

Structured leadership.

Biblical Leadership.



Structured leadership.

The different forms of government in Christian churches, with variations on each.

Non Governmental.

The church is led directly through the Holy Spirit.

- The representatives of this model not only declare all organization of the visible church as unnecessary but sometimes even as sinful. Consequently, these groups try to eliminate leadership structures wherever possible. They emphasise the inner work of the Holy Spirit who directly influences and leads the believer without the necessity of an organisation or institution

Structured leadership.

Non-governmental Church Government

Quakers for examples, stress the concept of the “inner light”.

- There is no actual church membership.
- The local meetings do have something like an overseer or elder for reasons of organization but without leadership functions.
- Decisions are not made by the unity of the Spirit.

The Plymouth Brethren believe that the church on earth exists only as an invisible church, which consists of all true believers.

- Therefore, an organization with specific administrators of office is not necessary.
- The presidency of the Holy Spirit is the all moving power.

Ephesians 4 however makes it clear that Christ Himself gave gift-ministries to the Church, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Also when discipline is needed there has to be an authority structure.

Structured leadership.

Episcopal:

This is a hierarchical form of church governance in which the chief local authorities are called bishops.

(The word "bishop" derives, via the British Latin and Vulgar Latin term **ebiscopus/*biscopus*, from the Ancient Greek *ἐπίσκοπος* *epískopos* meaning "overseer".) It is the structure used by many of the major Christian Churches and denominations, such as Catholic, Eastern, Anglican and Lutheran churches or denominations, and other churches founded independently from these lineages.

- Churches with an episcopal polity are governed by bishops, practicing their authorities in the dioceses and conferences or synods. The bishop supervises the clergy within the judicatory and is the representative to both secular structures and in the hierarchy of the church.

Structured leadership.

Episcopal polity

- Bishops considered their authority derived from an unbroken, personal apostolic succession from the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. Bishops with such authority are known as the historical episcopate. Churches with this type of government usually believe that the Church requires episcopal government. In some systems, bishops may be subject to higher-ranking bishops.
- For much of the written history of Christianity, episcopal government was the only known form of church organization. This changed at the Reformation. Many Protestant churches are now organized by either congregational or Presbyterian church polities, both descended from the writings of John Calvin.
- Advocates for an Episcopal form of church government argue that the sheer fact that it went virtually uncontested until the time of the Reformation testifies to its claims of apostolicity

Structured leadership.

Presbyterian:

With John Calvin came the form of government in which elders had the authority and ruled the church with the pastor as the leading elder.

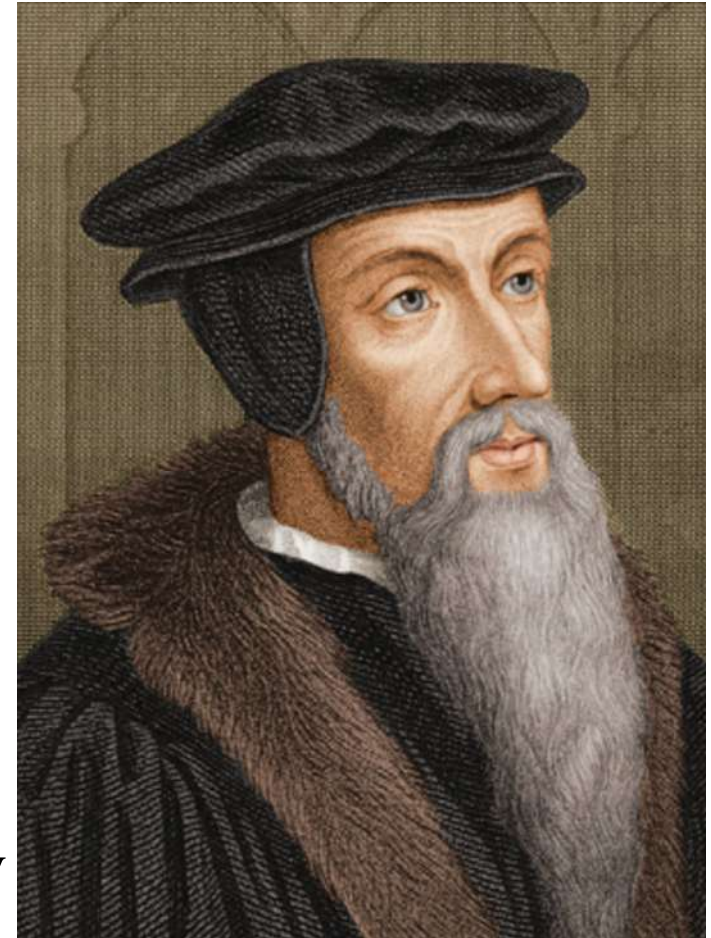
Calvin himself originally appointed elders.

