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**INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPPING MINISTRIES**  
**ITEM Conference on Ministry and Preaching**  
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**PRINCIPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT LEADERSHIP**

Ministry Lecture #5

**Introduction:**

**I. CHURCH LEADERS MUST BE SPIRITUALLY QUALIFIED (1 TIM 3; TITUS 1).**

**II. THE LEADERS QUALITY OF LIFE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE NUMBER WHO ARE FOLLOWING HIM.**

- A. Any dynamic leader can develop a large organization. Many false teachers have very large churches.
- B. Paul was concerned about choosing leaders based on their Christlikeness.
- C. The churches in the New Testament had more than one leader.
  - 1. No church in the New Testament was ruled and managed by only one man.
  - 2. Each church in the New Testament had at least two elders.
  - 3. Each of the elders (pastors) must be willing to consult and work with the other men who are as spiritually qualified as he is.
  - 4. Having more than one pastor (elder) keeps all of them accountable to the others.
  - 5. These leaders are to be respected and followed (1 Thes 5:12-13; Heb 13:17) but they must NOT act like lords over the people (1 Pet 5:2).
  - 6. Leaders are to prove themselves to be examples to the church (1 Pet 5:3).
- D. The spiritual leaders in the church, the elders, are to serve as the pastors and teachers of the church (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2; 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9).
  - 1. Jesus is the greatest example of a shepherd (John 10:11-14).
  - 2. The elder must be with the people like a shepherd is with the sheep.

3. He must be willing to leave the ninety-nine to go after the one who is straying (Matt 18:12-13).
  4. The elder (the pastor) is to be the shepherd and the teacher in the church (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:9).
  5. Jesus taught individuals, small groups, and large groups. Jesus taught wherever he went (Luke 15:1-17:11). We can learn from him.
- E. A spiritual leader in the church must learn to establish priorities in ministry.
1. The apostles delegated the ministry to widows to other men so they could concentrate on prayer and the ministry of the Word of God (Acts 6:2, 4).
  2. The New Testament gives three priorities to pastors (elders): Shepherding (leading), teaching and praying for the sick.
    - a. Most pastors today are expected to do almost everything in the church, which leaves very little time to shepherd the people and study the Bible so he can teach the church.
    - b. God's plan is for people in the church to help with the ministry and help build up the church in numbers and spiritually (Eph 4:11-12).
- F. The specific duties listed for the leaders in the church
1. There are no specific duties listed for deacons because they are appointed to serve the church and help with any need that presents itself.
  2. The specific duties listed in the New Testament for elders (pastors)
    - a. Shepherding the flock of God (Acts 20:28)
    - b. Be an example (Heb 13:7)
    - c. Manage the church (1 Tim 5:17 "rule")
    - d. Teach (1 Tim 3:2) the church the Bible
    - e. Refute false teachers (Titus 1:9)
    - f. Pray for the sick (James 5:14)

- G. Christians should not be concerned about titles for church leaders.
1. Elders, bishops, pastors, shepherds, and overseers were all the same person in the New Testament church (1 Pet 5:1-2; Acts 20:17, 28 he was speaking to elders in verse 17 and told them to shepherd, which also means pastor, and to oversee, which is the word for bishop in verse 28).
  2. Qualifications and duties are what is important not titles.

**Summary:**

1. The more important factor in choosing leaders for the church is their spiritual qualifications not their talents, their money, or who they know.
2. There were multiple leaders in the churches of the New Testament not just one.
3. A spiritual leader in the church must learn to concentrate on the priorities in ministry.
4. Christians must not focus on the titles of their leaders.