

choose. This is not true. The scriptural names are connected with specific qualifications and functions. And so we must reply, "Why not use the scriptural names for the scriptural offices?" If we do not use the names, qualifications, and functions given in Scripture, we are likely to set up offices of our own devising, with qualifications and functions that fit our own conception of the way government in the church should operate.

- b. A second question that must be raised is, 'What can be done to bring our current pattern of local church government into line with the scriptural pattern?'

In this connection, some suggestions would appear to be in order:

- (1) Resist the impulse to become a "young turk", and to make sweeping changes immediately.

We need to remind ourselves that the church is the people. Change in the church means change in the people. Change must not be forced, unilaterally from the top, but motivated. The people need to be motivated to change; they must see the need for change. Church development is people development!

- (2) Lay the groundwork for change by patiently and systematically teaching what the scriptures have to say about the government of the church.
- (3) Allow the Spirit of God to use the scriptural teaching to form (or reform) the views and convictions of the current officers and members on church government, so that the impulse to modify and change the current pattern comes from them, rather than from you.
- (4) As a groundswell for change develops, work with the current officers and members to bring about a smooth transition from the present pattern to the scriptural pattern.
- (5) If change doesn't come as quickly as you would wish, keep on educating, praying, and quietly working for change, trusting that God will bring about the needed change in His good time. Be patient with God and with His people!

5. The Scriptural Pattern in Church History

a. As witnessed to by the Apostolic Fathers

- (1) Clement of Rome, Genuine Epistle to the Corinthians (dated at 95 A.D.)

Paragraph 42 -- "So preaching everywhere in country and town, they (the Apostles) appointed their first-fruits, when they had proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons unto them that should believe. And this they did in no new fashion; for indeed it had been written concerning