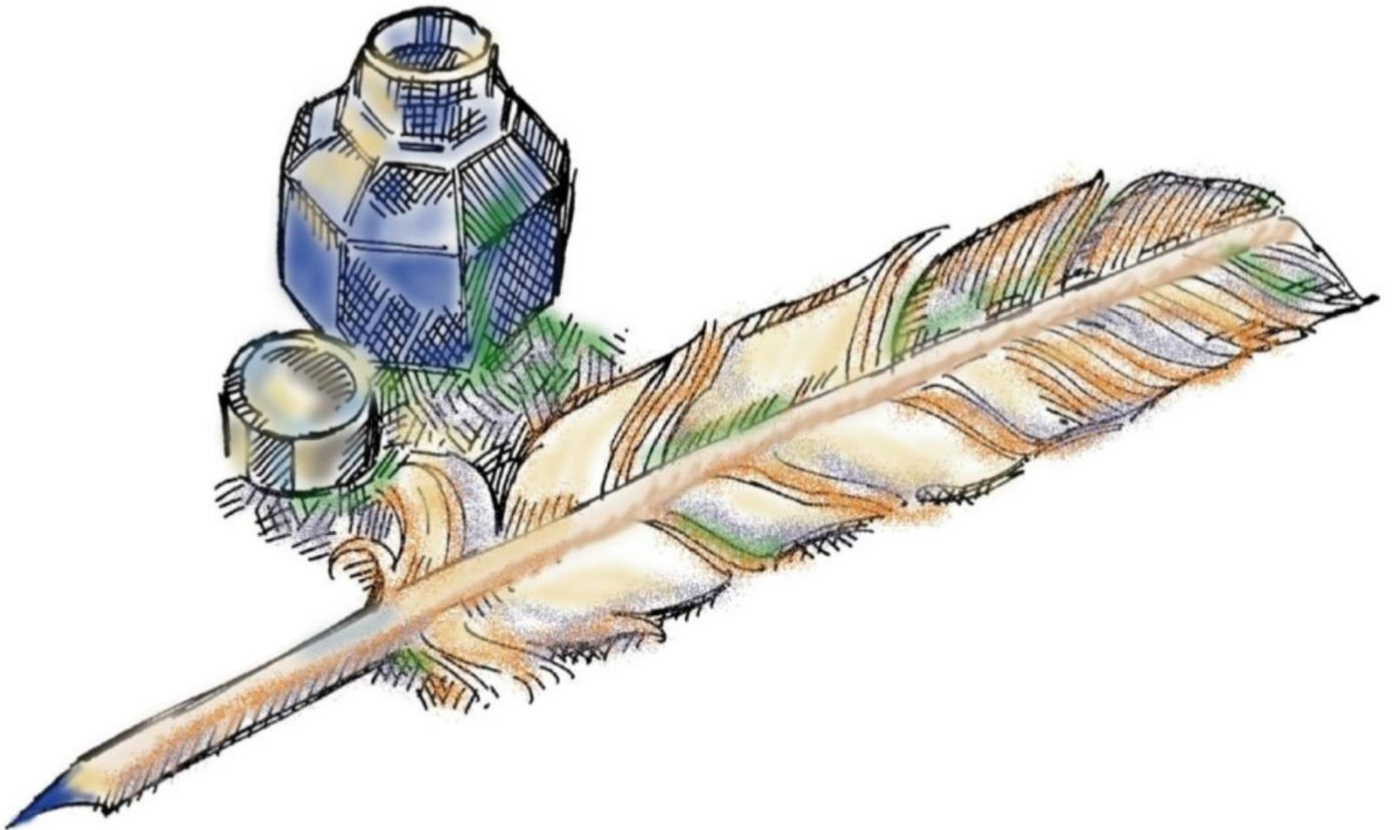




Constitution and By Laws



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CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior, and on the profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, we do now in the presence of God, Angels, and this assembly, reverently and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

Because of that, we determine, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and comfort, to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline, and doctrines, to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the Church, and the spread of the gospel through missions endeavors.

We also commit to maintain family devotions; to biblically and spiritually teach our children, to seek the salvation of family, friends and acquaintances; to live for Christ in the world; to be fair in our dealings, faithful in our commitments, and exemplary in our lifestyle; to avoid all talebearing, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from promoting the sale or use of, or engaging in ungodly vices, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible unite with a church of like faith and order, where we can carry out the Spirit of this Covenant and the principles of God's Word.

[UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED: AUGUST 16, 2000]

PREAMBLE

We believe it is the duty of Christians to make common testimony of their glorious faith, especially in these darkening days of apostasy. The members of this local New Testament, independent, indigenous, fundamental, Bible-believing church, do now and forever establish and unreservedly dedicated without compromise BridgeWay Baptist Church as a witness to the glory of God and the historic faith of the New Testament Church, including adherence to the truths set forth in this constitution.

CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I: NAME

The name of the Church shall be BRIDGEWAY BAPTIST CHURCH.

ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The purpose and mission of the Church shall be to “strive”, by the help of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord Jesus Christ as stated in Matthew 28:18-20, and elsewhere.

1. Every member shall be urged and expected to assist others in taking the Gospel of Salvation to the lost and expected to go personally.
2. Converts who have been led to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and received Him as Lord and Saviour, shall be instructed to confess Christ by Believer’s Baptism (Water Immersion).
3. Converts shall then be disciplined according to the program offered, as directed by the Pastor.

ARTICLE III: AUTHORITY

The Church accepts The Holy Scriptures as final authority on all matters.

1. The Bible shall be our rule of faith and practice.
2. The Bible shall interpret the Bible (Rev. 21:18-20).
3. Based on the accuracy of translation and a commitment to unity within the Church, the King James Version of the Bible shall ever be the accepted text for teaching and preaching.

ARTICLE IV: GOVERNMENT

1. The Church shall ever be an Independent Baptist Church made up of Born-Again, Baptized Believers.
2. The government shall ever be vested in its assembled membership, through its leadership of Pastor and officers.
3. The Church shall never be subject to the control of any other ecclesiastical body, nor denomination, nor association, nor shall any representatives ever sit in judgment over its affairs.
4. The fellowship of the Church with any other church can, at any time, be voided by the Pastor.

ARTICLE V: MEMBERSHIP

Salvation shall ever be a prerequisite for membership into the Church (Acts 1:41), and any person desiring to join the Church may be received into the membership at any service without prior notice.

