

**General Topics :: Submission to church leadership****Submission to church leadership - posted by narrowpath, on: 2019/4/21 16:24**

After reading Greg's book about Ignatius, the issue of submission to leadership and honoring elders came to my attention.

1 Corinthians 16:15-17

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,) 16 That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth.

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.

In our day and age where everybody can voice their opinion to the rest of the world, we have to recover this ancient doctrine of submission and headship.

God is the head of Christ, Christ the head of the church, husbands heads over their wives, children under the rule of parents. We are also subject to every civil authority, be they godly or ungodly, as long as we do not have to compromise our faith. Women should cover their heads in service while praying or prophesying.

Overseers, bishops and elders as well as deacons are servant leaders, and we do well to both honour them and submit to them. That does not mean they are to control all aspects of our lives, but as far as the body of Christ is concerned, we should obey, honor and support them that have the rule over us. Therefore only the godliest and most mature and seasoned men should have the rule.

This does not mean that their actions cannot be questioned and they are not above the authority of scripture. There are biblical mechanisms in place that can remove failed leaders from their offices when necessary.

God will hold every leader to account about the works and fruit of those under their care.

If we obey, honour and support them it will be a lot easier for them and good for ourselves, too. If we make it difficult for them and work against them, we will come under God's judgment.

When looking at Paul's ministry, we see that he used to give orders to others who worked with him.

Timothy and Erastus received orders from Paul how to order affairs in the churches on his behalf. John Mark was personal assistant to Paul and Barnabas and did errands for them.

Titus was sent to appoint elders in Crete. Philemon received orders as to how to deal with Onesimus. Priscilla and Aquila were considered helpers, too.

This was only possible when the apostles' authority was duly recognized, otherwise they could have answered back saying, "What are you to command me, I can receive orders from God for myself, it is not my calling to be called on by you."

I am glad we have examples of apostolic workers who not only submitted to God but also saw it as a privilege to serve their leaders and were willing to even risk their lives for them.

Romans 16:3-4

3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: 4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.

Apostolic or bishopric leadership

I believe the apostolic type of leadership is necessary for the establishment of the church in its foundational stages. Apostles were never meant to stay beyond the foundational phase and would eventually hand over the episcopal leadership of the local fellowship to others:

2 Tim 2:2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.

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There were no denominations with differing doctrines of views in the apostles time. They either adhered to the apostles doctrine (Acts 2:42) or they were counted as sectarian. So they could appoint bishops who oversaw these household-based fellowships in the city.

For us in the 21st century it would be unthinkable that Baptists, Pentecostals, Anglicans, Episcopalians, Reformed and Methodist would come under one bishop or a council of bishops in one city. Perhaps it will take persecution and hardship to make us adapt such a model.

Our democratic understanding of government is incompatible with God's principle of biblical headship and servant leadership. Are our Egos too big to submit to leaders and see them worth of double honor according to 1 Timothy 5:17 ? While living in Asia, I discovered that they are much more inclined to submit and honor leaders than we in the West. Surely, undue respect and unchecked submission to leaders will eventually lead to abuse, and there were many scandals that have hit the church. Some of us will remember the heavy shepherding movement around Derek Prince and Bob Mumford and their companions. Fortunately, they repented, but damage was done. On the other hand, disrespect for God-appointed leaders will lead to a low view of scripture and a low standards of holy living. No wonder our churches cannot shake off worldliness.

Can we come to a balanced approach to authority and submission in the body of Christ?

Re: Submission to church leadership - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2019/4/21 17:25

Narrowpath,
I believe that the leaders are accountable.. We are to be accountable to them with ministry.. However i have seen and find that if you do not agree totally with their doctrinal interpretation then you get the left foot of fellowship. (:
If you try to reconcile and they do not want to over your doctrinal differences the leaders can say you are in rebellion.. I believe this will lead to believers not wanting to be accountable.. Sheep bites hurt and Im sure we all have stories.. I believe the LORD would have leaders be accountable and train in the 5 fold ministry Eph 4:11.. to equip and train.. To Ephesians 4:11-16 New King James Version (NKJV)
11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head 'Christ' 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love..
I believe the 5 fold ministry should be restored to equip and train to do the work of the ministry outside the church walls.. I also believe we are to be accountable for the leaders are accountable for your souls..
Blessings
in Christ
Sister Frannie

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/4/21 21:14

Quote:
-----Our democratic understanding of government is incompatible with God's principle of biblical headship and servant leadership. Are our Egos too big to submit to leaders and see them worth of double honor according to 1 Timothy 5:17 ? While living in Asia, I discovered that they are much more inclined to submit and honor leaders than we in the West.

