

Elder Training Series

Session 19 - Job Duty of 'Directing The Affairs Of The Church': Categories Of Church Personnel, Finances, Property, Policies, Doctrines, and Programs / Activities (NIV based)

(Repeating) NOTE: Again perhaps it would be prudent for you to mark or highlight the items in this document that you need to work on or improve.

READ: "**The elders who direct the affairs of the church well...**" (1 Timothy 5:17a), and "**But you** [pastor Timothy]... **discharge all the duties of your ministry**" (2 Timothy 4:5)

SECTION POINT: The categories of Church Personnel, Finances, Property, Policies, Doctrines, and Programs / Activities need oversight from the elders, overseers, and pastors.

- - In fulfilling the functions that relate to "directing the affairs of the church", typically there are categories that are common to most churches and ministries for which elders, overseers, and pastors need to exert oversight.

-- 1. Church Personnel, such as pastor(s), elders, ministry leaders, deacons, support staff, volunteers, work teams, and etcetera.

- - At minimum, elders, overseers, and pastors should be at least generally aware of how the functioning of each of the personnel in their church or ministry is proceeding.

- - Confronting and holding accountable inappropriately behaving personnel must be conducted, and always by 2 or more of the elders, overseers, or pastors. (Matthew 18:16)

- - And, terminating personnel from their position must always be conducted by means of proper due process.

- - Personnel rightfully deserve an opportunity to hear and address any accusations or charges against them. And when appropriate, they should be allowed and even encouraged to make corrections in their performance - rather than or before they are terminated.

- - The tone, or atmosphere, or environment of the church or ministry is set by the top leadership, particularly by the pastor(s).

- - A loving and collaborative atmosphere is most conducive for healthy and productive godly ministry functioning of all of the personnel and volunteers.

- - Whereas, an unpleasant, or tense, or harsh, or short-tempered, or authoritarian, or abusive atmosphere is counterproductive to healthy ministry functioning by the personnel.

- - Team building and team cohesiveness amongst the personnel are definitely worthwhile endeavors to pursue. The pastor(s) should continually strive to develop mutually-amicable personal relationships and team building with the other top leaders. Likewise, elders, overseers, and ministry leaders should continually strive to develop mutually-amicable personal relationships and team building with the personnel, workers, and volunteers under their oversight.

- - The pastor needs the support of the elders - all of the elders (Mark 3:25). Therefore, elders need to be certain they are on solid biblical grounds when they withhold their support of the pastor.
- - Of course, when a pastor, elder, or ministry leader has an accusation brought against him, the other elders and pastor(s) are clearly instructed by God, "**Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses**" (1 Timothy 5:19).
- - When a pastor, or elder, or ministry leader is wrongly accused, or charged, and being unjustly railroaded out of the church or ministry, the other elders and pastors are rightly and justly obligated before God to promptly speak up and be active defenders and active vocal supporters of the innocent accused pastor, or elder, or ministry leader. (James 4:17)
- - On a relating and important side-note: When a former personnel brings a request to the leadership to conduct hearings to determine and set the record straight that he/she was falsely accused of wrongdoing and forced out by a former pastor or elder in that church or ministry, the current elders and pastors are rightly and justly obligated before God to investigate and then make an official determination on the record if they indeed determine the innocence of that former personnel. This fellow brother or sister in Christ has been unjustly ministerially murdered by a former pastor or elder, and definitely needs to be officially vindicated in order for the healing process to start and perhaps someday becoming active again in doing ministry. [For help from suffering this devastating ministry mistreatment, see the document "Recovering From Ministerial Abuse, Assault, Murder" on the "Counseling" web page of this website, www.BelieverAssist.com .]

-- 2. Church Finances, such as budgets, bank accounts, bookkeeping, payroll, bills, loans, offerings, donations, benevolence, perhaps daycare or school, and etcetera.

- - The challenges and dangers regarding finances are obvious, so it would be wise to always remember that anyone, even leaders and good true believers in churches or ministries, can be tempted to pilfer or embezzle funds, or cash, or objects.
- - The elders, overseers, and pastors are God's designated authoritative spiritual leaders of the church or ministry, so they are the ones who should be determining the financial direction of the church or ministry, which of course funds all of the spiritual programs and spiritual aspects of the church or ministry.
- - God expects elders, overseers, and pastors to 'direct the finances of the church well'.

-- 3. Church Property, such as physical building facilities, land, equipment, chairs, tables, supplies, teaching materials, perhaps a vehicle, and etcetera.

- - The elders, overseers, and pastor(s) should be monitoring and ensuring that maintenance and repairs are being conducted appropriately and on time.
- - And yet, the doing of the maintenance and repairs can and should be delegated to the deacons (servers), while remaining under elder oversight and authority.

-- 4. Church Policies, such as rules, procedures, requirements, meetings, membership, staff, employees, allocations, and etcetera.

- - Logically, the elders, overseers, and pastor(s) should be determining and setting the various policies of the church or ministry, while at least monitoring the implementing and the enforcing of those policies.

- - For some policies, they should actively seek feedback and measure results, so that a policy can be modified to make it more appropriate or effective.
- - Policies should be set by a vote of all the elders, overseers, and pastor(s), and not be set by a personal whim of one elder, or overseer, or pastor.
- - Furthermore, policies that were set in the past by prior leadership and inherited by the current leadership, should be reviewed and corrected if warranted or if not-aligned to the Scriptures, for examples: the policy of having no elder positions in the church, or the policy of allowing non-members and non-believers to vote in a congregational meeting.

-- 5. Church doctrines, such as theological doctrines, ordinances, ceremonies, rituals, rites, customs, spiritual gifts, spiritual warfare, counseling, homosexuality, and etcetera.