Article V Section 1 – Admission to Membership

1. Modes

- a. **Baptism:** Any person, having been saved but not scripturally baptized (immersion), may be accepted into membership by following the Lord in Believer’s baptism (immersion) at BridgeWay Baptist Church. The time and place of the baptism is to be arranged for by the Pastor.
- b. **Letter:** Any person, having been saved and scripturally baptized (immersion) by another church of like faith may be received into the membership of the Church, by a satisfactory statement of faith and a letter of recommendation.
- c. **Statement:** Any person, having been saved and scripturally baptized (immersion), can be received into the membership of the Church by satisfactory statement of their faith in Christ Jesus.
- d. **Restoration:** Any person, whose membership has been terminated for any reason, may be readmitted to the membership of the Church after putting right. However, no restored member may hold any office for a period of six months.

- e. **Personal Desiring:** Any person from another denomination, that desires to become a member of the Church may be recommended for membership after due examination of their salvation and baptism by the Pastor and/or Deacons.

Article V Section 2 – Voting

No person may be admitted into membership without due voting by the existing members of the Church.

1. **Granting Membership:** Membership shall only be granted by a unanimous vote of the existing members present at that meeting of the Church.
2. **New Member Voting:** No new member may vote for 15 days, but may attend business meetings and give input, if so desired. (To prevent decision swaying and voting).
3. **Objections:** Any current member(s) with a valid Scriptural objection to any person being admitted for membership, must also have evidence for the objection.
 - a. **Privacy:** Any objection must be discussed privately with the Pastor and deacons. The Objector(s), Pastor, Deacons, and Prospective Member(s) must meet privately to discuss and resolve the issue.
 - b. **Invalid:** If the objection is found to be invalid, the prospective member will be regarded as a member. The Pastor will inform the Church of the decision.

Article V Section 3 – Causing Division

1. **Loss of Membership:** Any member who is participating in communication of any kind for the purpose of causing division, turmoil, or to undermine the stability of the Church, shall risk automatic loss of membership. (Determined on a case-by-case basis)
 - a. The Pastor and Deacons will meet with such member(s).
 - b. The Pastor and Deacons will review the situation and then decide what must be done for the good of the Church and its testimony.
 - c. The Church will be informed by the Pastor.
 - d. If discipline is necessary, the disciplined member(s) will be notified by a signed letter.
 - e. Disciplined member(s) can be restored to membership by a public apology to the Church.

Article V Section 4 – Use of Church Name and Property

1. **Ministries and Activities:** Any ministries (programs, schools, colleges, institutes, etc.) or activities on the Church's property or in the Church's name must have a two-thirds majority vote during a special meeting of members of the Church.
2. **Equipment:** Any equipment owned by the Church is for Church business only unless authorized by the Pastor or other Church officers.
 - a. Extreme care must be taken when using any Church owned equipment.
 - b. Church computers and internet service are password protected with limited access.

ARTICLE VI: CHURCH OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

All officers shall be expected to be an example to the Church and the community and shall be members in good standing and full compliance with the Church covenant and Statement of Faith. They shall tithe, give to the mission program of the Church, and be faithful in their attendance to all Church services. Absence for more than six weeks in a year shall give cause for dismissal from their office (unless it be for illness, a prior agreement with the Church, missions trips or evangelistic meetings, or extensive travel for ministry).

Any officer of the Church that must be disciplined for unscriptural conduct shall cease to function in his/her capacity until restored to full fellowship and reinstated to their position.

Article VI, Section 1 – The Pastor

The word 'Pastor' means a shepherd or spiritual overseer. With reference to the office commonly called the pastorate, as Elder or Bishop, I Tim. 3:1-5, I Pet. 5:1-4, I Tim. 5:17, I Thess. 5:13, Acts 20:28, and Heb. 13:7,17 are good examples and show clearly that the Pastor is to oversee and supervise the affairs of the Church.

1. **Qualifications:** I Tim. 3:16 and Titus 1:7-9 give the qualifications of the Pastor and his office. The study entitled "Ecclesiastical Relationship Between Shepherd and Sheep" is attached to and incorporated into these By-Laws as prepared and approved by the Church. This will be the accepted basis the Church shall abide by in relationship to the Pastor, his office, and his qualifications.

- a. The Pastor shall be an Independent, Fundamental, Bible believing, Baptist Preacher in full agreement with the philosophy of ministry and missions, and Constitution and By-laws of the Church.
 - b. The life of the Pastor and his family should be an example of Godliness and Spirituality.
 - c. The Pastor and his family should not indulge in sinful and worldly practices which weaken the testimony of the Church (I Thess. 5:22).
 - d. He shall not use profanity, alcohol, or tobacco in any form.
 - e. He shall not belong to any secret societies.
 - f. He Shall not bring disrepute on the Church through any sinful practice or un-godly associations. If he shall be determined to be so by a two-thirds majority vote, it shall be grounds for his dismissal, if the action is persisted in. Rom. 12:1-2; II Cor. 6:11-18; I Cor. 5:1-13
 - g. No person shall be considered for nor serve in the office whose beliefs and teachings are not in accordance with the Articles of Faith adopted by the Church.
 - h. No person shall be considered for nor serve as Pastor who maintains any connection with the National Council of World Churches or any of its agencies, conventions, or bodies.
 - i. No person shall be considered for nor serve as Pastor who believes in the concept of the Universal church.
 - j. No woman shall be considered for nor serve as Pastor of the Church.
 - k. No Homosexual person or a person associated with the LGBTQ+ community shall ever be considered for nor serve as Pastor of the Church.
- 2. Term of Office:** The Pastor shall hold the office for an undesignated period. This shall be left in the hands of the Pastor as to God's call, unless it is determined by the Church that he is guilty of un-repented sinful conduct or unscriptural teaching.
- 3. Liberty:** The Pastor shall have liberty to present any matter he deems necessary to the Church, for its consideration and instruction.
- 4. Preaching:** It shall be the duty of the Pastor to preach regularly at the Church.
- a. The Pastor shall always oversee the pulpit and shall furnish the supply of speakers.
 - b. The Pastor shall administer the ordinances of the Gospel (Baptism and the Lord's Supper) and to perform the various duties that are incumbent of his office.
- 5. Meetings and Committees:**
- a. The Pastor shall be the moderator of the Church and preside at all meetings unless he so designates someone to stand in his stead. Only an officer of the Church may do so.
 - b. The Pastor shall be the chairman of all committees and shall act as legal representative in all matters of legality.
- 6. Church Personnel:**
- a. The Pastor shall have the right to hire, with the Church's consent, any staff members as needed and as the budget will allow. This includes but is not limited to: Assistant Pastor(s), Music Director, Treasurer, Church Secretary, etc.
 - b. All staff personnel shall always work for and under the Pastor, and the Pastor shall have the right to dismiss any hired personnel at any time, without the Church's consent.
 - c. The Pastor shall have the right to appoint the Sunday School teachers and superintendents. The superintendents may appoint teachers with the Pastor's consent.
- 7. Complaints or Accusations:** Because of his office, the Pastor shall be counted worthy of 'Double Honor' (I Tim. 5:17). No accusations shall be accepted against him without two or three witnesses of good report (I Tim. 5:19).