Congregational:

This form, is a reaction to the abuses with the church government in England.

Congregationalism puts power into the hands of the voting members but potentially placing popularity over pastoral leadership.

The pastor can function as an employee, and spiritual leadership can be reduced to personal preferences and political pressures from various members.



Structured leadership.

a) Single elder/pastor led.

In a congregational church led by a single elder/pastor, primary leadership in all decisions and doctrinal determinations is vested in a single leader. (*Who Runs the Church?*, p. 150-52) Typically, this leader also performs the duties of a senior pastor/minister and provides the preaching and teaching ministries for the church in addition to administrative leadership. Often, a congregational church led by a single elder/pastor was founded by that singular leader or by a previous singular leader who appointed the present leader.

Concerns related to the more extreme forms of single-elder congregationalism has resulted in more accountability within Pentecostal congregations such as those affiliated with the Assemblies of God. Also, common experience with the consequences of unaccountable authority ranging from inappropriate use of church finances all the way to the tragedy in Jonestown are often relied upon by opponents of this structure in favour of increased accountability.

Structured leadership.

b) Democratic congregational.

In a congregational church led by a democratically elected leadership board or council, final authority for all decisions and doctrinal determinations are vested in a plurality of representative leaders selected by the congregation. The titles of the individual leaders and the structure of the leadership board or council varies.

One common use of this structure involves the election of "elders" to an "elder board". The "elders" make business and spiritual decisions for the congregation by committee and serve individually as examples and mentors to the rest of the congregation. Often "deacons" are also elected to provide leadership within specific committees, ministries or administrative functions. Typically, "deacons" are subordinate to the authority of the "elders". In some congregational churches, "deacons" serve on a unified "board" with the elders with equal voting authority.

- Another common use of this structure acknowledges the "pastor" as the single "elder" for the congregation who participates in decision-making with a "deacon board" selected by the congregation.

Structured leadership.

c) Plural elder-led

In a congregational church led by a plurality of elders, final authority for all decisions and doctrinal determinations are vested in a plurality of elders acting in committee. This structure is very similar to the "elder board" approach to the democratic congregational structure, often differing only in the method used to select the elders and/or in the term of service of each elder. In some congregations, elders are appointed by someone or some entity respected by the congregation and allows this authority. In some congregations, elders serve until they resign, die or are removed by the congregation or their peers for doctrinal or moral failures. This structure can, but does not always, include the use of "deacons" or other leaders subordinate to the authority of the elders.

Structured leadership.

Plural elder-led

- There is no distinction between "elders" and "bishops" (Titus 1:5-7; Acts 20:17, 28); these represent the same office and order.
- Each congregation and centre of leadership is to have a **plurality of elders** (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Philippians. 1:1), **not one-man rule**.
- These elders have oversight of the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter. 5:2-3) and are thus responsible to rule the congregation (1 Timothy. 3:5; 5:17; 1 Thessalonians. 5:12; Hebrews. 13:7, 17, 24).

They judge among the brothers (cf. 1 Corinthians. 6:5) and, in contrast to all the members, they do the rebuking (1 Timothy. 5:20).

These prominent forms of church government all appeal to the Scriptures as well as church tradition for support of their respective positions.

Structured leadership.

