

***AN UNDERSTANDING***  
***OF THE***  
***EPISCOPACY***  
***AN OVERVIEW***  
***OF***  
***BISHOPS***  
&

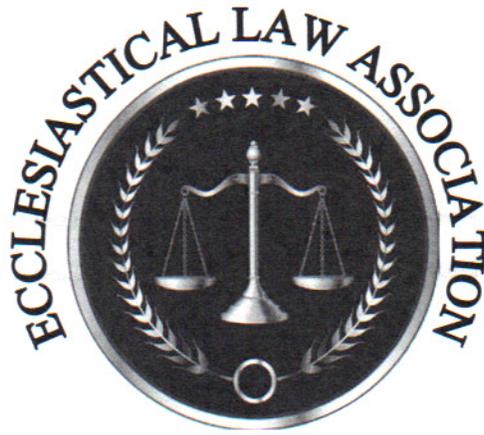
***(A HISTORY OF THE AUXILIARY BISHOP)***

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Cover Page



**JUSTICE = TRUTH, GRACE and MERCY**

**Rev. Dr. Frederick Douglas Jenkins**  
President  
*Truth the Guardian of Justice*  
*Grace has no regrets and Mercy has no memory.*

## **PREFACE**

George Bernard Shaw once said

*“The reasonable man adapts himself to the world. The unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man ability.”*

This book is a brief look at the Episcopacy through the ages and an overview of the Bishops to shed some light. It is my hope that it will be helpful to the reader.

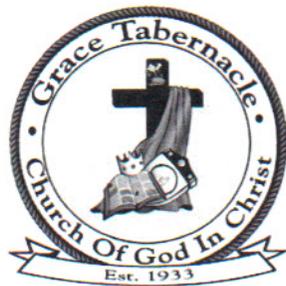
To the Episcopacy I caution you to always have etched in your remembrance, how great a treasure is committed to your charge. For they are the sheep of Christ, which He bought with His death, and for whom He shed His blood. The Church and Congregation whom you must serve, is His Spouse, and His Body. And if it shall happen that the same Church or any Member thereof, does suffer any hurt or hindrance by reason of your negligence, you know the greatness of the fault, and the horrible punishment that will ensue. Wherefore consider for yourselves the end of the Ministry towards the children of God, towards the Spouse and Body of Christ; see that you never cease your labor, your care and diligence. Until you have done all that is within you, according to your burden duty, to bring all such as are or shall be committed to your charge, unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God. And to that ripeness and perfectness of age in Christ, that there be no place left among you, either for error in religion, or for viciousness in life and for this let us pray.

O God of unchangeable power and eternal light: Look favorably upon thy whole Church, that wonderful and sacred mystery; by the tranquil operation of thy perpetual providence, carry out the work of men's salvation; let the whole world see and know that things which were cast down are being raised up, and things which had grown old are being made new, and that all things are being brought to their perfection by Him through whom all things were made, thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who lives and reigns with Thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

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# BIBLICAL CHURCH STRUCTURE

Over the years of my involvement in Church Leadership I have come to realize that when a Church is approaching the time when it will move from the mission stage to a fully operational church ministry. It is crucial that the operational structure be established in a way that is both Biblical and Practical. I believe that it should be structured for "the Long Haul" rather than expediency to fit the current leader's vision and current situation the church finds itself in.

I think it's worth noting that in view of the many New Testament detailed order of church offices it does not specify a particular one. All scripture references describe is "what was happening" at the time of writing. I believe that if God wanted a hard and fast structure in every church He would surely have revealed it more clearly. History reveals that God has often worked powerfully in poor church structures and in many instances' has also been crowded out in very good church structures.

I believe it is also helpful to understand that the structure of the earliest church grew out of Judaism of that time. Some scholar and theologians argue that the apostles believed that the church was just a new phase of God's covenant relationship with Israel. It is suggested that this can be seen in that:

- They continued to conduct their public activities in the Temple court
- They did not cross one Gentile threshold until Peter was directed by God to do so in Acts 10. This was years after the church age began, and
- They adopted the organizational structure of the Jewish synagogue.

Those in charge of the synagogue facilities were called **elders** and the teachers were called **Rabbi's**. Many suggest that at the first church council the **presiding elder** was James, who many also believe was the step-brother of Jesus. That decision about policy was made by "**the elders**". It should be remembered that the synagogue had no scriptural basis in Hebrew Scriptures, but was thought to be invented during the time of Judah's captivity in Babylon; we begin to see how God is gracious to work in organizational structures devised by expediency and tradition.

It is widely recorded that the church in the beginning years was referred to as the *apostolic church*, led by apostles and elders. In later years the Roman Catholic Church expanded on the office of "**Overseer**" (**Bishop**) to form a complex *Hierarchy* that includes *priests, bishops, vicars, archbishops, cardinals* and *pope*. With all authority flows from the **pope**. The Presbyterians, and others, have what is called a "*rule of elders*". The name is taken from the Greek word for elders. Episcopalians also take their name from the Greek word translated "**bishop**" in many English versions. They have bishop led churches. In The New Testament the Terms Used for Church Offices listed below are terms used in defining forms of church government deriving from the Greek language. We will try here to explain a little more; though not complete just an overview.

1. Apostle
2. Bishop – Overseer
3. Pastor – Shepherd

4. Elder-leader
5. Deacon/Deaconess - Ministers - servant

## Apostles

The basic meaning of "*apostle*" is "*messenger*". The apostles were the first propagators of the gospel of Christ and gave to the church New Testament revelation. There were the twelve apostles that were required to have the special qualifications of:

- Having followed Jesus from His baptism by John, and
- Having been eye witnesses of Jesus after His resurrection.

Peter brought this out when Judas was replaced.

*"Wherefore of these men who have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us. Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that He was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of His resurrection". Acts 1:21, 22.*

It is believed that these twelve apostles had no successors. History records Paul as being set apart to be the apostle to the Gentiles, Romans 11:13

*"For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office."* Barnabas was referred to as an apostle when he accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey,

Acts 14:14

*"Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of, they rent their clothes, and ran in among the people, crying out,"*

It is possible (but not conclusive) that "*apostle*" may have been used of others in the sense of "*messenger*", but there is no clear evidence that they held an office of leadership in the church. (Acts 2:42; 4:35, 37; 5:2 ;)

## Bishops - Overseer

It is recorded that about 280 BC Hebrew scholars translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek. Tradition says that there were seventy-two men involved. The translation was called the Septuagint, meaning "*the translation of the 70*".

Adapted from Theological Dictionary Of The New Testament Editor - Gerhard Kittel sights the Greek words in our New Testament translated "**bishop**" or "**overseer**" in various forms. The root meaning of "*episkopos*", or **overseer** in secular Greek was "*the looking down of the gods.*" Hebrew usage expanded on this with the meanings of "*to visit*"; "*to search*"; "*to be concerned about something*"; "*to care for something*". In the latter two cases it was used to describe the benevolent care of a shepherd for his flock. "*Episkopos*" had the meaning of "*to muster*". The idea is to gather the people, troops or flock together to see if any are missing. David was an example of this meaning when he said to Jonathan,

*"If your father(Saul) misses me at all..." 1 Samuel 20:6. It was also used often to describe God's benevolent watch care over His people: "A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." Deuteronomy 11:12.*

Sometimes *episkopos* was used of God in the sense of "to visit". It could mean to visit in mercy and grace or in judgment. It is used in both senses in Zechariah 10:3

*"Mine anger was kindled against the shepherds, and I punished the goats: for the LORD of hosts hath visited his flock the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle. "*

The verb form *episkeptomai* can mean "to punish" (as in Exodus 32:34) or it can mean "to bring blessing" as in Genesis 21:1.

*"The Lord visited Sarah as He had said.. .and Sarah conceived."*

*episkeptomai* was also used in the sense of "to appoint, to commission, to install someone". An example is Numbers 27:16,

*"Let God the Lord... set a man over the congregation... that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd."*

Another verb form "*episkeptesthai*" is used in the sense of "to visit" with a sense of concern and responsibility. Stephen used the word in this sense in regard to Moses.

*"But when he (Moses) was approaching the age of forty, it entered his mind to visit his brethren, the sons of Israel." Acts 7:23.*

Likewise, Paul said to Barnabas,

*"Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city. . .and see how they do. " Acts 15:36*

Peter gives us a very illuminating comparison between Jesus as *Episkopos* and those who serve as *episkopos* in the Christian congregations:

*"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop (**episkopos, overseer**) of your souls." 1 Peter 2:25, episkope' emphasizes the idea of visit or visitation.*

It can be a visitation of grace or judgment. See Luke 19:44 and 1 Peter 2:12, *episkope'* is also used of the apostolic office in Acts 1:16. *episkopos* (singular) and *episkopoi* (plural) only occur six times in the New Testament. In each case the idea of oversight is paramount. Strong's Concordance gives this definition: "a superintendent, e.i. Christian officer in general charge of a (or the) church (literal or figurative): - bishop, overseer."

*"Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers, to shepherd the church of God** which He purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28 " This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;" 1st Timothy 3:1,2.*

*" For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;" Titus 1:7*

## Elders

There are many who hold that the basic meaning of "elder" is "older" or "senior". The idea of spiritually older (or mature) rather than physically older seems to be the more dominant meaning for church leaders.

It is suggested that the Greek word "*presbuteros*" means "*older*" and in relation to church office means "*spiritually mature*". Often read "*priests and elders*" as leaders in Judaism in the gospels and the book of Acts. It seems that both apostles and other leaders in the early church were referred to as "*elders*".

Peter speaks clearly that **elders** (at least those who bear the title of *episkopos*) are **to have the attitude and actions of a benevolent shepherd** as they follow the example of the Chief Shepherd and Bishop, Jesus Christ.

*"The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not a way." -1 Peter 5:1-4*

An offering was sent to suffering Jewish believers in Judea. *"And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to **the elders** - Acts 11:30.*

At the close of the first missionary journey Paul and Barnabas retraced their steps to the churches they had planted.

*"And when they had **appointed elders** for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed." Acts 14:23.*

At the first church council there are several references to "*elders*" in the Jerusalem church. Acts 15:2, 46, 22, 23 and 16:4. The leaders of the church at Ephesus are referred to as "*elders*." Acts 21:17. This is true of both Jewish and Gentile (non-Jewish) churches. 1st Timothy 5:1, 2, 17, 19; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; 1st Peter 5:1, 2; 2nd John 1 and 3rd John 1. This exhortation was made to the **elders** of the church of Ephesus whom Paul had summoned.

*"Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons." Philippians 1:1 "For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls." 1 st Peter 2:25*

In regard to men *episkopos* is used twice in the plural and three times in singular. When used of Jesus Christ it is obviously used in the singular.

## Deacons - Ministers

The word "*deacon*" appears twice in our English New Testament.

*"And let these first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. "*

*"For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith, which is in Christ Jesus. " –  
1 Timothy 3:10, 13*

The plural form "*deacons*" appears three times:

*"Paul and Timotheus...to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." Philippians 1:1*

*"Like wise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;*

*"Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well." 1st Timothy 3:8, 12*

From Strong's Concordance *deacon* is defined as: *Diakonos* (to run errands; an attendant, i.e. (gen.) a waiter (at a table or in other menial duties).

From Thayer's Greek English Lexicon:

"One who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master; a servant, attendant, minister."

" . . .*but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister*" (i.e. *deacon*).  
Matthew 20:26.

*"Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve (diakoneo) tables. Wherefore, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and Wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. " Acts 6:2,3*

*"I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant (diakonos) of the church which is at Cenchræa; That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh*

*saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.* Romans 16:1,2

The ministry of a deacon was to serve the needs of others. Anyone who served the needs of others was performing a deacon ministry. Those men who were characterized by serving the needs of others were set apart to the office of deacons.