I agree with this, there are single house church elder brothers who are over 5 million or more believers. They call them "uncles" but there is a great sense of submission to authority in all things. We can much from them in this.

Re: Submission to church leadership - posted by savannah, on: 2019/4/21 23:36

narrowpath asks,

"Can we come to a balanced approach to authority and submission in the body of Christ?"

I think that this short book, "The Great Ecclesiastical Conspiracy", may help some answer that question.

"The Great Ecclesiastical Conspiracy" can be read at the following link;

<http://www.inthebeginning.com/books/ecc.htm>

Re: - posted by Martyr (), on: 2019/4/22 0:52

So what is one to do if they disagree with the authority that has been established?

Re: - posted by narrowpath, on: 2019/4/22 2:32

1 Timothy 5:19-21 King James Version (KJV)

19 Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses.

20 Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.

21 I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/4/22 10:21

Quote:
-----This does not mean that their actions cannot be questioned and they are not above the authority of scripture. There are biblical mechanisms in place that can remove failed leaders from their offices when necessary.

Narrowpath just gave the scripture that refers to this. But there is an attitude that we should have as well. If we see an elder in error, we are to intreat them as fathers. In other words, even in error, they are to be treated with respect and the error discussed with them in person. If they are unrepentant and if there are more than one person that can verify the error, then they can be rebuked before others that all may fear. But I believe that this rebuke should come from other leadership. Remember, Paul is giving instruction to Timothy who is a young leader.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2019/4/22 11:24

Quote:
-----But I believe that this rebuke should come from other leadership. Remember, Paul is giving instruction to Timothy who is a young leader.

Yes I agree with this, leadership usually are the ones that keep other in balance and check. Usually saints with stronger giftings who are teachers and manifest the character of Christ.

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Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/4/22 11:50

There are several things that come to my mind about this whole issue.

First, think of the reason for the admonition given in scripture. Leaders have followers looking to them. If that leader stumbles, there are many young and immature people who are hurt and are caused to stumble. This is a very serious matter. When bloggers online feel it their right to openly rebuke or correct leaders, they create chaos in the body, disunity, and they cause weak believers to stumble and possibly fall away entirely. This is not to mention the effect this has on the world that we are trying hard to reach for Christ.

Look at Paul's admonition about believers taking one another to court in the world's courts. He says, "Hey guys, you are creating a foul taste in the mouths of unbelievers about believers." Where then does taking fellow believers to court in the open forum of public opinion fall in this admonition? There may not be a lawyer and an official charge, but the two are the same thing.

If we are to become like Christ through intimacy with Him, if we are to bear His image and have His love living in and through us, why would we handle things in a way that could cause young believers to stumble and prevent many people from coming to Christ? Why would we not rather go to God and cry out for the leader in error that God would break through to his heart and that he might find a place of repentance? Why would we not personally contact the leader and entreating him as a father, speak to him about the error of his ways?

This is not to say that if I am a leader in a flock, that I do not have personal conversations with that flock and teach them to avoid an error if it has the potential to lead them astray. I have had believers ask me about certain men or certain teachings, and I have had to instruct them about error in the man or the teaching. But this is a far cry from decrying the leader publicly before the world. There is an order that we need to follow in these things.

That is why I like the rule here of, "Play the ball and not the person." We might discuss issues and doctrines with the goal of arriving at truth. We should never debate issues with a mind to proving ourselves right or attack a person in a way that a weak and young believer or a person from the world would be caused to stumble or become offended.

Re: - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2019/4/22 18:49

Quote:
-----But I believe that this rebuke should come from other leadership. Remember, Paul is giving instruction to Timothy who is a young leader.

Yes I agree with this, leadership usually are the ones that keep other in balance and check. Usually saints with stronger giftings who are teachers and manifest the character of Christ.

I am in agreement with this.. IF there is a difference.. A brother or sister should contact in private.. IF there is no reconciliation.. Go to the church.. You are to forgive and try to reconcile with respect.

Reconciliation must always be attempted

Matt 18:15-17 Phillips translation.