Church Structure - Church offices

The pastor (literally, “shepherd”) is the human head of a church. In the early church, there was a plurality of elders, also called “overseers.”

It is the elders who lead the church and are responsible for teaching the Word and guiding, admonishing, and exhorting the people of God. **(1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Acts 14:23)**

The pastor/teacher is actually one of the elders.

The other office in the church is that of deacon.

Deacons are those who handle the practical concerns of the church, such as caring for the sick, elderly or widowed and maintaining buildings or other property. **(Acts 6:1-6 and 1 Timothy 3:8-12)**

The Pastor is a Servant of the Lord.

Even in the Government people who are supposed to serve and are even called civil servants, like to lord it over people and frustrate them by their slothful approach to their duties.

Structured leadership.

- The elders are assisted in their ministry by "deacons" who give attention to the ministry of mercy (Phil. 1:1; Acts 6:1-6; cf. 1 Tim. 3:8-13).
- The office-bearers in the church are nominated and elected by the members of the congregation (e.g. Acts 6:5-6), but must also be examined, confirmed and ordained by the present board of elders (Acts 6:6; 13: 1-3; 1 Tim. 4: 14).
- Members of the church have the right to appeal disputed matters in the congregation to their elders for resolution, and if the dispute is with those local elders, to appeal to the regional governing body (the presbytery) or, beyond that, to the whole general assembly (Acts 15). The decisions of the wider governing bodies are authoritative in all the local congregations (Acts 15:22-23, 28, 30; 16:1-5).

Who is the head of the Church?

Catholics use the following verse to claim the Pope is the head.

Matthew 16:15-18.

But what about you? he asked. Who do you say I am? Simon Peter answered, You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God. Jesus replied, Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.



Jesus said to Peter **“You are petros (little stone), and on this Petra (Rock) I will build my church”**. Jesus builds His church on the rock of Peter’s confession, not on the stone of Peter himself.

1 Corinthians 3:5-6. *What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe, as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow.*

Structured leadership.

1 Corinthians 1:10-13.

I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, I follow Paul; another, I follow Apollos; another, I follow Cephas; still another, I follow Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Corinthians 3:7-11.

So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.....

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Responsibility of Leadership (Binding and loosing)

Matt 18:18. (KJV)

Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

NIV: *I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.*

The NIV footnote indicates that

“will be bound” can also be translated “will have been bound”.

Young’s Literal Translation renders it: *...whatever thou mayest bind upon the earth shall be having been bound in the heavens, and whatever thou mayest loose upon the earth shall be having been loosed in the heavens.*

Both **Matthew 16:19 and 18:18** use an unusual Greek verbal construction (a periphrastic future perfect). It is best translated by the **NASB** *“Whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”*

Thus the binding and loosing by God in heaven precedes the binding and loosing on earth by the church. The church’s action on earth reflects God’s judgment in heaven. The church follows God, not the other way around.

Responsibility of Leadership (Binding and loosing)

The Pharisees used to bind and loose - they used to tell people that certain things were allowed and certain things were forbidden. What Jesus was doing was the following. The church at that stage did not have complete Bibles. You and I have got complete Bibles; the early church only had the Old Testament (the Law and the Prophets). They didn't yet have the New Testament and they were going into a new dispensation of grace, where some thought you could do as you please. But no! Jesus said to the apostles:



“I give you authority, I give you the keys of the Kingdom, whatever you say is allowed, is allowed and whatever you say is forbidden, is forbidden.”

Simply put: just like the Pharisees used to bind and loose, Jesus gave the apostles authority to bind and loose. They never went around binding the devil or demons. The devil is going to be bound for a thousand years in the Abyss (**Rev 20**), but up until that time he is roaming around seeking whom he may devour (**1 Pet 5:8**).

No spiritual ceremony that you or I do will stop that.

Responsibility of Leadership (Binding and loosing)

Jesus was simply saying that it is not a free for all. People cannot just say, “I’m not under law anymore so I’m going to do what I please.”

The apostles had the keys of the Kingdom to declare what is forbidden and what is allowed. And we see that they exercised this authority.