## Church Organizational Structure

Scriptures from the pastoral epistles to Timothy and Titus that shed light on church organizational structure.

*"Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." 1st Timothy 2:7*

*"Until I come, give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you, which was bestowed upon you through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the presbytery (body of elder)." 1st Timothy 4:13, 14*

The inference is that Timothy was "appointed" or "ordained" to an office of considerable importance. We presume this to be the office of Bishop since "Bishop" (*piscopus*) and "Elders" (*presbuteros*) are the only titles used in regard to recognized leadership of the church. One could conclude that "Deacons" held the office of "ministry" or "service".

Other scriptures indicate or suggest that Timothy was not only the primary leader of the church at Ephesus, but exercised considerable influence among other churches of Asia Minor. (Virtually the entire contents of 1st and 2nd Timothy makes this assumption.

*"Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching." 1st Timothy 5:17*

Here are elders serving with multiple gifts: administering, preaching and teaching. Verse 18 many believe indicates that "double honor" refers to financial compensation. To others it seems strange that if these "elders" were also "bishops" that Paul did not refer to them as "bishops". The weight of that inference is that they were equivalent to what we refer to as "paid staff" in our churches today.

*"Do not lay hands (to appoint or ordain) upon any one too hastily and thus share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin." 1st Timothy 5:22*

It would appear that the authority of deciding who's to ordain to the position of bishop was vested in Timothy, but he was exhorted to use this authority with great care.

*"Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." 1st Timothy 6:12*

The inference is that before Timothy was "ordained" or "appointed" to the office of

Bishop he was interrogated about his doctrinal and moral positions and gave satisfactory answers before many witnesses.

*"O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you..." 1st Timothy 6:20*

This suggests that Timothy had been entrusted with a position or responsibility of great importance.

*"And for this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands." 2nd Timothy 1:6*

Paul was present when Timothy was "ordained" or "appointed" to the position he held in the church at Ephesus.

*"...for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher." 2nd Timothy 1:11*

Paul identifies his spiritual gifts and position to which he had been appointed by Jesus Christ.

*"And the things which you heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." 2nd Timothy 2:2*

Paul will shortly die a martyr's death. And it could be argued that he had no successor as the apostle to the Gentiles. However it appears Paul might have given the formula by which church leadership was to be passed on from generation to generation.

*"I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires; and will turn a way their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." 2nd Timothy 4:1-5*

Paul's closing charge to Timothy requires both zeal and faithfulness in a broad range of responsibilities. This indicates he occupied the position of the bishop or overseer that required far more from him than the average elder.

*"For this reason, I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you." For the overseer (bishop) must be above reproach as God's steward..." Titus 1: 5, 7.*

Titus had the responsibility and authority to "appoint" elders in every city. The word "appoint" is sometimes translated "ordain". It literally means "stretching forth the hand"

and refers to pointing someone out and bestowing on them a new position and/or responsibility. The entire book of Titus concerns the responsibility of Titus to "set in order" things that still needed to be set in order in the churches on the island of Crete. Chief among those things was "appointing" or "ordaining" elders in every city. Although not 100% conclusive the weight of the pastoral epistles seems to indicate that the leadership and administration of the early churches was entrusted to elders., It also seems to teach that from the elders one or more were "appointed" or "ordained" to be benevolent "overseer(s)" to "pastor" or "shepherd" the church in the manner a literal shepherd "watches over" his flock.

In the early church Elders and Bishops were servant leaders who ministered primarily but not exclusively to the spiritual needs of the church. "Deacons" or "Ministers" ministered primarily, but not exclusively to the physical and material needs of the church. Every Bishop was an elder, but it seems that every Elder was not necessarily a bishop or overseer.

## **Leaders Are To Be Servant Leaders**

*"Jesus called them to Himself, and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant...' Matthew 20: 25,26.*

Less we forget Elders-Pastors-Bishops are leaders who serves, and Deacons are Servants who leads.

## **Preferred Church Structure**

It cannot be conclusively proven that any one structure is required by scripture. Those who prefer a different structure can not conclusively prove that they have a scriptural mandate. Our goal however should be to have a structure that is harmonious with scriptural revelation and then present every aspect to God for Him to use according to His purpose.

## **Authority in Church**

This subject is made difficult not only by the rich diversity of the New Testament witness, but also by the diverse trajectories of ecclesiastical culture, customs and traditions from post apostolic times on.

### **The Locus or (particular pattern) of Authority**

Arguably, the strongest authoritative human voices in the early New Testament churches were the Apostles (in the narrow sense of that flexible term, i.e., the Twelve (Matthias replacing Judas) plus Paul).

Their authority extended beyond the local congregation, even beyond congregations they had been instrumental in founding (for how else could Peter's influence be felt in

Corinth and Paul's in Colossae?), but it was not without limit. And a Peter could prove inconsistent in practice

*"<sup>11</sup> But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.*

*<sup>12</sup> For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision.*

*<sup>13</sup> And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.*

*<sup>14</sup> But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" (Gal. 2:11 -14),*

and Paul could be mistaken in judgment

*"<sup>37</sup> Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them,*

*<sup>38</sup> but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work.*

*<sup>39</sup> They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus,*

*<sup>40</sup> but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord." (Acts 15:37-40)*

*"<sup>11</sup> Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry." (2 Tim. 4:11).*

The objective truth of the gospel, Paul insists, enjoys an antecedent (A Predecessor if you will) authority; if even an apostle tampers with that, he is to be considered anathema (Abomination)

*"<sup>8</sup> But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*

*<sup>9</sup> As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:8-9).*

So an authoritative gospel must be passed on. That Paul in an early epistle can speak of the old covenant as being read (2 Cor. 3:14) not only presupposes that Christians enjoy a new covenant but anticipates a reading of the new covenant (and therefore a **NT** canon) with scriptural authority analogous to that of the **OT** (2 Pet. 3:15-16). In such cases, however, whether the penman be an apostle or not, the authority rests in the resulting inspired Scriptures, not the human being who inscripturates them,

<sup>16</sup> *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (2 Tim. 3:16).*

## **Analogous things could be affirmed of Old Testament prophets**

Indeed, it can be argued rather compellingly that the true **NT** analogue of the **OT** prophet is not the **NT** prophet but the **NT** apostle (in the narrow sense). The apostles enjoy a self-conscious authority as God-chosen custodians of the gospel; and if they prefer to exercise their authority with meekness in an effort to win spiritually minded consensus (e.g., 1 Cor. 5:1 - 10; 2 Cor. 10:6; 1 Pet. 5:1 - 4), they are also prepared, if need be, to impose their authority without seeking consensus, and even against the consensus (e.g., Acts 5:1 - 11; 1 Cor. 4:18-21; 2 Cor. 10:11; 13:2 - 3; 3 John 10).

Their authority is especially prominent in their role as interpreters both of the **OT** Scriptures and of the teachings of Jesus, as well as of His ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension. It was widely seen that the church devoted itself to the apostles' teaching (Acts 2:42).

## **New Testament prophets likewise enjoyed wide authority**

Some of them may have been itinerant, not restricting their ministrations to one congregation. "Prophecy" in the **NT** ranges from Spirit-empowered preaching to direct propositional messages from God; but the degree or kind of inspiration and the corresponding authority status of the prophet are limited. It is virtually impossible to conceive of 1 Cor. 14:29 being applied to OT prophets (once their credentials were accepted) or to **NT** apostles.

Those who seem consistently to enjoy the greatest authority at the level of the local congregation are the elders, almost certainly the same as those also labeled bishops (or overseers) and pastors (Acts 20:17-28; cf. Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:1 - 7; Titus 1:5, 7; 1 Pet. 5:1 - 2). The first term stems from the synagogue and from village organization; the second reflects genuine oversight and authority; and the third betrays an agrarian background ("pastor" derives from a Latin root meaning "shepherd").

In a typical list of qualifications for this office / function (e.g., 1 Tim. 3:1 - 7) we discover that almost every entry is mandated elsewhere of all believers. What is distinctive about the elder reduces to two things:

- (1) He must not be a novice. Clearly this is a relative term, largely dictated by how recently the church in question came into being, since Paul appoints elders mere months after their conversion in some instances (e.g., Acts 14:23).
- (2) He must be able to teach, which presupposes a growing grasp of the gospel and of the Scriptures and an ability to communicate them well.

The other qualifications mentioned (e.g., an overseer must not be a woman, must be given to hospitality, etc.) suggest that he must excel in the graces and deportment

expected of all believers. He who would lead the church must himself be a good reflection of it, not a mere professional.

It is argued then that in general, this sphere of responsibility and authority for these, the bishops - elders - pastors is the local church; there is little compelling evidence for the view that a bishop, for instance, unlike elders, exerted authority over several congregations.

A plurality of elders, if not mandated, appears to have been common, and perhaps the norm. On the other hand, only "churches"; one reads of churches in Galatia, but of the church in Antioch or Jerusalem or Ephesus. Thus it is possible, though not certain, that a single elder may have exercised authority in relation to one house group, a house group that in some cases constituted part of the citywide church, so that the individual elder would nevertheless be one of many in that citywide "church" taken as a whole.

The apparent anomalies to this limitation on the sphere of elders can be credibly explained. The writer of 2 John and 3 John labels himself an "elder," even though he is seeking to influence the affairs of other churches; but most likely this particular elder it appears is writing with apostolic prerogatives. The same is true of Peter when he refers to himself as an elder (1 Pet. 5:1). The position of James in Acts 15 is peculiar, but the evidence is being stretched when interpreters conclude that James chaired the proceedings. The case is laid before the apostles and elders (15:4); "the apostles and elders, with the whole church" (15:22), make the final decisions; and the apostles and elders write the letter (15:23). Peter speaks as an apostle, James as an elder; it is not obvious that either "chaired" the meeting. But even if James did so, the crucial decisions were taken by the apostles, elders, and the church in concert.

Deacons may trace the origin of their office / function to the appointment of the seven (Acts 6), but this is uncertain. When lists of qualifications are presented elsewhere (e.g., 1 Tim. 3:8 -13), stress is laid (as in the case of elders) on features which signify spiritual maturity; but in this instance teaching is not required. Deacons were responsible to serve the church in a variety of subsidiary roles, but enjoyed no church-recognized teaching authority akin to that of elders.

## **Patterns of Authority**

The more difficult question for us today is how these two offices / functions, viz., elders / pastors / overseers and deacons, relate their authority to the authority of the local church or to some broader grouping of churches. Historically one of three avenues has been followed, with many variations.

### **Congregationalism**

Tends to place the ultimate choices in the hands of the entire congregation. In part this stance is a reaction against the interposition of a priestly class between God and man; the priesthood of all believers (1 Pet. 2:9) is central. Churches decide alongside the apostles and elders (Acts 15:22); churches are responsible to protect themselves against false teachers (Galatians; 2 Cor. 10 -13; 2 John); churches become the final court of appeal (Matt. 18:17); and even when the apostle Paul wants some discipline to be exercised, he appeals to the entire local church in solemn assembly (1 Cor. 5:4).

# Episcopacy

Labels its chief ministers bishops and lesser ones presbyters (or priests) and deacons. Some within this camp see the function of the bishops as heir to the apostles; others point to the intermediate roles of Timothy and Titus as portrayed in the Pastoral Epistles, men who had power themselves to appoint elders (Titus 1:5), as had the apostles in the churches they founded (Acts 14:23). Certainly the threefold ministry was defended as early as Ignatius (c. 110 AD), without, apparently, a traumatic debate reflecting change.

# Presbyterianism

Points out that presbyters in the NT occupy the most important place after the apostles; and in any location the plurality of presbyters (or elders) seems to argue for a committee or college of presbyters who exercised general oversight over the congregation in the area (1 Thess. 5:12 - 13; Heb. 13:17).