“But if your brother wrongs you, go and have it out with him at once—just between the two of you. If he will listen to you, you have won him back as your brother. But if he will not listen to you, take one or two others with you so that every thing that is said may have the support of two or three witnesses. And if he still won’t pay any attention, tell the matter to the church. And if he won’t even listen to the church then he must be to you just like a pagan or a tax-collector!”

Everything should be done in love and in order by both parties.. All leaders and lay ministers should be respected.

I also believe that Leaders Pastors deacons deaconesses.. should be accountable to other leaders.. satan was kicked out of heaven because he had pride and wanted to be equal to GOD and did not want to be accountable to anyone but himself..

â€œThe 5 â€I Willsâ€™ of Satanâ€

Compiled by Rev. George F. Parsons

Let us consider the five "I WILLS" of Lucifer as found in Isaiah 14:13-14:

1) "I WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN." Lucifer wanted to mount up or scale to the heavens. He desired to occupy the highest heavens: to probe, and to penetrate the kingdom of the infinite God. He wanted to have a very HIGH position!

2) "I WILL EXALT MY THRONE ABOVE THE STARS OF GOD." Luciferâ€™s position and service before Godâ€™s throne was not enough. He wanted a throne from which he could exercise final authority and make decisions pertaining to the angelic host ("the stars of God"). He wanted to rule over all the angels. God had made him an exalted angel, but Lucifer wanted to be exalted even more. (He was not content to shine as the "morning star"; he wanted to shine as the star of stars--with a brilliance that would far outshine all the other stars (even as the sunâ€™s brightness makes all the other stars fade away so that you cannot even see them during daylight hours).

3) "I WILL SIT ALSO UPON THE MOUNT OF THE CONGREGATION." He desired to sit or be enthroned in the highest place having all the angelic assemblies in submission to him. He wanted to be the center of attention. He wanted to be IDOLIZED by all.

4) "I WILL ASCEND ABOVE THE HEIGHTS OF THE CLOUDS." "Clouds" are often used in the Bible to speak of the glory of God (see Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:9; Rev. 1:7). Lucifer coveted Godâ€™s glory for his own. He failed to acknowledge that his glory and beauty all came from and was dependent upon God. In his sinful pride, Lucifer wanted a glory that would impress and dazzle all creatures.

5) "I WILL BE LIKE THE MOST HIGH." He wanted to be EQUAL with God and to take Godâ€™s place as Possessor and Ruler of all. He wanted to become a completely independent creature, responsible to no one. Pastor George F. Parsons created this helpful diagram to show Luciferâ€™s five haughty "I WILLS":

Final Note by Rev. David J. Bauer: We are asked many times just what is the problem we encounter most often in our work with strife-torn congregations. In general I can put it into one word: PRIDE.

â€¸ Pride causes us to put self on the throne instead of Christ our Savior.

â€¸ Pride causes us to not own our sin, nor be broken over it and the damage it causes others in and out of the church.

â€¸ Pride keeps us from apologizing to those we have offended.

â€¸ Pride keeps us from authentic biblical repentance and restoration.

â€¸ Pride is deadly to our personal and spiritual life, and to the life of the church.

â€¸ Pride is as ancient as the fall of Satan, and is still one of his favorite tools.

â€œPride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.â€ â€Proverbs 16:18

â€œLikewise, 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. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.â€ â€1 Peter 5:5-8

Bible Related Ministries ..

Just some thoughts..

in Christ

Sister Frannie

General Topics :: Submission to church leadership

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2019/4/23 10:30

Frannie wrote:

"I also believe that Leaders Pastors deacons deaconesses.. should be accountable to other leaders.. satan was kicked out of heaven because he had pride and wanted to be equal to GOD and did not want to be accountable to anyone but himself.."

"And it was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for works of ministry, to build up the body of Christ,â€ (Ephesians 4:11,12).

In most of the churches today the ministries of Pastors, teachers, and evangelists are recognized, but the Apostolic and Prophetic ministry gifts are overlooked. All of these ministry gifts have been given to the Church to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry.

The ministry of the pastor in most churches today is overemphasized, and many saints have become mere spectators in the church, going on Sunday and many Wednesday nights, hearing a sermon, but for the most part not being activated in their gifts and calling.

