



VISION 2018

University Baptist Church

GOSPELS

Matthew 16:18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 18:15-17 If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.¹⁶ But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

ACTS

Acts 6:1-4 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ² And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve [*diakonein*] tables.³ Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

ACTS

Acts 6:5-7 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶ These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

ACTS

Acts 11:30 And they did so, sending it to the **elders** [*presbuteros*] by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 14:23 And when they had appointed **elders** [*presbuteros*] for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

ACTS

Acts 15:4 When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the **elders** [*presbuteros*], and they declared all that God had done with them.

15:6 The apostles and the **elders** [*presbuteros*] were gathered together to consider this matter.

15:22-23 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the **elders** [*presbuteros*], with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers,²³ with the following letter. “The brothers, both the apostles and the **elders** [*presbuteros*], to the brothers. . . .

ACTS

Acts 16:4 As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and **elders** [*presbuteros*] who were in Jerusalem.

Acts 20:17 Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the **elders** [*presbuteros*]* of the church to come to him.

Acts 20:28 “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**, [*episcopos*]* to care for the church of God.”

* presbuteros and episcopos used interchangeably.

ACTS

Acts 21:18 “On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the **elders** [*presbuteros*] were present.”

EPISTLES

Ephesians 4:11-12 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the **shepherds [poimenas] and teachers,** ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

KJV Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors [poimenas] and teachers.**

Philippians 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the **overseers [episcopos] and deacons [diakonos].**

EPISTLES

1 Timothy 3:1-7 The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of **overseer** [*episcopos*], he desires a noble task.

2 Therefore an **overseer** [*episcopos*] must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,³ not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.⁴ He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive,⁵ for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.⁷ Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

EPISTLES

1 Timothy 3:8-13 Deacons [*diakonos*] likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁹They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. ¹¹Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. ¹²Let **deacons** [*diakonos*] each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. ¹³For those who serve well as **deacons** [*diakonos*] gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

EPISTLES

1 Timothy 4:14 Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of **elders** [*presbuteros*] laid their hands on you.

1 Timothy 5:17-18 Let the **elders** [*presbuteros*] who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

¹⁸ For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.”

1 Timothy 5:19 Do not admit a charge against an **elder** [*presbuteros*] except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

EPISTLES

Titus 1:5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint **elders** [*presbuteros*]* in every town as I directed you—

⁶ if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷ For an **overseer** [*episcopos*]*, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

* *presbuteros* and *episcopos* used interchangeably.

EPISTLES

James 5:14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the **elders** [*presbuteros*] of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

EPISTLES

1 Peter 5:1-5 So I exhort the **elders** [*presbuteros*]* among you, as a fellow **elder** [*presbuteros*] and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: **2 shepherd** [*poimante*]* the flock of God that is among you, **exercising oversight** [*episcopountes*]*, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; **3 not domineering** over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. **4 And when the chief Shepherd** [*archipoimenos*] appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. **5 Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders** [*presbuteros*].

*presbuteros, poimenas, and episcopos used interchangeably.

EPISTLES

2 John 1:1 The **elder** [*presbuteros*] to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth,

3 John 1:1 The **elder** [*presbuteros*] to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

CONCLUSIONS

Jesus Christ is the supreme head of the church. The “arch shepherd.”

The Bible emphasizes congregationalism—specifically in matters of church discipline and the selection of deacons. The epistles are addressed to whole congregations.

The Bible teaches two continuing offices in the church (1) elder/overseer/pastor and (2) deacon.

Elders and deacons always occur in a plurality.

Paul distinguishes two types of elders (lay and vocational).

Is there a weakness in UBC’s current polity?



VISION 2018 PROPOSAL

In 2018 UBC should begin working towards a plurality of *both* lay and vocational elders to facilitate our five priorities.

CLARIFICATIONS

We are merely assessing the biblical data—not mapping out the process.

This proposal reflects true historic Baptist polity. It is not Presbyterianism!

17th Century
Baptist
Sources

17th Century
Baptist
Sources

17th Century
Baptist
Sources

Baptist
Sources

Campeche
Evangelists

from the *Turks*? from the *Waldensians*, *Lutherians*, *Calvinists*, or any *Non-conforming Protestants*? No, no; why whole Language then is it? Whose! Why, 'tis the Language of the *Beast* of the Bottomless Pit, and Bloody Whore, who bare these Blasphemous Sons of her own Body, daily nourishes them at her Breast, and strengthens them in their sinful courses, by accounting them the Sons, the precious Sons of *Sion*, the true Sons of the *Catholick Church*, the Darlings of Heaven, the beloved ones of the Virgin *Mary*, and gives them Pardons for these Bold and Heaven daring sins, as often as they commit them, and come to ask Pardon for them; so that Sin and Pardon is as constant and common with them, as Breathing and Eating. And these things are done to Seal and Confirm Lies, which is the more heavy, heinous, and prodigious; For if men may Lye by Allowance; may kill, and shed Innocent Blood, without controul of Conscience and Church censures; may Swear and Blaspheme, and Challenge God himself to Damn them; may burn men for Religion, consume Cities to Ashes, conspire the death of Kings, the Ruin and Overthrow of Kingdoms, Whore, and Murther Infants; and yet be accounted a Church, the Members and Parts of it called Saints, Holy Children and the

Sons of the most high God: Then may we claim a Patent, and take a License to change the name of all things, and alter the Ideas of the minds of men; call and account *Beelzebub* a good God, and all his black Tribe, the pure Saints of the most High; call the lower Regions of Blackness and Darkness, to which he is confined, the Heaven of Glory and Eternal Light, of which things we ought in Justice to clear the *Turks*: until Witnesses of undoubted credit shall come forth, and evidence that the *Turkish State* is the Mother of as great Abominations as these are.

