

"CHURCH LEADERSHIP SELECTION"

By Dr. Hoyt W. Allen, Jr.

Acts 14:23 states that the apostles appointed elders in every congregation.

There have been various ideas concerning this. Some have been:

- a) **Episcopal** form of church government, such as the Roman Catholic Church, contends that this refers to the laying on of hands in an ordination service. This is the official setting apart a person for a task.
- b) **Presbyterian** form of church government contends that it meant to select or set apart men who may have been previously elected by the members.
- c) **Congregation** form of church government contends that it implies a selection of leaders by the members, of which selection was under the oversight of the apostles.

There are fifteen different Greek words in the Bible for "appoint", but the word used here in the King James Version (Greek CHEROTONEO), literally means, "stretch out the hand". It is from this that the teaching has surfaced that one is selected to the office of leadership by the showing of hands or voting for a specific person to serve as a leader within a congregation. It is translated as "ordain" in most newer translations. It is used in only one other place in the New Testament, that being II Corinthians 8:19, where it is translated in several ways; chosen, selected, appointed, etc.

The New Testament does not elaborate upon methods by which leaders are to be selected. Titus 1:5 states that elders were to be appointed by evangelists. In **Acts 6:1-7** the selection of servants (deacons) were ordained or appointed by the apostles, but the congregation was instructed to select them. Thus, based upon this precedent, whatever method is selected **the learned congregation must have some input.** This allows for local church government and not a hierarchy presiding over a congregation..

Keeping the above in mind. **May the following be considered** as a good potential plan for a church to select leaders for a specified period of time. Several months prior to a scheduled congregational meeting the following could be announced:

- 1) The Evangelist (Pulpit Minister) will preach/teach a series on Bible qualifications concerning church leadership.
- 2) Two months prior to the congregational meeting, nominations for various offices are made to a Nominating Committee, which is comprised of the Evangelist and the Elders not up for re-election. These nominees are screened, approved, and then presented to the congregation for their final approval by a vote. An official ordination service should follow.

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