The Office of an Elder
1 Tim. 3:1

Introduction:
A. Need and possibility of selecting and appointing more elders soon.
   1. Not an exclusive work of present elders – whole church involved.
B. Church needs to know the nature of the office, it’s qualifications and its work.
   1. Else cannot intelligently participate in the selection process.
   2. Hence this series of lessons of the eldership.
C. Features involved in the office itself that we need to consider in the first of this series:

Discussion:

I. It Is a Working Office – Not a Honorary Position.
   A. A work to be desired, not an honor to coveted (“a good work’).
      1. Elders should be honors “for their works sake” (1 Thess. 5:12, 13)
      2. Yet, they must not desire it for honors sake.
   B. A work is indicated by the terms referring to elders (cf. Acts 20:17,28; 1 Pet. 5:1-2)
      1. Elder/Presbyter indicates the work of guidance by reason of maturity and experience.
      2. Bishop/Overseer indicates the work of superintending – has authority.
      3. Pastor/Shepherd indicates the work of leading and tending a flock.
   C. The nature of their work so extensive will take another whole lesson to deal with it.

II. It Is a Divine Office – Not a Political Office.
   A. Elders are made by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28).
      1. How? The same way he makes Christians.
      2. Holy Spirit gives the terms and conditions – we must follow instructions.
      3. When church selects officers they must fit the terms laid down by inspired men. (cf. Acts 6:3)
   B. Elders are not made by a political process.
      1. Often men “runs for elder” much like one runs for political office – back slapping and all.
      2. Often men are appointed because of fleshly considerations.
         a. Well educated.
         b. Great personality.
         c. Social Prestige.
         d. Business success.
         e. Family pedigree.

III. It Is a Local Office – Not Diocesan.
   A. Elders were only in local churches in the New Testament (Acts 14:23; 20:17; 1 Pet. 5:2).
   B. Elders do not oversee the people for the work of sister congregations.
   C. Elders do not meddle in internal affairs of sister congregations.

IV. It Is an Administrative Office – Not Legislative.
   A. They are administrators under the “Chief Shepherd.” (1 Pet. 5:4).
   B. They makes no laws, bind no rules – simply carry out Christ’s law.
   C. They rule not as Lords, but as leaders (1 Pet. 5:3).

Conclusion:
A. Men who desire the office should know what they desire – prepare self for it.
B. All should know what is involved in the eldership.