The Pattern of the New Testament Church Part 2

Adam Willingham · Series: **Pattern of New Testament Church**

INTRODUCTION

- I think a good way to think of this is to think of a blueprint that God has given us for just what the church is to be and to do.
- We establish the fact that there is a pattern that is revealed for us, for the local church, for what we are to do collectively, for how the church is to function.

1 Differences Between the Local Church and the Individual

1 Timothy 5:16; 1 Corinthians 11:22; James 1:27

- In Scripture, it is not true that whatever the Christian can do, the church can do.
- If any believing man or woman has widows, let them relieve them, and do not let the church be burdened, that it may relieve those who are really widows.
- When the church takes on the responsibility that ought to be acted upon and fulfilled by the individual, then it becomes a burden to the church.
- There are home activities that cannot be church activities.
- Those two verses are in a context of individual responsibility. We as individuals have the responsibility to take care of widows and orphans.

2 The Oversight of Elders

Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1–7

- Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. To shepherd the church of God.
- We could refer to our four elders here in this congregation with any of those five terms and be scripturally accurate in doing so.
- Preachers are not called pastors in the Bible.
- Do you see that there is a distinction between evangelists and pastors? They are not the same.
- Another part of this pattern regarding elders is that multiple elders are to oversee a single local church.

3 The Service of Deacons

1 Timothy 3:8–13; Romans 16:1; Philippians 1:1

- Likewise, deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.
- Those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

- These qualifications are similar to elder qualifications, but they're not exactly the same.
- Some of the qualifications for elders actually are not given for deacons, such as apt to teach.
- There is no female deaconess position.

4 Local Church Autonomy

1 Corinthians 4:17

- Each local church in the New Testament was independent and autonomous, self-governing.
- We don't see one church controlled by another church.
- If we simply follow what we have recorded here without adding or taking away, then there will be unity in that regard among local churches that follow the pattern.
- The New Testament knows nothing of one pastor over a church.

5 Names of the Local Church Are Descriptions

Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Timothy 3:15

- These names that we find in the New Testament for the church are not titles, they are descriptions.
- We need to be very careful how we use the term church of Christ. That we don't use it as a title.
- How are we going to be the church of Christ, brethren? By belonging to Christ and following his teachings.
- These terms in the New Testament were all interchangeable to refer to the Lord's people.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **Now that's a pattern to follow, and that pattern is harder to follow. So we need to make sure and follow both patterns.**

MY NOTES