When approaching complaints or accusations against the Pastor (or any Christian brother) please keep in mind these two scriptures: **Matthew 18:15-17** – "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, take with thee one or two more, that in the word of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and publican." **Deuteronomy 19:15** – "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth; at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.")

- a. **Complaints:** Sometimes complaints and/or problems arise from a misunderstanding or miscommunication. If this occurs, the following steps are to be taken.
 - i. Any person(s) having a complaint(s) and/or problem(s) with the Pastor are to resolve these one-on-one with the Pastor and no outside discussion.
 - ii. After speaking with the Pastor, if the person(s) feels that the problem and/or complaint is not resolved, then they must go to the Deacons with the complaint(s).
 - iii. The complaint shall be in writing and signed with any evidence to support the complaint with no outside discussion. (If there are no Deacons, they may then go to the Church officers).
 - iv. The Deacons must talk with the Pastor with no outside discussion. If the written complaint is not a valid scriptural complaint, then the Deacons MUST discuss this with the complainer and then call the Pastor in.
 - v. If the complaint is valid scripturally and the Pastor refuses to listen to the Deacons, then the Deacons MUST call a business meeting and take the matter before the Church, regardless of any objections by the Pastor.
 - vi. The Pastor will be requested to be present. If the Pastor is able, yet refuses to be present, then it will be regarded as automatic admission of guilt by the Pastor.
- 8. **Special Situations:** Listed below are charges, if found by the Deacons to be true, that must be brought before the Church. In these cases, a vote shall be taken by the Church to determine whether to terminate the service of a Pastor. A two-thirds majority vote of Church members is required. Members shall consist of those in good standing and regular attendance.
 - a. Heresy.
 - b. Immorality.
 - c. Conduct that brings a reproach on Christ and the Church's testimony.
 - d. Serious misuse of Church accounts and/or funds.

Article VI, Section 2 – The Call of a Pastor

When it is necessary, by the death or resignation of the Pastor, the Church shall, without delay, proceed to secure a new Pastor in the following manner:

1. **Forming the Pulpit Committee:** It shall comprise between three and seven men.
2. **Committee Members:** It shall consist of Deacons or officers of the Church. However, in the absence of both, the Church shall elect faithful men after a time of prayer.
3. **Committee Responsibilities:** It is the responsibility of the Pulpit Committee to take care of all business of the Church during this time.
4. **Seeking Recommendations:** For recommendations, the committee shall proceed to contact sister churches with which the Church has fellowship, or the BBFI (USA).
5. **Contacting a Candidate:** Once a prospective candidate is found, the Pulpit Committee shall contact the candidate to confirm whether he is indeed a pastoral candidate. Upon confirmation, the following shall be done:
 - a. They shall send the candidate two documents – The Constitution and By-Laws of the Church and a Pastoral Candidate Application Form.
 - b. Upon receipt of the completed forms and required items, they shall be reviewed by the Pulpit Committee.
6. **Confirming a Candidate:** Upon approval of all items received, the Pulpit Committee shall contact either in person, by phone, or by email. All communication and information must be documented. Contact shall be made as follows:
 - a. The Pastoral and employer references.
 - b. The candidate, concerning His application form and required items.
 - c. During the confirmation process, Pulpit Committee wives may contact the candidate's wife and/or the wives of the Pastors who supplied references.
7. **Inviting a Candidate:** If the Pulpit Committee is satisfied with the interviews conducted, the candidate and his family is invited to come. During their visit, the following shall be done.
 - a. The candidate shall preach to the Church.
 - b. The Pulpit Committee is to interview the candidate, and Pulpit Committee wives may meet with candidate's wife if she is agreeable to meet.

8. **Voting on a Candidate:** It shall be announced at least one regular service prior to taking a vote that the visiting minister is a candidate for the office of Pastor.
 - a. He shall preach at least two services and teach at least one class.
 - b. He shall answer questions before the Church body.
 - c. The vote shall be taken one week after the last service a candidate is present.
 - d. A three-fourths majority vote of Church members is required. Members shall consist of those in good standing and regular attendance. There shall be no absentee voting. The vote shall consist of a "YES" or a "NO".
9. **Dissolving the Pulpit Committee:** At the call of the new Pastor, the Pulpit Committee shall be dissolved immediately.

Article VI, Section 3 – Deacons

1. **Qualifications:** I Tim. 3:8-13 and Acts 6:1-3 give the qualifications of Deacons and their office. The qualifications and duties of the Deacon(s) shall be found in the copy attached to this document entitled, "Ecclesiastical Relationship Between Shepherd and Sheep." No person occupying the office of a Deacon shall be considered to have any authority, unless given him by the Pastor to carry out tasks.
2. **Duties:** A Deacon is a servant. His office is to visit the sick, sorrowing, and needy which frees the Pastor so that he may prepare for the services of the Church. The Deacon is not the people's or the Pastor's servant, but God's, under the Pastor's direction.
 - a. He must execute the duties of his office in a dedicated, business-like manner.
 - b. He must manifest a concern for the growth, unity, and well-being of the Church. He depicts a zeal for lost souls and the un-churched.
3. **Quantity of Deacons:** The Pastor shall determine the number of Deacons according to the needs of the Church.
4. **Nominations:** They shall be nominated by the Pastor and Deacons and shall be voted on at the AGM.
5. **Term of Office:** A Deacon shall hold the office for two years, and then may be re-elected. Deacons may also hold another office during their term.

