

# God, His Church, and His Elders



**Presented by the  
Kannapolis Church of Christ  
Kannapolis, NC**

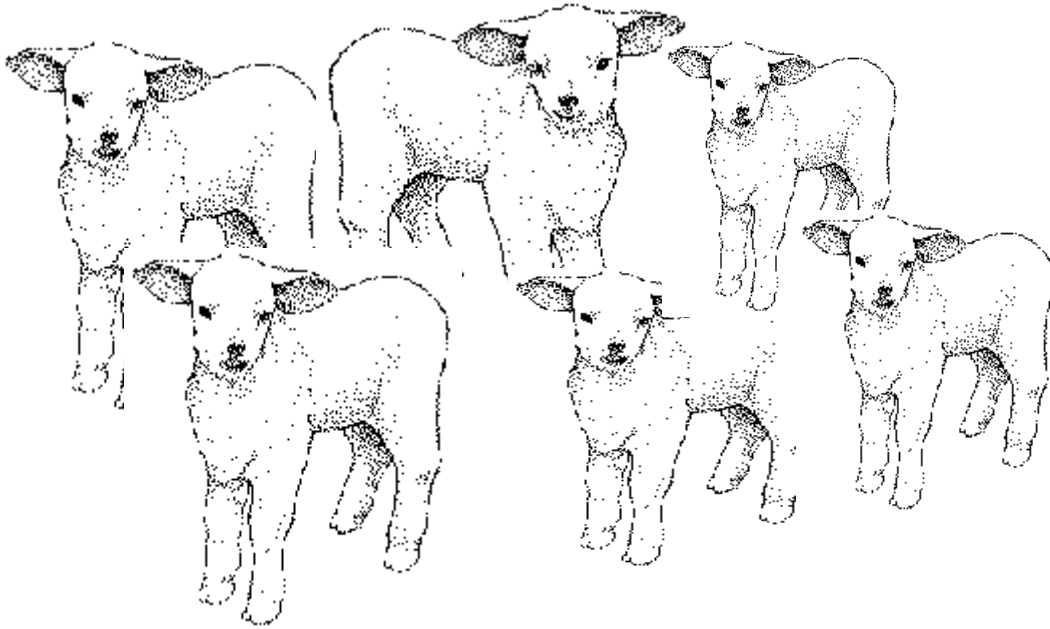
**Prepared by the Elders**

**May, 2001**

People do this to me. I am so glad  
that I am not one of them!

Remember that when the sheep  
want to act like goats -- and they  
will!





**Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Spirit hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood.**

Acts 20:28

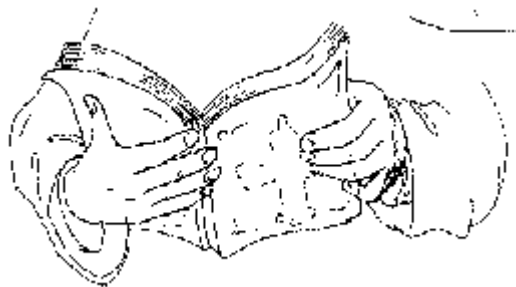
**Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever will save his life shall lose it; but whoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?**

Mark 8:34-37

# Fundamental Truths

Acts 20:28-30, Mark 8:34-38, Ephesians 1,  
Colossians 1

- Ø Shepherds lead the flock; they do not follow the flock
- Ø Church does not belong to any member; the church belongs to Christ
- Ø Church does not belong to any elder/eldership; the church belongs to Christ
- Ø Elders do not serve the church; they minister to the church to serve God
- Ø It is an eldership rule; it is not an elder rule
- Ø The church is not the elder's judge; God will be the elder's judge
- Ø The church does not give the elders any authority; that authority comes only from God
- Ø The elders do not take that authority; the church chooses them to accept that divine authority



# God, His Church, and His Elders

- ¥ The dynamics of an eldership
- ¥ What is the spiritual leadership style?
- ¥ The elders work/ministry/service
- ¥ The elder's inner life
- ¥ The example of Moses
- ¥ The spiritual growth of an elder
- ¥ The dangers/threats/perils
- ¥ Conflict resolution!
- ¥ How do we impact change?
- ¥ Decision making model
- ¥ The Good Shepherd's example



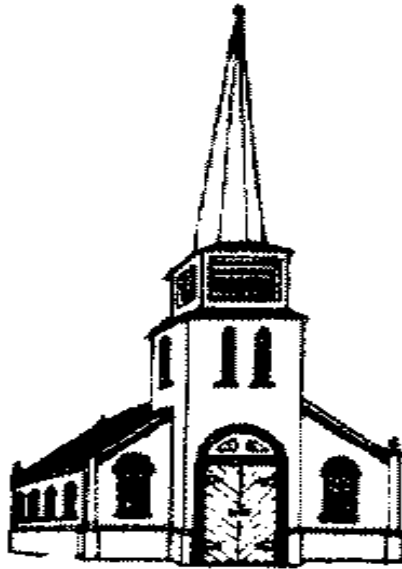
# The Dynamics of the Eldership

**A Dynamic within the eldership, with the congregation, and with the individual member**

- μ Qualifications/Skills
- μ Responsibilities/Tasks
- μ Relationships/Personalities
- μ Attitudes/Character
- μ Expectations/Realities
- μ Elder/Eldership
- μ Elders/Deacons
- μ Elders/Members
- μ Elders/Families
- μ Conflicts/Resolution
- μ Truth/Decisions



