

# **WE ARE THE HOUSEHOLD**

Part 4 of CHURCH 101. Ephesians 2:19.

Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. September 11, 2022.

## **THE CHURCH IS GOD'S HOUSEHOLD**

One metaphor for the church is **HOUSEHOLD OR FAMILY**.

Ephesians 2:18-19 (ESV) 18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God ...

1 Timothy 3:14-15 (ESV) 14 I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, 15 if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

Galatians 6:9-10 (ESV) And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. 10 So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

## **WHAT IS A HOUSEHOLD?**

The apostle Paul's context was the Greco-Roman culture & customs.

- A Roman household was ruled by the father - paterfamilias.
- The household was overseen by stewards or managers.
- Downton Abbey is a modern picture of the ancient Roman household.

# WHAT DOES THE HOUSEHOLD METAPHOR TELL US ABOUT THE CHURCH?

The household metaphor tells us that:

- The church is like a family.
- The church is based on Jesus.
- The church is an organization.

The wellbeing of the church depends on its stewards.

## THE HOUSEHOLD STEWARDS OF THE CHURCH

The stewards of the church are called elders - overseers.

Titus 1:5-9 (ESV) This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders 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, 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.

- Elders maintain the organization of the church family - verse 5.
- Elders are recognized, not self-appointed - verse 5.
- Elders are stewards or house managers, accountable to God - verse 7.
- Elders are mature believers with proven character - verses 6-7.
- Elders are capable Bible teachers - verse 9.

# SELECTING ELDERS FOR GOD'S HOUSEHOLD

In many churches, elders are selected for the wrong reasons:

The pathway to eldership at the Cornerstone is different:

- You may feel the Lord's " nudge."
- Ask yourself: Do I meet the qualifications?
- Read Acts 20:17-38; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4
- Ask your wife for her honest feedback.
- Consider your circumstances: physical health, work, family.
- Think about your personality, emotional and mental health.
- Seek out godly counsel.
- Talk to me. I will tell you: Before you move ahead, take my Character-Based Leadership course. Wednesday evenings this fall.

## THE CORNERSTONE ELDERS

The Cornerstone is blessed with six godly elders:

- They lead with perseverance.
- They are faithful to God and his Word.
- They care for God's people.
- They are good Bible teachers.
- They know how to disagree agreeably.
- Their motives are pure.

## NEXT STEPS

During the week, take some steps to reflect on and apply today's Bible teaching. Pick one or more of these questions to consider:

- Read the following online article by Professor Andreas Köstenberger to learn more about the "household" metaphor for the church. Write down the highlights:

<https://www.biblicalfoundations.org/the-household-of-god/>

- What are some aspects of the Cornerstone church family/household that you appreciate the most?
- Have you ever spoken to one of the Cornerstone elders? Have you ever asked an elder for prayer or spiritual encouragement or direction? Consider doing that soon. What things would you ask for prayer or direction about?
- Read through 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and think about the ways your life and character reflect or do not reflect these character qualities. Pray for more grace in those areas you feel are lacking.
- Is the Lord nudging you towards eldership here at the Cornerstone "household?" Follow the confirmation steps outlined in Peter's sermon. Talk to Peter about it. Take the Character-Based Leadership course.