

# YOUR PASTORS & LEADERS



## Bethel Discipleship Series

*Nothing is more important to God than the welfare of His church. The church is a major component of God's greatest plan for mankind. He has furnished His Church with ordained leaders and ministers who guide it and direct His power and authority throughout the entire Church.*

### I. ALL AUTHORITY IS ALLOWED AND ORDAINED OF GOD

#### A. Amplified version of **Romans 13:1-7**:

*"Let every person be loyally subject to the governing (civil) authorities. For there is no authority except from God [by His permission, His sanction], and those that exist do so by God's appointment.*

*<sup>2</sup> Therefore he who resists and sets himself up against the authorities resists what God has appointed and arranged [in divine order]. And those who resist will bring down judgment upon themselves [receiving the penalty due them].*

*<sup>3</sup> For civil authorities are not a terror to [people of] good conduct, but to [those of] bad behavior. Would you have no dread of him who is in authority? Then do what is right and you will receive his approval and commendation.*

*<sup>4</sup> For he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, [you should dread him and] be afraid, for he does not bear and wear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant to execute His wrath (punishment, vengeance) on the wrongdoer.*

*<sup>5</sup> Therefore one must be subject, not only to avoid God's wrath and escape punishment, but also as a matter of principle and for the sake of conscience.*

*<sup>6</sup> For this same reason you pay taxes, for [the civil authorities] are official servants under God, devoting themselves to attending to this very service.*

*<sup>7</sup> Render to all men their dues. [Pay] taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, and honor to whom honor is due."*

#### B. Government and civil administration are obviously permitted, allowed and ordained of God.

1. Rebellion, disobedience, revolt and insubordination are not of God. In 1 Samuel 15:23 rebellion is equated with the sin of witchcraft.
2. The law of sowing and reaping (Galatians 6:7) teaches us that if we sow disobedience and rebellion we will reap the bitter fruit of insurrection and insubordination.

#### C. The apostle Paul clearly expected believers to teach and practice obedience to civil government.

- **Titus 3:1** – "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates..."

#### SCRIPTURE TEXTS:

**Romans 13:1-7** – "**1** Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. **2** Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. **3** For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: **4** For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. **5** Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. **6** For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. **7** Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour."

**Ephesians 4:11-12** – "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."

**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."

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1. The only time we are instructed to disobey the instructions, laws and commands of civil authorities is when obeying them would contradict the principles of the Word of God.
    - **Acts 5:29** – “Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.”
  2. When man’s laws do not contradict God’s laws, we are accountable to obey man’s laws. In instances where a conflict exists, we are accountable to obey God first and foremost.
  3. This even includes the unpleasant responsibility of paying legal taxes (Matthew 22:21, 17:24-27).
- D. To resist governmental authority is to resist God. God considers our obedience to human government as part of our obedience to Him.
- **1 Peter 2:13-15** – “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.”

## II. OBEYING SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY

- A. If it is important that Christians obey civil authority, how much more responsible and accountable we must be toward spiritual authority.
- **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.”
1. Amplified version of **Hebrews 13:17**:
    - “Obey your spiritual leaders and submit to them – continually recognizing their authority over you; for they are constantly keeping watch over your souls and guarding your spiritual welfare, as men who will have to render an account (of their trust). (Do your part to) let them do this with gladness, and not with sighing and groaning, for that would not be profitable to you (either).”
  2. Just as civil authority is ordained of God, so spiritual authority is bestowed and ordained of God.
- B. Disregarding, rejecting, or substituting God’s order of authority always brings calamity.
1. The rebellion of Korah: Numbers 16

*Four men (Korah, Dathan, Abiram and On) gathered together 250 distinguished princes of Israel and rebelled against the authority of Moses. These insurgent leaders said to Moses, “You are not the only holy person among us. We are all holy. Why do you set yourself above us to tell us what we should do?” Korah inspired a revolt against Moses’ leadership because he felt that since he also heard from God he was, therefore, not subject to the authority of Moses. God was so angry at this mutiny that he caused the ground to open up and swallow Korah and his 250 followers in a pit of fire.*

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2. The rebellion of Israel against God's prophet, Samuel: 1 Samuel 8.

