



Part Three

1 Peter 5:6 (NIV) Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

1. God wants you to be under the authority of **A LOCAL CHURCH**

Hebrews 13:17 (NIV) Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Matthew 16:16-18 (NIV) Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

2. The example of the New Testament church was leadership by a **PLURALITY OF ELDERS**

A couple of Biblical principles:

A. The **DIRECTION** of the church should be in the hands of **GODLY** individuals

1 Timothy 3:1-7 (NLT) This is a trustworthy saying: "If someone aspires to be an elder, he desires an honorable position." ² So an elder must be a man whose life is above reproach. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exercise self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must be able to teach. ³He must not be a heavy drinker or be violent. He must be gentle, not quarrelsome, and not love money. ⁴He must manage his own family well, having children who respect and obey him. ⁵For if a man cannot manage his own household, how can he take care of God's church? ⁶An elder must not be a new believer, because he might become proud, and the devil would cause him to fall. ⁷Also, people outside the church must speak well of him so that he will not be disgraced and fall into the devil's trap.

B. The **DECISIONS** of the church should be in the hands of those who are **RESPONSIBLE** for it.

1 Timothy 5:17 (NIV) The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

Acts 15:1-2, 6 (NLT) While Paul and Barnabas were at Antioch of Syria, some men from Judea arrived and began to teach the believers: "Unless you are circumcised as required by the law of Moses, you cannot be saved." ²Paul and Barnabas disagreed with them, arguing vehemently. Finally, the church decided to send Paul and Barnabas to Jerusalem, accompanied by some local believers, to talk to the apostles and elders about this question... ⁶So the apostles and elders met together to resolve this issue.

3. For the past 2000 years the church has continually gotten off track by pastors and leaders who **ABUSE** authority *and* Christians who **REFUSE** authority

Matthew 5:23-24 (NLT) "So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, ²⁴leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.

Matthew 18:15 (NLT) "If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back.

Bible Reading Plan		
<input type="checkbox"/> Sun.: Mark 15	<input type="checkbox"/> Mon.: Mark 16	<input type="checkbox"/> Tues.: Rom. 1
<input type="checkbox"/> Wed.: Rom. 2	<input type="checkbox"/> Thurs.: Rom. 3	<input type="checkbox"/> Fri.: Rom. 4
<input type="checkbox"/> Sat.: Rom. 5	<input type="checkbox"/> Sun.: Rom. 6	