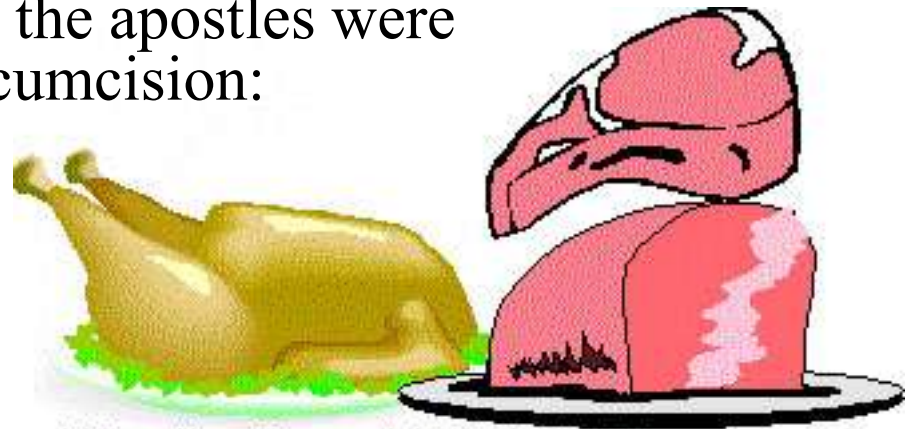
In **Acts 15:28-29** it says that when the apostles were presented with the question of circumcision:

“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:

You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality.

You will do well to avoid these things.”

They were loosed from the law of circumcision and even more at a later stage. You’ll find that when Paul writes to the Corinthian church he effectively says that if you are eating meat and you don’t know that it has been offered to an idol, then don’t worry about it.



Was it offered to idols? Don't ask. Just eat it. Unless, of course, it a problem for another

Responsibility of Leadership (Binding and loosing)

1 Corinthians 10:25-30.

Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, for, The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. If some unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. But if anyone says to you, this has been offered in sacrifice, then do not eat it, both for the sake of the man who told you and for conscience' sake, the other man's conscience, I mean, not yours. For why should my freedom be judged by another's conscience? If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for?

So as the church grew they were released from certain things, but initially the church was told that they were not allowed to eat meat offered to idols.

You will find that Paul exercises his apostolic authority later on years down the line to even release them from not eating meat offered to idols. Binding and loosing was simply the authority given to the apostles to declare certain things allowed and certain things forbidden

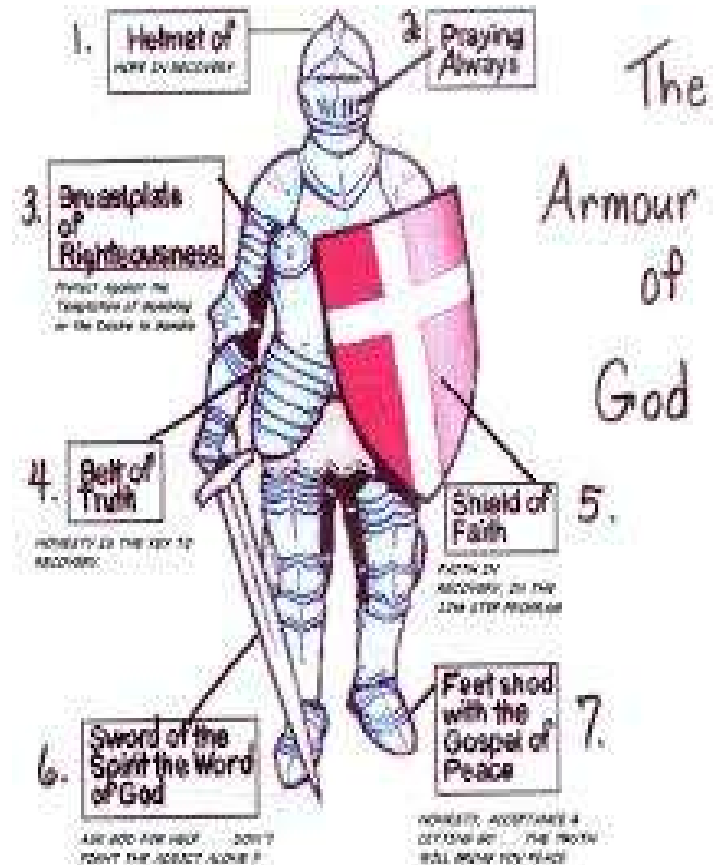
*** Grudem W, Systematic Theology, Zondervan, 1994**

