

What the Elders Wish the Church Knew

Acts 20:28

Introduction:

1. Not an easy job, rather, a job that places one in a position of responsibility of another person's soul (Hebrews 13:17)
 2. This is why it is so crucial one understand that this office is "desired" and should never be thrust upon a man. (1 Timothy 3:1)
 3. It is impossible to be the church as God would have it if we cannot be united (Matthew 12:25)
 4. Unity should be our goal.
- I. That the church would give them the benefit of the doubt
 - A. 1 Timothy 3:1-7 - The church appointed them on the basis of maturity, wisdom and equipped with good judgment.
 - B. Take caution when accusing an elder, defend them when others will not (1 Timothy 5:19)
 - C. Elders are often "safes" of personal information that will never be shared publicly.
 - D. If we cannot trust these men, even when we do not understand their wisdom in some decisions, then they should have never been appointed.
 - II. That the elders are not the opposition
 - A. Not a "we" vs "them" mentality
 - B. This attitude will destroy trust and the church (1 Corinthians 12:25)
 - C. They are prayerful and full of wisdom, their advice and correction should be heeded and appreciated (Hebrews 13:17)
 - III. That faithfulness is a two-way street
 - A. Elders have a responsibility to know and shepherd the flock (1 Peter 5:1-4; John 10:14)
 - B. The church also has a responsibility towards the elders (1Thessalonians 5:12-13; John 10:4)
 - C. Larger the church, larger the responsibility is upon the elders and the church
 - IV. That the church knew what their job is
 - A. Terms bishop/overseer includes decision making, but their role is much broader than decision making.
 - B. Ezekiel 34:1-4
 - C. They have the right to get involved in our personal lives, but not meddle.

Conclusion:

1. Psalm 142:4
2. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13