- - The elders, overseers, and pastor(s) are commanded by God that:
 - - - they "**must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine**" (Titus 2:1);
 - - - they must "**refute those who oppose it**" (Titus 1:9);
 - - - they must "**command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer**" (1 Timothy 1:3);
 - - - they must "**watch [their]... doctrine closely**" and "**persevere in [it]**" (1 Timothy 4:16);
 - - - they must "**guard what has been entrusted to [their] care**", "having" "**turned away from... what is false**" doctrine (1 Timothy 6:20, Strong's #1624).
- - These commands from God are very specific, very direct, very non-negotiable, and very targeted to the elders, overseers, and pastor(s) to be doing.
- - Also notice how forceful, confrontational, and authoritative these commands are.
- - A justified conclusion is that God is extremely serious that there needs to be sound doctrines in the church or ministry, with no false doctrines. And God has charged the leadership to be supremely responsible to establish, maintain, and guard this condition.
- - Elders, overseers, and pastor(s) would be wise to treat these commands as seriously as God does.
- - If you think about it, false doctrines actually directly implant, feed, enhance, and energize the agendas of the Kingdom of Darkness: within God's churches and ministries; among God's people, workers, and leaders; while they think they are doing God's work; but in reality they are supplanting God's work with the practicing and the advancing of the agendas of the Kingdom of Darkness!!
- - The Kingdom of Darkness directly opposes and targets all true churches and ministries, so it would be wise to be prepared for an incursion of false doctrine into your church or ministry.
- - In advance, do research and study sound doctrines. Learn them thoroughly. Cement them as high priority in your mind and heart. [NOTE: There are numerous documents on doctrines available for free download on the 'Doctrines' web-page of this web-site, www.BelieverAssist.com .]
- - Always maintain high alert and vigilance in your church or ministry for false doctrines, from your ministry leaders, from your members, and from your attenders.
- - When detected, immediately take bold, courageous, and formidable action to stop the false doctrine, as authorized and commanded of you by God.
- - If you fail to act and in a timely manner, then expect that your church or ministry will significantly diminish in effectiveness for God's kingdom and may even crumble to

pieces sooner or later, which thereupon you will not have much of a ministry that survives and remains.

- - How can you expect God to bless you, your church or ministry, and your people if you allow false doctrine in your midst?

-- 6. Church Programs and Activities, such as worship service(s), Sunday school classes, midweek Bible classes, youth groups, children's group, women's ministry, men's ministry, and etcetera.

- - The elders, overseers, and pastor(s) should be extensively involved in the implementation of some of the church programs and activities, as appropriate, or desired, or needed, or warranted.

- - In the programs and activities that they are not involved in the implementation, they should be regularly communicating with the ministry leaders of those programs and activities, to stay informed and to address problems that may arise. Those programs and activities should also occasionally be attended by an elder, overseer, or pastor, in order to ensure that the programs and activities are being conducted appropriately and effectively, and proceeding in a correct spiritual direction, with sound doctrine.

- - Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the elders, overseers, and pastor(s), who as part of their God-given duties of 'directing the affairs of the church', are to recruit, train, and equip new workers to be ready to fill worker vacancies in the programs and activities of the church or ministry. This responsibility should not be dumped on the ministry leaders, who usually have too much work to do as they endeavor and strain to accomplish all of the logistics that are necessary to run an excellent and effective program or activity each time.

- - Therefore, the elders, overseers, and pastor(s) should conduct training sessions, perhaps one each quarter, to not only train and equip new workers to fill future worker vacancies, but also to provide ongoing training and equipping for current workers.

- - If ministry workers are not trained how to do ministry, they will naturally revert to doing ministry by means of their own worldly-influenced thinking, perceptions, and experiences, which of course is divergent from doing ministry in precisely God's way.

APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

-- As an elder, overseer, or pastor, what is your approach to overseeing the ministry category(s), and/or program(s), and/or activity(s), and/or group(s) that you are responsible for or have been assigned to? Be honest.

- - - - Do you take a laid-back approach of 'do nothing until you are told of a problem and are pressured to resolve it, and then bark at the ministry leader for not resolving it for you'?

- - - - Or do you 'ignore the problem and hope it goes away'?

- - - - Or do you 'state that you will fix the problem but then are too busy to prioritize and apply yourself to working on the problem'?

- - - - Or are you 'unreachable by phone, or text message, or E-mail'?

- - - - Or are you 'frequently out-of-town, working on some other ministry that you like doing'?

- - - - Or are you in fact 'at home most of your available time, surfing the Internet or playing video games'?

- - Do you see the value in promoting team building and nurturing very good personal relationships with each of your fellow leaders? If so, what are you going to do about that?
- - Do you recognize and take seriously the real dangers that are inherent within the handling of finances? If so, what are you going to do about that?
- - Do you see and value the importance of being a good steward of the finances that God gives your church or ministry, not wasting any finances (v.12 in John 6:1-13) and staying prepared to financially cover unexpected expenses or unexpected drops in offerings (similar concept in Matthew 7:24-27)? If so, what are you going to do about that?
- - Do you agree that poor management of property, equipment, and materials can hinder good ministry functioning? If so, what are you going to do about that?
- - Do you appreciate that some poorly-designed policies can actually produce significant losses or adverse consequences to your church or ministry? If so, what are you going to do about that?
- - When you read the verses above in this document pertaining to sound doctrines, did you feel the intense seriousness that God has for maintaining sound doctrines in your church or ministry? If so, what are you going to do about that?
- - When you read above in this document about how the Kingdom of Darkness gleefully reaps a double harvest for its agenda when false doctrine is present in a church or ministry, what is your reaction?
- - Are training sessions being regularly conducted in your church or ministry, to recruit, train, and equip new workers and current workers in how to do ministry? If not, what are you going to do about that?

Works Cited:

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

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