Responsibility of Leadership (Binding and loosing)

If “binding and loosing”, “pleading the blood” were legitimate tools in our spiritual warfare and so effective, why didn’t the apostles ever use them?

You won’t find one instance with Peter or Paul or one of the apostles “pleading the blood” or “binding and loosing” the Devil or demons and all these other wonderful things that some Christians do in modern spiritual warfare.

They are not part of the weapons that are laid out in **Ephesians 6** when it speaks about the armour of God.



To have authority, you must be under authority.

Jeremiah 5:26-31

Among my people are the wicked who lie in wait like men who snare birds and like those who set traps to catch people. Like cages full of birds, their houses are full of deceit; they have become rich and powerful and have grown fat and sleek. Their evil deeds have no limit; they do not seek justice.

They do not promote the case of the fatherless; they do not defend the just cause of the poor. Should I not punish them for this? Declares the Lord.

Should I not avenge myself on such a nation as this? A horrible and shocking thing has happened in the land: The prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?



Biblical Authority.

Jeremiah 5:31.

The prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?

Without wanting to take away from the importance of God given Biblical authority I want to highlight that there are those who rule with their own authority and not God's, they have no Biblical mandate for the positions they hold or for the teachings and doctrines they propagate.

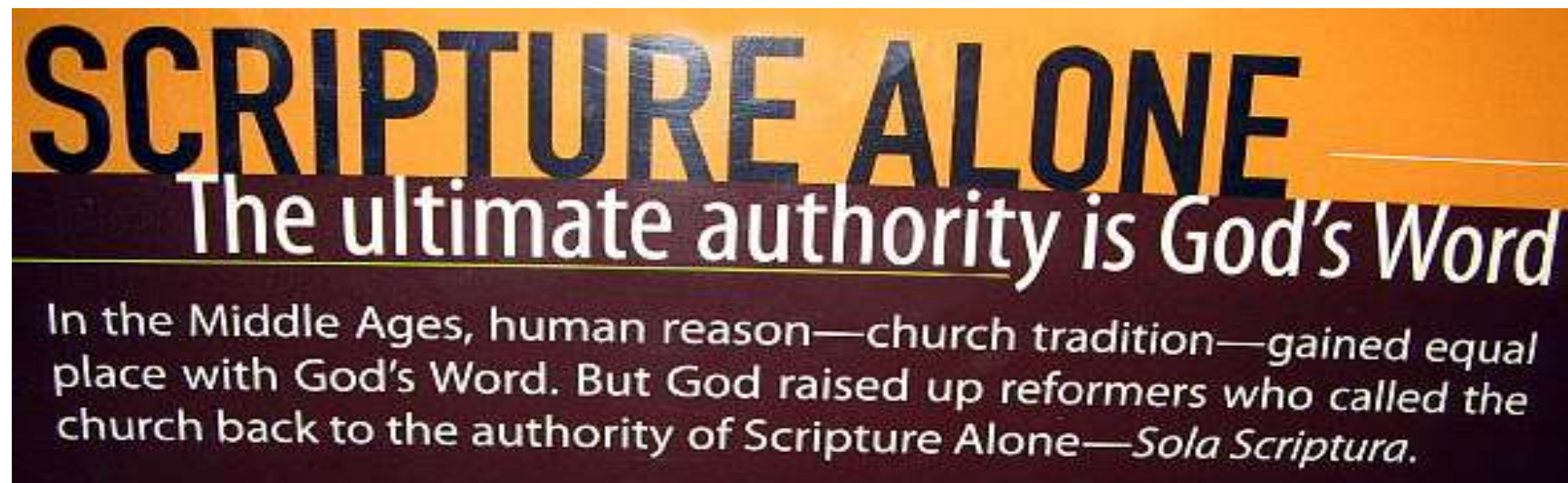


The authority of the Word.