As most frequently practiced, all three of these prevailing patterns raise questions:

**Presbyterianism** has raised an inference from Scripture to the status of principle.

**Episcopacy** makes disjunctions between bishop and elder a position that some feels cannot be defended from the NT, and therefore appeals to Timothy and Titus as paradigms are futile, not least because their functions are best explained on other lines (and in any case they are not called "bishops" over against some lesser clergy status).

**Congregationalism** tends to read principles of democratic majority vote into NT churches. Ironically, some forms of Congregationalism elevate the pastor; once he has been voted in, to near papal authority, in practice if not in theory.

The problem may lie in the fact that we have too often envisaged church authority flowing in straight lines, whether up or down, instead of recognizing the somewhat more fluid reality of the New Testament.

It is believed by many Scholars and Theologians that the normal responsibility for and authority of leadership in the **NT** church rests with the bishops - elders - pastors; but if they are interested in pursuing biblical patterns of leadership, they will be concerned to demonstrate observable growth not only in their grasp of truth but also in their life discipline (1 Tim. 4:14 - 16).

They will comprehend that spiritual leadership, far from lording it over others (Matt. 20:25-28), is a balanced combination of oversight (1 Tim. 4:11 -13; 6:17- 19; Titus 3:9 - 11) and example (1 Tim. 4:12; 6:6-11, 17 - 18; 1 Pet. 5:1 -4) which, far from being antithetical, are mutually reinforcing. By the same token such leaders prefer not to dictate terms but to lead the church into spiritually minded consensus.

Whereas Christians are encouraged to support and submit to spiritual leadership (e.g., Heb. 13:17), such encouragement must not be considered a blank check if churches are responsible for and have the authority to discipline false teachers and to recognize an antecedent (predecessor) commitment not to a pastor but to the truth of the gospel. Modern models are not so much wrong as frequently lopsided, favoring a prejudicial selection of the NT data. Similarly, the Ignatian defense of a threefold ministry was not so much a rebellious aberration as an attempt to ground the rising monarchical episcopate in Scripture in order to use it to ward off traveling preachers who were frequently found spreading Gnostic heresy.

## Spheres of Authority

The spheres in which ecclesiastical authority (however such authority is to be manifested) operates are primarily three:

**First**, the early Christian churches exercised discipline, which ranged all the way from private and thoughtful admonition (e.g., Gal. 6:1) to excommunication (a severe social pressure when the entire church was cooperating) and even the handing over of a person to Satan (e.g., 1 Cor. 5:5; cf. Matt. 16:19; 18:18). Calvin was not wrong to identify church discipline as the third distinguishing mark of the NT church.

**Second**, they enjoyed responsibility for and authority over a substantial range of questions affecting internal order, e.g., arrangement for collection of monies for relief of the poor (2 Cor. 8 - 9) or the administration of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor.

**Third**, churches had some responsibility and authority in the selection of deacons and elders and delegates (e.g., Acts 6:3 - 6; 15:22; 1 Cor. 16:3).

In no case were decisions established by mere majority approval; nor were these spheres of authority the exclusive prerogatives of the entire congregation.

Apostles appointed elders, and Timothy had hands laid on him both by the apostle Paul and by the presbytery (2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Tim. 4:14).

This need not mean such appointment was made without close consultation with the church; but if the authority granted Titus is significant (Titus 1:5), it appears that oversight, especially in the case of fledgling churches, was exercised first by the apostles and then by their appointees.

In sum, there is dynamic tension among the constituent parts of the church as far as the authority of each is concerned. Two boundaries, to say the least, are fixed:

- (1) The church is not at liberty to ignore or countermand or contravene the authority of the gospel itself, now at last inscripturated, without sooner or

- later calling into question its own status as church.
- (2) The church of the NT does not expect its authority to be administered directly to the surrounding world, but to be felt through the transformed and redemptive lives of its members.

## Were Early Churches Ruled by Elders or a Single Bishop?

There is a (seemingly) never-ending debate amongst theologians and pastors about the proper form of government for the church.

For generations, Christians Churches have disagreed about what leadership structure the church ought to use. From the plurality of Apostles-Bishops-Elders led Early church to the informal Brethren churches, there is great diversity.

And one of the fundamental flash points in this debate is the practice of the early church. What form of government did the earliest Christians have?

Of course, early Christian polity is a vast and complex subject with many different issues in play. But, I want to focus in upon a narrow one:

Were the earliest churches ruled by a plurality of elders or a single bishop?

Now it needs to be noted from the outset that by the end of the second century, most churches were ruled by a single Bishop. For whatever set of reasons, moniscopacy had won the day. Many scholars attribute this development to Ignatius.

But, what about earlier?

Was there a single-Bishop structure in the first and early second century?

The New Testament evidence itself seems to favor a plurality of elders as the standard model.

The book of Acts tells us that as the Apostles planted churches, they appointed "Elders" (from the Greek term *πρεσβύτερος*, to oversee them (Acts 11:30; 14:23; 15:2; 20:17). Likewise, Titus is told to "appoint elders in every town" (Titus 1:5).

A very similar word, *ἐπισκοπότης*; ("Bishop" or "overseer"), is used in other contexts to describe what appears to be the same ruling office (Phil 1:1; Tim 3:1-7; ).

The overlap between these two terms is evident in Acts 20:28 when Paul, while addressing the Ephesians "elders" (*πρεσβύτερος*), declares that "The Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*ἐπισκοπότης*)." Thus, one can possibly derive that the New Testament writings might indicate that the office of elder/bishop is functionally one and the same.

But, what about the church after the New Testament?

Did they maintain the model of multiple elders?

Two quick examples comes to mind for your consideration which might suggest that at least the church at Rome did maintain this structure at least for a little while:

1. At one point, the *Didache Bible* addresses the issue of church government directly, "And so, elect for yourselves bishops (rmaKOTTouc;) and deacons who are worthy of the Lord, gentle men who are not fond of money, who are true and approved" (15.1).

"The **Didache Bible** is a valuable resource for students and those participating in Scripture studies. Ideal for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of the Catholic faith and intended to be accessible by all Catholics in its level of scriptural scholarship."

It is noteworthy that the author mentions plural bishops—not a single ruling bishop—and that he places these bishops alongside the office of deacon, as Paul himself does (e.g., Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:1-13). Thus, as noted above, it might appear that the bishops described here are possibly essentially equivalent to the office of "elder."

2. A letter known as *1 Clement* (c.96) also has much to say about early church governance. This letter is attributed to a "Clement"—who was also known as **Saint Clement of Rome**, listed by Irenaeus and Tertullian as Bishop of Rome, holding office from 88 to his death in 99. He is considered to be the first Apostolic Father of the Church.

Clement was said to have been consecrated by Peter, and was known to have been a leading member of the church in Rome in the late 1<sup>st</sup> century. Early church lists place him as the second or third bishop of Rome after Peter—who represents the church in Rome and wrote to the church at Corinth to deal with the fallout of a recent turnover in leadership. Writing to convince (not command) the Corinthians to reinstate its bishops (elders) who were wrongly deposed. The letter affirms the testimony of the book of Acts when it tells us that the apostles initially appointed "bishops (ETTiQKOTrouq) and deacons" in the various churches they visited (42.4). After the time of the apostles, bishops were appointed "by other reputable men with the entire church giving its approval" (44.3). This is an echo of the *Didache Bible* which indicated that bishops were elected by the church.

In sum, the NT texts and texts from the early second century indicate that a plurality of elders was the standard structure in the earliest stages. But, as noted above, the idea of a singular Bishop began to dominate by the end of the second century.

What led to this transition?

Most scholars argue that it was the heretical battles fought by the church in the second century that led them to turn to key leaders to defend and represent the church.

"For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;" (Tit. 1:7).

## What then is EPISCOPACY in the early church?

Episcopacy refers to the system of church government by three distinct orders of ministers -- bishops, priests, and deacons -- of whom the bishops have superior authority and in which Bishops serve as general superintendents or overseers of the church and are responsible individually and collectively for the spiritual and temporal welfare of the denomination. The Episcopal system is established by the Constitution as an integral part of the organizational structure of the church.

### Episcopacy

The definition of the word Episcopal has variation among Christian traditions. There are subtle differences in governmental principles among Episcopal churches at the present time. To some extent the separation of Episcopal churches can be traced to these differences in ecclesiology, that is, their theological understanding of church and church governance. For some, "Episcopal churches" are churches that use a hierarchy of bishops that regard themselves as being in an unbroken, personal Apostolic Succession.

Episcopal is also commonly used to distinguish between the various organizational structures of denominations. For instance, the word Presbyters (Greek: 'πρεσβύτης, presbites) is used to describe a church governed by a hierarchy of assemblies of elected Elders, referred to as Presbyterian. Similarly, Episcopal is used to describe a church governed by Bishops. Self-governed local congregations, governed neither by elders nor bishops, are usually referred to as Congregational as noted earlier.

More specifically, the title Episcopal (capitalized in this instance) is applied to several churches historically based within Anglicanism (Episcopalianism) including those still in communion with the Church of England.

The origins of episcopacy are obscure, but by the 2nd century A.D., it was becoming established in the main centers of Christianity. It was closely tied to the idea of Apostolic Succession, the belief that bishops can trace their office in a direct, uninterrupted line back to the Apostles of Jesus.

A 2nd-century bishop was charged with the spiritual welfare of his congregation; he was the chief liturgical minister, and he baptized, celebrated the Lords' Supper, ordained, absolved, controlled finances, and settled matters of dispute. With state recognition of Christianity in the 4th century, the Bishop came to be regarded not only as a church leader but also as an important figure in secular affairs.

As the bishops' duties increased and congregations grew in size and number, it became necessary either to have more bishops or to delegate some of their functions to others.

Congregations in an area (diocese) were entrusted to presbyters (priests), assisted by deacons, under the supervision of a bishop.

It was this system of church government that became established throughout the church. The bishop retained as his exclusive right the power to confirm church members, ordain priests, and consecrate other bishops.

As the middle ages advanced, the system of delegation of duties became excessively organized, and an ecclesiastical bureaucracy came into being. A complex hierarchy of subordinate officials acted on the bishop's behalf.

Although bishops made important contributions to the medieval state, this activity was thought to interfere with the office of the local church leader.

During the Reformation in the 16th century, episcopacy was repudiated by most Protestant churches, partly on the grounds of its involvement in political rule but also because many believed the system was not based on the New Testament church structure. The Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, Old Catholic, and Swedish Lutheran churches all have the Episcopal form of church government, as do some German Lutheran churches, the United Methodist Church, and a number of others.

In the 20th-century ecumenical movement, episcopacy was problematic for churches seeking reunion. Some maintained its necessity to the church, others thought it beneficial to the church, and still others considered it neither necessary nor beneficial. Most Christians agreed that episkopos in its original Greek sense of "overseer" is essential to the church, but they differed as to the functions of the overseer.

## What is a Bishop?

### Pastors, Bishops and Elders

Among many Christians today, there is considerable confusion about the scriptural identifications and distinctions regarding pastors, bishops and elders. The purpose here is to scripturally clarify as is widely understood these designations and to give an overview of the service required.

This overview is best understood with a study of Acts Chapter 20. In this chapter, Paul stops in Ephesus on his way to Jerusalem. While in Ephesus, Acts 20:17 says that Paul had called together, "the elders of the church." Acts 20:18-38 contains Paul's address to these "elders" on that occasion.

