

INSIDE OUT: God's Calling, Our surrender

God's Calling of Leadership: (Elders & Deacons) 1 Peter 1:1-5; 1 Tim. 3:1-12

Today's sermon: Housekeeping (chores) – not fun, but necessary – How are we being led?

-God has called every Believer to lead out in some capacity in their life: Not me???

(A. to lead their own life/heart; B. To lead within their home C. To lead other people into Christlikeness= discipleship) ...ALL of us are lead by example in our life & Christian walk:

-God calls some to lead out within the Church: Two sanctioned offices within the Church: Elders and Deacons (At the WELL= Elders, Pastors, Ministers, Support staff, Deacons, Min. leads)

1 Peter 5:1-5: "Therefore, I urge **elders** among you, as *your* fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, *and* one who is also a fellow partaker of the glory that is to be revealed: ² **shepherd** the flock of God among you, exercising **oversight**, not under compulsion but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not with greed but with eagerness; ³ nor yet as domineering over those assigned to your care, but by proving to be examples to the flock. ⁴ And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading ^[c] crown of glory. ⁵ You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God is opposed to the proud, but He gives grace to the humble." The WORDS **Pastor, Elder, Overseer** are all used synonymously & interchangeably

Consider the high calling of a biblically qualified Elder to lead within the local church:

1 Timothy 3:1-12: "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of ^[a]overseer, *it is* a fine work he desires *to do*. ² ^[b]An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, ^[c]temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, skillful in teaching, ³ not overindulging in wine, not ^[d]a bully, but gentle, not contentious, free from the love of money. ⁴ *He must be* one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity ⁵ (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), ⁶ *and* not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into condemnation incurred by the devil. ⁷ And he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*, so that he will not fall into disgrace and the snare of the devil." -Our elders are vetted seriously for their ministry qualifications, their marriages, their finances, their business life, their personal life, their neighbors, their calling, their theology and doctrine, and a thorough background check: It's a 3-4 month process.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

A. TO LEAD the flock spiritually: Acts 20:28 "Keep watch over yourselves and the entire flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which He purchased with His own blood."

To lead biblically is to rule; to spiritually govern; to give direction; to organize/order (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 9:27; 11:34; 14:40; Col. 2:5; Titus 1:5; 1 Tim. 3:4-3; 5:17)

1. Lead in **Prayer** and by prayer for all things at the WELL. (*What is God saying to us?*)
2. Lead in **Vision**. Hear from God, define, affirm, & relate God's vision to the Church body. (*Where is God leading us?*)
 - We are charged with setting the course and direction for the whole church
 - We will determine which ministries will help us accomplish the vision and which will not
3. Lead in ministry **accountability** to the Vision of WELL. All ministries are to align to vision
4. Lead in ministry **organization**. Oversee strategy, leadership pipeline for church body.

5. Lead in **stewardship** & oversight of church finances, investments, & ministry spending.
6. Lead as official agents of the church body in **legal** matters or responsibilities.
7. Lead by **example** as biblically qualified men in faithfulness, discipline, joy, & love.

***The Elders have assigned to the Executive Staff Team** (Me, Adam, Brent, Rex, Jared, & Kim) to lead the day-to-day business of the church, to lead staff, hire/fire, & make critical business decisions, oversee & execute the elder-approved ministry budgets, and lead ministry & building operations.

A. To Lead the Flock.

B. TO FEED others spiritually through God's Word: to train, to teach, to disciple; to model
(Jeremiah 23:4; 1 Tim. 3:2, 13; Titus 1:5-9, 13)

1. Feed the flock through weekly **teaching**, preaching, and discipling. (*What has God said?*)
 - We are charged with the spiritual diet of the flock. Do we know the spiritual condition of our body?
 - We are charged with giving spiritual direction to church-wide discipleship and we are to steward who is teaching in the church, what is being taught in the church, and when
 - We are to be men *given to the Word of God in personal life* and in our public ministry

C. TO CARE FOR the needs and souls of the church body: to nurture; to help; to serve
(1 Thess. 5:12-14; Hebrews 13:7; 17)