Our source of direction in life has to be one of the following.

- ❖ **Humanism:** Man's ability to reason and evaluate.
- ❖ **Tradition:** Either of society (Culture) or the Church (What the denomination or Pastor and Elders say)
- ❖ **The will of God:** Revealed in the Scriptures which he inspired.

We are not to ignore the value of reason or the guidance of Elders or be insensitive to our cultural setting, but Scripture stands supreme.



SCRIPTURE ALONE
The ultimate authority is God's Word

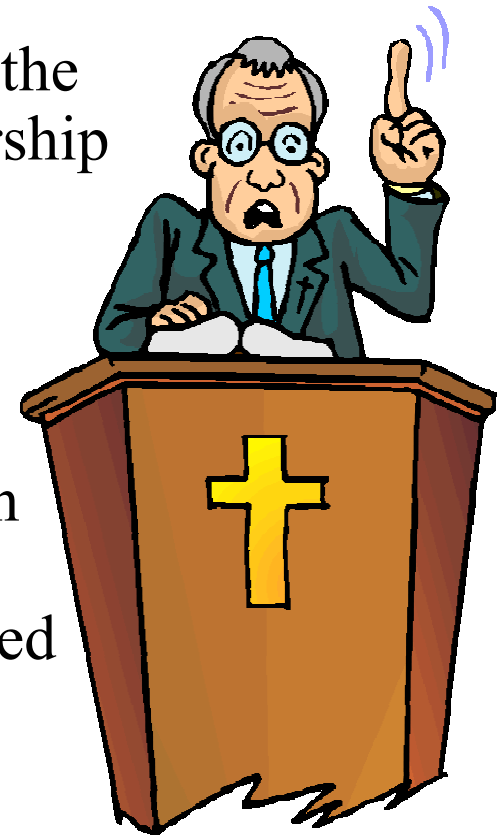
In the Middle Ages, human reason—church tradition—gained equal place with God's Word. But God raised up reformers who called the church back to the authority of Scripture Alone—*Sola Scriptura*.

If you are not under authority, you do not have authority.

Matthew 8:7-9.

Jesus said to him, Shall I come and heal him? The centurion replied, Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell this one, Go, and he goes; and that one, Come, and he comes. I say to my servant, Do this, and he does it.

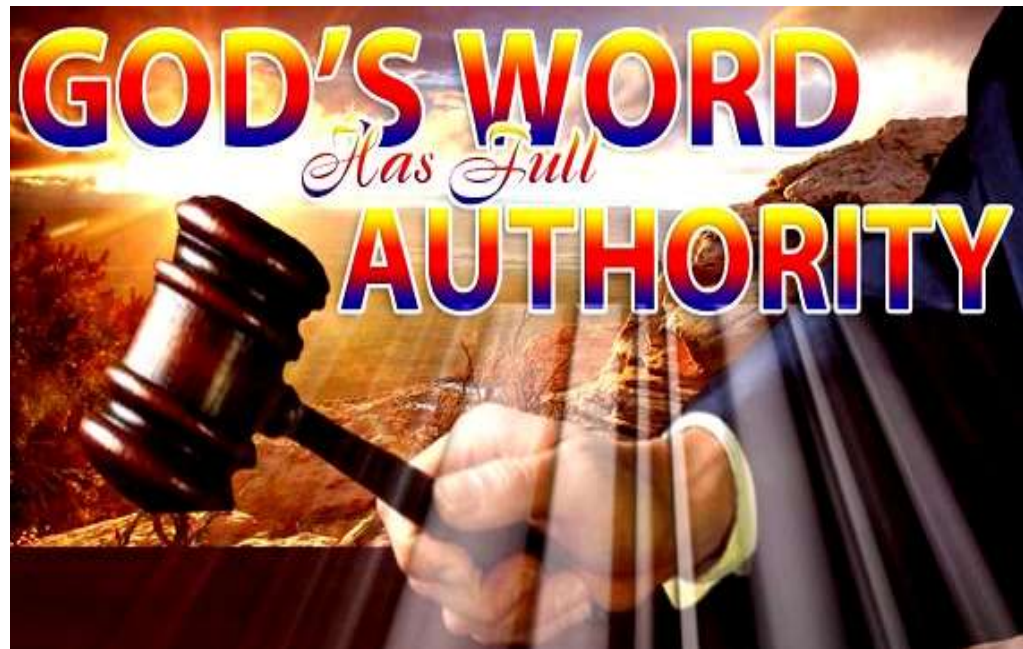
- ❖ There are many independent Churches today where the Minister is not accountable to anyone and the leadership in the Church is under his dictatorship and he is not accountable to them.
- ❖ There are also Churches that have no covering body that they are accountable to. Some of those that do have a covering of sort, only use it to get recognition from the Government to get licences to perform marriages etc, when anything is suggested or enforced on them by the covering body they just move to another one that leaves them to do as they please.



