

Testament evidence for the office of treasurer (in the case of Judas Iscariot), but some would not appreciate the association

If the board of elders designates one of their number to serve as treasurer, or delegates this task to someone in the church who is not an elder, there is nothing against it in Scripture. And if the elders constitute themselves the trustees of the church (for governmental purposes), there is nothing against it in Scripture. The same principles of internal designation or external delegation hold true for the board of deacons, subject of course to the oversight of the elders.

## 2. The scriptural pattern of local church government

As we have seen, the scriptural pattern is:

- a. Rulership and oversight and superintendence by bishops-elders-pastors
  - (1) Bishops-elders-pastors who rule
  - (2) Bishops-elders-pastors who rule and labor in the Word and teaching
- b. Administration of temporal matters by deacons

God has given us this pattern in Scripture, and nowhere do we find a blanket allowance for the institution of some other form or pattern that we might think is better. To the contrary, we find that this pattern has been given to us in order that we may know how to conduct ourselves in the church (I Timothy 3:15).

## 3. Contemporary patterns of local church government

Some local church polities stress a powerful pastor; some stress a powerful board (either a general board, or a board of elders or deacons); and some stress a powerful congregation. All local churches fall, somewhere along a continuum between the extremes of an all-powerful pastor and an all-powerful congregation, with all sorts of combinations and permutations between. A large number of these patterns are charted on the following page.

## 4. The scriptural pattern and the pattern of our own local church

- a. The question is sometimes raised, "What's the difference what pattern we have or what we call the officers? We have deacons, you have elders, others have board members. What does it matter?"

The first part of the question is important. If the scriptural pattern has been given to us so that we may know how to organize the local church to carry out its God-ordained functions, then the matter is not a matter of option. We are obliged to follow this pattern.

On the other hand, we may feel that the second part of the question is not as important. After all, since the names of the officers are either translations or transliterations (bishop or overseer for ἐπίσκοπος, pastor or shepherd for ποιμήν, elder for πρεσβυτέρος, and deacon for διάκονος), we may feel that we are free to use whatever names we