

EQUIP

Webpage: <https://english.gracebaptistchurch.sg/equip>

What is church polity / church governance? Why does it matter?

Different church polities

Types of Polity	Pros	Cons
Pastor/Elder ruled		
Lay Leaders ruled		
Congregationalism		
Denominational leadership		

Biblical Church Governance

Firstly, Scripture teaches us who is the Big Boss.

1 Cor 3:9

Eph 5:32

1 Pet 5:4

Secondly, Scripture teaches us that God gives churches leaders

1 Cor 3:5-9

⁵What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. ⁶I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. ⁷So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. ⁸He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. ⁹For we are God's fellow workers. You are God's field, God's building.

1 Peter 5:1-4

Acts 20:17, 28

¹⁷ *Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the **elders** of the church to come to him.*

²⁸ *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to **all the flock**, in which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*

Acts 14:23

And when they had appointed elders for them **in every church**, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

Qualifications & Scope of eldership:

1 Tim 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9, Acts 6:4 and Hebrews 13:17-18

Qualifications for deacons:

1 Tim 3:8-13

Thirdly, Scripture teaches us that members are responsible for the gospel witness of the church.

Matthew 18:17-20

Acts 6:5

Acts 15:22

How do we reconcile the 3 things Scripture teaches us about polity, that

1. God is the Big Boss
2. God has given churches leaders to shepherd the flock
3. Members have a responsibility to protect the gospel witness of the church

Biblical Congregationalism

Expectation of Congregation

Expectation of Elders:

Elders Meetings

Member Meetings

Case Studies

1. Need to adopt or amend our statement of faith
2. Need to hire a pastor
3. A member is in unrepentant sin
4. Someone wants to join our church
5. Need to renovate and create more space for SS
6. Someone wants to start a new ministry

Coming up next:

24 Mar: Practices meaningful membership

14 Apr: Helps Christians grow

21 Apr: Prays and goes

Further Reading

- *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever
- *Biblical Foundations for Baptist Churches: A Contemporary Ecclesiology* by John S. Hammett
- *Church Elders* by Jeramie Rinne
- *Deacons* by Matt Smethurst
- *Church Membership* by Jonathan Leeman