



Volume 45, No. 7, February 18, 2020 / Southside Baptist Church / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a WEEKLY Bible Study**, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Savior JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever.***

BIBLICAL TEACHING ABOUT ELDERS and a Call to Receive Jaden Allen, as one of our Elders!

Dear Southsiders!

AS WAS ANNOUNCED on Sunday, February 16, the Southside Elders, (Cloyd Young, Dicky Richard, James Bell), are recommending to our church family that we ordain JADEN ALLEN as an Elder at Southside.

To God be the glory, we, along with many of you, have WITNESSED wonderful GROWTH IN GRACE in Jaden and Rhi— their Christ-like spirit, their loving family, their servant hearts, as well as Jaden's excellent development as a Bible teacher/preacher; and servant in the body.

During college, Jaden experienced 'God's call' to gospel ministry... and a call to ministry in Gallatin. After college, about 5 years ago, Jaden came back to Gallatin. He came in faith, with no promises of anything. He was encouraged that he would need to be faithful; and that he would need to be a continuing student of the Scriptures; and that he would need to be patient. He was told that at the end of the day IF GOD NEVER opened a door for him to serve in Eldership at Southside, his time in waiting would not be wasted— for we would seek to mentor and further equip him... so that he would be PREPARED for whatever door opened in the future. By the grace of God, we have witnessed Jaden walking in these paths.

OUR present Elders believe is the time for us as a church family to call for Jaden Allen's ordination and for him to serve as an elder at Southside.

REALITY: Most of us have grown up in a culture where a local church, 1) Appoints a pastor search committee who seek out a potential pastor from someplace else;

2) They then recommend a pastoral candidate to the church;

3) And then, the church votes on whether or not to call this total stranger as the next 'lone' pastor! In spite of all— there are times when God blesses in spite of the man-centered system!

4) BY THE GRACE OF GOD... on several occasions, the LORD has blessed the following procedures here at Southside. **THUS: HERE ARE up coming PLANS/PROCEDURES, as to Jaden:**

1. THE ENTIRE CONGREGATION Praying; and prayerfully reading this Bible-based teaching on Eldership.

2. EVERY SOUTHSIDER is asked TO BE PRESENT on March 8. At the conclusion of our March 8, worship service, we will have an 'Open Forum'... ** Jaden and Rhi will give their salvation testimonies and testimonies of their CALLING and DESIRE to serve— specifically, the desire God has given them to serve at Southside.

3. ALSO, on March 8, we are desiring/praying that Elders, Deacons, and Members will, from their hearts, be impressed to give STATEMENTS which complete this sentence:

"I, _____, have read the provided STUDY as to Eldership. I HAVE COMPLETED THE ELDER EVALUATION FORM... **(which will be given this coming Sunday).** I have prayed. AND I have OBSERVED and been blessed by _____ in Jaden and Rhi! THUS, I would count it a blessing for Jaden to serve as one of our Elders."

4. PRIOR TO March 8:.... Upon reading the provided information as to ELDERS— IF you have a QUESTION and/or a concern about ordaining Jaden— PLEASE SPEAK TO ONE OF THE ELDERS.

5. WITH ALL GOING WELL on March 8... [a] We will set a time, in the very near future, for an actual **Ordination Examining Council**— comprised of our Elders and a few other like-minded pastors/elders. **[b] With all going well there,** we will then set a time for **the actual Ordination Service.**

The Call of GOD to Serve as Elders/Bishops/Pastors

FIRST, SOME CONTEXT: ALL Christians are called to serve the cause of Christ! In the New Testament Church, ALL CHRISTIANS proclaimed the Word— Acts 8:4! **A local congregation is BUILT UP by the significant contributing MINISTRY of every member—** Ephesians 4:16.

In a local congregation **EVERY MEMBER** is gifted by God with various Holy Spirit gifts so that the entire local church is BUILT UP in the faith to the glory of God— 1 Corinthians 12:4-27.