*The people of Israel decided they wanted a human king. It had always been God's desire to be Israel's King Himself and to govern the people through His prophets. But the people of Israel were not satisfied with God's ways. They wanted an earthly king like other nations. God allowed Israel to have their human king, but He pronounced judgment upon them and proclaimed that their kings would tax them and take their children as servants and workers. The people of Israel got their king, but God exacted a severe price from them for their rebellion.*

- C. Disobeying God's principles of authority and obedience always brings disaster. Obedience to our leaders who are the anointed spiritual authorities over us is directly commanded in scripture.

## III. GOD'S GOVERNMENT SYSTEM

- A. God's church is governed in a very unique manner. It is not supervised and managed by any of the usual forms of human government. God's church is not a:
- *Democracy* – government by the majority
  - *Monarchy* – government by a royal family
  - *Gerontocracy* – government by senior citizens or an elder class
  - *Oligarchy* – government by gentry or aristocracy
- B. God's church is a theocracy, government by Almighty God, Himself.
1. The human ministers that God places in positions of authority within His church are not determined by aristocratic bloodline or popular vote – they are not even chosen by gifts, talents, or abilities.
  2. God's ordained ministers are always chosen and selected by the divine will of God Himself.
    - *Psalm 75:6-7* – “*For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.*”
    - God chose Moses, a tongue-tied shepherd who argued that he was unqualified (Exodus 4:10).
    - God chose David as king of Israel even though David had numerous older brothers who outwardly appeared to be better qualified (1 Samuel 16:11).
    - God overlooked Esau, a strong, cunning hunter and chose Jacob, a conniving, plain man who lived quietly in tents (Genesis 25:27).
    - God chose Gideon, a cowardly wheat thresher (Judges 6:11).
    - God chose Peter, an impulsive, ignorant fisherman (Matthew 4:18).
    - God chose Saul of Tarsus (Paul), an arrogant persecutor of the church (Acts 26:14).
  3. Each of these men had imperfections and failings, but God called them. Eventually each of these men became successful leaders in the kingdom, just as God had planned.
- C. God's appointed ministers do not preach, teach, administrate or govern to please people – God's leaders minister in order to please God.
- *Galatians 1:10* – “*...do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.*”

## IV. THE HEAD AND THE BODY

- A. Jesus Christ is the head (chief authority) of the church, the body of Christ.

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- *Ephesians 5:23* – “...Christ is the head of the church...”
  - *Colossians 1:18* – “And he (Jesus Christ) is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.”
- B. The Church is the body of Christ – each member of the church is an active, vital part of the body of Jesus Christ on earth.
- *1 Corinthians 12:27* – “Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”
- C. Just as the human body has many different parts providing many different functions, so the body of Christ has different members and offices.
- *Romans 12:4-5* – “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”
  - *1 Corinthians 12:12-20* – “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ...For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body.”
1. Under Jesus Christ, the head of the church, the body has been organized by God into particular and distinct offices and authorities as it pleases Him.
  2. God has chosen and anointed men and women to lead, administrate, and govern His body. Scripture clearly defines His detailed blueprint for authority and government within the church today.

## V. THE FIVE-FOLD MINISTRY WITHIN THE BODY

- A. God has placed a specific five-fold ministry of leadership within the church. This five-fold structure is His blueprint for the operation, administration, and government of the church from its beginning until now.
- *Ephesians 4:11-12* – “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”
- B. Each of these offices has distinct responsibilities, gifts, and operations that are unique and needful to the church.
- C. Apostles – individuals anointed with a specific message and commission. Apostles apparently receive a unique gift of miraculous power (2 Corinthians 12:12).
1. We are probably most familiar with the term “apostle” in its application to the 12 original apostles who were directly acquainted with Jesus Christ.
  2. Jesus commissioned these men to carry the gospel throughout the world after His ascension. Their role was to lay the foundation of the church and to establish sound doctrine. Several of these original 12 apostles contributed to the anointed scripture that we call the New Testament.
  3. Acts 1:21-22 indicates that one of the qualifications of the 12 original apostles was to have personally witnessed Jesus Christ.

