



Study 8

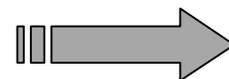
THE

COOPERATION

(ORGANISATION)

THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMANDS

A church is different to any other group of people. It is meant to be a group of spiritually-related people who are co-operative and organised. Just like a football team, a church requires people who perform different functions simultaneously in order to achieve their common goal. In a football team there are those who initially get the ball moving. These are usually the big guys. They can't run, duck and weave, like the smaller guys, but they sure can jump high and get things moving! Then there's the smaller guys who get fed the ball by the big guys- boy! they can run! They get the ball to the mid-fielders who know how to jostle with their opponent and get around them to pass the ball to the forwards. It's the forwards who know how to kick goals. Then there's the defensive members of the team whose job is to get the ball off the other side and prevent them from kicking goals.



The church is made up of people who are gifted to get things moving. There are others who are able to *keep* things moving: servant-hearted people who know what “hard work” means. They serve as deacons, ushers, hosts, follow-up counsellors, visitation helpers, cleaners, gardeners, or door-greeters. Then there are those who are like “wingers”. They play near the side boundary with an aim to get the ball into the middle of the field toward their goal. In the church there are evangelists who are like *wingers*. They roam the boundaries looking for lost souls to bring into the centre of God’s Kingdom. They are bold. They gossip the Gospel. They scheme for the salvation of souls. They pray for sinners to be converted. They don’t care for the limelight but they long for the light of the Lord to shine in the darkness of people’s minds and souls. When the ball gets near the goal, the player with the ball is often “shepherded” by his team-mates. In the church, we each shepherd each other by protecting each other with prayer, encouragement, and practical provisions. The church that is functioning as a well-organised and co-operative team is more likely to be a growing, healthy church.

1. According to Ephesians 4:11-12, who has Christ placed *in* the church and why?

WHO LEADS THE CHURCH?

“Leadership” means different things to different people.

2. What did “leadership” mean to Jesus? (Note Luke 22:26)

3. What picture did Christ promote of the type of leaders He was training? (John 10:3)

Indeed, the picture most often used by Christ of Himself is that of a *shepherd*. Any leader within the church must serve with a shepherd’s heart.



In the early 1800s, an Anglican minister reacted badly to what he saw as unreasonable leadership within his denomination. This minister, John Nelson Darby (pictured right), left the Anglican church and helped to found what became known as *The Plymouth Brethren*. This group believed that the church should not be led a pastor but by a *group* of men (“brothers”, hence their name: *Brethren*). Darby taught that the New Testament prescribed “elders” as the leaders of local churches rather than “*an* elder” as “*the* leader”. That is, that every member of a church is equal in authority.



4. How does this Brethren idea differ from Hebrews 13:7, 17? (Note verse 24)

5. How does Christ’s leadership picture in Luke 15:4-7 reinforce the idea that “a” leader of a church is not unbiblical?

Churches, like any organization, need to be led. This requires diversity and cooperation. Just because people within a church carry differing levels of responsibility does not therefore mean that there is a hierarchy within a church. That is, no one within a church is superior to anyone else. But, there are differing ministries and levels of responsibilities.

6. How does 1Corinthians 12:18 explain why we are all needed within a church?

7. But which word in 1Corinthians 12:28 helps us to understand that there are differing levels of authority and responsibility within a church?



In some churches people select their own leaders. This is called *democracy*. It's always good when leaders enjoy the support of their people. But when unqualified people garner support through their popularity or charisma it can lead to extremely ungodly leadership.

8. List the qualities required for a leader as detailed in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 8-13 ~

Leaders within a church are appointed by God. Paul stressed this aspect of his ministry in many of his epistles. He also stressed that those responsible for the local church could *appoint* their leadership team (Acts 14:23). But this is not what we see in some churches where leadership positions are filled by popular vote with a process called *democracy*.

9. The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy who he appointed to lead the church at Ephesus. What leadership task did Paul want Timothy to carry out which also possibly reveals a broader leadership role according to 2 Timothy 2:2?

Leaders must be trained and able to train. This requires that they know how to work with and empower people. It also means that there will be accountability. This means that good organization and cooperation will involve reviewing, getting feedback, and being open to how things could be done better. It also means that when someone fails or sins they are restored through discipleship (discipline).

10. Who do you allow to hold you accountable? That is, who do you allow to evaluate or even correct you?

Amen.