1. To care for is to shepherd/pastor the flock, **knowing** intimately their joys, needs, hopes, hurts, disappointments, trials, temptations, struggles, and sins.
2. To care for our people is to gently, lovingly, and patiently **walk with** them as growing, unfinished people in need of spiritual care and ministry.
 - We are charged with knowing the spiritual health and condition of our church body
 - We are charged with knowing the spiritual health and condition of our church staff
 - We are charged with engaging and ministering to our body through leading the Deacons who are assigned community group Coaches- who will know, support, pray for, counsel, encourage, and lead them as they pour into the leaders of each group
 - We are in the people-building business - helping our flock to grow spiritually in healthy environments

D. TO PROTECT the Church from all predators who would dishonor the Lord, His Word, or divide His house: to guard against; to rebuke; to give correction; to discipline the wayward
(1 Peter 5:2-4; Titus 2:15; 3:10-11; Acts 20:29-30; Numbers 11:17)

1. To protect God's flock is to provide spiritual **covering** for them against evil
2. To protect God's flock is to **safeguard** against false teachers, teachings, & ministries
 - We are charged with testing every minister, every ministry, every spirit within the church
3. To protect God's flock is to administer loving church **discipline** as needed
 - We are charged to administer church discipline with a view toward spiritual restoration to Christ
4. To protect God's flock is to problem solve and offer biblical **solutions** to struggles
 - We are charged with running to problems, not running from them. We are called to serve!

What is the church's responsibility to their elders? To obey them in spiritual matters, pray for them, and follow their leadership: as both covenant members or attenders of the WELL Hebrews 13:17 *"Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you."*

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.”

1 Thess. 5:12 “But we ask you, brothers, to acknowledge those who work diligently among you, who preside over you in the Lord and give you instruction.”

APPLICATION:

- A. At the WELL, going forward, all of our pastors will be considered Elders – as biblically, there is no separation. The role and office of Pastor/Elder/Overseer are all the same. 1 Pt. 5
- B. All of our current Pastors at the WELL, have been asked to step into the role of Elder too (Brent Southard, Rex Cole, Jared Musgrove, Mike Bui, Clif Kapka, and Taylor Morgan)
- C. All of our current LAY Elders will also be considered as Pastors at the WELL
- D. When we hire future Pastors at the WELL, they will need to be Elder-qualified men if they will be a successful pastoral candidate to be hired.
- E. At present, we now have 13 Elders: & we have 7 voting elders (5 lay elders: Kelly Harmon, Allan Kuykendall, Chad Poling, Mark Ohlinger, and Kevin Brown) – and Two Staff Elders: myself & Adam Crawford
-The new 6 Pastor/Elders who are rotating on, will not be voting elders yet for this year as they are trained in eldership. But they will be present for all of our current meetings.
- F. Because we are a biblically Complementarian church, Pastors and Elders at the WELL will always be men. Our biblically qualified women can and do serve the church on staff as Ministers, Ministry leaders, Elders’ wives, Deacons’ wives, and Support staff. Women at the WELL can hold any leadership position at our church and use their spiritual gifts and life experience in any role other than that of the Biblical offices of Pastor/Elder and Deacon.

****We will also be Officially Ordaining nine new men/wives to the office of DEACON:**

1 Timothy 3:8 Deacons likewise *must be* men of dignity, not ⁸insincere, not prone to *drink* much wine, not greedy for money, ⁹but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰These men must also first be tested; then have them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. ¹¹¹¹Women *must* likewise *be* dignified, not malicious gossips, but ¹²temperate, faithful in all things. ¹²Deacons must be husbands of one wife, *and* ¹³good managers of *their* children and their own households. ¹³For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a ¹⁴high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Competent, qualified deacons are critical to the health of any local church. We consider deacons officers of The Well who primarily – **along with their wives** – serve the church body with frontline ministry to group leaders and members, preserving and promoting church unity as they assist the elders and pastoral staff with the daily ministry and needs of the Church Body.

The elders and pastoral staff share the responsibility to discover, develop, and deploy qualified deacons. **Deacons are trained laypersons who have been nominated, tested, trained, and approved by the elders and will be installed for a renewable three-year term of service.**

Dacons will assist the elders in pastoral care ministry by coaching & equipping Group Leaders. Group Leaders are the first line of proactive care - & **everyone needs to be in a community group!**

¹⁴I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; ¹⁵but ¹⁵in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you will know how one should act in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. **=we have to get this right!!! – This is critical to the success of how we lead souls well.**

*We are an Elder-led, Congregationally affirmed Church (Church votes on key issues).

*Name all the Deacon candidates for Deacon Ordination on May 7th 5pm. =Ch. To Affirm them...