

Welcome to Calvary Church, Brighton



Today 24th June 2018 speaker Philip Wells, Full-time Elder.
This morning - "Eldership - a practical study (2)"

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Sermons and talks - calvary-brighton.sermon.net

Eldership - a practical study #1

Aim - to help us find the will of God regarding future ministry at Calvary Church by going back to *first principles*.

Q: does the bible tell us the name and address of the next (future) paid Elder?

A: unfortunately not

BUT - God does promise to guide and provide for his people in accordance with his word, and by his Spirit.

So ... presumably God has a BETTER way than just giving us the email address ...

- this probably involves us in praying,
 - examining ourselves
 - and our situation,
 - learning to trust God,
 - learning more about his ways by experience.

N.B. Isaiah's teaching - TRUST THE LORD

This teaching - the Lord is my shepherd ... I'll not lack

Eldership

Will aim to touch on the following thoughts:

- Why Elders?
- What are Elders?
- What are they like?
- How do you get them?
- What do they do?
- How do they do it?
 - but painting with a broad brush

My arrangement of thoughts ...

- 1. it's not just N.T. that has elders*
- 2. the N.T church did have elders*

3. the elders had various descriptive titles

Before asking "why and how Elders"?

Ask

Q: Why and how the church?

A: Jesus "[Peter: "you are the Christ the son of the living God"]...I will build my church and the gates of hell will not overcome it ..." Matthew 16:18

- Jesus' masterplan
- To gather Jews and Gentiles together across history and geography of the earth
- Against the opposition of the evil one
- Based on faith in Jesus the Christ as conveyed in the message of the gospel

Eldership #2

3. the elders had various descriptive titles

- Elder = presbyter ~ older
- Overseer = episkopos ~ bishop
- Shepherd = noun and verb "to shepherd" // feed sheep // tend sheep // pastor
- Also:
 - "Examples" - not "Lords" 1 Peter 5
 - Those who "rule" Hebrews 13:7,17,24,
 - The one who "rules" well 1 Timothy 3:5, 5:17

Q1: What do they do? Q:2 How do they do it?

Q1: What do they do?

A: they oversee, they shepherd, they "lead"

- N.B. #1 they are not a law unto themselves i.e. autocrats, but are under the Lord
- N.B. #2 they are to set an example (e.g. of selfless servant-heartedness)
- N.B. #3 the ultimate human place of authority is the church assembled. i.e. their authority derives not from themselves, not from appointing bishop, but from the church to which they are called and by which they are appointed (i.e. not exactly transferable)

Q1: What do they do?

1 Peter 5

- v.2 Shepherd the in you flock of God
- not by constraint, **but rather** from-willingness,
- not for unclean profit, **but rather** voluntarily
- v.3 Not as-if-lord of the possession **but rather** examples becoming to the flock
- v.4 And when appears the arch-shepherd you will be in receipt of an amarantine crown of glory

=> emphasises the nature of this role as:

- Delegated ... someone else's flock
- Heartfelt ... not just a "job"
- Not to "get one's own way" but setting an example [of Christ i.e.]
 - serving rather than being served
 - Leading rather than driving
 - Sacrificing rather than profiting financially

Q1: What do they do?

Those who “rule” Hebrews 13:7,17,24,

- v.7 remember your leaders []
 - Who spoke the word of God to you
 - taking a good look at the outcome of their conduct
 - Imitating the faith
- v.17 be persuaded-to-obey your leaders []
 - And be under them
 - They lose-sleep (= keep watch) over your souls
 - As ones who must respond an account (logos)
 - So that with joy they do this and not groaning
 - For that would be “un-tax-efficient” for you
- v.24 Greet all your leaders[] and all God's people
- Leader [~go] also “count” ??? [“go \$20”]
 - *Who go-ahead, who decide things*
 - *Spoke the word of God*
 - *Set and example of faith and conduct*
 - *Lead so as to have people accept their authority*
 - *Care for people's souls [=spiritual dimension]*
 - *Accrue joy and benefit in the church*

Q1: What do they do?

The one who "rules" 1 Timothy 3

- v.2 the overseer ... apt-to-teach [didaktikon]
- v.4 his own household well he manages [] children having falling-into-line with all reverence
- v.5 but if anyone his own household not to manage [] knows, how the assembly of God will he take-care {}
- [pro-istemi = before-stand → preside, preside over] ==> with appropriate response of giving respect
- {~epi-melo = upon-to-care → look after, take care of. }
- ==> *management, taking care of, and thus*
- ==> *there is a parallel between being father of family and being elder in the church of God*

Q1: What do they do?

