



Preacher's Pen by Gene McCoy

The Biblical Elder is not only delegated with divine authority to rule the church of God (1 Tim. 5:17), but is charged with certain tasks and assigned a specific role in the church. Our Elders do a better job of tending to their duties than do many.

Some people have little knowledge of what our elders do. This prompts two comments. First, the people in the pew need to be more attuned to what work the Elders are doing. Second, the leadership needs to do a better job of educating the flock.

It is not possible for the person in the pew to know all that the Elders do by virtue of the fact that much of it is personal in scope and confidential in nature. Nor do these men have a selfish interest in boasting about all they do. It gives me pleasure to brag on them because a functioning Eldership is a preacher's greatest delight and security.

TEACHING

Our Elders feed the flock by teaching the Word. Some are engaged in formal Bible instruction. All of them teach by setting a good example to the flock not only in their personal lives, but also in their faithful attendance at church meetings. There was a time when few of the Elders attended the midweek Bible class. But that is no longer true.

Some of our Elders are adept at writing, using that skill to instruct and counsel the sheep.

COUNSELING

Not only do our Elders provide personal counsel to sheep in distress and danger, but they are also equipped with a knowledge of the Bible adequate

enough to engage in theological and doctrinal discussions on an advanced level.

They have demonstrated the ability to fulfill their responsibility in disciplining wayward sheep in a firm, yet gracious manner.

ADMINISTRATION

Our Elders function in varying degrees of managing the organization of the church. They assist the preachers in planning activities and events that provide for the nurturing and health of the body. Each serves as a liaison for a ministry team.

All are engaged in setting policies that protect the flock and keep us focused on the right path.



Honor Your Pastors

LEADING

In all of these ways the Elders are out front leading the flock. They think ahead and plan carefully.

There is no way people in the pew can fully appreciate the prayerful deliberations in which our Elders are engaged as they make decisions. They give careful consideration to every decision, weighing the implications and ramifications of each one as to how it will affect individuals or groups within the body.

These are your shepherds.

Paul says we are to "know" them (1 Thess. 5:12). That word entails the aspect of appreciation. They need to be regarded as confidants and trusted friends. We have come to recognize their voice as being one of love, understanding,

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conviction, truth, integrity, and morality.

Paul says they are worthy of "double honor" (1 Tim. 5:17). Whatever else this means, it certainly includes the idea that these leaders are to be honored above all for their qualification and for their work. We are to voluntarily accept their authority as being divinely ordained and delegated. Then we are to submit to them, showing proper respect to these guardians and sentinels of our souls who keep themselves awake (Heb. 13:17) because of their genuine concern for the flock.

Our job as sheep is to make their job as shepherds one of joy (Heb. 13:17). This we do by honoring their office, trusting their judgment, submitting to their decisions, and following their leadership. The Hebrew writer indicates that there are Judgment Day implications to be considered in this matter of caring for our Elders and those who lead. Let us, then, be submissive to them.

I can confidently commend our current Elders to be worthy of your trust and support.

Pray for them.

Affirm them.

Follow them.