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4. Revelation 21:4 states that the names of these twelve apostles are inscribed on the twelve foundations in the New Jerusalem.
  5. Ephesians 4:11 indicates that the office of “apostle” has been given for the entire church age, including today.
  6. Part of the role of an apostle was to be commissioned to deliver the gospel to a specific geographical location or to a particular people. The apostle Paul referred to himself as the Apostle of the Gentiles (Romans 11:13).
  7. The title or office of an apostle can never be conferred by mankind – it can be bestowed only by Jesus Christ (Romans 1:5).
  8. Few people dare to claim this office today, even though they may indeed be an apostle and may be faithfully and successfully fulfilling this ministry.
- D. Prophets – individuals who are divinely inspired or commissioned by God to communicate a specific message to God’s people.
1. The ministry of a prophet involves the operation of two spiritual gifts – knowledge and wisdom.
  2. Prophets can foretell (predict) or forth-tell (proclaim). The word “prophecy” means both to tell the future and also to tell forth the Word of the Lord.
  3. The role of the prophet was operative within the New Testament church. We read of prophets in the church at Antioch (Acts 13:1; 15:32) and Jerusalem (Acts 11:27; 21:10). Scripture also gives the account of four women, daughters of Philip the evangelist, who prophesied in Caesarea (Acts 21:9).
  4. New Testament prophets must abide by the guidelines detailed in 1 Corinthians, chapters 12 and 14.
  5. Prophets are commanded to submit themselves to the supervision and judgment of the leadership ministry of the church (1 Corinthians 14:29).
  6. In both the Old and New Testaments, prophets are to be judged by the truthfulness of their words.
  7. Jesus commanded us to beware of false prophets and to judge them by their fruit (Matthew 7:15-16).
  8. Any prophet whose forth-telling contradicts the Word of God is to be disregarded as a false prophet (1 John 4:1).
  9. Any prophet whose foretelling fails to come to pass is also to be considered a false prophet.
  10. Genuine prophecy edifies the church (1 Corinthians 14:4), teaches and comforts the church (1 Corinthians 14:31), and can be used to bestow spiritual gifts upon others (1 Timothy 4:14).
  11. Although the office of prophecy has been misused and abused from time to time, it is a necessary ministry in the church, and we are exhorted to “despise not prophesyings” (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21).
- E. Evangelists – translated from the Greek word *euaggelistes*, which literally means a preacher or proclaimer of the gospel. It carries the meaning of preaching the gospel to those who have never heard it.
1. The ministry of evangelism is not directed toward the church, but toward the world. Evangelists have a distinct ability to proclaim the gospel to unbelievers, and it is largely through their anointed ministry that souls are born into the kingdom of God.
  2. In addition to being a specific office of ministry, evangelism is also a work. A pastor, a teacher, or an apostle might on occasion do the work of an evangelist.
    - **2 Timothy 4:5** – “*But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.*”

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3. All believers are called to do the “work” of an evangelist at times. When we witness, testify, and spread the gospel in any way, we are doing an evangelist’s work.
- F. *Pastors* – translated from the Greek word *poimen*, which literally means “a shepherd.”
1. Jesus referred to his followers as sheep (John 10:27).
  2. A pastor is called to feed, lead, and care for the flock of God in a particular location.
  3. In the same manner that the natural shepherd protects the flock from predatory animals, the spiritual shepherd (pastor) watches and guards the church from the “roaring lion” (1 Peter 5:8) and “grievous wolves” (Acts 20:29).
  4. The pastor is the chief leader of the flock. He teaches, preaches, counsels, admonishes, corrects, rebukes, and guides all the sheep, including other ministers who serve the same flock.
  5. The shepherd is the most important leader of the flock, as is the pastor to the church.
- G. *Teachers* – individuals commissioned to instruct the church in scriptural doctrine, taking Biblical principles and applying them to daily life.
1. The disciples were commissioned to “teach” (Matthew 28:19), and they “ceased not” to teach and preach daily (Acts 5:42).
  2. Teachers in the church are commissioned to “rightly divide the Word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).
  3. Teachers are commissioned to train other teachers that they also might become teachers (2 Tim. 2:2).
  4. Teachers are appointed to feed the “sincere milk of the word” to the young lambs (Hebrew 5:12-13) and “strong meat” to the mature sheep (Hebrews 5:14).
  5. There are solemn warnings in scripture that caution teachers in the operation of their ministry.
    - **James 3:1** – “My brethren, be not many masters (instructors, teachers), knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation.”
  6. True teachers are models and examples. They must live what they teach. Jesus Christ, our greatest teacher, was also our greatest role model.
  7. While it is impossible for human teachers to be absolutely perfect, true teachers strive to emulate Jesus Christ and live the principles they teach from the Word of God.

