Church Government
1 Peter 5:1-4

Introduction:
A. The universal church is not an organized functioning unit.
   1. No government except each Christian under Christ.
   2. No work that needs overseeing.
B. The Local church is an organized functioning unit.
   1. Needs coordination and oversight.
   2. Needs direction and leadership.
C. The scriptures assign certain attributes to local church government.

Discussion:
   A. Bible pattern rather than pattern set by kingdoms of this world.
   B. Bible teaching rather than trial and error of human experience.
II. It Is Congregational, Rather than Diocesan. ("among you" v. 2).
   A. Local men called elders, bishops, etc. (cf. Tit. 1:5,7).
   B. Local rather than national, county, city, etc. wide.
   A. No "the pastor" of a church.
   B. No bishop over several churches.
   C. No woman or women over any church.
IV. It Is by Superintendents, Rather than Lords. (v. 3).
   A. Neither democratic nor dictatorial - neither voting nor lording.
   B. Lords come in different forms:
      1. Elders who abuse their office.
      2. Members who assume oversight.
      3. Members who impose their will by grumbling, threatening and/or pouting.
   C. Elders are shepherds leading a flock - not giving orders from afar.
      1. This is done by Catholic type organization.
      2. This is done by diocesan, conference type organization.
V. It Is Administrative, Rather than Legislative. (v. 4).
   A. Cannot make laws, only carries them out.
      1. Must make judgment decisions in execution of divine law.
      2. Must not make laws for God, nor seek to change divine law.
   B. Christ, as king, has all authority.
VI. It Is by Qualification and Appointment, Rather than by Politics. (Tit. 1; 1 Tim. 3).
   A. If not qualified, no appointment no matter how popular one may be.
   C. If plurality not qualified, no need for an eldership.
      1. Should not simply appoint those "nearest" or "best we have".
      2. Should not consider no eldership a permanent arrangement
      3. Should not consider such a church second-class.
   D. If qualified men, church must appoint an eldership to please God.
      1. Cannot allow some frivolous objection to keep church from appointing good elders.
      2. Cannot allow some "man made" rule to rob church of eldership.

Conclusion:
A. The Abuse of church government causes many other errors - history shows.
B. The Neglect of church government creates a vacuum - often filled with error.
C. The Right use of church government make church effective force for truth.