

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

August 14

2022

## How Does The Holy Spirit Make Elders Today?

In Acts 20, the apostle Paul's farewell words to the elders in Ephesus are recorded and one of the remarks that Paul made to those men was, "*Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood*" (Acts 20:28). Here, Paul informed the elders in Ephesus that the Holy Spirit made them overseers (i.e. elders). So, the question I purpose is, how does the Holy Spirit make elders today?

Well, first of all, it is important to note that the eldership plays a vital role in the organization of the Lord's church (Philippians 1:1), and that elders have a big responsibility as those who watch out for the spiritual well being of the flock (Hebrews 13:17). Also, it's important to acknowledge that elders or overseers of the local church are also known as pastors (Ephesians 4:11), bishops (Philippians 1:1), and shepherds (1 Peter 5:1-4), and the Holy Spirit has revealed (2 Peter 1:21-22) through God's inspired word the qualifications that men must meet in order to be appointed to the eldership.

We find these qualifications for elders in (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). You see, Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, penned these instructions in two of his epistles that were written to a pair of evangelists named Timothy and Titus, and they were to use this Divine instruction in setting in order that which was lacking in the appointment of elders in every city. For, the Lord certainly desires for

qualified elders to be in every church in every city (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5), but in order for local churches to have qualified elders according to God's will they must have men who meet all of the qualifications revealed by the Holy Spirit.

So, to answer our question, the Holy Spirit makes elders today by revealing the qualifications in which a man must possess in order to be appointed to the eldership. Therefore, when appointing men for the eldership, we must always follow the guidelines revealed to us in the all inspired Scriptures by the Holy Spirit. For, this is how the Holy Spirit makes elders today.

✍️ Brad Phillips

## First Things First!

Once during His time here on earth, Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their own dead" (Matt. 8:22).

There have been many people who have tried and failed to explain the meaning of this phrase correctly. The truth is, in order to better understand the phrase, we need to look at it in its proper scriptural context of Matthew 8:18-22.

"And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead." (Matt. 8:19-22).

### What the Issue Is Not

The issue Jesus is confronting is not burying the dead in and of itself. People have buried their dead for thousands of years without a reprimand from God. Abraham requested of the children of Heth, "*I am a stranger and a sojourner with you: give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight*" (Gen. 23:4).

Likewise, Joseph asked of Pharaoh, "Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again" (Gen. 50:5).

Therefore, Jesus' words are not a condemnation of burial. It must be something else. What is it?

### What The Issue Is

When one reads the context of the Matthew and Luke accounts, one finds that they are talking about "following the Lord" (Matt. 8:19; Lk. 9:57).

Notice, when Jesus said, "Let the dead bury their own dead" he was responding to the man's statement, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father."

"Suffer me, first" simply means "allow me, first" (NASB). He had things he wanted to get done before he started following Jesus. This included waiting until his father was dead to follow Jesus! It wasn't that the funeral was starting shortly! Instead, he was saying I will follow you after my father dies. To this request, Jesus told him "follow me and let the dead bury their dead."

When one follows the Lord, he cannot let anything get in the way. Sadly, some when faced with the choice of doing something for the family or going to worship the Lord, they won't choose the Lord. That's the issue in Matthew 8 and Luke 9.

Jesus is not being heartless and saying "don't bury your father," as if the funeral was starting in a few minutes! This man's soul was at stake. Jesus was simply demanding this man get his priorities straight! Isn't this the reminder we all need? Where are your priorities? Are we focused on the Lord first? Is He second, or third in our list? If so, why?

Jesus said, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33). Do we realize just how important it is to get this right?

*Ethan Jennings*

## The Golden Rule

"So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 7:12).

Oh how application of Jesus' words here would solve so many problems! The difference it would make if folks would simply treat others as they'd wish to be treated. No more stealing. No more lying. No more senseless murders in shopping malls.

How wonderful it would be if our communities were filled with love, compassion, friendship, caring and sharing! That is largely what would result as each learned to do unto others as they'd have done unto them.

Whether others abide by Jesus' teaching or not, what about you? Let us do our best to not only know "the golden rule," but to go on and practice it.

*David McPherson*

### Belleville church of Christ

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

#### Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study .....	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship .....	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship .....	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study .....	7:00 p.m.

#### Evangelist

Brad Phillips..... (765) 720-2816