SECOND, SOME in the church are Apostles and Prophets— 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 2:20; 4:11. [THE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS are ones whom God used in setting the foundation of the Church; and THEY are with us today in the form of the writings of the Prophets and Apostles of the Old and New Testaments; with **Jesus being the CHIEF CORNERSTONE.**]

THIRD, Being guided by Ephesians 4:11-16, we see that in addition to Apostles and Prophets, GOD HAS GIVEN to local churches **1)- Evangelists; and 2)- Pastor-teachers.** They are not called upon to do all the work of ministry in a local church. **Rather, they are primarily assigned to EQUIP the members of a local congregation** so that the members can more and more effectively carry out the work of ministry— Ephesians 4:11-16

FORTH, The Biblical terms pastor, elder, and bishop are all speaking of one and the same person— not 3 different callings. These ‘titles’ each reveal different aspects/duties. **MOREOVER, they do NOT elevate men to a position so as to lord over others, 1 Peter 5:1-7.**

HOW DO WE RECOGNIZE THE CALL OF GOD TO ELDERSHIP?

1. There is an INWARD CALL: If a man *desires or aspires* to be a bishop/pastor/elder, “it is a good or fine work he desires or aspires to do” (1 Timothy 3:1). By His Spirit, God speaks to those persons He has called to serve as pastors of His Church.

Those whom God has called know this call by a sense of leading, purpose, and growing commitment. **Such a call will not be rightly understood** or rightly discerned apart from a good understanding from the Word of God as to the Biblical revelation as to pastors / bishops/ elders. **Obviously, such a call cannot be confirmed if there is not a good report in the man of the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:5-9.**

Those called by God sense a growing compulsion to preach and teach the Word; and a call to minister to the people of God— **not merely to stand and preach; but also to teach and to shepherd, to care for the spiritual well-being of a local assembly of saints. Receiving such a call they set themselves to the task of preparation;** and to wait on the LORD for some open door, in the LORD’S time. **ALARM:** sadly, there are those who are adamant IN THEIR CLAIM that they are called— but they have no desire or willingness to SHEPHERD THE FLOCK and/or are careless about Biblical qualifications.

2. There is also a CONFIRMING CALL from existing servant leadership in the church. The Apostle Paul exhorted Titus to, ‘... ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee...’ (Titus 1:5)

3. Moreover, we see the reality of CONGEGATIONAL involvement in similar situations, although, not specifically

elders: Acts 13:1-3; Acts 6:1-7. **Thus, SOUTHSIDE has experienced God wonderfully using the congregation *in the sacred process of “calling out the called” to ministry. HERE IS REALITY:*** As a family of faith, the congregation should recognize and celebrate the gifts of ministry given to its members. CHURCH MEMBERS should take responsibility to evaluate, affirm, exhort, and/or encourage those whom God has called— **even as Aquila and Priscilla did for Apollos: Acts 18:24-28;** and Galatians 6:1.

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, only God can call a true pastor, and only GOD can grant the pastor/elder/bishop gifts necessary for service. God calls men who are humble and yet BOLD and uncompromising for the truth; (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 4:1-5); and men who will SHEPHERD the flock! **EVERYONE in the local assembly of saints needs a good Biblical understanding of elders/pastors/bishops.**

Bishops/ Elders/Pastors— the meaning of the words:

*** **ELDER: Presbuteros-** There are some places where the term simply refers to an “older person or a senior.” (1 Timothy 5:1-2) W.E. VINE, in AN EXPOSITORY DICTIONARY OF BIBLICAL WORDS: “In the Christian churches, those who, being raised and qualified by the Holy Spirit, were pointed to have the spiritual care of and to exercise oversight over the churches.”

NOTE: No specific age is noted. However, such ones should not be new converts; should demonstrate maturity, along the lines of the SET FORTH qualifications in Timothy and Titus.