Until we recognize all of the fivefold ministry, and that it is the Lord's will that the saints would grow up and be equipped to do the work of the ministry, the Church will never fulfill the purpose of God.

I am thankful that Jesus is the Head of His Church. No man is to be the head. True spiritual authority only comes down from the Head.

True spiritual leaders are not called to be CEO's, but shepherds, servants, but there are many churches today where the sheep are being used to serve the pastor, his ministry, and vision.

In the early 80's I was in a fellowship that had a very gifted pastor. He was an excellent preacher and teacher, moved in the gifts of the Spirit, and his ministry started with bible studies in his home and then a small storefront church, and several years later he was the pastor of one of the largest and fastest growing churches in the city. There were many people being saved through the ministry of this church, but as time went on although the Word was being taught, there was an abuse of power by this pastor, and it was either his way or the highway. After much prayer, the Lord led us and many of the most spiritual believers out of this fellowship. About 10 years later he announced to the church that he and his wife were divorced. The church was in his name, so the church was sold and he remarried and moved out of state. The church split up into two or three other churches, and there were many people that were hurt.

This is an example of what can happen to any minister that does not submit himself to the authority of other leaders, and forgets where he came from.

No church is to be built upon a man's ministry. There is only one sure foundation that the Church is to be built upon. The Church of Jesus Christ is the Body of Christ, and there is only one Head of the Body.

Re: - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2019/4/23 19:31

Amen. Brother Mike.. As I pray with others for revival.. I am praying that the five fold ministry is restored to all the churches.. It is the foundation..

May we all be in agreement for all the ministries to flow.. The eye cannot see without the foot or the hand.

1 cor 12 14-15.

14For the body does not consist of one part, but of many. 15If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body.â€

We all need one another.. We are HIS BODY.. We are HIS church.. May the spirit of unity fall and the spirits of offense be gone in the name of JESUS.. As I study. I think of Saul and David.. They both had anointings.. However Saul wanted to wear Davids armor.. Sad.. we must be where He wants and use the gifts He has given us and wear our own armor.. may the five fold ministry be restored in JESUS name... Its still Christs Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against the church.... ITS HIS CHURCH.....

Matt 16 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.
in Christ
Sister
Frannie

Re: one foundation - posted by savannah, on: 2019/4/24 9:58

"In most of the churches today...the Apostolic and Prophetic ministry gifts are overlooked."

Only one foundation is necessary. And it has been laid.

"And you are built up upon the foundation of the Apostles and of the Prophets, and he is The Head of The Corner of the building-Yeshua The Messiah." Eph. 2:20

"These are the names of the twelve apostles: first Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who later betrayed Jesus." Matthew 10:2-4

"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb." Rev. 21:14

How firm a foundation, you saints of the Lord,
is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!
What more can he say than to you he has said,
to you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

Re: Foundations are for building upon - posted by docs (), on: 2019/4/24 10:36

And He gave some to be APOSTLES, some PROPHETS, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry... (Eph 4:11-12)

Evangelists, pastors and teachers are widely and commonly acknowledged but the office and function of apostles and prophets is relegated by many to yesteryear. It has cost the church.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/4/24 11:23

The 5 fold offices are not done away with at the death of the foundational apostles.

we are not wiser than God because we now have a bible in hand. Some think because of that...I have no need of any more apostles or prophets.

So what do we do in their place?

We listen to super-pastors, pastors of ten-thousand, pastors of 10 church venues via video casting. So, we have a super-pastor and get rid of so many non-essential pastors who don't preach as well as the super pastor.

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Or so we think.

We elevate a man who has authority over ten churches, or even a hundred churches...and his calling? Pastor. Either we are errant as to give a man called to be a pastor the job of apostle or the pastor is not a pastor but an apostle.. and we wont call him that because tradition has told us there are no more apostles.

We seem to always trick ourselves. We seem to find ways around God's word while claiming we are following God's word.

It's about time we dump the humanist rationalist thinking that has relegated the gifts and the offices to millennia that has long gone.

We do we put in it's place? Rationalism, reason, science, human logic, culture and human ability. And with that those who imbibe deeply in it consider themselves biblical and the others fanatics.

Re: humanist, rationalist, or...? - posted by savannah, on: 2019/4/24 12:05

A man writes,

"It's about time we dump the humanist rationalist thinking that has relegated the gifts and the offices to millennia that has long gone."