## VI. GOD’S MINISTERS: HIS GIFT OF GOVERNMENT FOR THE CHURCH

- **Ephesians 4:11-12** – “And he gave apostles ...prophets ...evangelists ...pastors ...teachers...”
- A. The five-fold ministry is a gift of God to the church and is bestowed for our benefit and blessing.
1. The ministry is not placed over the church as a harsh corps of prison wardens to prohibit our happiness or restrict our individuality. If we view them as such we will be unable to thrive and mature.
  2. God’s ministers are His gifts to His people – to edify them, to promote their spiritual well-being, and to assist them in reaching their full potential in Christ Jesus.

## VII. MINISTERIAL TITLES AND OFFICES

- A. In addition to the five-fold ministry, the Bible also describes several additional titles and offices of ministry

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within the church.

1. Bishop – from the Greek word *episkopos*, which means “superintendent” or “one who inspects.” This title is often applied to ministerial leaders who oversee more than one congregation, flock, or ministry.
  - a. A bishop can preside over many churches within an organization or fellowship of ministers to maintain and manage affairs that affect those churches.
  - b. A bishop can also be considered as a “pastor over pastors.” If a congregation has several pastors, the chief pastor may be known as the bishop.
2. Elders, Presbyters, Deacons – interchangeable titles that refer to a secondary level of ministerial leadership within local congregations.
  - a. These ministries are bestowed upon godly men, “full of the Holy Ghost,” who are commissioned to assist the pastors, apostles, prophets, evangelists, and teachers (1 Corinthians 12:28).
  - b. The first seven deacons ministered to the needs of the widows and the orphans in the church.
  - c. These secondary ministries often labor in areas of administration and organization, and sometimes even assist in areas of evangelism and outreach.
  - d. Stephen, the first ordained deacon, did great wonders and miracles among the people and was later stoned to death because of his debates in the temple with unbelievers (Acts 6).

## VIII. THE MINISTRY’S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE SAINTS

- A. Various scriptures outline the responsibility that the five-fold ministry must fulfill to the church.
  - **Matthew 28:19-20** – “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”
1. To Teach the Flock
  - a. The Leadership Ministry is under the divine injunction of the Great Commission to instruct and train the church in the Word of God.
    - **1 Timothy 4:11** – “These things command and teach.”
2. To Baptize the Flock
  - a. The Leadership Ministry is also commissioned to baptize the believers in water in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - **Mark 16:15-16** – “And he (Jesus) said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
  - b. Water baptism is an ordinance of the ministry. It should be administered by individuals who have been ordained and commissioned by the five-fold ministry for this purpose.
3. To Preach the Word to the Flock
  - **2 Timothy 4:2** – “Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; ...”