The one who "rules" well 1 Timothy 5:17

- v.17 the ones elders who well [pro-istemi] =NIV "direct the affairs of the church" double respect are reckoned-worthy very-much those labouring in word and teaching
- v.18 ... worker deserves wages
- v.19 *don't receive an accusation against an elder except upon 2 or 3 witnesses. The ones sinning reprove so that the left-over-ones fear may be having*

=> financial provision shows the value put on teaching/word-ministry

=> [pro-istemi = preside over/ direct-the-affairs is much linked with word-ministry

Q1: What do they do?

To manage the church like looking after a family

- Caring and kindness + authority ⇔ respect
 - Enquiring and caring
 - Supporting and praying
 - Saying “no” in various ways
- “ruling” (AV) / “presiding” / “managing” / “leading”
 - let’s all do XYZ, e.g. change from using A.V., have a week of prayer
 - Strategic thinking, planning “this is where we should send missionary”
 - Showing a way forward “if we give money we could afford to XYZ”
- NOT as if Lord, but consistent with servant heart
 - “this is how to live, this is how to love”
- Elders serve congregation by servant-leading (not by taking orders from the congregation)
 - Making sacrifices for the church, but not being made a sacrifice
- They “keep watch over souls” (and have to give an account)
 - Is ABC still praying, serving, following the Lord. If not what can be done to put that right
- They “oversee”
 - How is everyone, how is the work progressing, who needs help? Who needs a kick? Who needs time and attention? Where are people at?

Q2: How do they do this?

- **some things** are solved at business meetings rather than prayer meetings (e.g. appointing the 7 - Acts 6, the overlooked widows)
- **some progress** is made via spiritual response, strategic consultation and planning (e.g. Paul and companions going over to Macedonia)
- **AND much is achieved** by word-ministry

Q2: How do they do this?

- much is achieved by word-ministry

e.g. take idea of "shepherd"

- Gather lost sheep (=evangelism)
- Guide wandering sheep (direct through issues of life)
- Feed hungry sheep (nourish, build-up, strengthen)

– *N.B. careful not to jump to idea of "preaching"*

5 arguments to back up the theme of word ministry

- *1. 1 Timothy 3:2 must be able-to-teach*
- *2. Titus 1:9 must hold fast to the trustworthy message as it has been taught so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it*

Q2: How do they do this?

- much is achieved by word-ministry

3. Paul's instructions to Timothy (as church leader)

- 4:9 a trust-worthy saying: *God is Saviour of ... those who believe*
- v.11 *"Command and teach these things ... devote yourself to public reading of Scripture to preaching [paraklesia/encouraging] to teaching [didaskalia] ... gift*
- v.16 *"watch your life and doctrine [didaskalia] closely. Persevere in these things ... you will save yourself and your hearers"*
 - *N.B. difference between commanding the word of God and wisely advising human wisdom*
 - *e.g. meditate on God's word = command*
 - *e.g. get up at 0700 and read bible for 20 mins = advice*

Q2: How do they do this?

- much is achieved by word-ministry

4. Paul's own method

- *Acts 20:20 "I have not hesitated to preach [anangelo = to announce] and teach [didasko] publicly and from house to house*
- *v.21 have declared [thoroughly-testified] to turn to God in repentance and faith*
- *v.25 preaching [kerysso = to announce] the kingdom*
- *v.27 I have not hesitated to proclaim [anangelo] to you the whole will of God*
- *v.32 I commit you to God and the word of his grace*

Q2: How do they do this?

- much is achieved by word-ministry

5. Jesus' own method

– *The sower sows ...*

- *The word!*

– *When surrounded by medical cases he slipped up saying "let us go to the surrounding villages so that I can*

- *Preach [kerysso]. For that is why I came.*

– *Where does the two-edged sword come from?*

- *His mouth (= his word)*

– *How did God make the world?*

- *By his word, by speaking*

Q1 & Q2

Q:1 What to they do?

A: they further and continue the work of Jesus Christ i.e. winning the lost and making his church beautiful and mature for him

- Gathering in the lost*
- Encouraging what is good, rebuking what is amiss*
- Shepherding: leading, guiding, feeding*
- Directing-the-affairs of the church*

Q:2 How do they do it?

- Presiding over decision making, planning, strategising*
- Supporting individuals*
- CHIEFLY and overall by ministry of the word of God*

=> isn't it a sobering thing and an amazing thing that the heavenly Almighty Saviour uses ordinary faulty human beings as the channels and instruments of the divine word to accomplish his glorious work of perfecting his church!

=> how we should pray for God to send his servants to serve in his churches