From a technical perspective theologian believes that, Acts 20 reinforces a doctrine about terminology used with regard to Pastoral Ministry. In verse 17, the men who are called together are referred to as "elders." The Greek word there is "presbuturos." In verse 28, Paul refers to these same men as "overseers." That Greek word is "episkopos." It literally means "overseer" or "superintendent" and was used in the first century as a designation for the leader of secular projects as well. It is used 7 times in the New Testament and is translated "bishop" in the other 6 occurrences. That means that these very same "elders" are also referred to as "bishops" in the same address by Paul. There is no distinction in scripture between "elders" and "bishops" with regard to

their position in the church. One more technical clarification is in order here. Verse 28 also contains the Greek verb, "poimaino," translated "feed" here. The definition of this word is "to tend a flock as a shepherd." It just so happens that the noun form of this word, "poimaine" is translated "shepherd" in every scriptural occurrence except one, Ephesians 4:11, where it is translated "pastor."

Other New Testament passages support the synonymous usage of these terms as well. Peter uses the same three Greek roots in I Peter 5:1-4, the only difference being that he uses the verb form "episkopeo" (translated "taking oversight") instead of the noun form "episkopos." In Paul's letter to Titus, he refers to these men as "elders" in Titus 1:5, but "bishop" in verse 7. It is clear that they were used interchangeably by Paul.

Conclusion: There is no distinction between a pastor, a bishop or an elder in the scripture. They all refer to the exact same office. Some have suggested that the three words speak to a different aspect of the pastoral ministry. Perhaps, but it is difficult to see that distinction in scripture. They are all scriptural terms designated for those who lead believers in the local church. To put it simply: A pastor is a bishop is an elder. Incidentally, if you do further study on this subject, you will observe that "presbuturos" has a triple meaning in scripture distinguishable only by context. Sometimes "presbuturos" is used as the designation for an older person without regard to church polity (I Timothy 5:1-2). It is also sometimes used to describe civil leadership (Acts 4:8 - "elders of Israel"). In all three contexts, the "elders" are those to whom others look for mature decision making.

Now that we know from scripture that pastors, bishops and elders all refer to the same position within the local church, let's take a closer look at this New Testament local-church position. What are the distinguishing characteristics of a pastor/bishop/elder? One only needs to combine the definitions of the three Greek words used to get a substantial picture of the pastor's function. He is one who "shepherds" (leads) the flock (local assembly of Believers) while taking responsibility for their pursuits in service ("bishop" = "overseer"). He also is charged with making mature decisions ("elder" = "mature person") on behalf of the flock. There is no New Testament specification as to whether or not pastors are supported financially by the local church; obviously some were and others were not. In viewing New Testament patterns of service, a plurality of elder leadership is seen in the local church (as in Ephesus, Acts 20:17), especially obvious in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15:2,6,22). These men were not treated as a board of directors, but were rather men who were fully engaged in the pastoral leadership of the ministry.

That leads us to the qualifications of a pastor/bishop/elder. Two separate New Testament passages list the qualifications for this office, I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Paul makes it obvious in both of these passages that this is a position of example. Pastors are to be men who are good examples in their church and community. Potential candidates within the local church should meet the spiritual requirements in advance of their appointment to that formal position.

# THE BISHOP IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

I thought to conduct this research as a means to help the Episcopacy of our Great Church, the Church Of God In Christ. In what specific ways is the exercise of Episcopal Leadership in contemporary society different than many years ago, even as recently as the beginning of this century?

The Bishops themselves speak about the ways in which they perceive that they are influenced in their ability and intention by the environment in which they work.

How often is the Bishop today faced with the difficulty of having his efforts to be a leader in a pluralistic society handicapped by a stereotype of what a Bishop was in centuries past?

How many Bishops have sufficient budget and staff assistance to meet head-on the challenges posed by ever-changing conditions?

How many enjoy mutually-supportive relationships with the clergy of their dioceses and with fellow Bishops?

How secure these days are a leadership role based on the authority of the episcopate?

How frequently are Bishops made to feel the irony of leadership in a structure which has Episcopal government but Congregational power?

How often are Bishops expected to take full responsibility for policies and programs in their dioceses over which, in reality, they have little authority or influence?

What is it like to be a Bishop in an anti-authoritarian era and an age of liturgical reform and change?

By its very name Episcopal advertises that Bishops are an essential part of the Church structure and consequently serve key functions in all aspects of church life. At the same time the task of the Bishop remains loosely defined and subject to a great variety of interpretations. While much attention is being paid to the frustrations and dilemmas of clergy these days, little attention is paid to those persons upon whose ministry the work and the ministry of all other ordained persons depend.

Bishops need information, resource and support in order to make policy decisions which affect them all. While the Bishops may individually be able to answer the questions posed in this writing, few if any could speculate accurately about the factual situation for the diocesan/jurisdictional Bishops as a whole. The high degree of "pluralistic ignorance" about the situations, attitudes, and needs of their peers which is evident is not conducive to Bishops being able to make effective policies of benefit to the whole Church. While there is always the tendency to take oneself for the "norm," in reality this is almost always erroneous and thus potentially destructive to overall planning.

For example, programs and resources which are very much needed by

newly-consecrated Bishops may not be those needed by very experienced Bishops. Newly-consecrated Bishops may be facing a different environment and set of problems than Bishops who were consecrated ten, fifteen or more years ago.

Not only is ours a time of rapid social changes with a subsequent effect on the position of organized religion, but it is also a time of sharply-increasing expense in all denominations. No denomination can afford to ignore the consequences of fluctuating expectations, in our Church it is essential that such help be provided for the Bishops in all dioceses/jurisdictions.

By having a clearer picture of the demands made on Bishops, the tasks they are asked to accomplish in their different dioceses /jurisdictions, the pressures they feel, and the kinds of assistance they request or need, the Church can better make a supportive response geared to the situations actually faced by contemporary Bishops.

## **BISHOPS LEADERSHIP STYLE: PREFERENCES AND POSSIBILITIES**

Although Bishops at times may feel isolated in his status, "no man is an island" in fact, so the perspectives and performance of Bishops, like those of other persons, are affected by the culture of which they are a part. Few Bishops make the claim to be "rulers" in their dioceses/ jurisdictions, nor expressed any desire to claim complete authority, which may be a reflection of the anti-authoritarian spirit of our times. The practice of leadership is related to the times and the situation in which it is exercised.

There were two preferred leadership styles described by Bishops interviewed as those they attempt to incorporate in diocesan administration of various denominations with an Episcopal and Hierarchical church structure:

1. Democratic Supervisor: Nearly half the interviewed Bishops gave descriptions of their preferred and actual leadership style as one of shared leadership with others (clergy, committees, commissions) in the diocese/ jurisdiction, with the Bishop acting as supervisor, coordinator, and especially enabler, of the efforts of others to perform the work and expand the ministry of the diocese/jurisdiction.
2. Chairman of the Board: At least a third of the remaining Bishops interviewed described themselves as fulfilling their leadership responsibilities by delegating work, assigning responsibilities to others, reserving all major decisions on who was to undertake principal responsibility for what work, and what policies would be implemented. A Bishop with this orientation seeks input and advice from staff, experts, and constituencies on which to base the decisions, but he always casts the deciding vote.

Leadership-style preferences of Bishops, however, are not the only factor in determining actual leadership style. Bishops with democratic-supervisor orientations must have constituents who are willing to be actively engaged in decision-making and share

responsibility for the success or failure of diocesan/jurisdictional work under the supervision of the Bishop.

Bishops who act as "chairmen of the board" are only going to be able to function effectively if they have the staff to delegate to or the resources to purchase expert advice, as well as people who can be counted upon to willingly provide input and carry through on policies set.

In short, like leaders in all organizations, Bishops, too, will be constrained in the exercise of their authority, the translation of preferences into actualities, by the characteristics and attitudes of their "subordinates" and the resources and characteristics of their "organizations" as a whole. To a far greater extent perhaps than a century ago, the environment of the diocese/jurisdiction establishes how the Bishop can act as leader of the diocese/jurisdiction.

What are these conditions? Although there are a large number of conditions which will affect the leadership style a Bishop is able to adopt, the major ones seem to be the following:

**First**, is the expectation of the active members of the dioceses as to what the leadership style of the Bishop should be.

**Second**, is the amount of financial resource available to the diocese. There are two potential components here which may affect the ability of the Bishop to exercise his preferred leadership style:

1) The wealthier the diocese, the less problem the Bishop is going to have in getting support for new programs he favors. Survey data show clearly that Bishops from wealthier dioceses are more comfortable about having "economic clout" than Bishops from poorer dioceses.

2) the wealthier the diocese, the more likely the Bishop is to have a larger staff with which to share responsibility and enable better involvement of others. A component often but not invariably associated with wealth of a diocese is the involvement of laity from high socio-economic background in diocesan decision-making.

**Third**, is the geographical spread of the diocese. Bishops in dioceses which are quite dispersed geographically, i.e., where clergy and laity have to travel fifty-to-seventy-five miles on the average to attend diocesan meetings, have more problems involving clergy and people in the on-going work of the diocese to any great extent than those Bishops in dioceses which are relatively compact geographically.

Bishops who reported that they did not have enough time to do the job they should be doing were less able to live with their Episcopal authority comfortably than those Bishops who did have sufficient time to do their job, and certainly time spent traveling can substantially eat into the time needed to perform other bishopric tasks.

These three conditions impinging on the Bishop's ability to exercise his preferred leadership style can be independent of one another, and often are. However, there is a tendency for the three major conditions to overlap especially in very rich or very poor dioceses, creating special constraints on the Bishop's freedom to lead as he chooses.

Example, Bishops in the poorer dioceses are likely to be pressured by their constituents to run the diocese on the basis of "Bishop's authority." At the same time, these dioceses often are geographically dispersed. This factor in addition to expectations that the Bishop will make the decisions (and do most of the work) makes it almost impossible for the Bishop to engage effectively in a "democratic-supervisor" style of leadership.

The relative poverty of the diocese also makes it unlikely that the Bishop will have sufficient staff to delegate much of the work or monies to hire outside experts, hence making it difficult as well for him to employ a "chairman of the board" leadership style. Bishops in poorer dioceses then are apt to be forced into the more authoritarian leadership style by conditions within their dioceses, quite apart from their own leadership-style preferences.

In contrast, Bishops of wealthier dioceses perceive that most people do not expect the diocese to run on the basis of "Bishop's authority." In fact, there are strong indications that the active (upper middle-class) laity involved in decision-making groups in the dioceses would not tolerate an authoritarian leadership style by the Bishop.

Since such dioceses tend to be relatively geographically compact, such leaders can more easily participate in decisions and make their views known.

Bishops in wealthier dioceses have more economic clout within the diocese as well as larger staffs and more funds for new programs and outside experts. Hence, they have more freedom to adopt either a "democratic-supervisor" or "chairman of the board" leadership style.

(There is some indication, however, that Bishops in the "advantaged" dioceses may have had less authority than they wanted, since there was a slight tendency for Bishops from richer dioceses to express conflict between their own preferences and that expressed by most people in the diocese as to whether or not the diocese should operate on the basis of consensus.)

For whatever combination of reasons, Bishops in the poorer dioceses seem more dissatisfied with their opportunities to exert leadership by the way their position as Bishop is presently defined (or perhaps "undefined") in their dioceses.

They are quite a bit more likely than Bishops in richer dioceses to express a need to have their job goals more clearly defined by the House of Bishops and by the General Convention and by their local dioceses.

# **Bishops' Leadership Roles**

There are a number of roles that are included in the office of Bishop. In this section we will be looking at how Bishops define various roles, what priority they give them, and whether their role preferences are again viable possibilities to emphasize in their dioceses.