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- a. Every believer is called to “preach” to the lost, but only the “called” and “anointed” ministry is ordained to preach to the church itself.
  - b. It is through the five-fold ministry, the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, that the body will hear what the Spirit is saying expressly to the church.
4. To Correct, Reprove and Rebuke the Flock
- **2 Timothy 4:2** – “... reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.”
  - **1 Timothy 5:20** – “Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”
  - **Titus 2:15** – “These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority...”
  - **1 Thessalonians 5:14** – “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly...”
- a. The ministry is commissioned of God to be the voice of correction and reproof to the church.
  - b. On rare occasions, the ministry may find it necessary to rebuke an unrepentant brother or sister publicly “before all.”
  - c. Public rebuke is unpleasant, but it certainly occurred in the first church (Acts 5:1-5, Titus 1:13, 1 Corinthians 5:12-13, 2 Corinthians 13:2), and it is a part of the responsibility of God’s ordained ministers.
5. To Exhort the Flock
- a. To exhort is to arouse the flock to spiritual duty and responsibility by proposing suitable or correct motives for behavior.
    - **1 Timothy 4:13** – “...give attendance (apply yourself) ...to exhortation...”
  - b. The ministry is challenged to motivate, encourage and inspire the flock to good works and a holy lifestyle.
  - c. The ministry seeks to ignite a flame of zeal within the hearts of believers that motivates us to enthusiastic obedience.
  - d. The ministry endeavors to “stir up the pure minds” of the believers (2 Peter 3:1), to awaken the church from spiritual sleep (Romans 13:11), to cause the saints to be “zealously affected” for good things (Galatians 4:18), and to be “doers” of the Word and not “hearers” only (James 1:22).
  - e. The ministry affects us by the fervor, ardency and passion with which they relate spiritual truths. This is why preaching is often exuberant and high-spirited.
  - f. In exhortation, the ministry endeavors to transmit passion and enthusiasm for the things of God.
6. To Oversee and Protect the Flock
- **Acts 20:28** – “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers...”
- a. The ministry protects, guards, and watches over the flock.

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- b. The five-fold ministry warns the church of potential dangers and spiritual pitfalls that await to trap and ensnare unwary Christians.
  - c. Sometimes, members of the flock view regulations and boundaries as infringements upon their personal freedom rather than protection from personal destruction.
  - d. We must learn to think of the sheepfold as a protection to keep out grievous wolves rather than as a stockade that hinders us from enjoying greener pastures.
  - e. God has put the watchman on the wall of your life to keep you from danger and harm.
- *Ezekiel 3:17* – “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.”
7. To Feed the Flock of God
- a. God has instructed the ministry to prepare a well-balanced diet for the flock in order that it may be healthy and prosper.
    - *John 21:17* – “He (Jesus) saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter . . . said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”
  - b. The average human being eats more than 21 physical meals each week, yet we sometimes expect our inner man to thrive on less than two or three spiritual meals during the same time period.
  - c. God’s ordained ministry is commissioned to prepare spiritual food, but the sheep must be present when the shepherd feeds the flock. Just as Jesus invited His disciples, so the five-fold ministry invites the church, “Come and dine” (John 21:12).

## IX. THE SAINT’S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE MINISTRY

- A. Each saint has a personal responsibility to the ministry under which he or she has been placed by God.
1. To obey and submit to the ministry as unto the Lord.
- *Hebrews 13:17* – “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves...”
  - a. In the kingdom of God, obedience is always a requirement. The apostle Paul stated that obedience was a proof of the believer.
    - *2 Corinthians 2:9* – “For to this end also did I write, that I might know the proof of you, whether ye be obedient in all things.”
  - b. The believer has a duty to be a submitted follower of those who teach scriptural truths.
    - *Hebrews 13:7* – “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow,...”
  - c. Hebrews 13:7 confirms that refusing to obey and submit to our leaders is “unprofitable” to us – it brings serious consequences.
    - *Romans 2:8* – “But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath.”
    - *Ephesians 5:6* – “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.”
  - d. The church is instructed to willingly submit to the offices of ministry and to follow and obey their

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teaching that they might escape the wrath which is to come.

## 2. To Endure Correction And Reproof

- a. The saints have explicit instructions to obey the chastening and rebuke of God's ordained five-fold ministry.
  - **Hebrews 12:5-11** – “...My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”
- b. Jesus loved Simon Peter, but He rebuked him (Mark 8:33). Jesus loved His disciples, James and John, but He rebuked them also (Luke 9:55).
- c. The church is commanded to “despise not chastening,” (Hebrews 12:5) to “endure chastening” (Hebrews 12:7) and to rejoice that it is proof that we are beloved of God.
  - **Revelation 3:19** – “As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.”

