

THE APOSTLE'S TEACHING:
CHURCH POLITY

WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF THE CHURCH?

“And they devoted themselves to _____
and _____, to _____ and
_____.”

- Acts 2:42

WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF THE CHURCH?

“And they devoted themselves to *the apostle’s teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*”

- Acts 2:42

WHAT ARE THE ELEMENTS OF THE CHURCH?

- *The Apostle's Teaching* (Doctrine/Instruction/Word):
 - Public Preaching
 - Public Reading
 - Church Polity
 - Statement of Faith

WHAT IS "CHURCH POLITY?"

“Polity is governance and organization... how a church or group of churches organize and administrate themselves.”

- Chad Owen Brand,
Perspectives on Church Government

WHY IS CHURCH POLITY
IMPORTANT?

CHURCH POLITY

- The Apostle's Doctrine *includes* church polity.
- The Apostle's Doctrine outlines a *way* for God's people to be organized and governed.
- The Apostle's Doctrine is *guarded, taught and passed on* through church government and authority.

POLITY AND GOD'S PEOPLE: OT

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- Called 'Elders' / 'Officers' (lit: *the old*): **Numb 11:16-17**

TEMPLE PREPARATION

- Temple building preparations: **1 Chronicles 22:1-5**
- Solomon charged to build: **1 Chronicles 22:6-19**
- David assembles leaders: **1 Chronicles 23:1-2**
 - And then governance & organization laid out...

TEMPLE RESPONSIBILITIES

| Administrative Duties | | Ministerial Duties | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Officers | 1 Chronicles 23:4-5 | Priests | 1 Chronicles 24:1-2 |
| Baliffs | 1 Chronicles 23:4-5 | Prophets | 1 Chronicles 25:1 |
| Judges | 1 Chronicles 23:4-5 | Assistants for Sacrifices | 1 Chronicles 23:29-31 |
| Public Administrators | 1 Chronicles 26:29-30 | Assistants for Purification Ceremonies | 1 Chronicles 23:27-28 |
| Service Duties | | Artistic Duties | |
| Bakers of the Bread of the Presence | 1 Chronicles 23:29 | Musicians | 1 Chronicles 25:6 |
| Weights & Measures Officers | 1 Chronicles 23:29 | Singers | 1 Chronicles 25:7 |
| Custodians | 1 Chronicles 23:28 | Individual Assignments | |
| Financial Duties | | Recording Secretary | 1 Chronicles 24:6 |
| Treasury Officers | 1 Chronicles 26:20 | Chaplain to King | 1 Chronicles 25:4 |
| Dedicated Items Officers | 1 Chronicles 26:26-28 | Private Prophet to the King | 1 Chronicles 25:2 |
| Protective Duties | | Captain of the Guard | 1 Chronicles 26:1 |
| Gatekeepers | 1 Chronicles 23:5 | Chief Officer of the Treasury | 1 Chronicles 26:23-24 |
| Gate & Storehouse Guards | 1 Chronicles 26:12-18 | | |

TEMPLE ORGANIZATION

“On that day men were *appointed* over the storerooms, the contributions, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather into them the portions required by the law for the priests and the Levites... *For long ago in the days of David and Asaph there were directors...*”

- Nehemiah 12:44-47

THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH

- *In the NT, the Church is birthed, and Head made clear:*
 - **Ephesians 1:22, 4:15, 5:23**
 - **Colossians 1:15-18, 2:19**

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 - **Colossians 1:15-18, 2:19**
- *Jesus is Lord of the Church is the synonymous truth:*
 - **Acts 2:36**
 - **2 Corinthians 4:5 (c.f. Philippians 2:9-11)**

CHURCH ORDER FROM CHRIST

“And [Christ] gave *the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers*, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”

- Ephesians 4:11-12 (c.f. 2:20)

CHURCH POLITY: ACTS 6

- Organization required in the New Testament church:

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- Organization required in the New Testament church:
 - A plurality (v.3a)
 - Active work (v.1)
 - Character (v.3b)
 - Lifestyle work (v.1 a, 4)

CHURCH POLITY: EARLY CHURCH

- *The Jerusalem Council. Acts 15:1-5*
- *The Ephesian Elders. Acts 20:17-18*
- *The Jerusalem Elders. Acts 21:17-18*
- *The Philippian Church. Philippians 1:1*
 - *Two distinct offices are in the Church, with the saints.*

ELDERS? OVERSEERS? PASTORS?

- **πρεσβύτερος. Acts 20:17**
 - Defined: *Older, elder, official or leader*
- **ἐπίσκοπος. Philippians 1:1**
 - Defined: *One who watches over, overseer, guardian, bishop*
- **ποιμήν. Ephesians 4:11**
 - Defined: *Shepherd, one who tends, pastor*

ELDER/OVERSEER/PASTOR

“So I exhort the *elders* [Gk. *presbyteros*] among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: *shepherd* [Gk. *poimaino*] the flock of God that is among you, exercising *oversight* [Gk. *episkopeo*], not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly.”

- 1 Peter 5:1-2

ELDER/OVERSEER/PASTOR

“Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the *elders* [*Gk. presbyteros*] of the church... and said to them... Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock in which the Holy Spirit has made you *overseers* [*Gk. episkopos*], to *care for* [*Gk. poimaino*] the church of God.”

- Acts 20:17-28

THE OFFICE OF ELDER

- Distinct as an *office* in the local church. **1 Timothy 3:1**
- An office for *all* local churches. **1 Timothy 3:14-15**
- Distinct from the other church office. **1 Timothy 3:8**
 - c.f. **Philippians 1:1**
- The elder is both *vocational* and *lay*. **1 Timothy 5:17-18**

THE OFFICE OF ELDER

- Elders are specifically *characterized* in the NT:
 - **1 Timothy 3:1-7**
 - **Titus 1:5-9**
 - **1 Peter 5:1-3**

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ELDER

- Elders *minister the Word & pray* in the church. **Acts 6:4**
- Elders *care/concerned for* the church. **Acts 20:28**
- Elders *protect* the church. **Acts 20:29-31**
- Elders *labour* in the church. **1 Thessalonians 5:12**
- Elders *answer* for the church. **Hebrews 13:17**

THE OFFICE OF DEACON

- Distinct as an *office* in the local church. **1 Timothy 3:8**
 - c.f. **Philippians 1:1**
- An office for *all* local churches. **1 Timothy 3:14-15**
- An office which includes both qualified men & women:
 - **1 Timothy 3:11** (γῦνή = a woman or wife)
 - **Romans 16:1-2** (διάκονον = Phoebe)
- A *service* office, as opposed to *oversight/teaching*. **Acts 6**

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DEACONS

- Deacons *do not manage a budget, but do manage money.*
- Deacons *do not manage people, but do manage a schedule.*
- Deacons are not just tending to buildings & lists. Also:
 - **Prayer & Care.**
 - **Hospitality.**

QUESTIONS?