## **1. Bishop as Manager**

Three-fourths of the surveyed Bishops agreed that most people in their dioceses expected them to be "Manager of the Diocese," and nearly one-fifth of the Bishops indicated this was a very strong expectation. It was most likely to be this latter group, i.e., those who were strongly pressured by their dioceses to assume the managerial role, who reported conflict between their own predilections and those of most in their diocese concerning the emphasis that should be placed on their role as "Manager of the Diocese." However, other Bishops as well were dissatisfied with the amount of effort "over demanded" of them in the managerial role by their dioceses, since nearly one-third expressed conflict here between their own preferences and that expected of them by most in their dioceses.

Some Bishops, frankly like the role. Being a manager or administrator is their primary interest. These "managerial Bishops" spend most of their time in administrative work, and firmly believe that they fulfill other bishopric roles such as chief priest, pastor, and teacher through the administrative one. The best estimate that can be made is that these Bishops compose approximately 10-20% of all Bishops.

Other Bishops feel no conflict between the managerial role and other roles expected of the Bishop because they are willing and able to delegate much of the administrative work to their staff. These are the Bishops most inclined to adopt the "chairman of the board" style of leadership.

## **2. Bishop as Chief Pastor**

Almost all Bishops (97%) report that the majority of their dioceses expect them to be the "Chief Pastor, the Bishops report this expectation is very strong in their dioceses. Further, it would seem that Bishops themselves endorse this role emphasis, since only 3% of all Bishops experience any conflict here over what they would prefer and what most in their dioceses expect from them as "Chief Pastor."

Given the acknowledged importance of this Episcopal role, how exactly do Bishops define it? Kirk defined

"Chief Pastor" not as a personal pastoral counselor for clergy, but a social leader who focuses his energies on "creating conditions in a diocese, norms and practices that are supportive to real growth among clergy." Such a Bishop, according to Kirk, takes care to provide clergy with access

### **3. Bishop as Chief Priest -- Chief Liturgical Officer**

Many Bishops a majority of those we surveyed thought that most people in their dioceses/jurisdiction expected them to spend the majority of their time as Chief Priests. There seems to have been little conflict between the Bishops' own their preferred role and that expected of them.

How do Bishops define the role of "Chief Priest?" Interview data indicate some confusion as to whether this role refers to activities involved in leading worship, preaching, and making parish/church visitations, or whether the role of "Chief Priest" is in essence the same as that of chief liturgical officer, i.e., the activities involved in overseeing the liturgical and worship practices within the diocese/jurisdiction setting and maintaining standards in this area.

Whether or not Bishops equated "Chief Priest" with "Chief Liturgical Officer," our research suggest that far more Bishops experienced conflict in fulfilling this latter role. Why? Because there is confusion on how to administer the doctrine, discipline and worship of the church when there are those who seemed to be deviating from the culture, custom and tradition of the church," and for some Bishops this was a real problem.

### **4. Bishop as Theologian -- Teacher**

Interviews suggest that about one-fourth of the Bishops would consider themselves to be "theologians." Though a few who so defined themselves saw the role of theologian as nearly synonymous with that of "chief liturgical officer," more with this self-designation meant that they believed they were competent as theologians per se, and used this expertise directly in their job as Bishop.

There seem to be associated conditions which make it more probable that Bishops will define themselves as theologians:

**First**, they were more likely to think of themselves as theologians if they were currently teaching in a seminary full or part-time (this is the most important condition predisposing Bishops to consider themselves theologians');

**Second**, if they had a recently-earned a graduate degree in religion and or theology;

**Third**, if they were currently engaged in continuing education courses or private study in academic theology.

There are those Bishops do not consider themselves theologians:

although Bishops rated "reading and study" and "personal prayer and meditation" among their three most liked activities, the former activity consumed only 7% of their average work week and the latter 3%,totally no more than seven hours together at the very most. It would be difficult to conceive of oneself as a "theologian" under those circumstances!

Most of those who saw themselves as "theologians" also saw themselves as "teachers"; however, among those who rejected the appellation "theologian," there were a substantial proportion who did consider themselves "teachers". This is interesting in view of the fact that our research disclose that the average Bishop spends no more than .07% of his typical work week in actual teaching, or about half an hour perhaps. The answer to this apparent discrepancy lies in how Bishops defined themselves as teachers. Most Bishops interviewed saw their teaching function totally fulfilled through their preaching and writing.

The remaining Bishops who saw themselves neither as "theologians" nor as "teachers" nevertheless did not feel they neglected these functions in the diocese/jurisdictions. Rather they took on the role of enablers in promoting these kinds of activities in their dioceses/jurisdictions through importing theologians to keep diocesan/jurisdiction staff and clergy informed on current theological thinking and other matters of common concern, and/or sought out local talent within the diocese/jurisdiction to be the teachers of others.

## **LONELINESS AND SUPPORT**

What is it like then to wear the purple in an anti-authoritarian era and an age of liturgical reform? Not an unmixed blessing. For some Bishops it is a very lonely position.

What is the essence of "loneliness" for Bishops? From our interviews it appears that the "lonely" Bishops are those who lack not so much personal friends outside their job with whom they can chat about matters of mutual interest as much as they lack professional colleagues with whom they can establish primary relationships in which to share the stresses and joys, frustrations and successes they are experiencing in the job of Bishop.

How many "lonely" Bishops are there? Our Survey data indicate that over two-thirds of the Bishops agreed at least somewhat that in their job of Bishop they felt and feel the need for others to "know me as a person," slightly under 20% strongly expressing this need. Interview data which could focus more directly on this issue suggest that nearly two-fifths of the Bishops feel isolated from both colleague relationships with other clergy in their diocese/jurisdiction and from peer relationships with other Bishops.

However one estimates the proportion, the conclusion is unavoidable that a substantial minority of Bishops do feel "lonely."

What reasons do such Bishops give for not being able to establish professional friendships with other clergy in their diocese/jurisdiction? From our interviews, the major reason given is that their role of "judge" and "administrator" impedes their ability to establish such relationships. Another reason given by some is that the geographical spread of the diocese/jurisdictions makes colleague relationships with clergy 50 miles or more from diocesan/jurisdiction headquarters impractical.

Our Survey data in conjunction with interview data suggest other reasons as well for this isolation. The Bishops who feel the most need for others to know them as a "person" are those primarily:

- 1) *Who are Bishops in poorer dioceses/jurisdictions;*
- 2) *Are recently-consecrated Bishops.*

Bishops from poorer dioceses/jurisdictions may have difficulty in establishing professional friendships within the diocese/jurisdiction because these dioceses/jurisdictions not only tend to be geographically disperse but also (and perhaps more importantly) tend to be conservative both theologically and in their perceptions of the authority that should be vested in the office of the Bishop.

For example, in these kinds of dioceses/jurisdictions clergy and laity tend to invest the office of the Bishop with at least monarchial (if not divine) authority, and thus tend to avoid establishing friendships with such an exalted officer of the church. They would not consider it proper for the Bishop to be a personal friend or share his personal stresses and frustrations with them. The Bishop's place is high and mighty, and he is going to be "kept in his place" by his clergy and laity whether or not he wants to be isolated in this dubious splendor.

Newly-consecrated Bishops may indeed be quite "lonely" as they begin a new way of life and work. Our interviews suggest that a very small minority of newly-consecrated Bishops are not isolated if they have been a in ministry for a decade or more in the same diocese/jurisdiction where they now serve as a Bishop. Previously-established professional friendships with other clergy can more easily survive their "promotion" to Bishop of the diocese/jurisdiction. This is not the case for Bishops who come "new" into the diocese/jurisdiction.

Some recently-consecrated Bishops had additional reasons to feel lonely other than being a stranger. Several had come into dioceses/jurisdictions which were conflict-ridden, and where they were supposed to play the role of "mediator." It is very difficult to establish personal friendships with clergy under those circumstances since the necessity of demonstrating "detached concern" is essential, and personal friendship with individual clergy might be seen as a violation of trust. A few Bishops reported that they entered dioceses/jurisdictions where the actions of their predecessors had destroyed trust in the office of the Bishop to the extent that clergy were not willing to trust the new Bishop either.

Perhaps because they tended to be "baby Bishops," perhaps because regardless of their length of tenure they were geographically removed from other Bishops, or for some other reason, Bishops who were lonely in their dioceses/jurisdictions also tended to report in our interviews that they had not been able to establish supportive professional friendships with other Bishops. Perhaps a better idea of why lonely Bishops were having difficulty in this area as well can be gained by looking more closely at the characteristics of the Bishops who are not lonely.

The slight majority of all Bishops who were fairly well supplied with professional colleagues among their diocesan/jurisdictional clergy and other Bishops (though some more than others) tended to be those Bishops (in reverse) who:

Had been Bishops for a decade or more,

Who were in relatively wealthy dioceses which also tended to be run on the basis of consensus and had active clergy in near proximity to the diocesan/jurisdictional headquarters. In such dioceses there is sufficient monies and enthusiasm for embarking on new programs and such dioceses/ jurisdictions also tend to be relatively conflict-free, and not expect role emphases from the Bishop which differ from his own definition of his roles. Bishops with such characteristics also tended to be disproportionately nominated on the survey as "one of five" Bishops who other Bishops believed were doing an "excellent job" and whom they most "admired."

The most "admired" and respected Bishops for their "excellent" work were also those Bishops who seemed least likely to feel need for the wisdom of other Bishops, or for communicating with other Bishops about specific aspects of bishoping. We assume this indicates that they were indeed already experienced and well-supplied with professional friendships. (Indeed, how else would they and their work be known sufficiently by other Bishops so that they received top nominations as Bishops who are doing an excellent job and are most admired?) This does not indicate that they would be unwilling to fulfill a need from other Bishops.

Now there were A number of interviewed Bishops (not necessarily those just referred to) who enjoy satisfying colleague relationships both within and beyond their diocese, tended to disparage the "lonely" Bishops, saying things such as: "it's the fault of the man, not the office," inferring or stating directly their opinion that "lonely" Bishops tended to have personality problems, or did not put out sufficient effort, were not trusting enough, etc., etc.

Assigning blame for widespread systematic problems to individual attitudes is a doubtful course to pursue in solving problems of this nature. The conditions which create "loneliness" for many Bishops in their dioceses/jurisdictions are bad enough without having their Episcopal peers subtly denigrating them for feeling lonely.

The lonely Bishops are mixed in whether they are angry that other Bishops and clergy do not fulfill their needs for professional relationships or whether they are resigned to the depressing fact that being "lonely" is part of the job. In either case, they would not be adverse to receiving help of some variety in establishing such relationships.

## All Bishops

It seems that Bishops who can serve as enablers of others in their dioceses/jurisdictions helping with some of the bishopric duties, becoming involved in the decision-making, and taking responsibility for on-going programs have an easier time in all areas than Bishops who must perform most bishopric duties themselves and make decisions alone. Although we acknowledge the fact that characteristics of the diocese/jurisdiction play a major role in the extent to which one can delegate or enable, would any of you find it of benefit to receive some training in how to undertake the enabler role?

# A View of the Classes of Bishops

## Archbishop

An archbishop is the bishop of an archdiocese. This is usually a prestigious diocese with an important place in local church history. In the Roman Catholic Church, the title is purely honorific and carries no extra jurisdiction, though most archbishops are also metropolitan bishops, as above, and are always awarded a pallium. In most provinces of the Anglican Communion, however, an archbishop has metropolitan and primatial power.

## Area bishop

Some Anglican suffragans are given the responsibility for a geographical area within the diocese.

## Assistant Bishop

Honorary Assistant Bishop, Assisting Bishop, or Bishop Emeritus: These titles are usually applied to retired bishops who are given a general license to minister as Episcopal pastors under a diocesan's oversight. The titles, in this meaning, are not used by the Roman Catholic Church.

## Auxiliary Bishop

The diocesan bishop may request that the Holy Catholic See (Church) appoint one or more Auxiliary Bishops, to assist him in his duties.