5. And Lastly; The *Turks* cannot be *Mystery Babylon*, because they never were made drunk with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus; which this Woman *Mystery Babylon*, is expressly said to be, *Rev. 17 6. And I saw the Woman drunk with the Blood of the Saints, and with the Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus: and I wondered with great admiration.* Now let any man shew such blood-shed, Saints blood-shed, by Massacres and Martyrdom, for the Professing of Christianity (which must be if the Text be answered in that clause, *Blood of the Martyrs of Jesus*,) by the *Turks*, either within their Dominions, or without, as hath been shed by a Generation, nearer home, and we shall become like the Man without the Wedding

continually flowing forth; ² thither ought | all men ¹ to come, of all estates, that acknowledge him to | be their Prophet, Priest, and King, to be in-rolled amongst | his household servants, to be under his heavenly conduct | and government, to lead their lives in his walled sheep- | fold, and watered garden, to have communion here with | the Saints, that they may be made to be partakers of their | inheritance in the Kingdome of God.

XXXV.

And all his servants are called thither, to present their | bodies and soules, and to bring their gifts God hath gi- | ven them; so being come, they are here by himselfe be- | stowed in their severall order, peculiar place, due use, be- | ing fitly compact and knit together, according to the ef- | fectual working of every part, to the edification of it | selfe in love.

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XXXVI.

That being thus joyned, every Church has ¹ power gi- | ven them from Christ for their better well-being, to | choose to themselves meet persons into the office of | ² Pastors, Teachers(a), Elders, Deacons, being qualified ac- | cording to the Word, as those which Christ has appoint- | ed in his Testament, for the feeding, governing, serving, | and building up of his Church, and that none other have | power to impose them, either these or any other.

XXXVII.

That the Ministers aforesaid, lawfully called by the | Church, where they are to administer, ought to conti- | nue in their calling, according to Gods Ordinance, and | carefully to feed the flock of Christ committed to them, | not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.

(b) XXXVIII.

That the due maintenance of the Officers aforesaid, | should be the free and voluntary communication of the | Church, that according to Christs Ordinance, they that | preach the Gospel, should live on the Gospel and not by | con-

(a) "Pastors" and "teachers" are omitted in later editions.

(b) The final clause, beginning "and not by constraint," was criticised by Featley and consequently omitted in the edition of 1646. The entire article was omitted from the editions of 1651 and 1652, probably owing to Quaker influence.

*Ordinance
no specific application
to two church rites*

Phil. 4 . 25, 16. strait to be compelled from the people by a forced | Law.

XXXIX.

That Baptisme is an Ordinance of the new Testament. | given by Christ, to be dispensed (a) ¹ onely upon persons professing faith, ² or that are Disciples, or taught, who upon | a profession of faith, ought to be baptized. (b)

XL.

The way and manner of the ¹ dispensing of this Ordi- | nance (c) the Scripture holds out to be dipping or plung- | ing the whole body under water, yet so as with convenient garments both upon the ad- | ministrator and subject, with all modestie. (d) ¹ with a confirmation of our | faith, that as certainly as the body is buried under water, | and riseth againe, so certainly shall the bodies of the | Saints be raised by the power of Christ, in the day of the | resurrection, to reigne with Christ.

XLI.

The persons designed by Christ, to dispense this Or- | dinance, the ¹ Scriptures hold forth to be a (e) preaching | Disciple, it being no where tyed to a particular Church, | Officer, or person extraordinarily sent, the Commission | injoyning the administration, being given to them under | no other consideration, but as considered Dis- | ciples.

(a) Featley declared this article would not be objectionable if the word only were omitted, and again strangely enough it was omitted in subsequent editions.

(b) Later editions added, "and after to partake of the Lord's Supper."

(c) In criticising this article, Doctor Featley denied that the Scripture defines baptism as an immersion, and in subsequent editions the phrase, "the Scripture holds out to be," is omitted, as well as the words "first, the washing the whole soule in the blood of Christ." To the words "death, buriall, and resurrection" are added "of Christ" in later editions.

(d) Editions 1651 and 1652 add "which is also our practice, as many eye witnesses can testify."

(e) Doctor Featley ridiculed the expression "preaching Disciple," and in later editions "preaching" is omitted, and the words "being men able to preach the Gospel" are added at the end of the article. "Church, Officer" is changed into "Church-officer" in later editions, as it appears in Doctor Featley.

The word Baptizo, signifying to dip under water, yet so as with convenient garments both upon the administrator and subject, with all modestie. (d)

Explication

Interpretation

Explication

Interpretation

Interpretation

Interpretation

Ecclerology

Office

Interpretation

ADVANTAGES

Plurality increases the breadth of giftedness in elder/pastoral ministry.

Plurality of elders frees the plurality of deacons to focus on physical needs.

Plurality adds breadth to pastoral wisdom in dealing with diverse issues.

Plurality indigenizes and stabilizes ministries during transition periods.

A plurality of lay and vocational elders exercises better stewardship of a church's financial resources.

A plurality of lay and vocational elders provides greater accountability.

Plurality follows the example and teaching of the New Testament.



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