

Key Point: God has made His Church the pillar and support of truth (1 Timothy 3:15). When we look at the Church we should see the character of God in the Church. If a person does not understand God's purpose for the Church, they may misunderstand their role in the Church. Therefore, we must learn these things so that we may honor God in our church.

I. Who is responsible for taking care of the local church?

A. **Elders/Pastor-Teachers/Overseers** – Men who have the functional comprehensive oversight of God's people to manage according to God's will/agenda. They are responsible for:

1. Teaching the body biblical truth
2. Leading the church in a direction that fulfills the Kingdom agenda
3. Watching over (shepherding) those in the local church
4. Warning those in the local church against impending dangers
5. Maintaining order, unity and holiness within the body
6. Overseeing all aspects of the church

(Ephesians 4:11-17, Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17, Romans 16:17-20, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Titus 1:5-9)

B. **Deacons** – Men who have been given the responsibilities of helping the overseers through addressing the practical or tangible needs of the body of Christ within the local church. (Acts 6:1-7, 1 Timothy 3:8-13)

II. What is my role as a member of the local church?

A. You are to be a **disciple** and to make **disciples** of Christ. (Luke 9:23-26, Matthew 28:18-20)

B. You are to **love** others accordingly. (1 Timothy 1:5, Romans 12:8-21)

C. You are to serve by using your **spiritual gifts** accordingly in bearing burdens, meeting needs, and teaching the truth. (1 Peter 4:10-11, Galatians 6:2, Titus 3:14, 1 John 3:17-18, Ephesians 4:15-16)

D. You are to give **monetarily** to support the work of the church. (2 Corinthians 9:6-15)

E. You are to maintain **unity** within the church seeking to be at peace with all while conducting yourself in a manner that is holy and honorable. (Ephesians 4:1-3, Romans 12:17-18, 1 Peter 1:13-16)

III. What is the big picture?

- A. God is saving souls from hell. (Ephesians 2:1-10)
- B. God is maturing saints into the image of Jesus Christ. (2 Corinthians 3:17-18)
- C. God is using the Church through evangelism and discipleship to save souls from hell and mature saints into the image of Christ. (Matthew 28:18-20, 2 Corinthians 5:15-20, Ephesians 4:11-17)
- D. God is using individuals within the church through their spiritual gifts, which results in burdens being born, needs being met, and truth being proclaimed. This results in evangelism and discipleship taking place, which results in souls being saved from hell and saints being matured into the image of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:1-7, Ephesians 4:15-16, Acts 2:41-47)
- E. Therefore, as members of the church we are to be anticipating the return of Christ through living righteously in Christ and purifying ourselves from sin in thoughts, words, and actions. (1 John 3:1-3, Philippians 3:1-21)