

## Week 17 | Church

### What are the offices and ordinances of the church?

Leadership is important for any organization or team to move forward. The local church is no different.

The local church needs leadership marked by “\_\_\_\_\_.” In the New Testament, God set up two offices of leadership for the local church...Elders and Deacons. Both offices are described in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

The primary role of the elder is spiritual o\_\_\_\_\_ and leadership of the congregation. They set ministry v\_\_\_\_\_ and direction. They s\_\_\_\_\_ the flock.

Deacons offer oversight for m\_\_\_\_\_ and p\_\_\_\_\_ needs within the congregation. Practically, they take care of b\_\_\_\_\_, buildings, and benevolence needs.

### What about the pastors?...

*Pastor are elders. The words are used interchangeably in the Scriptures. It's the same office. Pastors are “\_\_\_\_\_ pastors” and the elders are “\_\_\_\_\_ pastors” (or you could say “paid elders” vs. “volunteer elders”).*

Spiritual leaders are servants that are \_\_\_\_\_ to one another and respectfully \_\_\_\_\_ to one another.

There are to be no stars in the church, just humble servants, working together for the mission of Jesus, the ultimate Lead Pastor of the church.



## **Whole Group Discussion**

*Who are some pastors/elders and/or deacons you have deeply respected? How come?*

*Why do you think there has been an increase of pastors who have fallen into sin and have had to leave the ministry?*

When you look at the New Testament church, there are two ordinances that Jesus established for the local church to regularly observe... Communion (or the Lord's Supper) and Baptism.

The Lord's Supper is the opportunity to remember the death of our Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus instituted communion at His last supper with the disciples.

### **Paul's teachings on the Lord's Supper...**

*"For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.'" 1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

Baptism is another very important ordinance for the local church. And again, it was Jesus who established baptism. Jesus was Himself baptized (Matthew 3:16) and commanded that people be baptized (Matthew 28:19).

The Greek word for baptism is “baptizo,” and it means “to be immersed into water.” We should be baptized for a number of reasons.

#1 To follow the example set by Christ.

#2 Because Christ (and the apostles) commanded it (Acts 2:38).

#3 Because it serves as a testimony to others that we are believers (Acts 18:8).

#4 Because obeying Christ’s command shows you obey Him and that you love Him (John 14:15).

#5 Because baptism has a great deal of scriptural significance.

Romans 6:4 says, *"We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life."*

Colossians 2:12 says, *"having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead."*

So who should be baptized? Those who have repented of sin and are united with Christ in the death and resurrection of Christ.

It’s hugely important to realize that baptism DOES NOT save anyone. Baptism is simply the outward sign of an inward commitment that a person has already made in their life.

The offices of the church should be a living and breathing example of the servant leadership of Jesus.

The ordinances of the Lord’s Supper and baptism should be an ongoing reminder that Jesus loved us enough to pay the price for our sins upon a cross, and that our response is to find new life in Him. And the church should be the living and breathing example of Jesus to all the world around us.



## **Small Group Discussion**

*Take some time talking about your baptism experience. Can you think of a baptism testimony that really impacted your life?*

*Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34. What were the issues going on in the church in regards to the Lord's Supper? How can we sometimes take communion in an "unworthy manner" today?*

*What are some ways you can make sure you're not taking the Lord's Supper lightly?*



## **Prayer Focus**

Do you still need to be baptized as a believer? Are there any ways you are taking the Lord's Supper lightly? Take time praying about these things.