"The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John. Since that time, the gospel of the kingdom of God is being preached, and everyone is forcing his way into it. But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for a single stroke of a pen to drop out of the Law."

- Jesus

"God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers through the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world."

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/4/24 13:20

Quote:
-----In most of the churches today the ministries of Pastors, teachers, and evangelists are recognized, but the Apostolic and Prophetic ministry gifts are overlooked. All of these ministry gifts have been given to the Church to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry.

I think it is good to look at this quote in context rather than only picking out portions of it. All five of these gifts are in operation in the church today. It is God's way of maturing His body. But there have been some abuses in the teaching of the five-fold gifts. Savannah quoted a verse about the church being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. The interpretation is right on I think. This verse speaks not of a foundational structure in today's assemblies, but rather of the fact that the prophets of the old testament time laid a foundation that the early apostles (the 11 plus Paul, Timothy, etc.) established as the bedrock of the church.

But we must not miss the fact that Paul in Ephesians is speaking of God's structure for the church, which is us. We get ourselves into trouble when we begin to emphasize or deemphasize any of these gifts in the body. Some of the Apostolic Prophetic movement has tried to emphasize two of these gifts to the body to the extent that everyone is running around trying to be prophetic and elevate apostles and in doing so have left sound doctrine and have become flaky. But on the other hand some are in right field, denying that all five gifts are operating today.

What if instead we simply read Eph. 4 for what it says and accepted it at face value. God has placed men with these gifts in the body to grow and mature the body. These men have as their primary ministry focus the body and not necessarily the lost. They have special calls on their lives and are chosen by God to carry their gift to the body. What if we recognize

ized their anointing, learned from them, and did not make more or less of it than it is.

I know men who are apostles. They would not call themselves "so and so the apostle", but they would frankly say, "Yes, that is the call that God has brought me into." I know men who are pastors, teachers, evangelists, and prophets as well. They are not weird or flaky, just matter of fact, solid in the word, men of prayer, and mightily used of the Holy Spirit.

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2019/4/24 13:53

Travis,

I agree with you, and those that those that hand out calling cards saying Apostle or Prophet so and so ought to raise red flags when we see it. True Apostles and Prophets don't need a title, but are recognized and validated by their function.

Re: - posted by EAGLEFLYING (), on: 2019/4/24 15:19

AMEN..

We cannot change the word..

EPh 4:11

Ephesians 4:11-16 New King James Version (NKJV)

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

GOD calls He trains He equips.. HE CALLS.. men and women.. Yes they are the foundation of the church today..

If people would allow the LORD TO BE LORD AND USE WHO HE WANTS THE CHURCH would have less of the world in it..

I am believing this is for today..

and pls for freedom sake.. There are women who are in this place also.

ACTS 21.7 And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, and saluted the brethren, and abode with them one day. 8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. 9 And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.

10 And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus.

May we all be where HE Wants and take our place in the battle. and Yes no titles.. we are to be servants and minister as HE leads with the Authority He has given us in the position He has called us to I believe.

In Christ.

A daughter of the KING...

Frannie

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2019/4/24 16:04

The twelve apostles of the Lamb, these foundation men are apostles to the WHOLE BODY of Christ.

My observations

1. true prophets and apostles today do not have the scope of authority the foundational have now.
2. true prophets and apostles today do not have the whole Church as their sheep.
3. True prophets and apostles today are not adding or subtracting from the foundations laid by the first twelve.

True prophets and apostles today "build upon" the foundations.

Their scope, authority, persons required to submit under them and their tasks reside within the range of "non-foundation

al prophets and apostles".

I believe it is a categorical mistake to compare non-foundational apostles with foundational one in the arena of scope, authority, range of ministry and tasks.

If you do, the only conclusion reasonable is "all these apostles are false" But why I ask?

1. Because they don't speak to the whole church
2. Because they don't have authority over the whole church
3. Because they are not supposed to be laying a new foundation for the Church.

It is possible the apostle today has a range of ministry, a flock of a certain number and a scope and task set forth by God that is limited in comparison to the foundational apostles?

My answer is yes.

I realize our Church PC demands we don't use titles; Paul was not shy about using his title over and over again.

I don't see why another godly man would not do the same to those to whom he ministers?

Instead of defaulting to "he just wants to be a big-shot with a big-title", instead of guessing at his mind and heart, find out what he really is doing with his gifts.

