orthodox, and Catholics.

### Another form of church government is the Presbyterian, where elders who rule the church are called a session. They represent the church to higher bodies outside the local church: a presbytery, the synod in each locale, and finally the general assembly.

## What about Baptists?

### We believe in what has been called the autonomy of the local church—that each church is independent of any higher structure.

### We believe that Scripture does not show any church submitting to another church or individual, but only the unity between churches.

(So far this morning my comments have related to the ultimate authority in the local church. We’ve seen that this authority is in the people themselves—not in their elected leadership within the church or in any structure outside the church. Now let’s shift our focus to the second question: how should a local church be led biblically?)

# II. The biblical pattern is church leadership by elders.

## Scripture supports a plurality of elders:

# Conclusion

###  (MI/CPS).

### Main Points

### Exhortation/Application

### Prayer



Rick Griffith

7 August 2016

Message of 2 of 3

**Elder Roles**

***1 Timothy 3:1***

# Introduction

What kind of animal are you?

***Two questions:***

1. Who has the ultimate say in the church according to the Bible?

2. What is the biblical pattern for church leadership?

# I. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## The final authority in the local church is the people themselves.

### The ultimate authority for *church discipline* is the church itself—not even its leaders (Matt. 18:15-17). Notice how the final authority is the body of believers.

### *Selecting their own leaders* is the role of the people in the church rather than these being selected by some outside group (Acts 6:1-6).

### The congregation itself has responsibility to *maintain true doctrine* and practice.

#### The ordinances are given to the entire church—not just the leaders (1 Cor. 11:23).

#### Every Christian is to “test the spirits” (1 John 4:1) and contend for the faith (Jude 3).

## Episcopal

## Presbyterian

# II. The biblical pattern is church leadership by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

## Scripture supports a plurality of elders—so does our By-Laws.

## In fact, God has led His people through a group of elders for a long time.

## Rick 1 TB:Users:griffith:Documents:NTS Folder:NTS Images:NTS236a-c1 1 Tim Elder Roles.pngThree basic responsibilities of elders:

### \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 3:1, 4-5; 5:17)

### \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17)



### \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20:29, 35; 1 Thess. 5:12; Eph. 4:11)

## How should elders relate to deacons?



## Elder leadership and congregational authority are not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

# Conclusion

1. Ultimate authority in the local church rests with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ but these people should be led by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

2. Action Points

Thought Questions

1. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7 aloud. List the qualifications of elders you can find.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Verse | Trait |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |
| Text | Text |

1. Which man in this church would make a good elder?

Text