Article VI, Section 4 – Trustees

1. **Duties:** Trustees are, like the deacons, servants. They assist the Pastor by their availability and willingness to lend knowledge and expertise.
 - a. They are elected to sign legal papers for the Church.
 - b. They give counsel on matters of business pertaining to finances, etc.
 - c. They assist the Pastor in maintenance and repairs of the Church building.
2. **Quantity of Trustees:** There shall be at least two trustees and shall be male members of the Church in good standing.
3. **Limitations:**
 - a. They shall not have authority to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, transfer, or otherwise encumber the Church property without a two-thirds majority vote of Church members authorizing such action.
 - b. They shall not have authority to sign any negotiable instrument without a two-thirds majority vote of Church members in a business meeting.
 - c. They may only oppose by their individual vote as a member, in a business meeting.
4. **Term of Office:** Trustees shall hold the office for two years, and then may be re-elected.

Article VI, Section 5 – Treasurer

1. **Duties:** The treasurer shall be responsible for all monetary transactions. Including, but not limited to:
 - a. The counting of all monies and offerings. Two people shall be present during counting whether it be the treasurer and assistant treasurer or Pastor and trustee.
 - b. The depositing of all monies into the bank.
 - c. The posting of all inflows and outflows of monies each month.
 - d. The keeping of a fair and true ledger book or electronic record of accounts.
 - e. The issuing of a quarterly statement of all expenditures and deposits.
 - f. The signing of all negotiable instruments along with the Pastor's signature or any other so appointed in this capacity.

2. **Confidentiality:** The treasurer shall keep individual tithing/giving records confidential. The Pastor shall be the only other person allowed to access to this information.
3. **Term of Office:** The treasurer shall be hired by the Pastor and shall hold the office for an undesignated period. This shall be left in the hands of the Pastor as to God's direction, unless it is determined by the Pastor that the Treasurer needs to be relieved of the office.
4. **Limitations:**
 - a. The treasurer shall not open any charge accounts or make charges to any account without the joint consent of the Pastor, treasurer, and at least one of the Deacons.
 - b. The treasurer shall not disclose any individual tithing/giving information to a non-member or other person outside the Church.

Article VI, Section 6 – Finance Committee

1. **Duties:** The Finance Committee shall have the following duties:
 - a. It shall make provision for the opening and operation of such bank account or accounts as may be deemed necessary for the purposes of the Church.
 - b. It shall have access to all financial records. **Exception:** The Deacons and trustees shall not have access to individual tithing/giving records.
 - c. It shall ensure the financial records of the Church are kept secure and in the permanent files of the Church.
 - d. It shall assist in the preparation of an annual budget, which will be recommended to the Church for approval.
2. **Committee Members:** The Committee shall be comprised of the Pastor, Deacons, treasurer, and trustees. **Exception:** In the absence of Deacons, The Committee shall be the Pastor, treasurer, and trustees.
3. **Church Member Access:** The Committee shall allow, by appointment with the Pastor, the viewing of Church financial records by any member in good standing. **Exception:** Tithing and giving records of other members cannot be viewed.
4. **Allowance:** The Pastor shall have a spending limit of five hundred fifty dollars per week to operate Church business. Any amount over two hundred fifty dollars shall be approved by the Finance Committee.
5. **Return of Gifts and Donations:** All assets, gifts, and/or donations to the Church shall be the property of the Church and shall not be subject to the return of such to the benefactor at any time.

Article VI, Section 7 – Church Clerk/Secretary

The Church clerk/secretary position shall be held by a person with administrative skills.

1. **Duties:** The Clerk/Secretary shall be responsible for the following. Including, but not limited to:
 - a. The keeping a fair and accurate record of all Church business.
 - b. The signing all letters of recommendation and maintain a register of members.
 - c. The keeping the corporate seal, affixing it when necessary.
6. **Term of Office:** The Clerk/Secretary shall be hired by the Pastor and hold the office for an undesignated period. This shall be left in the hands of the Pastor as to God's direction, unless it is determined by the Pastor that the Clerk/Secretary needs to be relieved of the office.
7. **Meetings:** The Clerk/Secretary shall be present during all meetings of business, for the recording of minutes and written details of the meeting.

Article VI, Section 8 – Nomination Committee

1. **Committee Members:** The nomination committee shall be made up of the Pastor and Deacons.
2. **Expressed Interest:** Those that are interested in serving in an office must submit in writing their name and desired office to the Pastor.
3. **Submission of a Nomination:** The Pastor shall bring the name(s) to the committee, and they shall make nominations known to the Church to be voted upon.

ARTICLE VII: WORSHIP AND BUSINESS MEETINGS

Article VII, Section 1 – Meeting for Worship

1. **Weekly Meetings:** The Church shall hold weekly meetings for public worship, preaching, instruction, prayer, and evangelism. These meetings shall meet the following criteria:
 - a. They shall be for the membership and any visitors.

- b. They shall be held each Sunday morning and evening and one mid-week evening, or at regular times as the Church & leadership deem necessary.
 - c. They shall be under the direction of the Pastor or, in his absence, an appointed person.
- 2. Additional Meetings:** To instruct, enlist and inspire the membership to active labors of the Church, and to cause them to grow closer to one another, the Church shall foster fellowship of the members through but not limited to the following:
- a. A Sunday School program
 - b. Women's fellowships
 - c. Men's fellowships
 - d. Youth meetings and/or youth clubs
- 3. Special Meetings:** Whenever possible, the Pastor shall conduct revivals, youth revivals and rallies, mission conferences, and family seminars. The Pastor or a visiting Pastor shall preach.
- 4. Changes to Meetings:** No meeting shall be dispensed with or changed to another time without the approval of the Pastor.

Article VII, Section 2 – Meeting for Business

1. Conducting a Business Meeting:

- a. No business meeting shall be called without the Pastor's consent. **Exception:** If the Church is without a Pastor or if the current Pastor must be brought before the Church for misconduct. (See Article VI, Section 1, 7) Under these two conditions, the Deacons shall call for a business meeting.
- b. The meeting shall be opened and closed with prayer, after which the Pastor shall introduce the matters of business to be discussed and voted upon.
- c. The moderator may address any subject under discussion.
- d. Members who wish to speak shall rise and respectively address the moderator. **Exception:** Any member not in regular attendance or in good standing shall automatically forfeit the right to vote in any meeting or on any issue.
- e. No second motion shall be entertained until the one under consideration has been disposed of, except a motion of amendment, adjournment or 'puts the question'.
- f. Any speaker who introduces any matter foreign to the subject under discussion shall be ruled out of order and shall forfeit the speaker's right to the floor.
- g. Discourteous language or remarks adapted to injure the reputation, or the feelings of any member shall be ruled out of order and shall forfeit the speaker's right to the floor.
- h. No member shall speak more than twice upon the same subject.
- i. A majority vote of those present and eligible to vote shall determine any matter voted upon. **Exception:** The call or the dismissal of the Pastor and/or when amending this Constitution and By Laws, a three-fourths majority vote of Church members shall determine.