You'll notice some will say "I know this prophet" or "I know of this apostle", but is that prophet or apostle attempting to be foundational or is he attempting to fulfill his calling and task whatever level God has instructed him?

All I am saying is if titles are not important, then using that title cannot be more important or less, it's just a point of reference to God's calling.

Humility or lack thereof has no bearing on the use of the title. This same axiom can be used for Pastor or Teacher.

We make no bones at all about Pastor or Teacher, prophet or apostle should be no different.

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2019/4/24 18:49

The link savannah provided earlier, is a good one to read with eyes wide open.

<http://www.inthebeginning.com/books/ecc.htm>

Here is the parting verse at the end of the book:

"Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross." (Philippians 2:5-8 RSV)

Re: Submission to church leadership - posted by narrowpath, on: 2019/4/25 1:59

It wonders me why almost all replies are about the accountability of leaders and abuses of power. We should not forget that we are equally obliged to support them and submit to them.

If we fail to do so we are doing disservice to our head which is Christ himself.

It reveals to me how deep the distrust towards leaders is among us.

Re: - posted by cryinthenite, on: 2019/4/26 21:12

That is the point, Christ alone is the head. We are all brothers. Submit one to another in love. We submit to Christ in one another. Elders are given as a gift to the church as those who have gone before us. Not some paid pro speaker or even an unpaid talent. Call no man teacher but Christ. There are teachers in the body but they are to have no title. Just because most Christians have only known top down clergy leadership doesn't mean it is in the new covenant. It is a beautiful thing to be among brothers who come to one mind in all things in Christ without a clergy but Christ alone. waiting on one another till the least of us is fully persuaded in their own mind concerning God's will. It is the flesh that wants a title and submission to one own ideas.

Re: - posted by docs (), on: 2019/4/26 21:31

What might there be wrong with referring to someone as a teacher in the body of Christ? You are not giving them a title per say but just identifying what their function is in the body.

Re: - posted by cryinthenite, on: 2019/4/26 23:44

No problem. It is about the heart for sure and only the Lord really knows that

Re: - posted by CofG (), on: 2019/4/27 2:41

Brothers and Sisters

According to the Holy Spirit, the apostles, evangelists, prophets, teachers and elders were given to the church as gifts from God for the building up and strengthening of the Body; individuals and the larger corporate body. Further, elders have a responsibility to feed and protect the flock from the wolves and those who would tear her down. Beyond those functions, the Scriptures are not specific. I could quote the verses to support these statements, but I'm sure all know.

There is no "office" of bishop described in Scripture.

unless one is prepared to say that all elders are bishops. I put the word office in quotations because that word is used in Scripture on a limited occasion and quoted from OT.

Apostles were not always foundation layers in the building metaphor as has been suggested. Paul laid foundations, but Apollus built on that foundation that had already been laid by Paul. Paul was a planter and a "waterer" in the garden metaphor whereas Apollus was described only as the latter. Thus, there were church planters and church strengtheners and each either on their own or in teams traveled around building the spiritual temple of the Lord.

Elders were chosen from among the local church body after a period of growth and maturation had occurred and those with such calling and gifting as could be seen in their life.

The idea of apostolic succession is not seen in the Scriptures other than the choosing by lot of Matthias and this example is not portable to the future because the elements of Matthias replacing Judas had to do with being a witness to the resurrection which was essential to the Apostles with a big "A" ministry and authority.

All that I have written is from Scripture. There is no opinion or personal preference or belief involved. Finally, there is no "tradition" or church practice in these statements that are at best fallible.

The reason I write these things is not to correct but to suggest to those who are in long standing church cultures that these Scriptures and functions of the apostolic body were very important in the newly birthed church where there was no church history or culture. They were essential instructions and functions that helped churches in unreached areas survive, have brotherly fellowship and grow to maturity and the likeness of Christ.

In established church areas, it seems the tendency is over time to institutionalize and make church leadership into a profession and job. This is especially true in cultures where Christianity is tolerated or even embraced on a cultural though not spiritual level.

The function of the apostolic leaders was primarily to lay foundations and then help grow the newly birthed believers and churches to a maturity level where they could for all intents and purposes self regulate with elders and other gifted people strengthening and growing the younger believers. In addition, the older men and women in the faith disciplined the younger believers as instructed in Scripture. The apostles were restricted by geography, time and resources to these roles and Scripture has very limited instances of Apostles exercising management of any kind after elders were appointed unless gross doctrinal error or sin in the church arose.

