1 – **The Qualification of Elders - God’s Pattern For The Church**

1 Timothy 3 - Titus 1

2 - **God’s Plan For the Local Church**

* The church in Philippi had *“****saints****… including* ***overseers*** *(bishops; NKJV & ASV) and* ***deacons****”*. (Philippians 1:1)
* **Every church** is to have elders. (Acts 14:23)
* Every church is to have **it’s own elders**.
(Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2)
* **Deacons are to serve**. (1 Timothy 3:8ff)

3 - **God’s Plan For the Local Church**

* Titus was left in Crete *“that you would* ***set in order what remains*** *and* ***appoint elders*** *in every city as I directed you”.* (Titus 1:5; cf., Ephesians 4:11)
* ***“Set in order”*** - “in the sense of **setting right again what was defective**” (Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words)
* ***“What remains”*** - “to be lacking or absent, to fail” (Thayer) “**Wanting or deficient**” (NT Word Studies)
* The Lord’s church is “**lacking**” or “**deficient**” without elder**s** and needs to be “**set right again**”.

4 - **4 States of Local Church Organization**

* **Scripturally organized** - organized WITH qualified elders
* **Unscripturally organized** - organized WITHOUT qualified elders.
* **Scripturally unorganized** - without elders due to a lack of qualification
* **Unscripturally unorganized** - without elders though qualified men exist.

5 - **Use Of The Term Elder**

1. ***“Elder”*** - from the Greek “presbuteros” (1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Peter 5:1-2) - Note - always in the plural.
2. ***“Shepherd”*** or ***“Pastor”*** - from the Greek “poimen” meaning “to **tend as a shepherd**” (Strong). (Ephesians 4:11; verb form used in Acts 20:28 & 1 Peter 5:2)
	* **Not the same as an evangelist, preacher or minister!** (2 Timothy 4:5; Romans 10:14; Ephesians 3:7)
	* **Learn from the OT**. (Jeremiah 23:1-6)
3. ***“Overseer”*** or “***bishop***” - from the Greek “episkopos” meaning “one charged with the duty of **seeing that things… are done rightly**”. (Thayer)
	* Again, not the same as an evangelist!

6 - **Why study this?**

* **Only when seeking to appoint elders?**Preparation is needed!
* **Seeking to influence the world around us?** Leadership is about influence, Matthew 5:13-16
* **Impact at home?**What would our homes and families be like?
* **What if all our civic leaders and work leaders had these qualities?**
* **We all need these qualities as children of God!**
* **Other than domestic qualities involving the home and family, all attributes are “musts” for any Christians desiring to be saved and go to heaven!**

7 - **Why study this?**

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8 - **« If Any Man Aspire…  »**

***“Aspire”* - “to stretch oneself, i.e., reach out after” (Strong)**

**Why would a man “aspire”?**

1. **Concern for the purity and soundness** of the **Lord’s church**. (Ephesians 5:22-33; 1 Timothy 3:15)
2. **A love for the souls of others**. (1 Peter 1:22; 2 Cor. 12:15)
3. **A love for the truth of the gospel**. (Titus 1:9-11; Acts 20:28)
4. **Commitment to the work**! (Titus 2:14; 3:1, 8, 14)
5. **Commitment to continued growth**! (2 Peter 1:5-10)

9 - **« If Any Man Aspire…  »**

**What are your aspirations?**

**Are they fleshly and temporal?** (1 Timothy 6:10)

**Are they spiritual and eternal?** (Hebrews 11:16)

*“But as it is,* ***they desire a better country****, that is,* ***a heavenly one****. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for* ***He has prepared a city for them****.”*