An auxiliary bishop is a full-time assistant to a diocesan bishop Leader over a department. (No territory) (the Orthodox and Catholic equivalent of an Anglican suffragan bishop).

## The History Office of Auxiliary Bishop

The Office of Auxiliary, or Assistant, Bishop came into the Church around the sixth century. Before that time, only one Bishop served within an ecclesial province as sole spiritual leader of that region. Those clerics who hold this dignity are properly entitled "Titular Bishops" whom the Holy Catholic Church has simultaneously assigned to assist a local Ordinary in the exercise of his Episcopal responsibilities. The term 'Auxiliary' refers to the supporting role that the Titular Bishop provides a Residential Bishop but in every way, auxiliaries embody the fullness of the Episcopal dignity.

Although the Church considers both Linus and Cletus to be the first Auxiliary Bishops, as assistants to St. Peter in the Church of Rome, the first mention of the actual term "Auxiliary Bishop" was made in a decree by Pope Leo X (1513-1521) entitled *de Cardinalibus Lateransibus* (sess. IX). In this decree, Leo confirms the need for clerics who enjoy the fullness of Holy Orders as assistants to the Cardinals-Bishops of the Suburbicarian Churches of Ostia, Velletri-Segni,

Sabina-Poggia-Mirteto, Albano, Palestrina, Porto-Santo Rufina, and Frascati, all of which surround the Roman Diocese. Because the Cardinal-Bishops resided mostly in Rome, serving the popes as senior advisors, these vicars governed the suburbicarian churches in their absence.

But in the broader sense, the origin of the office of Auxiliary Bishop came into the Church when Islam overtook North Africa and the Near East in the first millennium, resulting in the collapse of the local Catholic churches across the southern Mediterranean basin. Those Christians who were not martyred for their faith converted to Islam or fled to a safe shelter in Europe. A great many of the bishops of this region made their way to safety in Rome. In due time, however, most of these deposed bishops permanently resided in the Eternal City, living at the Papal Court, or at the seat of the Roman Empire. They remained there, living in great style and comfort, until death, but their formal diocesan titles did not die with each, as one would expect.

Not willing to relinquish both her rights to, and presence in, these overtaken dioceses, the Holy Catholic Church continued for centuries to nominate men to the vacated churches in hope that one day the Church would return and she could then illustrate a continuity of Apostolic Succession throughout the duration of the Islamic occupation. During this prolonged period, these many dozens of dioceses in exile were officially seated in Rome where the clerics assigned to them had little to do. In time this caused problems for the Church, which continued to resist the presence of so many bishops at the Papal Court. And by the twelfth century, even sitting bishops of major European churches also preferred life at the magnificent Papal Court to the simplicity, and sometimes harshness, of their own dioceses; so much so that a succession of popes of this age had to finally order bishops to return home under pain of excommunication.

The presence of exiled titulars only compounded the situation.

Not knowing what

to do with so many idle bishops, the popes of the twelfth through fourteenth centuries began to make use of the keen abilities of these clerics by assigning them to temporary governance of vacant churches in Western Europe. The local prince who coveted the wealth and influence enjoyed by the local Diocese or Abbey-Nullius often blocked formal replacement of a permanent residential bishop in many of these wealthy and prestigious dioceses upwards to a decade. And so, in this impermanent role the titular bishops more or less served as temporary papal vicars but each retained their jurisdiction over their own titular church from long abandoned North Africa and beyond. This policy continued for several hundred years and out of it grew the modern canonical understanding of the role of both Auxiliary Bishop and vicars apostolic.

It was not until after the Council of Trent (1543-63), that Pope Saint Pius V (1566-72) decreed that thereafter, Auxiliary Bishops could only be assigned to Cardinals who governed major churches or to archbishops with vast territories under their spiritual care. At this time, the term "Auxiliary" was generally replaced by that of "Suffragan" but when larger ecclesiastical provinces were later subdivided into numerous smaller dioceses, this latter term was then affixed to those newly created residential bishoprics that in turn reported to the senior

archbishopric of the region (the incumbent of that see thereafter referred to as the Metropolitan-Archbishop of that province) and as such, the term "Auxiliary" returned for those prelates working as assisting bishops to a cardinal or archbishop. Pope Pius's decree also limited the appointment of auxiliaries to those sees (churches) that were financially able to properly sustain a second, titular, bishop in that place. The rights, privileges and responsibilities of these clerics were thereafter carefully defined in the writ of appointment of each individual prelate, each differing dependent upon the specific needs of each local Church.

It was after Trent, therefore, that the law finally required a cleric, who was not already a bishop at the time that he was named an auxiliary of a specific place, to be vested with one of the many vacant sees (churches) from North Africa or the Near East. From the earliest days of the Church, it had always been understood that no one could enjoy the fullness of Holy Orders without being assigned a specific diocese over which he either actively or passively governed. In fact, when a priest is ordained to the episcopacy as an auxiliary bishop, as in the case of Bishop Hundt, one of these ancient long-lost sees (churches) of the Mediterranean basin is always assigned to him. Today these dioceses are known collectively as the *sedi titulari* (or titular sees-church). The titular see of Tarasa in Byzacena (*Tarasensis* in Byzacena to give it its proper Latin title) has been conferred upon Bishop Hundt as his own canonical diocese. Thus continues the Apostolic Succession of the See (Church) of Tarasa even though more than a thousand years has passed since a Catholic bishop has actually sat in governance there.

### **Bishop emeritus**

When a bishop retires, the word "emeritus" is added to his former title,

### **Cardinal**

In Roman Catholicism, a cardinal, a title dating back to the 8th century, is a member of the clergy appointed by the pope to serve in the College of Cardinals. This body is empowered to elect a new pope in *sede vacante*, but cardinals over the age of 80 may not be electors. Cardinals serve as advisors to the pope and hold positions of authority within the structure of the Catholic Church. Under modern canon law, a man who is not a bishop who is appointed a cardinal must accept ordination as a bishop, or seek special permission from the pope to decline ordination. Most cardinals are already bishops at the time of their appointment, the majority being archbishops of important archdioceses or patriarchs, and a substantial portion of the rest already titular archbishops serving in the Vatican. Recent popes have appointed a few priests, most of them influential theologians, to the College of Cardinals without requiring them to be ordained as bishops; invariably, these men are near or over the age of 80, and consequently not eligible to take part in a conclave.

## **Coadjutor Bishop**

A coadjutor bishop (or bishop coadjutor) is a bishop in the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and (historically) Eastern Orthodox churches who is designated to assist the diocesan bishop in the administration of the diocese. The coadjutor (literally, "co-assister" in Latin) is a bishop himself. Immediate successor to Prelate. Cannot do anything without Prelate's authorization. A coadjutor bishop is an auxiliary bishop who is given almost equal authority in a diocese with the diocesan bishop, and the automatic right to succeed the incumbent diocesan bishop. The appointment of coadjutors is often seen as a means of providing for continuity of church leadership. A coadjutor is one who contributes to the fulfillment of a need or furtherance of an effort or purpose. Thus, a coadjutor does his ministrations so that a high ranking official may finish his designated work. This is precisely what, by principle and function, an adjutant does.

***In Protestantism, it is "adjutant", and in Catholicism, it is "coadjutor-same office, same function, same qualities and characteristics.***

## **Chorbishop**

A chorbishop is an official of a diocese in some Eastern Christian churches. Chorbishops are not generally ordained bishops - they are not given the sacrament of Holy Orders in that degree - but function as assistants to the diocesan bishop with certain honorary privileges.

## **Diocesan Bishop**

A "diocesan bishop" in the Catholic Church — is entrusted with the pastoral care of Local Churches in a Diocese, over which he holds ordinary jurisdictional authority. He is responsible for teaching, governing, and sanctifying the faithful of his diocese, sharing these duties with the priests and deacons who serve under him.

## **General bishop**

A title and role in some churches not associated with a diocese. In the Coptic Orthodox Church the Episcopal ranks from highest to lowest are metropolitan archbishops, metropolitan bishops, diocesan bishops, bishops exarchs of the throne, suffragan bishops, auxiliary bishops, general bishops, and finally chorbishops. Bishops of the same category rank according to date of consecration.

## **Major Archbishop**

Major Archbishops are the heads of some of the Eastern Catholic Churches. Their authority within their *sui juris* church is equal to that of a patriarch, but they receive fewer ceremonial honors.

## **Metropolitan Bishop**

A metropolitan bishop is an archbishop in charge of an Ecclesiastical Province, or group of dioceses, and in addition to having immediate jurisdiction over his own archdiocese, also exercises some oversight over the other dioceses within that province. Sometimes a metropolitan may also be the head of an autocephalous, sui juris, or autonomous church when the number of adherents of that tradition are small. In the Latin Rite, metropolitans are always archbishops; in many Eastern churches, the title is "metropolitan," with some of these churches using "archbishop" as a separate office.

## **Patriarch**

A patriarch is the title of a bishop with the highest possible rank and means he is superior to all the other bishops within the area that is responsible for and is only answerable to the pope.

## **Pope**

The title pope, in the Catholic Church is the Bishop of Rome, who, in virtue of his position as successor of St. Peter, is the chief pastor of the whole Church, the Vicar of Christ upon earth. Besides the bishopric of the Roman Diocese, the pope is the supreme and universal pastorate, he is Archbishop of the Roman Province, Primate of Italy and the adjacent islands, and sole Patriarch of the Western Church. He is the supreme authority of the Vatican city state and of Catholics of the world.

## **Presiding Bishop or President Bishop**

These titles are often used for the head of a national and or global church, but the title is not particular associated with any one Church.

## **Primate**

A primate is usually the bishop of the oldest church of a Nation. Sometimes this carries jurisdiction over metropolitan bishops, but usually it is purely honorific (*of an office or position given as a mark of respect, but having few or no duties.*).

## **Suffragan Bishop**

Assistant to the Primate. Has no direct succeeding line. Cannot ordain. Administration / Secretary. A suffragan bishop is a bishop subordinate to a Metropolitan. In the Roman Catholic Church this term is applied to all non-metropolitan bishops (that is, diocesan bishops of dioceses within a metropolitan's province, and auxiliary bishops). In the Anglican Communion, the term applies to a bishop who is a full-time assistant to a diocesan bishop.

## **Supreme Bishop**

The Obispo Maximo, or Supreme Bishop, of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente is elected by the General Assembly of the Church. He is the Chief Executive Officer of the Church. He also holds an important pastoral role being the Spiritual Head and Chief Pastor of the Church. He has precedence of honor and prominence of position among, and recognized to have primacy, over other bishops.

## **Titular Bishop**

Bishop Emeritus - No Portfolio of churches. Retired from active service but retains one's title. A titular bishop is a bishop without a diocese.

# **The Church of God in Christ =(COGIC)**

The Declaration of Faith and Preamble states:

"We, the members of the Church of God In Christ, hold the Holy Scriptures as contained in the Old and New Testaments of our Bible as our rule of Faith and Practice."

The Church Of God In Christ at this moment stretches nearly around the globe with congregations in Europe, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, Africa, and Asia as well as covering the United States and its territories.

A multi-national, multi-lingual, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-generational Church.

Seeking to reach and serve all of God's people even those who may have very different views and experiences than this organizational structure. The intent he is to educate, embrace and grow in order to empower the ministries and witness of the church.

The Church Of God In Christ is a complex organism with multiple levels of organization and structure, over which the General Assembly is the final Legislative authority. Not all of the practices of the Church Of God In Christ as many other denominations can be backed with scriptural authority, but they are practical.

The Church is governed and decisions are made at every level through democratic processes in which all members of the church (Lay persons, Missionaries, Supervisors, Ministers, Elders, Pastors, and Bishops,) participates. ^

The winds of change are blowing throughout the community of Churches, and the Church Of God In Christ is no exception. Church-going Baby Boomers continue to populate the pews, and the Millennia's' "spiritual-not religious" interests have pushed the Church to claim its relevance.