Notice: Members shall be concerned with and endeavor to attend all business meetings. If a member is unable to be present, they shall lovingly abide by and cooperate with all matters of business voted upon and approved. In summary, if a member desires to have input, be at the meeting!

- 2. Annual General Meeting:** An Annual General Meeting of the members shall be held on the premises of the Church in the month of June each year, to receive and vote upon the business of the Church. At the meeting:
- a. Only members 18 years of age or older and in good standing shall vote.
 - b. The Pastor shall be moderator unless he appoints someone else.
 - c. The business shall be concerning the previous fiscal year, which shall be April 1 to March 31.
 - d. All officers, excluding the Pastor, shall be voted on. If there is a tie, the vote shall be taken again.

Notice: Should the date of the meeting need to be changed; two weeks' notice shall be given to the members.

- 3. Special Meetings:** Special meetings shall be called by the Pastor if he deems it necessary.

ARTICLE VIII: MISSIONS ENDEAVORS

As commanded in Matthew 29:19-20, the Church shall always strive to preach the Gospel to the whole world by sending Born-Again, independent Baptist missionaries as God shall make it possible. The mission's program of the Church is supported by "Faith Promise" giving, which is giving over and above the tithe.

1. The program shall consist of both home and foreign missions.
2. Individual missionaries and mission projects shall be recommended by the Pastor to the Church for approval.
3. All Missions monies must be used for support of missions and missionaries.

ARTICLE IX: WINDING UP (DISSOLUTION)

If in the event of such winding up, there remains, after the payment of all its debts and liabilities, any monies or property whatsoever the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Church but shall be given or transferred to another Independent Baptist Church or Churches which remain true to the spirit of the Church determined by the officers and Church members.

Notice: All assets, gifts, and/or donations to the Church shall be the property of the Church and shall not be subject to the return of such to the benefactor at any time.

ARTICLE X: AMENDMENTS

This Constitution and By Laws may be amended by an affirmative a three-fourths majority vote of the assembled members in good standing. All amendments shall be put in writing and introduced by the Pastor and presented to the Deacons. A decision shall then be made as to the pertinence of the business introduced.

Notice: No amendments shall ever be voted on regarding the 'Articles of Faith' of the Church.

ARTICLE XI: INTERPRETATION

The following words and expressions used in this constitution have the meanings set out below unless such meanings are excluded by or are repugnant to the context or subject matter, that is to say:

"The Church" shall mean BRIDGEWAY BAPTIST CHURCH.

"The Pastor" shall mean the Pastor for the time being of the Church and shall include an interim Pastor, as elected in accordance with this constitution.

"The Deacons" shall mean the Deacons for the time being of the Church as elected in accordance with this constitution.

"The Trustees" shall mean the Trustees for the time being of the Church as elected in accordance with this constitution.

"The Treasurer" shall mean the Treasurer for the time being of the Church and shall include an acting Treasurer, as elected in accordance with this constitution.

"The Finance Committee" shall mean the Finance Committee for the time being of the Church.

"The Church Clerk/Secretary" shall mean the Clerk/Secretary for the time being of the Church and shall include an acting Clerk/Secretary, as elected in accordance with this constitution.

"The Nomination Committee" shall mean the Nomination Committee for the time being of the Church.

"A Member in Good Standing" shall mean one who complies with the Articles of Faith and Church Covenant, is faithful in Church attendance, and faithful in giving.

"Month" shall mean a calendar month.

Words importing only the singular number shall include the plural number and vice versa.

"In writing", "printed" and "written" shall include handwriting, printing, email, direct message, text message, photocopier, facsimile and other modes of representing or reproducing words in a visible form.

Words importing persons shall include corporations.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SHEPHERD AND SHEEP



Dr. Dalton A. Walker

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The Rule of the Church By God's Rules

BridgeWay Baptist Church

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PASTOR'S PREFACE

Dear Friends and Fellow Worshippers,

I believe it's noteworthy for us as the members of the Church of our dear Lord and Savior – Jesus Christ - by way of *BridgeWay Baptist Church*, to embark into the study of the Ecclesiastical relationship between the Pastor and the people. Our authority for this study will simply be the scriptures. We'll be studying this doctrine (Bible teaching) of the Pastor in his relationship to the church for the next few weeks now.

Although it's not much discussed much today, the need is still here with even greater importance to know the PROPER relationship of the "Shepherd and Sheep". I am convinced that there is a great need to teach on this matter in the church today.

So, as we continue to grow, develop, and mature here at *BridgeWay Baptist Church* in the months and years to come, I'm very much conscious of the need for a church to be grounded upon the Word of God in every area. In this way, no storm will ever be able to move this great Church from it's foundation – which shall always be the Word of God. In order for our church to be strong enough to stand the trials of Satan, we are simply going to have to teach God's Word line upon line and precept upon precept.

The Bible says:

“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge...”

Hosea 4:6

LESSON ONE
The Distinction Between "Pastor and Teacher" and "Deacon".
Ephesians 4:11-16

And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; ¹²For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: ¹³Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: ¹⁴That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; ¹⁵But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: ¹⁶From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

I. THE FOUR GIFTS TO THE CHURCHES. Ephesians 4:12

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Evangelists
4. Pastors and Teachers

II. FOR WHAT PURPOSE ARE THESE GIFTS? Ephesians 4:12-16

1. Perfecting of Saints. vs.12
2. Work of the Ministry. vs.12
3. Edifying of the Body of Christ. vs. 12
4. Unity of Faith. vs.13
5. For Protection from Works of Satan. vs.14
6. For Growth of Love. vs.15-16

III. THE ONLY TWO OFFICES IN THE LORD'S CHURCH.

1. Pastor and Teacher. Ephesians 4:11

The terms Pastor and Teacher in scripture are inseparable or joined together. The one compliments the other. There is no separate office for Teacher in scripture, for the Pastor *is* the Teacher of the church. Everything taught in the church is the responsibility of the Pastor.

