

Life Notes *Understanding Our Core Values*

with Pastor Stephen

Core Value #9– Pastors Who Are Servant Leaders:

We believe in God-ordained leaders who model the Christian life and devote themselves to the care of the church family. The responsibility for the church rests upon their shoulders.

What does this Core Value Mean?

- **We believe this core value is the founding principle of church government.**
- **We believe the New Testament reveals three expressions of government: (1) Apostolic/Pastoral leadership (2) Elder rule and (3) congregation decisions.**
- **We believe these three expressions represent one form of church government.**
 - The congregation makes some decisions as opportunity arises (Acts 6:1-4).
 - A group of Elders, some of whom are responsible for teaching and preaching, direct the affairs of the church (1 Timothy 5:17, 18).
 - Among the Elders, there is a “Senior Elder” or pastor (or apostolic leader) who is the one ultimately responsible for the direction of the church. That is why the matter of Gentile conversions was discussed with many people and many leaders, but James (the “Pastor” of the Jerusalem Church) said with confidence, “This then, is my decision concerning this matter.” (Acts 15:13-18)
- In Acts 20:17-30, the church leadership in Ephesus was referred to as “Elders” collectively. In the course of his teaching and admonition to them, they were alternately called not only “Elders”, but also “Overseers” and “Shepherds.”
 - As Elders, they are to be men of mature experience who can lead with confidence.
 - As “Overseers”, they are to provide administrative wisdom in matters of church policy and procedures.
 - As “Shepherds,” they are to lead the flock by guiding, protecting, and feeding the flock of God.

- These leaders understood they were to be held accountable for the life of the church, “Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.” Hebrews 13:17

Why is this Core Value important?

- **The danger of ignoring this Core Value:**
 - Without Pastors who are servant leaders, it is likely the church will be torn between conflicting visions and philosophies expressed by various people who are not truly responsible or God-called to lead the church.
- **The principle we embrace:**
 - These Pastors must understand that Jesus is the Head of the Church, and their authority flows only from Him.
 - They must remember that a shepherd who ignores submission to the Chief Shepherd is a “hireling” who serves only his own interests, and does not care for the flock.

How can I make this Core Value part of my life?

- Pray for your Pastors. Realize they are men subject to mistakes and emotions that can get them distracted.
- Support your pastors by finding your ministry and serving faithfully.

The result of believing this Core Value:

- A concise vision and clear direction will make service for Christ a joyful experience.
- Spiritual security will be felt by God’s flock.
- The church will be properly fed, protected, and positioned.

From all the Christian Life Pastors:

**“It is a joy to serve with you!
We love you all!”**