

## **The Overseer as Administrator:**

### **Theologically informed models of church administration**

#### 1. God as an orderly being

##### a. Order as a theological matter

The reason there ought to be order in the church is that there is order in God. There is, in a very real and technical sense, a *theological* foundation for how the church ought to be governed. The church ought to function in a particular way because she is God's church. Her practices should rightly reflect the economy of God—the good order of God himself. There are at least three important realms in which God's good order is observable. Together these realms frame the background for order in the NT church: order in God, order in God's world, order among God's people.<sup>1</sup>

##### b. Order in God (his triune being and attributes)

1) Triune order in God's being (Eternal Father, Son, and Spirit; ordered relations speak to the eternal order)

2) Order as one of God's attributes

3) Order in God's world (cosmos, family, society and government)

4) Order in the creation of the world (Gen 1)

5) Order in the creation of man and woman/family (Gen 2; 1 Cor 11:3; Eph 5)

6) Order in the structure of society (Rom 13)

7) Order among God's people (Israel)

8) Formation of a nation

9) Formation of a kingdom

##### c. Order in the New Testament church (1 Cor 14; Col 2:5; Titus 1:5)

1) Order in the developing government of the New Testament church

2) Order is necessary for doctrine and life/ministry (teaching and practice)

##### d. Resource: *Manual of Church Order*, John L. Dagg

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<sup>1</sup> Much thanks to Dr. Pete Schemm for his insight on this matter.

2. Orderly administration in the local church: The meaning and role of the “overseer/bishop”
  - a. The word “episkopos” generally means “A superintendent, an officer in charge over the affairs of a local church (some denominations extend the bishop’s oversight beyond one local church and separate the office of bishop from elder/pastor).
  - b. The Old Testament term “nacah” in Genesis 39:4,5 tells of Joseph becoming the overseer of the house and placed in charge over all of the affairs over everything that Potipher owned. In 2 Chronicles 34:12 and 17, it describes the function of a supervisor over the work of the laborers.
3. The church as organism and organization
  - a. The church as a growing and maturing body (Ephesians 4)
  - b. The church as a living building (1 Peter 2)
  - c. Models for pastors as administrators: better and worse approaches
    1. The “Do it All” micro-managing pastor
    2. The “Hands Off” total delegating pastor
    3. The “CEO” business model pastor
    4. The pastor as shepherding overseer
4. Division of labor and oversight amongst the elders
5. Responsibilities for today’s shepherding overseer: managing the affairs of the local church
  - a. Managing the church staff and the church’s day-to-day operations
  - b. Managing the ministries of the church and the church’s calendar
  - c. Managing a meaningful membership process
  - d. Managing the discipleship and small group ministry of the church
  - e. Managing the church’s finances and facilities
  - f. Managing growth, church-planting and future planning