*** **BISHOP: Episkopos-** This word means “an overseer, superintendent, guardian, or bishop.” (Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:2) **Episkopeo-** This is the verb form of the previous word, meaning, “Exercising the oversight to oversee, to care for, to look at, to take care of.” (Heb. 12:15; 1 Pet. 5:2)

*** **PASTOR: Poimen-** This word is generally translated as “shepherd,” once it is translated “pastor.” It means “one who keeps, tends, cares for sheep.” The shepherd is one who is in a position of both authority and service. (Ephesians 4:11; I Peter 5:1-2)

The qualifications for a bishop, listed in I Timothy 3:1-7, and those for an elder, in Titus 1:6-9, are unmistakably parallel. In Titus, Paul uses both terms to refer to the same man (1:5, 7).

1 Peter 5:1-2 brings all three terms together. Peter instructs the *elders* to be good *bishops* as they *pastor*— “Therefore, I exhort the **elders [presbuteros]** among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, **shepherd/feed/pastor [poimaino]** the flock of God among you, exercising **oversight [episkopos]** not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God.”

Acts 20 also uses all three terms interchangeably: In verse 17, Paul assembles all the **elders [presbuteros]** of the church to give them his farewell message. **In verse 28**, he says, “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers [episkopos]**, to **shepherd/feed/pastor [poimaino]** the church of God.”

*** **The Qualification for Elders/Bishops/Pastors:**

Moral Qualifications- The **elder/bishop/pastor** is to be **blameless** (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6); must be **temperate** (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8); is to be **sober** (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8); must be of **good behavior** (I Timothy 3:3); is **not to be given to wine** (I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7); is **not to be a striker** (I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7); is **not to be greedy of money** (I Timothy 3:3;

Titus 1:7); is **not to be a brawler** (I Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7); is **not to be covetous** (I Timothy 3:3); is **not to be self-willed**. (Titus 1:7); is to be **a lover of good** (Titus 1:8).

Domestic Qualifications- The elder/bishop/pastor not only has to have himself under control, but he must have his own home under control. If he cannot rule effectively in his own house, how can he qualify to rule in God's house? **THUS:** An elder/bishop/pastor must be the **husband of one wife** (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6); is to be **hospitable** (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:3); is to **rule his own house well**. (1 Timothy 3:4)

Spiritual Qualifications- The elder/bishop/pastor needs to have certain spiritual qualities if he is going to fulfill the ministry to which he has been called. It takes more than a good man and a good father; it takes a man divinely enabled and equipped. The elder/bishop/pastor must be **able to teach** (I Timothy 3:2); is **not to be a novice** or young convert (I Timothy 3:6); must be **of good report** among the unsaved (I Timothy 3:7); is to be **just** (Titus 1:8); is to be **holy** (Titus 1:8); must **hold fast (firmly to) the faithful word** as he has been taught (Titus 1:9-14); must be **able to exhort** and convince in sound doctrine (Titus 1:9); must be **patient** (I Timothy 3:3).

The Number of Elders: Nowhere in the New Testament are we given a set number of elders. **MOREOVER**, plurality of elders does not necessarily mean that all elders will have the same responsibilities. One elder may carry ultimate responsibility. There is not word in the New Testament about the length of an elder's stay.

The Honor of Elders:

The people of the congregation are to know those who are over them (I Thessalonians 5:12). **The people** are to esteem them

highly (I Thessalonians 5:13). **The people** are to submit themselves to God's anointed and appointed elders (Hebrews 13:17).

SUPER IMPORTANT: WE ARE ALL TO ALL SUBMIT OURSELVES ONE TO ANOTHER IN THE FEAR OF GOD!" (Eph. 6:27). **The people** are to support financially those elders who labor exclusively in the word of shepherding (I Timothy 5:17; Galatians 6:6; I Thessalonians 2:6,9; II Corinthians 7f; Philippians 4:10f; I Corinthians 9:11-14). **The people** are not to charge an elder with wrong-doing without witnesses; **HOWEVER, IF WRONG DOING is a sad reality— then OPEN REBUKE of such leaders is required.** (I Timothy 5:19-20). **The people** are to remember and pray for their elders (Hebrews 13:7; I Thessalonians 5:25).

***** Biblical Eldership: Concepts**

The Ox Principle: In 1 Timothy 5:18 an elder is likened to an ox who works hard at threshing grain. He is like a waiter who merely brings from the kitchen what the chef has prepared— his main job being not to mess up what he has been sent to deliver!

