

Church – The Beginnings, Part 65

Paul's Charge to the Ephesian Elders - Part 2 - Acts 20:17-38

01/28/2018

NEW LIFE FELLOWSHIP

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Acts 20:17-38 - From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. ¹⁸ And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, ¹⁹ serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; ²⁰ how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, ²¹ testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. ²² And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. ²⁴ But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. ²⁵ And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. ²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷ For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. ²⁸ Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

³² "So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ³³ I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel. ³⁴ Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me. ³⁵ I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

³⁶ And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, ³⁸ sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

Character Qualities of Elders – ref. 1 Tim. 3:1-7 & Titus 1:5-9

1. What is the Major Difference between Elders and Deacons?

Answer: Elders must be able to teach. This is NOT a requirement for Deacons.

2. The Motivation – what is behind the “desire” to become an Elder?

It is a good desire. If that is the case – HE – must be a HE.

A husband of one wife. Only a Male of the Human species qualifies.

Before being a Husband (or a “one wife kind of man”), He must be Above Reproach. Blameless. He is not doing things that are Shameful, that would bring shame upon himself, his family, the local church family, or upon the Name of Jesus Christ (tarnish Christ's reputation). Proverbs 22:1 - A good name is to be more desired than great wealth, favor is better than silver and gold. (“good name” = reputation). Ref. James 3:1

3. Personal and Social-Relational Character Qualities of the Elder:

1 Timothy 3:2-3; Titus 1:7-8

Just like there is the **Ideal Woman** seen in Proverbs 31:10-31 These are qualities of the **Ideal Man** – the **highest example** within the Body of Christ. This is **reflection** of Jesus Christ, Himself.

→ temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, not addicted to wine or pugnacious (combative, belligerent), but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled

4. Family LIFE is a Part of the Qualification – 1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:6

His **Marriage and Parenting** are a focal point ... if he cannot manage his own household well, then he has no business being an elder.

Children → those who are still in the household, who are still “children” and not grown adults. “**children who believe**” – can also be translated as “children who are faithful” – in the sense as being under parental control with dignity – as the synthesis of both 1 Timothy 3:3-4 and Titus 1:6 seem to suggest.

This excludes: **Full Brutality/Abuse** and/or **Neglect** (c'est la vie)

5. Not a New Convert – why? (this goes for both Elder & Deacon)

Not being a new convert – is another way of saying –

A Humble, Servant-Hearted, Seasoned, Mature Veteran in the Faith

Good Reputation towards or among those who are outside the church? What about those that just hate Christians?

What's the alternative, dangerous, Attitude that could result?