# The Nature of the Church



The church is a body and family of **fellows**:

- fellow members -- we all belong together
- fellow citizens -- we all live together
- fellow soldiers -- we all fight together
- fellow laborers -- we all work together
- fellow servants -- we all minister together
- fellow heirs -- we will all inherit heaven together

# The Elders

## Work/Ministry/Service

Acts 20:28-30, Titus 1:5-10, Ephesians 4:11-16,  
I Thessalonians 5:12-14



- ç LEAD: the sheep must be led and fed
- ç PROTECT: the wolves in/out of the flock
- ç CONVICT: the lambs must not be lead astray
- ç TEACH: the sheep must be nurtured and fed
- ç FELLOWSHIP: the elders smell like the sheep
- ç The AUTHORITY issue

# The Good Shepherd's Example

Matthew 4:23-25, John 10:1-18



- § The authority of his words (Mt.7:27-28)
- § Whose approval did he seek? (Mt.3:16-17, Jo.5:36-37, Ma.6:1-6)
- § The influence of his relationships (Lk.22:54-62)
- § He neglected no one, no matter what others thought he should do (Lk.15:1-2) Why? (vs.3-25)
- § The power of his integrity (Ma.14:1, Jo.8:46)
- § Dismayed yet always patient (Ma.4:36-41)
- § Endlessly prayed for himself and the disciples
- § He always saw the best in a person even when others put him/her down (Lk.7:36-50)
- § Not afraid to judge sin (Ma.7:1-14, Mt.23)
- § Surrendered to God's will (Ma.14:33-36)

## The Example of Moses

- ¿ "I AM" is our confidence/ability (Ex.3:13-14,4:10-12)
- ¿ His qualities made him a good influence (He.11:23-29)
  - faith (24)
  - integrity (25)
  - vision (26)
  - decisiveness (27)
  - obedience (28)
  - responsibility (29)
- ¿ His heart of compassion and prayer (Ex.33-34)
- ¿ His frustration
- ¿ His devotion (Deut.34)

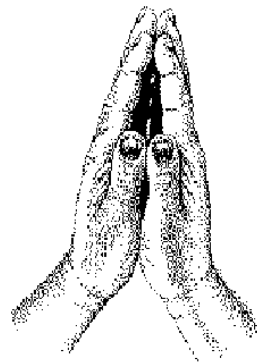


# What is the Spiritual Leadership Style?

## 1 Thessalonians 2

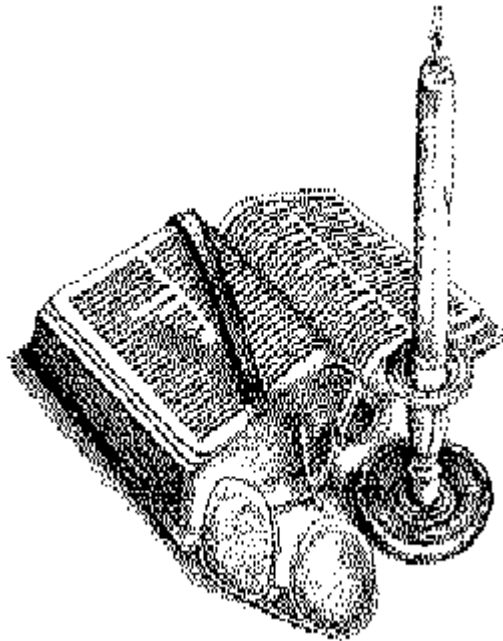
- ç A Mother's Nurture (vs.7-8)
  - gentle
  - caring
  - sharing
  
- ç A Bother's Example (vs. 1-6, 9-10)
  - no -- flattery, hypocrisy, greed, desire for praise
  - but instead -- toil, hardship, constant labor
  
- ç A Father's Love (vs. 11-12)
  - encouragement
  - comfort
  - urging or provoking

Outline from "Serving the Body" by Richard Rogers (1984)



# The Elder's Inner Life

- ⌘ God's goals (Rom.8:29, 1 Tim.1:5 and 4:12,16)
- ⌘ Intimate with God (Phil.4:13, Mat.5:3-12)
- ⌘ Pure in heart/life (Phil.4:8, Dan.1:8)
- ⌘ Humble in heart (1 Pet.5:5-6, Jas.4:7-10)
- ⌘ Trust God (Eph.3:20-21, Heb.11:8-12 and 17-19)
- ⌘ Obedient spirit (Jas.1;19-27, Mk.8:34-38)
- ⌘ Courageous spirit (Jos.1:5-9, Mt.14:22-33)
- ⌘ Truthful spirit (Mt.7:1-6)