Any person teaching in the church must teach under the Pastor by his direct authority. It is the Pastor that must give a direct account unto God for everything that is taught in the church over which he is made the overseer.

Hebrews 13:17 – *They watch for your soul, as they that must give an account.*

Since there are only two "offices" in the church, there cannot be the office of Pastor, Teacher, S.S. Superintendent, Treasurer, or office of music. If there are but two scriptural offices in the church, then all others are designated as positions in the church under the Pastor's authority.

NOTE: The words "Elder", "Minister", and "Overseer" are terms used to describe the same person occupying the office of "Bishop." The words Bishop and Elder does not refer to different offices. Both are used to mean Pastor or Overseer, I Timothy 3:2,5. Elder describes Bishop, I Timothy 3:1,5.

POIMEN: Pastor or Shepherd and refers to the caring, leading, and feeding duties/responsibilities of this office.

PRESBUTEROS: Elder and refers to spiritual maturity of the one who holds this office.

EPISCOPOS: Overseer or Bishop and refers to the managing of the church.

I Timothy 3:1-5 – *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. ²A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; ³Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; ⁴One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; ⁵(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)*

2. Deacon. Acts 6:1-6, 1 Timothy 3:8-13

Acts 6:1-6 – *And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. ²Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. ³Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. ⁴But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. ⁵And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: ⁶Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.*

Deacon is translated from the Greek word "**diakon**" which means servant. All men who hold the position of a Deacon must be servants; however, not all servants must be Deacons.

ILLUSTRATION: In Romans 16:1 - Phoebe was said to be a servant "**diakonon**", Deaconess of the church. However, she did not hold an office. You do not have to be a Deacon to perform the functions of the office or position. A Deacon is one, because of appointment, who is responsible for certain functions.

Romans 16:1 – *I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea:*

- a. His Office or Position. Acts 6:1-6
- b. His Reason for Origin. Acts 6:1,4
- c. His Functions. Visitation and Prayer of the:
 - i. Widowed
 - ii. Sick
 - iii. Shut-in
- d. His Qualifications. I Timothy 3:8-13

I Timothy 3:8-13 – *Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; ⁹Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. ¹⁰And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. ¹¹Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. ¹²Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. ¹³For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

NOTE: No female was ever given this position. Furthermore, I Timothy 3:2,12 shows us a Deacon must be the husband of one wife. There is simply no room for interpretation that would include a woman as a biblical deacon. She would have to be the "husband of one wife", whereby she would be disqualified.

LESSON TWO

The Shepherd in His Office and His Qualifications.

II Timothy 4:5

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

I. HIS OFFICE.

1. He must do the work of an Evangelist.
 - a. This makes "full proof of his ministry." – Paul directed Timothy (inspired by the Holy Spirit of God) to **prove** his ministry through the burden of lost souls. Therefore, a Pastor is required to be a soul-winner or witness to his community. How else can he say, "*be ye followers of me*" if he doesn't set the example first?
 - b. A man can be an evangelist without being a Pastor, but he must work by the authority of a local N.T. church. He must also be the member of a local New Testament church himself – accountable to the church as well.
2. A Pastor Must be a God-Called Minister – How gracious Christ is to bestow upon any man the honor of preaching the cross and Christ's precious resurrection and future 2nd Coming.

Galatians 1:15-16 – *But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace,¹⁶To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood:*

- a. The Pastor should be separated from the old life – He must cause his life to fall into place with God's commands. When God calls you - you know. Notice the word "*separated*" in vs. 15. The difference between "mama-called" and "God-called" is that there are no regrets when God calls (Romans 11:29). He must "*know*" and not be told.

Hebrews 5:4 – *And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.*

Romans 11:29 – *For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*

- b. He should have a Godly Desire – God puts a desire there to do a good work. Not leisure; but to work for the Lord.

I Timothy 3:1 – *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.*

- c. What should a Pastor do? – He is to feed the flock over which the Holy Spirit hath made him overseer.

Acts 20:28 – *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

- d. He must give an Account – One day he will have to give an account unto God for his leading.

Hebrews 13:17 – *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

3. A Church Should Know Who is Called to Lead Them – A church should not accept someone blindly! It's foolish for a church to call a Pastor without a proper and thorough investigation. To do so, the church should acquaint herself with the 17 qualifications required of a Pastor according to Scripture and the Constitutions and By-Laws of the church.

I Thessalonians 5:12 – *And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;*

II. HIS QUALIFICATIONS

I Timothy. 3:1-7

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. ²A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; ³Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; ⁴One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; ⁵(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) ⁶Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

1. He Must Desire the Office of a Bishop. vs.1
 - a. No one can do his best for God if his heart is not in it.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 – *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.*
 - b. He must be content.

Philippians 4:11 – *Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.*
2. He must be Found Blameless. vs.2
He must be morally clean, self-disciplined, well-behaved, and doctrinally sound (not “without fault” Romans 3:23).
3. He Must Have Only One Wife. vs.2
 - a. Literally "one wife" (ruled out only by death). vs.4-5
 - b. This rules out women who cannot be the husband of one wife.
4. He is to be a Watchman, hence the word “Vigilant”. vs.2
 - a. He is told to watch in all things.

II Timothy 4:5 – *But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*
 - b. Against the wiles of the Devil.

I Peter 5:8 – *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*
 - c. He is to take the oversight.

I Peter 5:2 – *Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;*
5. He must be a Clear Thinker, “Sober”. vs.2
 - a. He must pray for wisdom -

James 1:5 – *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*
 - b. Wisdom is a necessity.

Matthew 10:16 – *Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.*
6. He Must Behave Himself. vs.2
He must be of good report from within and without.

I Timothy 3:7 – *Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*
7. He Must be Given to Hospitality. vs.2
 - a. Webster's definition of hospitality is “*Entertaining... with kindness and liberality.*”
 - b. He must do it sincerely.