Concern about declining and shifting membership, changing attitudes toward the Church organizational structure, declining resources for existing churches, programs,

travel and staff, rapidly changing needs and methods for communication, and questions of inclusion are but some of the contributing factors to this era of change.

While anxiety, resistance, and fear are natural and predictable human responses to change, it is also true that uncertainty inspires adaptation and innovation - and throughout the Church Of God In Christ, communities of faith the response to the changes require creative ingenuity.

The Church Of God In Christ, Classification = Protestant, Orientation = Pentecostal (also known as Holiness), Polity = Episcopal with an Ecclesiastical and Civil structure comprised of dioceses that are called "Jurisdictions" within COGIC, each under the authority of a Bishop, called "Jurisdictional Bishops".

**The Church Of God In Christ, Inc.**, governance is a unique blend of Church Government in that it is not purely any one of the three major recognized form of Church government (*Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Congregational*). The operation is in effect an (***Episcopacy operating within a Democracy with a Theocratic flavor***), they are however according to the Judicial Code of Conduct of the CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST and numerous Case Law studies considered a **Hierarchical** church, and it's government is divided into three segments (Branches), fashioned after the Federal and State governments - **The Legislative, The Executive and The Judicial** - which formulates the Checks and Balances system. The Checks and Balances allows for each segment (Branch) to operate and maintain certain powers and authority not to be exceeded or abused by any.

The Church Of God In Christ is divided into Diocese called (jurisdictions) they can either be made up of large geographical regions of churches or churches that are grouped and organized together as their own separate jurisdictions because of similar affiliations, regardless of geographical location or dispersion.

Each state in the U.S. has at least one jurisdiction while others may have several more, and each jurisdiction is usually composed of fewer than 30 to 100+ churches. Each jurisdiction is then divided into several districts, which are smaller groups of churches (either grouped by geographical situation or by similar affiliations) which are each under the authority of District Superintendents who answer to the authority of their Jurisdictional/State Bishop.

The Bishops of each jurisdiction, according to the COGIC Official Manual, are considered to be the modern day equivalent of the New Testament early apostolic church overseers; they are tasked with the responsibilities of being the head overseers of all religious, civil, and economic ministries and protocol for the churches under their care and supervision.

They also have the authority to appoint, ordain and license local Pastors, Elders, and Ministers within the denomination. The Bishops of the COGIC denomination are all collectively called "**The Board of Bishops.**"

The General Assembly of the COGIC, is comprised of clergy and lay delegates responsible for expressing doctrines, creeds, making laws, bylaws, policies and procedures of the denomination.

Every four years, The General Assembly of the COGIC elects from its Jurisdictional Bishops twelve Bishops to form "The General Board" of the church, the modern day equivalent of the New Testament early apostles, and from these twelve one Bishop is elected as the Presiding Bishop of the Church. The Presiding Bishop and the General Board provides the Church with Episcopal, Executive and administrative leadership. The Presiding Bishop according to the Church Of God In Christ Official Manual Part II Division I is considered the Chief Apostle and has the authority to appoint and remove with the approval of the General Board subject the General Assembly approval.

## Church Of God In Christ Ministerial Orders

From the Church Of God In Christ Official Manual Part V. the following is extracted:

### A. "APOSTLE

Apostle (*or apostolos*) means one sent forth or out on a missionary errand; an envoy. There is a distinction made in earlier classical Greek between a messenger (*angelos*) and an apostle (*apostolos*). An apostle was not considered as a mere messenger, but a delegate or representative of the person who sent him. The Christian origin of the term apostle, had its distinctive Christian meaning when Jesus used the word in the Aramaic rather than in the Greek to refer to his twelve disciples, (Matt. 10:1; Mark 3:4; Luke 6:13; 9:1); *Apostolos* is the literal equivalent used from the Aramaic.

In the book of Acts, the name "apostles" had become commonly used for the Eleven (Acts 1:1, 26), and after the election of Matthias in place of Judas for the Twelve (Acts 2:37, 42-42, etc.). It does not denote a particular or restricted office, but rather a worldwide evangelical missionary service to which the Twelve were called. Jesus commissioned in His last charge for them to go forth into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature (Matt. 28:19-20, Mark 16:15). He had told them that they were to be His witness not only in Jerusalem and Judea, but in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth (Acts 1:8). They were apostles not only because they were the Twelve, but because they were sent by their Lord on a universal worldwide mission.

### B. PROPHET-

The word "prophet," (*prophetes*) occurs occasionally before the time of Samuel, as in Gen. 20:7 and Ex. 7:1. But Samuel, it seems, was the founder of a regular order of prophets with schools, first at Ramah (I Sam. 19:20), Bethel, Jericho and Gilgal (II Kings 2:3, 5; 4:38). These prophets functioned over a period of some 300 years before the time of the prophets who wrote the closing seventeen (17) books of the Old Testament. They are called "Oral Prophets," to distinguish them from the "Literary Prophets," who wrote the books.

### C. EVANGELIST-

Ordinarily translated "gospel" (*evangelian*) except that there it designates one

who announces that gospel to others ("a bringer on good tidings"). Eph.4:11 teach that all may possess the gift of an evangelist in a measure, but some are specially endued with it. He gave some to be apostles; and some prophets, and some evangelist; and some...

It will be seen that as an order in the ministry, the evangelist precedes that of the pastor and teacher. The evangelist has no fixed place of residence.

As these are converted and united to Christ Jesus by Faith, the works of the pastor and teacher begins, to instruct them further in the things of Christ and build them up in the faith. The evangelist accompanied and assisted the apostles, and were sometimes sent out by these on special missions. Their work was to preach and baptize, but also to ordain elders ( Titus 1:5; I Tim 5:22) and to exercise discipline (Titus 3; 10). Their authority seems to have been more general and somewhat superior to that of the regular ministers. Evangelist are mentioned in the Bible in Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11; II Tim 4:5. Phillip, Mark, Timothy, and Titus belong to this class.

#### **D - F. PASTORS, ELDERS, BISHOPS -**

Pastor, (Poimen) literally means a helper or feeder of the sheep (A.V. Jer. 2:8;3:15; 10:21; 12:10; 17:16; 22:22,23; 1-2 and Eph.4:11). The word refers now to the minister appointed over a congregation 8 The pastor was always an elder, but an elder is used to denote seniority (Luke 15:25; I Tim. 5:2); certain persons appointed to hold office in the Christian Church, and to exercise spiritual oversight over the flock entrusted to them. From the reference in Acts 14:23; 20:17, it may be inferred that the churches generally had elders appointed over them. That "elders"(presbuteroi) that is, the older ones, and bishops (episkopoi) "overseers" were in the apostolic and sub-apostolic times the same. The most probable explanation of the difference of names is that "elder" refers mainly to the person, and "bishop," that is "overseer," emphasizes what the elder or presbyter does. 9 These officers clearly had the oversight of the flock that was entrusted to their care. They had to provide for it, govern it, and protect it as the very household of God. The elders or presbyters were most likely a council of advice in each local Christian Church. They appear to act conjointly and not separately (Acts 15:4; 6: 22; 16:4; 20:17; James 5:14). During Paul's lifetime, the church was evidently still unaware of the distinction between presbyters and bishops.

#### **G. DEACONS-**

The term diakonos or deacon denotes the service or ministration of the bondservant (doulos-slave) or helper (diakonos). Deacons are mentioned in the New Testament in Phil. 1:1; I Tim. 3:8, 10, 12. Many have sought the origin of the diaconate in the institution of the Seven a Jerusalem (Acts 6). The Seven were appointed to "serve tables" in order to permit the Twelve to "continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. They are not called deacons, and qualifications required are not the same as those prescribed by Paul in I Tim. 3:8-12. The obvious conclusion is, the Seven may be called the first deacons only in the sense they were the earliest recorded helpers of the Twelve as directors of

the church, and that they served in the capacity, among others, of specially appointed ministrants to the poor.

The deacons acted also as secretaries and treasurers to the bishops. They were the right hand men, representing them in all secular matters. A deacon shall have the authority to teach, to conduct worship services, to assist an elder in administering the Lord's Supper, providing this authority is given to him by the appointed pastor in charge.

## **H. DEACONESS-**

Deaconess is an order exclusively for women in the church. Paul clearly recognizes women as deaconesses but will not permit a women to teach (I Tim 2:12). Paul says, "I commend unto you Phoebe, our sister, who is a servant (deaconess) of the church that is at Cenchrae " (Rom. 16:1). This is by many taken as referring to an officially appointed deaconess; Phoebe was clearly an honored helper in the church closely associated with that at Corinth. In I Tim. 3:8-12, deacons and deaconess are here provided for, and the character of their qualifications makes it clear in those personal relations with the poor.

## **I. TEACHERS-**

The usual word for teach, "didasko," in the New Testament signifies either to hold a discourse with others in order to instruct them or to deliver a didactic discourse. A teacher is one who performs the function or fills the office of instruction. Ability and fitness for the work are required (Rom. 2:20; Heb. 5:12). Teaching, like preaching, was an integral part of the work of an apostle (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15; Eph, 4:1). Religious teaching is necessary to the development of Christian character and the highest efficiency in service (I Cor. 12:4-11, 28-29; Eph. 4:11-12). The qualification of the pastor is vitally connected with the teaching function of the church. He is to hold the truth (Titus 1:9), to apply the truth (Titus 1:9), to study the truth (I Tim. 4:13-15), to teach the truth (II Tim. 2:2; I Tim. 3:2), to live the truth and be faithful in all things (II Tim. 2:2, I Tim. 4:16).

## **J. WOMEN IN THE MINISTRY**

The Church of God In Christ recognizes that there are thousands of talented, Spirit-filled, dedicated and well-informed devout woman capable of conducting affairs of a church, both administratively and spiritually. Such women were mentioned in the New Testament, Roman 16:1-2, "I commend unto you Phoebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succouree of many, and of myself also." Roman 16: 3, "Greet Priscilla and Aquilla my helpers in Christ Jesus." Aquilla and Priscilla had a church in their home. (Acts 9:36) "Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and alms deeds which she did." (Acts 18:24-28), Priscilla is equally gifted with her husband as an expounder of "the way of God," and instructor of Apollos. (Acts 16:14) Lydia of Thyatira, a seller of purple whose hospitality made a home for Paul and a meeting place for the infant church.

It is evident in the New Testament and in the writing of the Apostolic Fathers that women, through the agency of two ecclesiastical orders were assigned official duties in the conduct and ministrations of the early church. Their existence as a distinct order is indicated in I Tim. 5:9-10 where Paul directs Timothy as to the conditions of their enrollment. No widow should be enrolled under 60 years of age having been the wife of one man. She must be "well reported of good works," "a mother having brought up children," "hospitable," having "used hospitality to strangers," Christ-like in loving service, having "washed the saints' feet."

Other special duties mentioned by the Church Fathers included prayer and fasting, visiting the sick, instruction of women, preparing them for baptism, assisting in the administration of this ordinance and taking the communion.

Many of the duties of the widows were transferred to the deaconesses by the Third Century, an order which in recent history has been restored to its original importance and effectiveness.

The Church of God In Christ recognizes the scriptural importance of women in the Christian Ministry, (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:1; John 20:1), the first at the tomb on the morning of Christ's resurrection; the first to whom the Lord appeared (Matt. 28:9; Mark 16:9; John 20:14) the first to announce the fact of the resurrection to the chosen disciples (Luke 29:9; 10:22) and etc., but nowhere can we find a mandate to ordain women to be an Elder, Bishop or Pastor. Women may teach the gospel to others (Phil. 4:3; Titus 2:3-5; Joel 2:28), have charge of a church in absence of its Pastor, if the Pastor so wishes, (Romans 16:1-5) without adopting the title of Elder, Reverend, Bishop or Pastor. Paul styled the women who labored with him as servants or helpers, not Elders, Bishops or Pastors.