Different levels of authority.

It is of vital importance to remember that there are different levels of authority.

The Bible (God's Word) is a higher authority than the Pastor or Eldership or Parents or the Husband in the home and that you can challenge false doctrine and wrong behaviour and attitudes with God's Word in a submissive way. Pastors and Teachers are not to be put on pedestals, but you must guard your attitude when challenging them on the basis of God's Word.



Different levels of authority.

Acts 4:18-21.

Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, Which is right in God's eyes: to listen to you, or to him? You be the judges! As for us, we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard. After further threats they let them go.

They could not decide how to punish them, because all the people were praising God for what had happened.



Different levels of authority.

Submission is unconditional but obedience is conditional.

However obeying God rather than man has consequences.

Acts 5:40-42.

His speech persuaded them. They called the apostles in and had them flogged. Then they ordered them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. The apostles left the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the Name.

Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Messiah.



The position of Elders.

Elders are appointed for their spiritual maturity and wisdom.

The oversight is God's provision to guide the Church in the things of the Lord and the affairs of the local Church.

Hebrews 13:7.

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

Hebrews 13:17.

Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.

Those who best qualify to exercise authority over others are those who have first learned to submit.

Rebellion is a terrible sin in God's eyes, it is as witchcraft and is the sin of Satan.

Ministry is just another word for serving.

Many who run from the idea of being a servant, like being called ministers.

1 Peter 5:1-3.

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed:

Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them, not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.



Our attitude in serving is important.

Phil 2:5-7.

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Jesus Christ: Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant.. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.



1 Peter 4:11.

If anyone serves they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

Luke 17:7-10.

When we have done everything we should do, we should still realise we are unworthy servants.

Our attitude in serving is important.

Luke 17:7-10.

Suppose one of you had a servant ploughing or looking after the sheep. Would he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, 'come along now and sit down to eat'? Would he not rather say, 'Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; Would he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do?

So you also when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.'



Serving/Ministering

True Servants of Christ (John MacArthur)

How do you evaluate Christian ministers? People use all kinds of criteria to determine who are the most successful, the most influential, the most gifted, and the most effective.

I once saw an article called "The 50 Most Influential Christians."

There were some faithful ministers and wonderful Christians on the list; but the list also included some of the premier peddlers of the church growth philosophy, some extreme charismatic's, and two high-level Roman Catholics. In fact, an anti-Trinitarian modalist was at the top of the list. The people who published that article based their selections on the "meaningful" input of "Christians across America and around the world." That's disturbing on a number of levels, but especially because it represents a growing confusion about Christianity and Christian leadership.

Serving/Ministering

When people who turn the church into a mall, confuse the nature of Jesus and the Godhead, and anathematize the true gospel are voted onto a list of influential Christians, evangelicalism is in trouble. Hard times are ahead because so few are able to discern the difference between true and false servants of Christ.