Titus 1:8 – *But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;*

I Peter 4:9 – *Use hospitality one to another without grudging.*

- c. Available 24 hours a day
8. He Must be Able to Teach. vs.2
- a. Pastor & Teacher – The Pastor looks out for, The Teacher instructs.
 - b. To be approved of by God:
 - II Timothy 2:15** – *Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*
9. He Must Not Drink Strong Drink. vs.3
- a. Wine in the Bible was merely grape juice, not “fermented” grape juice.
 - Isaiah 65:8** – *Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for my servants’ sakes, that I may not destroy them all.*
 - b. However, in storing sometimes it did ferment. Therefore, to be ‘blameless’ he couldn't even touch it.
10. He mustn't be a Fighter. vs.3
- He must be a peaceable man, knowing how to hold his temper is a sign of being disciplined and “sober-minded.”
- I Tim. 3:2** – A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;
 - I Peter 3:7** – Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.
 - I Peter 5:8** – *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*
11. He Must Not Love Money. vs.3
- Money must not be his prime concern. The Bible dearly teaches that the church (the people) are to take care of the Pastor so that he can give his full time to the work of the ministry. It's not the money that is evil – but the LOVE of it.
- 1 Timothy 5:17-18** – *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*
12. He Must be Patient.
- Patience is a virtue all Christians are told to add to their faith. The Pastor, above all people, must know how to wait upon the Lord. ‘Patience’ here is waiting upon the Lord.
- II Peter 1:5-7** – *And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; ⁶And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; ⁷And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity.*
13. He must not be Contentious: vs3
- a. A brawler is one who is contentious, quarrelsome over matters of little value, always looking for something over which to take issue.
 - II Timothy 2:23** – *But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.*
 - b. This does not mean a Pastor is to run from an issue, however, or fail to fight for a principle.
 - Jude 3** – *Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*
 - II Timothy 4:7** – *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*
 - I Timothy 6:12** – *Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

14. He Must Not be Covetous: vs.3
 - a. Webster definition is “to desire, to long for, to crave, especially something belonging to another, envy.”
 - b. We also find it to be idolatrous.

Colossians 3:5 – *Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:*
 - c. I Kings 21 tells of the sin of Ahab in coveting Naboth’s vineyard. No greater sin is mentioned in the Bible because it is idolatrous.
15. He must be the Head of his House. vs.4
 - a. If he cannot rule his own home, how will he be able to take care of God’s house? vs.5.
 - b. Joshua 24:15 must be the rule and not the exception in a man of God’s home.
 - c. His rule should be by leadership and example, not dictatorship.
16. He Must be Mature in the Scriptures: vs.6
 - a. Not a Novice - one who is unlearned or unskilled in his trade or immature. This is why Paul said, “*lay hands on no man suddenly*” in I Timothy 5:22.
 - b. This is why a Pastor is to “*study, to show himself approved of God.*”
17. He Must Have a Good Name: vs.7
 - a. A Pastor’s reputation is as delicate as a woman’s and must be guarded as closely.
 - b. The world will not always love a Bible preacher, but if his name is good, they will respect him.

The Sentry

By Carel Fabritius



Wikipedia. 2023. "The Sentry (Fabritius)" Wikimedia Foundation. Last modified 9 August 2023.
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sentry_\(Fabritius\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Sentry_(Fabritius))

LESSON THREE

The Biblical Method of the Shepherd's Duties.

I Peter 5:1-8

The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: ²Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; ³Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. ⁴And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. ⁵Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. ⁶Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: ⁷Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. ⁸Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

INTRODUCTION: As you have seen in the illustration on page 9, "THE SLEEPING SENTRY," the responsibility of the shepherd (sentry) is sobering. The responsibility of pastoral leadership is second to none in the field of leadership. In a study of I Peter 5, we will see the duties of the office and the way the Pastor is to perform these duties. It is my belief that a faithful Pastor will perform these duties with due reverence and fear toward God and love toward those with whom he serves.

I. HE IS TOLD TO "FEED THE FLOCK". vs.2

1. Feeding the Flock; His Chief Duty.

John 21:15-17 – *So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?** He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my lambs.** ¹⁶He saith to him again the second time, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?** He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my sheep.** ¹⁷He saith unto him the third time, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?** Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, **Lovest thou me?** And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, **Feed my sheep.***

a. Sheep know the voice of the one who feeds them, hence, they will come to him

John 10:4,5 – *And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. ⁵And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.*

b. Sheep will not go to a stranger.

2. A Pastor Must Study.

a. To provide food for sheep and lambs.

John 10:4,5 – *And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. ⁵And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.*

b. Quality of food: Sincere Milk of the Word.

I Peter 2:2 – *As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:*

NOTE: In I Corinthians 3:2, Paul tells the Corinthian Church they were not able to digest meat because they had not first digested (accepted, adhered to and applied) the sincere "milk" of the Word.

3. Method of Feeding.

II Timothy 4:2 – *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.*

II. HE IS TOLD TO "TAKE THE OVERSIGHT". vs.3

1. He is to 'Take' the Oversight.

Acts 20:28 – *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*

NOTE: He is commanded to take the oversight. Unless he takes, he will never have the oversight. The Holy Spirit has made him overseer and expects him to assume it.

a. Not by constraint

b. Not for filthy lucre

2. Three Things in Regard to "Overseer".
 - a. Watch over all the flock - vs.2
 - b. Overseer defined: (Gr.) "**episkepo**" – inspector, overseer, watchman, and guardian.
 - c. Implication.

He is somebody! In the flesh an unworthy sinner, however, placed in position by God he occupies the most important office in the world.

NOTE: Paul said, "*I magnify my office*" in Romans 11:13, and 1 Thessalonians 5:12 leaves no doubt as to what position a Pastor holds in a church.

III. HE IS NOT TO "LORD OVER THE CHURCH". vs.3

1. Definition of Lord Overseer (Grk.) "**katakuriou**" – to force against one's will or to subjugate. He should not dictate. He is to lead by example, teaching and encouraging.
2. He Cannot be Led by the Sheep.

QUOTE: Dr. Bogard, "You ask your church what is the will of the body? BOSH! They don't have a will, they are expecting you to lead them. You are to instruct them what to do and they are to follow." All he was saying is "take the oversight thereof"

3. He Cannot Drive His Sheep.

The sheep are not to be in front of the shepherd; they are not cattle but sheep. If the sheep do not go willingly, they have no reward.

1 Corinthians 9:17– *For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.*

4. He Must Lead His Sheep.

This puts things in proper scope or biblical practice. When he leads, he is in front the sheep follow behind and everything falls into place scripturally.

IV. HE IS TOLD TO BE "HUMBLE". vs.6

1. In this manner, God will not resist him, and will give him Grace. vs.5
2. Under the "Mighty Hand of God", not Man. vs.6
3. Then He will be Exalted. vs.6

Matthew 20:27 – *And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:*

V. HE IS TO BE "DEPENDENT". vs.7

1. Why? "For He Careth For You."

This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord.