Therefore, the Church Of God In Christ cannot accept the following scriptures as a mandate to ordain women preachers: Joel 2:28; Gal. 3:28-29; Matt. 28:9-11.

The qualifications for an Elder, Bishop, or Pastor are found in I Tim. 3:2-7 and Titus 1:7-9. We exhort all to take heed."

## What is Consecration

Consecration, in general, is an act by which a thing is separated from a common and irreligious to a sacred use, or by which a person or thing is dedicated to the service and worship of God by prayers, rites, and ceremonies. The custom of consecrating a person to the Divine service and things to serve in the worship of God may be traced to the remotest times. We find rites of consecration mentioned in the early cult of the Egyptians and other pagan nations. Among the Semitic tribes it consisted in the threefold act of *separating*, *sanctifying*, or *purifying*, and devoting or offering to the Deity. In the Hebrew Law we find it applied to the entire people whom Moses, by

a solemn act of consecration, designates as the People of God. As described in the Book of Exodus 24, the rite used on this occasion consisted

- of the erection of an altar and twelve memorial stones (to represent the twelve tribes);
- of the selection of twelve youths to perform the burnt-offering of the holocaust;
- Moses read the covenant, and the people made their profession of obedience;
- Moses sprinkled upon the people the blood reserved from the holocaust.

Later on we read of the consecration of the priests Aaron and his sons (Exodus 29) who had been previously elected (Exodus 28). Here we have the act of consecration consisting of *purifying, investing, and anointing* (Leviticus 8) as a preparation for their offering public sacrifice. The placing of the meat in their hands (Exodus 29) was considered an essential part of the ceremony of consecration, whence the expression *filling the hand* has been considered identical with *consecrating*. As to the oil used in this consecration, we find the particulars in Exodus (30:23-24; 37:29).

## **Consecration of a Bishop (though not COGIC custom)**

The consecration of a bishop marks the plenitude of the priesthood, and it is probable that on this account the "Pontificale Romanum" places the ceremony of Episcopal consecration immediately after that of the ordination of priests, Tit. XIII, "De consecratione electi in Episcopum". Episcopal Jurisdiction is acquired by the act of election and confirmation or by definite appointment, whilst the fullness of the priestly power itself is obtained in consecration, as the completion of hierarchical orders.

The *ceremony* of consecration of a bishop is one of the most splendid and impressive known to the Church. It may be divided into four parts: The *preludes*, the *consecration proper*, the *presentation of the insignia*, and the *conclusion*. It takes place during Mass celebrated by both the consecrator and the bishop-elect. For this purpose a separate altar is erected for the bishop-elect near the altar at which the consecrator celebrates Mass, either in a side chapel, or in the sanctuary, or just outside of it. /-\

## **CLASSES OF BISHOP IN THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST**

The Church Of God In Christ Official Manual *Article III Part II Section A, Article IV Section A.*, and *Part III Division IV* identifies the following classes of bishops:

### **PRESIDING BISHOP**

The General Assembly shall elect from among the Jurisdictional Bishops, twelve Bishops who shall comprise and be designated as the General Board and they shall be Ex-Officio Directors of the Corporation. From the twelve members of the General Board, the General Assembly shall elect a Presiding Bishop, who's actions shall be subject to the will of the General Assembly who elected them.

1. The Presiding Bishop shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc..

2. The Presiding Bishop shall preside over all sessions of the General Board.
3. The Presiding Bishop shall have the power and authority to conduct the executive functions of the Church of God In Christ when neither the General Board nor the General Assembly is in session.
4. The Presiding Bishop actions shall be subject to the approval by a majority of the members of the General Board and subject to the will of the General Assembly.
5. The Presiding Bishop shall select the First and Second Assistant Presiding Bishop's from among the elected members of the General Board, subject to the approval of the General Assembly.
6. The Presiding Bishop with the approval of the General Board and subject to the will of the General Assembly shall perform all executive duties and specifically shall perform the following duties:
  - (1) Take action upon petitions, requests, complaints, and other matters referred to the General Assembly, Jurisdictional Assembly, Departments of the Church of God In Christ, or members of the Church of God In Christ.
  - (2) Appoint all Departmental Heads and all National Officers in accordance with the terms and provisions of this Constitution.
  - (3) Appoint all Bishops of Ecclesiastical Jurisdictions and foreign jurisdictions from among the roster of qualified elders of the Church of God In Christ.
  - (4) Supervise and direct all departments of the Church.
  - (5) Execute the decisions of the General Board and the General Assembly.

#### **FIRST ASSISTANT PRESIDING BISHOP**

The First Assistant Presiding Bishop shall hold his respective offices for the term for which he was elected.

The First Assistant Presiding Bishop shall aid and assist the Presiding Bishop in discharging his Executive functions, and shall serve in his respective order, if for any reason, the Presiding Bishop does not serve or is unable to serve, the First Assistant Presiding Bishop shall become the Presiding Bishop serving out the unexpired term of the former Presiding Bishop.

## **SECOND ASSISTANT PRESIDING BISHOP**

The Second Assistant Presiding Bishop shall hold his respective offices for the term for which he was elected

The Second Assistant Presiding Bishop shall aid and assist the Presiding Bishop in discharging his Executive functions, and shall serve in his respective order, if for any reason, the Presiding Bishop does not serve or is unable to serve, and the First Assistant Presiding Bishop should ascend to the office of Presiding Bishop the Second Assistant Presiding Bishop shall ascend to become the First Assistant Presiding Bishop.

## **GENERAL BOARD BISHOP**

1. The General Board shall have the power to exercise all other powers, expressed or implied, which shall be necessary and proper to carry out the foregoing executive functions, and all other powers vested in it by the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church of God In Christ, and all actions taken shall be subject to the will of the General Assembly.
2. The members of the General Board shall be elected for a term of four (4) years. The term shall be computed from the date of their election and qualification, and each member may hold office until his successor has been duly elected and qualified.
3. In the event a vacancy in the General Board occurs while the General Assembly is not in session, the remaining members of the General Board shall fill such vacancy until such time as the General Assembly shall be convened in regular or special session, at which time the General Assembly shall fill such the position in the manner as herein provided. A vacancy in the office of the General Secretary, Financial Secretary, or Treasurer shall be filled in the same manner.

## **JURISDICTIONAL BISHOPS**

Jurisdictional Bishops, formerly known as Overseers or State Bishops, shall be appointed and removed by the Presiding Bishop with the approval of the General Board.

A Jurisdictional Bishop shall have the following qualifications, powers and duties:

1. The qualifications of a Jurisdictional Bishop shall be as follows:
  - (a) He must be an Ordained Elder of the Church.
  - (b) He must be in good standing with the Church.
  - (c) He must be a man of ability, honesty, and integrity, and he shall be dedicated to the work and service of the Church.
2. A Jurisdictional Bishop shall have the right to appoint and ordain Elders.

3. Each Jurisdictional Bishop shall be the representative of the Church of God In Christ in respect to all church matters in his Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and shall have general supervision over all departments and Churches in his jurisdiction.
4. A Jurisdictional Bishop shall preside over the Jurisdictional Assembly in his Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and fix and determine the time and place of its meeting.
5. Each Jurisdictional Bishop shall have the right to appoint and/or remove District Superintendents, Departmental heads and all other State officials in his Ecclesiastical jurisdiction, unless otherwise provided for by this constitution.
6. A Jurisdictional Bishop shall hold office during good behavior and until his successor is duly appointed and qualified. However, if during his term of office a Jurisdictional Bishop should die, or become physically or mentally incapable of performing his duties as Bishop, the Presiding Bishop of the Church, by and with the consent of the General Board, shall appoint his successor.

## **FOREIGN BISHOPS**

Foreign Bishops shall be appointed by the Presiding Bishop by and with the consent of the General Board to preside over churches of the Church of God In Christ located in geographical areas outside of the continental United States of America, and not designated as one of the several states of the United States.

The qualifications, powers and duties of a Foreign Bishop shall be fixed and determined by the General Board.

## **THE AUXILIARY BISHOP**

The only reference in the Official Manual of the Church Of God In Christ to the office of Auxiliary Bishop is in Part III Division IV which addresses his attire only, no qualification, no job description, no assignment.

## **COADJUTOR BISHOP**

One in 1987 A. La Dell Thomas, Sr. of Texas. No reference to this office in the Church Of god In Christ Official Manual.

## **The Consecration Charge for a Bishop:**

The Church Of God In Christ has expressed its confidence in you, in your character, in your devotion to Christ and Church, and in your ability to direct and promote the general affairs and interests of the entire Church, in that she has signally honored you by selecting you to this high office.

**The General Assembly of the Church Of God In Christ** has assigned to you, as Bishop the following duties:

To function as the administrative head of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction to which you are assigned.

To seek out and discover, in cooperation with your district superintendents and congregations, a suitable pastor for each congregation under your care.

To counsel with these pastors in planning well balanced congregational programs.

To encourage ministerial improvements and leadership training, ministerial retreats and supporting the Charles Harrison Mason Theological Seminary and the Charles Harrison Mason System of Bible Colleges.

To inspire the pastor to spiritual growth and personal improvement for more effective witnessing for Christ and his kingdom, to encourage pastoral visitations in homes, hospitals, and penal institutions.

To stimulate by your life and example, as well as by your effective preaching, the outlook and vision of your people and inspire them to holier living and more dedicated devotion to the total Church program.

To uphold, obey and defend the constitution, by-laws, doctrine and policy of the Church Of God In Christ as now is or may be amended from time to time, and to teach the pastors and congregations under your charge to do the same.

To seek out communities in your Jurisdiction into which a Christian Witness might be effectively carried.

Inasmuch as the Holy Scriptures enjoin that no man be placed hastily in supervision of the affairs of the Church, and in order that those here may know your mind and purpose concerning this sacred office, will you in the fear of God answer the questions we ask you in the name of Christ and His Church.

## **BISHOPS REMEMBER**

At this time in the life of the global Church Of God In Christ tensions and rifts between churches - and bishops - are seriously impairing our fellowship, worship, witness and growth. The reasons for these difficulties are complex and no one would imagine that it is an easy matter to restore fellowship across the churches of our denomination. In such circumstances we cannot forget that our life together is a gracious gift bestowed by the Lord. It is a gift that serves the mission of God in the world and has a direct effect on the integrity and power of our witness to the gospel.

How can we proclaim one Lord, one faith and one baptism when the gift of fellowship seems to be so easily set aside for a supposedly greater goal?

What can be more fundamental to our life on earth than our essential interconnectedness with others and the world?

What can be more at the heart of Christian life than the sacrament of communion in Christ's body broken for us and blood poured out for the world?

This fellowship is given by God in creation and renewed in Christ and the Spirit. It is a gift which subsists in the whole body of Christ prior to its embodiment in an 'instrument of unity' or particular ecclesial office. Furthermore, like all gifts of God, it can only be a blessing as it is faithfully received and shared by all. It is critical for this truth to be grasped by an often anxious and fearful Church that is often tempted to seek heroes or managers to heal its inner life. All ministries are witness of the Spirit for the building up of the body. This is not just a role but calling of the ministry. As overseers and teacher of the faith the Bishop lives and ministers as a sign and servant of ecclesial communion and communion with the Triune God. Bishops therefore bear a particular responsibility for the maintenance and nurture of communion as God's gift to all.

The ordinal is clear that Bishops of the Church have a great and grave responsibility to the Lord of the Church for the fellowship of all that are baptized. Your actions have consequence for the whole body of the faithful for we are all 'members one of another' (Romans 12:5).