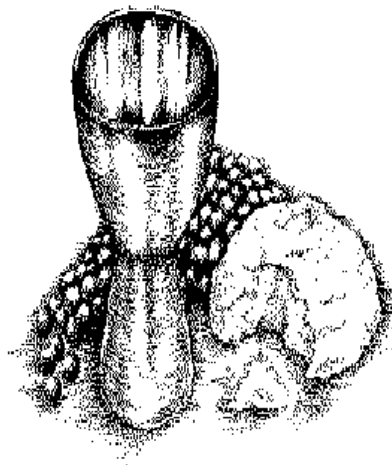


# The Spiritual Growth of an Elder

***Principle: Effective shepherding is rooted in spirituality -- in character, personality, and attitudes. It will be observed in deed/example.***

*Means: We become like the one we admire. So we must cultivate our fellowship with God in His Son (2 Cor.3:18, Col.3:1-17).*

- Ý Listen to God (2 Tim.3:14-17)
- Ý Converse with God (Jas.5:16, Eph.6:18-20)
- Ý Follow God (Jno.14:15,21-25)
- Ý Adore God (Job 38:1-33, 42:1-6)
- Ý Liberty of mind and soul (Rom.6:15-23, Col.2:6-23, Gal.5:13-25)
- Ý Awareness (2 Cor.4:7-18, 1 Pet.5:8-10)
- Ý Gratitude (1 Thes.5:16-18)



# Counting the Cost

## Luke 14:25-34

1. Gather all available/necessary facts and information before making any and all decisions
2. Stand together: you are an eldership
3. Support all decisions made by the eldership: if you can't, do not betray or undermine the eldership. Work through it openly and honestly with each other.
4. Think -- do not react
5. Do not gossip
6. Respect the appropriate barriers and boundaries
7. Beware of the agendas of others: sniff the air
8. Be honest/straightforward
9. Do not contradict yourselves when talking to the sheep one-to-one or the congregation
10. Be a good and willing listener: slow to speak swift to hear
11. Be as patient as humanly possible and then more
- 12. Learn to repent and forgive**

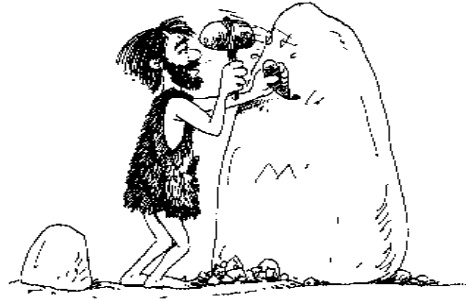
# The Dangers/Threats/Perils

- † Pride
- † Criticism
- † Discouragement
- † The troublemaker
- † The thorn-in-the-side/Conflicts with members
- † Worldliness
- † Dissention within the eldership



**The elder's greatest need "Take heed to thyself" (Ac.20:28). If Satan can destroy the leaders, he will destroy the people.**

# The Decision Making Model



1. Identify/evaluate the problem
2. Find possible/alternative solutions
3. Evaluate the consequences of each possible solution
4. Implement the most appropriate solution
5. Evaluate/learn from the results
6. Keep the congregation informed
7. Remember that only God's truth/law is absolute!

# How Do We Impact Change?

- ¥ Wholeheartedness (Hezekiah)
- ¥ Singlemindedness (Jesus, Paul)
- ¥ A Fighting Spirit (Nehemiah)
- ¥ Set Goals
- ¥ Execute effective decision making! (Phil.1:9-11)
- ¥ Delegate Responsibility/Authority
- ¥ Teach (Eph.4:11-16)



**Principle: Cultivate an environment that encourages change/growth.**

# Conflict Resolution!

***Principle: Avoid all gossip or power struggles or personal agendas of members. Always seek forgiveness and repentance. (Matthew 5:23-26 and 18:15-20, Ephesians 4:25-32)***

- ¥ One to one
- ¥ With witness
- ¥ Before the elders
- ¥ Before the Church
- ¥ Avoid anonymous problems
- ¥ Do not violate this process set in place by the Lord

**Remember -- Do not violate the privacy and trust of the members.**



# A Final Encouragement: The Example of Peter

- » Faith (Lk.5:1-11, Mt.16:15-19)
- » Loyalty (Jo.21:15-17)
- » Fearful (Mt.14:22-34, Lk.22:54-61)
- » Bold (Ac.4:13-20)
- » Humble
- » Struggled with the truth (Ac.10-11, Gal.2)



Remember that God entrusted Peter with the keys of the kingdom and always forgave Peter!!!!

God expects faithfulness not flawlessness!

