

The Holy Ghost Hath Made You Overseers

Introduction:

- A. It is noble for a man to want to be an elder (for the right reason). - 1 Timothy 3:1
- B. Every local church of Christ should strive to have qualified elders. - Acts 14:23
- C. But divinely approved elders are made by the Holy Spirit. - Acts 20:28
- D. How does the Holy Spirit make elders?

I. Illustration: By the Holy Spirit we are baptized into Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13

- A. by following the precepts of the Spirit-revealed Word - Romans 8:14; Galatians 3:26-27; Romans 10:17
- B. by human agency - Acts 8:38

II. By the Holy Spirit men are made elders. - Acts 20:28

- A. by following the precepts of the Spirit-revealed Word (meeting the scriptural qualifications) - 1 Timothy 3:1-2

B. by human agency

1. selection by the congregation - Acts 6:3-5

- a. This is the only New Testament passage which shows how to select officers in the local church and thus constitutes the New Testament pattern on the subject. - e.g.
 - (1) Acts 20:7 (example) is the New Testament pattern for when we eat the Lord's Supper.
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 (command) is the New Testament pattern for how and when the local church is to raise its money.
 - b. The apostles in the infancy of the church ruled the local church as elders did and do later. - Acts 4:34-35; 11:27-30
 - c. The apostles decided privately (not secretly) the number of men to serve (a matter of opinion). - Acts 6:1-2
 - d. The officers were chosen from within the local church. - Acts 6:3
 - e. The entire church was informed of their decision. - acts 6:2-4; cf. 1 Peter 5:1-3; Matthew 20:25-28
 - f. The church approved and obeyed the apostles' decision. - Acts 6:5-6
 - g. The entire church chose its own officers (method of choosing not specified). - Acts 6:3-6
 - (1) in a decent and orderly fashion - 1 Corinthians 14:40
 - (2) not by politics - 1 Corinthians 1:10-13
 - h. If a man's selection threatens the unity of the congregation or if he is unqualified, his name should be withdrawn. - Ephesians 4:3; 1 Timothy 3:2
- ##### 2. appointed by an evangelist - e.g., President of U.S.: people (electors) elect; Chief Justice appoints
- a. authority and meaning
 - (1) Acts 14:23: "*cheirotoneo*" - "extending the hand ... with the loss of the notion of extending the hand, to elect, appoint, create" (Thayer. 668)
 - (2) Titus 1:5: "*kathistemi*" - "to appoint one to administer an office" (Thayer. 314)
 - b. What should be done? - Acts 6:6; 14:23
 - (1) Certainly prayer should be used.
 - (2) The appointment should be done decently and orderly. - 1 Corinthians 14:40

Conclusion:

- A. If we follow these divine instructions faithfully, we can be assured that the Holy Spirit Himself has made the men so selected elders. - Acts 20:28
- B. Let us follow the Spirit-revealed path. - Colossians 3:17