Psalms 105:15 – *Saying, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.*

Isaiah 54:17 – *No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.*

2. God Promises Shepherds a "Crown of Glory" vs. 4

VI. HE IS TOLD TO BE ON GUARD. vs. 8

1. The Lion's After the Sheep. vs.8
2. The Devil Never Sleeps.

Ezekiel 3:17-19 – *Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. ¹⁸When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. ¹⁹Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul.*

3. To Resist Him. vs.9

Ephesians 6:11-17 – *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. ¹³Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; ¹⁵And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:*

II Timothy 1:7 – *For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

4. This is His True Mark.

John 10:12-13 – *But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. ¹³The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.*

VII. EIGHT INDICTMENTS OR MARKS OF UNFAITHFUL WATCHMEN.

1. Lack of Vision. Blind and “Cannot see afar off”

II Peter 1:9 – *But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.*

2. Ignorant. – All ignorant. Willingly ignorant.

3. Cowards who cannot bark. – What good is a watchdog that cannot bark?

4. Lazy. – Loving to slumber

Romans 13:11 – *And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.*

5. Greedy. – Can never have enough.

6. Dull of Understanding. – “Cannot understand”, and they do not ask for wisdom.

James 1:5 – *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*

7. Selfish. They look to their own way.

8. Reckless and Worldly. – They are careless.

VIII. HE IS TOLD TO BE “FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT.”

Ephesians 5:17 – *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

1. He will thus be a soul-winner.

2. He will produce fruit of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22-26 – *²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, ²³Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. ²⁴And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. ²⁵If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

CONCLUSION: II Timothy 4:5 – *Make full proof of thy ministry.* A Pastor may fill these 19 requirements combined with 6 specifications, only if he is filled by the Spirit of God.

LESSON FOUR
The Sheep and Their Shepherd.

I Thessalonians 5:12

And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;

INTRODUCTION: In the first three lessons, we have learned of the shepherd regarding his call, his qualifications, and his method of shepherding. These are all responsibilities of a shepherd to his sheep. The responsibilities have been shown to be great, far surpassing the ordinary job. In conclusion though, the responsibility the sheep have toward their shepherd is just as great.

I. THE SHEEP ARE TO RECOGNIZE THE SHEPHERD'S POSITION. vs.12

1. The Words "Know Them," Teach Three Things.

- a. They are to know the qualifications of a Pastor.
- b. They should know his needs and see that they are supplied.

I Corinthians 9:7-14 – *Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? ⁸ Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? ⁹ For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? ¹⁰ Or saith he it altogether for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and that he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. ¹¹ If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? ¹² If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ. ¹³ Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? ¹⁴ Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.*

Proverbs 27:18 – *Whoso keepeth the fig tree shall eat the fruit thereof: so he that waiteth on his master shall be honoured.*

I Timothy 5:17,18 – *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸ For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward.*

- c. They are to know the extent of their labors.
"They that labour among you." – His toil, work, preparation, prayer life, visitation work, care of the church, and many other things should not be a secret. Know and enter his work, for I Corinthians 3:9 says we are *"Laborers together with God."*

18. Shepherd is Over the Church "In the Lord." vs.12

- a. The key phrase is "in the Lord".
He must be faithful to the Word of the Lord and seek to be in the will of the Lord in order to deserve to be over the flock.
- b. He is the 'under-shepherd,' under Christ, the Chief Shepherd.
- c. Who is qualified to say whether he is "in the Lord" or not?
The Holy Spirit places him there and will remove him, not men.

ILLUSTRATION: I am reminded of a situation that arose in Oklahoma years ago, after a revival. A disgruntled Deacon stood and said (in a bus meeting), "I think it is time to change Pastors." Another Deacon politely stood and said, "I think you are wrong dear brother; I think it is time for you to change churches."

19. "Over You" – A Misunderstood Phrase.

The Literal Greek translation is "**proistemi**" which means to reside, govern, superintend, etc. Translated "ruleth" in Romans 12:8 and I Timothy 3:4-5,12,17.

II. THE SHEEP ARE TO EXALT THE SHEPHERD.

I Thessalonians 5:13 – *And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves.*

1. How Sheep Should View a Shepherd.

a. "In esteem". vs.13

This is from "**hegeoma**" the same word used in Hebrews 13:7-24 which is translated "rule." This simply means let them have the rule or leadership over you. A leader cannot lead without the consent of the followers.

NOTE: Wise leaders may be important, but wise followers are just as important!!

b. "Very highly" in esteem.

This is the degree of esteem the faithful shepherd is to have from his sheep.

c. "In Love".

The shepherd must be loved by his sheep to rule and be able to rule by his love.

d. "For his works sake".

Personality, charisma, and poise will aid the sheep in loving their shepherd, but this is a carnal love. The love that counts is love given to him "for his work's sake."

e. "And be at peace among yourselves".

I believe this is both the means and result of a shepherd being as strong leader in the church and how a church will be if they follow the Lord willingly in these matters.

Hebrews 13:17 – *Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

III. THE SHEEP ARE TO DEFEND THEIR PASTOR.

I Timothy 5:17-20 – *Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. ¹⁸For the scripture saith, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. ¹⁹Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. ²⁰Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.*

According to Scripture, the honor and character of the Pastor is to be defended by the men of the church. There are two ways given to us that this can be accomplished:

1. By Proper Pay. vs.18

Protect the Pastor from needs. Verse 18 makes it clear he is talking about paying the Pastor his due wages. "Double honor" means double pay. The membership should protect the Pastor from needs so that he can give his full time to the ministry.

2. By Defending Both Him and His Family Against the Scorners

a. Those who cause trouble in the church are an abomination unto the Lord.

Proverbs 6:16-19 – *These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: ¹⁷A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, ¹⁸An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, ¹⁹A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

James 3:5-7 – *Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! ⁶And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. ⁷For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:*

b. Paul tells how to handle such a one in verse 20, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others may fear."

c. Paul tells us in Romans 16:17 to, "mark them which cause divisions and offenses...and avoid them".

A public testimony and example should be made of anyone who dare bring accusations or criticism against the church leader. This may cause embarrassment or hurt, but it will keep down trouble in the future.

If the scriptures and God say to do it this way, then this is the way it needs to be done.

I hope you've gained a better insight on a shepherd and sheep relationship according to scripture. May the Lord Bless us all as we strive to grow in our spiritual life.

Pastor Dalton A. Walker