## 3. To Know Them That Minister

- **1 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.”
- a. The flock must watch the example of those who minister to them, to be certain that they are following ministers of character and integrity.
  - b. Saints should be assured that those who minister to them are teaching truth and sound doctrine.
  - c. The church must also beware of false teachers and wolves in sheep's clothing who may outwardly appear to have the trappings of ministry but do not walk in full truth.
    - **1 John 4:1** – “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try (examine) the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

## 4. To Esteem, Honor And Respect the Ministry

- **1 Timothy 5:17-19** – “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine. For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.”
- a. We are to honor and esteem them highly in love as a demonstration of our appreciation of their labor.
    - **1 Thessalonians 5:12-13** – “...know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake...”

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- b. There is an elevated degree of respect and honor that should be bestowed upon those who minister in the Word, rule well, and labor effectively in their offices of ministry.
- c. We must be careful not to gossip, slander or defame a minister; and we must not sympathize with someone who has a bitter spirit against a minister of the gospel.
  - **1 Timothy 5:19** – “Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.”
- d. Failure among God’s anointed is not a new phenomenon.

*Samson failed, King Saul failed, King David failed, King Solomon failed, even Judas failed. However, each man had been called and anointed of God to a specific position of leadership. In each case, these leaders either repented and accepted restoration, or God ultimately removed them from their place of authority.*

- e. It is God alone who calls people into positions of authority, and it is God alone who removes them from those positions.
  - **1 Chronicles 16:22** – “...Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.”
- f. When leaders fail, it is the responsibility of God and the higher ministries to remove them from their positions of authority.

## X. THE PURPOSE OF THE MINISTRY

- **Ephesians 4:11-14** – “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting (equipping) of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till 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...”
- A. The purpose of the five-fold ministry is to perfect or equip the church – the saints – so that they are better able to fulfill the life of service to which they have been called.
- B. This was the Apostle Paul’s desire as he instructed Timothy concerning the purpose of his ministry.
  - **2 Timothy 3:17** – “That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”
- C. The five-fold ministry teaches, trains, rebukes and exhorts the church that it might be furnished and equipped to engage in a productive ministry of good works.

## XI. THE GOAL OF THE SAINTS

- **Ephesians 4:11-14** – “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...”
- A. Whereas the primary objective of the five-fold ministry is to equip the church, the primary objective of the church is to edify the body of Christ.
  - 1. The word “*edifying*” is translated from the Greek word *oikodome*, which means the “building up, increase in structure or architecture.”
  - 2. The church’s purpose is to increase itself, add to its structure and build itself in size. The Amplified version of Ephesians 4:12 more clearly reveals this concept.
    - “His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people),

# YOUR PASTORS & LEADERS

*[that they should do] the work of ministering toward the building up of Christ's body (the church).*

3. Paul complimented the house of Stephanas, a notable saint in the country of Achaia (in Europe) because as saints they had addicted themselves to their ministries.
  - **1 Corinthians 16:15** – “I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.”
4. When the ministry equips the saints and the saints addict themselves to building up the body of Christ, the kingdom of God is truly edified.
  - **Ephesians 4:16** – “...the whole body fitly joined together... maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”

*When the five-fold ministry and the saints of God work together as God has ordained, the church moves forward as the most powerful force in the world. But this power cannot be achieved unless the church submits itself to God's authority structure and His ordained chain of command. Only when we submit to God, His will, and His leaders do we find fulfillment and success in our own personal lives and ministries as we seek to edify and build up the body of Christ.*

Additional resource (available through the Pentecostal Publishing House):  
*Five-Fold Ministry and Spiritual Insight*, Lee Stoneking

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**Bethel United Pentecostal Church**  
357 Jericho Turnpike, Old Westbury, NY 11568 ~ (516) 338-1032  
[www.BethelUPC.org](http://www.BethelUPC.org)  
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