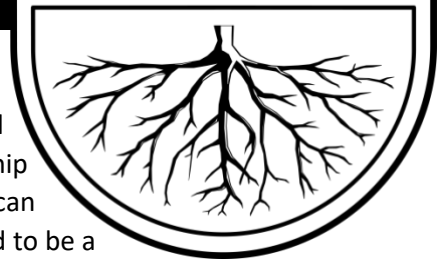




CONTEXT AND CLARIFICATION



Question #2: Your group may have difficulty answering this question if they do not have a biblical idea of what membership looks like. The pastors and elders are called to take care of their *flock*. If someone is not submitting to the guidance and leadership of the elder/pastor, how are they to lead them? Also people who are not members can range anywhere from a first-time guest to a “I’ve been here 20-years and don’t need to be a member.” Be sure to let your group share openly and give them a heads up that we will be visiting the topic of Biblical Church Membership in this series, use that to lead into the next question.

Question #3: There are many dangers when someone claims they do not want to be a member, but for this week try to help your group keep focused on the danger of not following/submitting to church leaders. With no membership, there is no accountability. There is no one to follow and that increases the odds of a wandering sheep.

Question #4: Remind your group that while the church submits to the leadership of the elders, the elders submit to the church’s authority. That is why Paul continually brings up in his letters how the elders bring things to “the church” as a whole. That is why at South Peoria, the church as a whole votes. This helps us walk in unity and at the same time submit to one another.

Question #7: Pastor Jeremiah will be sharing these examples in the sermon (You may also find these examples in chapter 4 of the Church Elders Book that you received).

Question #8: Remind your group that elders are not the only ones who teach, guide, lead, correct and confront sin. We as the body need to. Be mindful that these questions are more difficult and personal, so ensure that you give time for your group to think before you move on (be okay with awkward silence). Some examples of why it is difficult to address sin may be because 1) You are a people-pleaser 2) You have your own sin to deal with 3) They are family or close friends 4) You aren’t sure how to word it 5) It’s not a “big” sin. Some of your group may be blunt and say they don’t find it difficult, ask them if it’s difficult to do it in love.

Question #9: If your group finds it hard to answer this question, remind them that *is* a tough question. We are all prone to have blind-spots, and unfortunately sometimes those blind spots make it difficult for other Christians and leaders to address or correct our sin.

Question #10: After answering questions #7-#9 remind you group of how we are prone to wander and sin. We rebel against authority. Bring it back to the importance of having godly elders and a biblical church structure.



LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

Ice Breaker: What animal would you hate to have as a pet and why?

- 1) What was one of your biggest takeaways from the sermon?
- 2) What is the relationship between elders and members? How should elders relate to those who are not members?
- 3) What are the dangers of someone who claims to be a Christian but isn’t a member at a church?
- 4) Read Hebrews 13:17. How do you currently submit to your leaders?
- 5) Read Acts 20:27-31. What does Paul encourage the elders in Ephesus to do?
- 6) What is the best way to pray for your pastors and elders?
- 7) Which of the five sheep do you find yourself more prone to be? Why?
- 8) Why is it difficult for you to address another Christian’s sin?
- 9) What makes it difficult for other Christians to address your sin?
- 10) How can having multiple elders create a healthier church?



FURTHER STUDY

Acts 14:23 (NIV)

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.

Acts 15:22 (NIV)

Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose some of their own men and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas (called Barsabbas) and Silas, men who were leaders among the believers.

1 Timothy 5:17 (NIV)

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.



Titus 1:5 (NIV)

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you.

James 5:14 (NIV)

Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.

1 Peter 5:1 (NIV)

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ's sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed:

1 Peter 5:5 (NIV)

In the same way, you who are younger, submit yourselves to your elders. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

“Elders pastor a flock, teach doctrine, refute error, nurture the members toward maturity, track down strays, govern and lead, and defuse conflicts, to name a few of their duties.” —Jeramie Rinne



GREAT RESOURCES TO HELP EQUIP YOU DURING THIS SERIES

I AM A CHURCH MEMBER

By Thom S. Rainer

\$5.99 on
Christianbook.com

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

By Jonathan Leeman

\$8.49 on
Christianbook.com

or **FREE** Audiobook
on Hoopladigital.com
(must have library
card)