If we return to the Word of God, we can find our way out of the cultural confusion and into the clarity of the mind of God.

1 Corinthians 4:1-5 focuses on the nature and marks of God's true ministers. It's a look at how God evaluates His ministers. You won't find Paul talking about popularity, personality, degrees, and numbers playing a role in the Lord's perspective--they should therefore play no role in ours.

Titles and positions.

There are 3 areas that a minister of the Gospel will be tested in:

Pride, petticoats and pennies (Position and power, women and money)

Pride is the one that is often not seen to be deadly and men position themselves to lord it over others and demand respect and hold onto titles.

The Pharisees of Jesus day loved titles and so do many of our modern day **“Servants of the Gospel”**

Matthew 23:6-12.

They love the place of honour at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called ‘Rabbi’ by others. But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one Instructor, the Messiah. The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

Titles and positions.

Let us take for example those who take upon themselves the title of “Apostle”

Do they meet the requirements that mark an Apostle in Scripture.

2 Corinthians 12:11-12.

I have made a fool of myself, but you drove me to it. I ought to have been commended by you, for I am not in the least inferior to the “super-apostles,” even though I am nothing. I persevered in demonstrating among you the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles.

The Apostles that Jesus appointed paid a high price for that Apostolic anointing.



Serving/Ministering

1 Corinthians 4:1-7.

This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful. I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart. At that time each will receive their praise from God. Now, brothers and sisters, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, Do not go beyond what is written. Then you will not be puffed up in being a follower of one of us over against the other. For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?

Serving/Ministering

1 Corinthians 4:8-13.

Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have begun to reign, and that without us! How I wish that you really had begun to reign so that we also might reign with you!

For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like those condemned to die in the arena.

We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to human beings. We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honoured, we are dishonoured!

To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly. We have become the scum of the earth, the garbage of the world, right up to this moment.

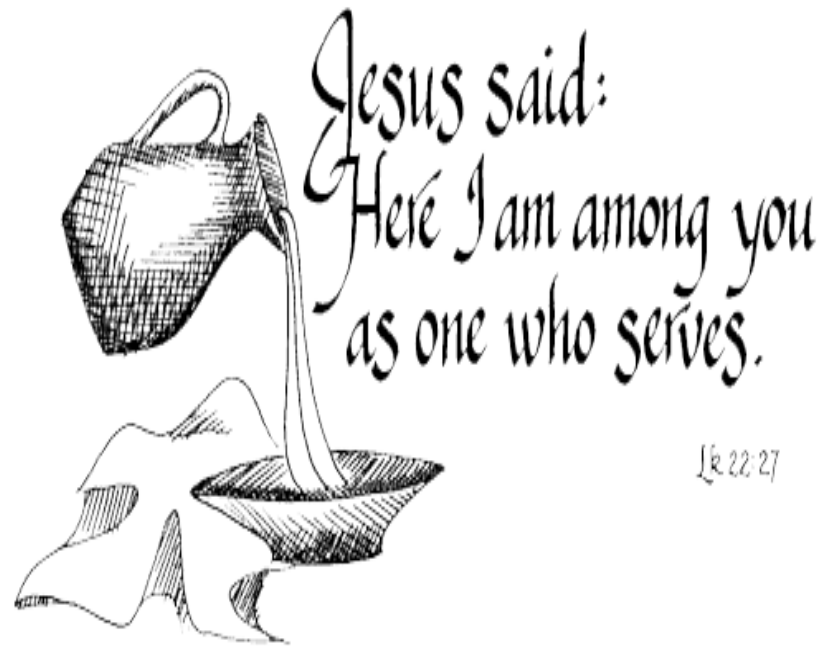
Serving/Ministering

John 13:3-17.

Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.

After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, Lord, are you going to wash my feet? Jesus replied, You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand. No, said Peter, you shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered, Unless I wash you, you have no part with me. Then, Lord, Simon Peter replied, not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!



Serving/Ministering

Jesus answered, Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you. For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. Do you understand what I have done for you? he asked them. You call me Teacher and Lord, and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.



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