To Equip the Saints: Putting something in working order so that it can function according to its design.

Evangelism is Not the Main Task of Pastors: The main task of pastors is to help people grow so that all the believers go out to witness concerning Christ. "Equipping the saints" is the main task of pastors. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

"Only God can ultimately bring a body of believers to a state of health and usefulness but God stoops to use pastor-teachers as a means to accomplish His goal!"

Pastoral Function: **A key text on pastoral function is Ephesians 4:11-13. The function of pastors is to equip**

(perfect, train, outfit) the believers for their functions in the body. The resulting activities of pastoral leaders are:

Equipping by Learning Assistance- In a ministry of prayer (Acts 6:4); In exposition/teaching (I Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7); In exhortation/preaching/counseling (Titus 1:9); In admonition/counseling (I Thessalonians 5:12); In humble example/life (I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9; Hebrews 13:7; I Peter 5:35)

Equipping by Giving Direction- In leading into new things: decision making (Acts 16:4; I Timothy 3:5, 5:17; Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24); In overseeing church life: evaluation and administration (Acts 11:30, 20:28; I Thessalonians 5:12; Hebrews 13:17)

Equipping by Watchful Protection- In guarding the flock from false teaching (Acts 20:28-31); In refuting false teachers and scoffers (Titus 1:9)

Equipping by Willing Service- Working hard at personal Bible study (I Timothy 5:17; Titus 1:9); Opening his home in loving hospitality (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8); Helping the weak in their needs (Acts 20:35); Anointing and praying for the sick (James 5:14)

Common Ministries for All Elders: He must lead an exemplary life (Hebrews 13:7; I Peter 5:3-5); He must be available to teach; He must give Spiritual counsel; He is to be practicing hospitality (I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8); Involvement in mercies ministries (James 5; Acts 6); Evaluating future elders, deacons, and missionaries; Watch over the church's life and doctrine, so that Biblical confrontation and discipline may be enacted with prayer and humility; Promoting a Spiritual understanding of church growth.

Keys to Unity of Spirit Among Elders: Each elder must GUARD unity, (Ephesians 4:3); Each elder must lift up Christ, not himself (Acts 20:28-30); Each elder must faithfully study the word and pray; THE ELDERS must REQUIRE unity among elders before there can be any church decision; without demanding absolute uniformity.

[A NUMBER of resources were used in developing this article]

Mercy, Grace, Love, and PEACE to all in Christ!
James Bell www.southsidegallatin.org

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SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:

TUESDAYS: Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care Nursing Home. Meet at the front door at **5:15PM.**

WEDNESDAYS: → **6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE**

→ **Enter via IRON STEPS, side door.**

WEDNESDAYS: → **6:30pm— Youth** Activities and Bible Study— enter, side double doors.

WEDNESDAYS: → **6:30pm— Young Family Prayer Time!** THIS IS a time of Bible study and prayer geared toward **families with children in the nursery and pre-K class.** Enter at double doors, under AWNING.

***** LADIES BIBLE STUDY: NEXT MEETING scheduled for**

MARCH 3rd 2020 @ 11:00am; NEW STUDY ==> LESSONS FROM WOMEN IN SCRIPTURE! ENTER at the back of the church building, *[Under AWNING, open at 10:30am... re-locked at 11:10am]*

***** MEN's Fellowship/Bible Study: EVERY SATURDAY @ 8:00am: (WE ARE STUDYING THE GOSPEL OF JOHN!) ENTER AT THE back of Church building... DOUBLE DOORS, under the drive-thru awning. [DOORS OPEN FOR FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits, & Donuts at 7:30am!]**

SUNDAY SERVICES FOR FEBRUARY— 23rd

**** Sunday School— at 9:30am // ** Worship at— 10:45am**

ADDITIONAL NOTES... ABOUT EACH SUNDAY: February 23 ... CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP FOR ALL ... currently completing a VIDEO series on Husband/Wife relationships, at 6:00pm