The idea of hierarchical authorities is so limited in Scripture that it is very hard to justify what we see in many denominations today.

Using Paul or the other 12 Apostles as an example of what church leadership should look like today is fraught with difficulties because Paul's own descriptions about why he had authority would not apply to any today.

In countries where the gospel has not advanced far, the apostolic method of planting and strengthening nascent church bodies in small villages is the only model that makes any sense practically. I do not use that as support for what I've seen Scripture saying. However, much of what the West practices as authoritative in church leadership is not only mostly unfound in the Scripture, but it is also very impractical and can't be done in small villages far apart with 5-10 families belonging to the local body. These churches have no connection to a denomination, no spiritual support and are too young to have any real maturity in their midst. The situations in these countries, villages and bodies is much the same as that found in the early church in Acts and the epistles.

No matter what you call or title the people, the advancing kingdom needs gifted and called mature men to plant and strengthen the small churches in villages and to help them be protected from the evil that would try to destroy them. Otherwise, we end up evangelizing, starting a work and then abandoning that work and those new believers which is a practical and prevalent tragedy. Many denominations have done just that. This isn't just theoretical where I work. There are so many spiritual orphans in villages who are discouraged, spiritually immature and without guidance and protection.

I get the idea of trying to be respectful to the traditions that have gone before but in all due respect, you can't export institutions. All the theories, ideas, strategies, opinions and preferences are not as useful in an advancing kingdom as the model that the book of Acts lays out.

Re: Submission to church leadership - posted by narrowpath, on: 2019/4/27 7:15

Young believers need role models of Christ in every aspect.

If they submit to godly elders and deacons they will make quick progress. But even if the leaders are questionable in some aspects, which is not ideal, they can still grow like David grew under Saul's rule.

Ever thought why God placed Saul under the rule of Samuel and David under the rule of Saul?

Saul did not submit to the rule of Samuel despite having a father in Christ to guide him, David submitted to Saul despite the fact that Saul was a failed King rejected by God. David prospered more and more and Saul diminished in power until there was only his title left.

Daniel prospered under heathen Dictators who surrounded themselves with thugs.

David dared not to touch God's anointed one and regretted tearing the tassel of Saul's robe, Saul rent Samuel's robe and his kingdom was torn away from him.

I know this is a hard one and some of you will protest.

I am not saying that we should not confront fallen leaders, but what can we learn from this in respect to leadership?

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/4/27 8:12

Quote:
-----What might there be wrong with referring to someone as a teacher in the body of Christ? You are not giving them a title per say but just identifying what their function is in the body.

Moses wrote that Moses was the meekest man on the face of the Earth. Paul wrote that He was an apostle. There is nothing wrong with knowing and acknowledging the gift that is in you from God for the rest of the body. There is something very wrong with finding your identity in that gift instead of finding your identity in Christ. In fact, it is only a man whose identity is firmly established in Christ that can assume a "title" in humility. That, I think, is where we get messed up. We do not find our identity in Christ, but rather in giftings, callings, titles, accolades, etc., and it leads us deeper into the flesh with the deception of thinking it is the Spirit because it has the trappings of ministry.

Re: - posted by twayneb (), on: 2019/4/27 8:15

Robert: I agree brother. Very clear way of putting it. The only thing I would add is that I have found Bishop and Elder in the NT to be interchangeable terms for the same role, overseer of the body.

Re: Narrowpath - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2019/4/27 9:29

My thoughts:

David did not go through Saul to God. David had a direct link to God.

Daniel did not go through heathen dictators to God. Daniel had a direct link to God.

Therefore, David was not affected by Saul's failure. And Daniel was not affected by the heathen dictators' rejection of God.

John 3:30 -- He must increase, but I must decrease.

Instead of being magnified, shouldn't every human leader seek to fade away till Christ alone is seen and is all in all?

Re: - posted by narrowpath, on: 2019/4/27 10:12

Hi Jade,

Samuel was mediator to Saul, but Saul was not to David, neither was Nebukadnezzar to Daniel.

What I am saying is, that a good man will prosper under a bad leader and a bad man will fail even under the best leader.

Their key to success was submission to leaders -good or bad-as unto God, and not unto man. They recognized God-ordained authority even though it was ill-disposed and doomed fail. This forged them into men whom God trust with real authority and they were greatly beloved (Dan 9:23) men after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14).

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2019/4/28 4:20

Hi narrowpath,

You said:

“What I am saying is, that a good man will prosper under a bad leader and a bad man will fail even under the best leader.”

And you said:

“Their key to success was submission to leaders -good or bad-as unto God, and not unto man.”

Do you have scriptural support for this statement?

To me, the key to success is UNION WITH CHRIST.

The Lord Jesus laid down this Eternal Law, this Eternal Truth:

John 15:5 “

I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

Apart from Christ we can do NOTHING!

Therefore, any man who has NO DIRECT UNION with Christ can do NOTHING even under the best leader.

And any man in union with Christ can do all things IN CHRIST despite a bad leader.

Ps. 16:8 “

I have set the LORD continually before me;
Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken.

Ps. 23:4 “

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me;

You also said:

“They recognized God-ordained authority even though it was ill-disposed and doomed fail. This forged them into men whom God trust with real authority and they were greatly beloved (Dan 9:23) men after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13:14).”

Is it written that David was a man after God's own heart because of his submission to Saul?

David only boasted in the Lord.

Ps. 18:1-3 “

For the choir director.

A Psalm of David the servant of the LORD, who spoke to the LORD the words of this song in the day that the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul.

And he said, "I love You, O LORD, my strength."

The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge;
My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.

I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised,

And I am saved from my enemies.

Ps. 44:8 'In

In God we have boasted all day long,
And we will give thanks to Your name forever. Selah.

A Question:

What is your view on the 'Nicolaitans'?

Rev. 2:6 'Yet

Yet this you do have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

Rev. 2:15-16 'So

So you also have some who in the same way hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.

Blessings

Re: - posted by narrowpath, on: 2019/4/28 10:21

Hi Jade,

you asked

Do you have scriptural support for this statement?

David was anointed King by the same Samuel, but the old King Saul still existed. David knew he could not lay hand on this rejected King by himself, although he had a few opportunities to do so. He had to wait until God fought this battle for him. David only fought the hostile armies around him and God gave him victory.

David needed a corrupt Saul to drive him into agonizing prayer. His respect for God's anointed assured him his eternal Kingdom.

You are right, in the end only union with Christ grants victory, however this is a painful process that can best -perhaps only- be achieved by adversity and suffering.

Re: - posted by passerby, on: 2019/4/28 13:54

Saul was a king of ancient Israel, a duly anointed one. However, what if it is about a false church, false preachers, false prophets, false apostles, or church overseers that endangers and deceives his congregation or followers.

I think a graduated appraisal is in order unless it is for our own interest and promotion.

Re: - posted by BranchinVINE (), on: 2019/4/29 4:05

Hi narrowpath,

You said:

“His (David’s) respect for God’s anointed assured him his eternal Kingdom.”

My comment:

If we are filled with the love of God, we will surely love God’s anointed. And, yes, we must respect and support God’s gifted apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Eph. 4:11) who are humbly and selflessly working for God. But our respect for God’s anointed has nothing to do with our salvation. Christ alone is our salvation.

You also said:

“Only union with Christ grants victory”

So glad we agree on this.

Blessings

Re: - posted by AbideinHim (), on: 2019/4/29 9:52

Time to Obey God Rather Than Man - Michael Brown

As sons and daughters of God, we are called to honor and respect authority and to be people of obedience rather than people of rebellion. But that means when the earthly authorities tell us to disobey God, we respectfully say, "We must obey God rather than man" (Acts 5:29).

This was a major theme at the "I Stand Sunday" rally in Houston, where thousands gathered together to pledge their obedience to God and His Word, regardless of cost or consequences.

In doing so, they were standing firmly on biblical principles, following in the footsteps of the Hebrew midwives in Exodus 1, Daniel and his compatriots in Daniel 3 and 6, the wise men of Matthew 2, and the apostles in Acts 4 and 5.

Of course, we must never lose sight of the fact that we are peacemakers rather than troublemakers, respectful rather than rude, and we must recognize that without proper authority structures the world could not function. At the same time, because we are called to obey God above all, there are times when we must disobey earthly authorities when their commands violate the commands of God.