

From Where I Sit . . .

"Leading God's People"

Leadership is a crying need within every organization, and the church is no exception. When I first heard about the Broad Street Church of Christ, I was impressed that a church this size could find nine men who were both qualified and willing to serve as the overseers - elders for the church. When I told friends that I was moving to Scottsboro and would work under nine elders they were in amazement. What I didn't realize was that the church had a legacy of great leaders who had carried the ball, many of whom had already passed into eternity: Sanford Roberts, Agee Strickland, Albert Parks, Q Howard, just to name those dating back to the 50's. Two or more generations had already passed from the scene before these men began to serve and dating back to 1884.

I was thrilled with the team spirit and love for the church and for Truth that I could see in the nine men who asked me to work with them: Tommy Bellomy, Bob Bridges, Randy Brown, Jack Caudle, Jim Harrington, Ron Harville, John Porter, Paul Stephenson, and Oz Willard.

Only two plus years later, now there are six. Randy Brown felt a strong need to preach the Gospel and has been preaching for the Pikeville church for the past two years. Oz Willard went into eternity in early July of 2003, and now Paul Stephenson has completed his journey and passed into eternity with these other great leaders who went before him.

We're reminded as we look back, that this church always had men who were prepared and willing to step up and be elders when the time came. That didn't happen by accident. These men had already spent the first 40, 50, 60 years of their lives preparing for this responsibility. We would have been in serious trouble if the church had suddenly needed all new elders and no one had been making these preparations.

I believe that God has always had his men, his special servants, who would rise up and carry the mantle when it is passed. Joshua replaced Moses as Israel's leader, Elisha replaced Elijah in the prophetic work, and throughout history, new generations of trained individuals have continued to carry on the great work that others had begun.

I'm struck with how transitory leadership really is. From nine, now there are six. No one can know what tomorrow holds. I've had the grim responsibility of doing funerals for six of the various elders, as well as a host of deacons I've worked with during my ministry. This congregation is in excellent hands with the six good men who lead us today. I have to raise the question, however, who out there among us has already begun the preparation that will equip him to one day accept the responsibility and carry the mantle when it is passed?

Young men should be dreaming of the time when they will be asked to serve as a leader for the Lord's church. Preachers aren't just made in a moment, and elders most assuredly are not. I challenge our young men to take the long view, and begin now living the right kind of life and gaining the right kind of knowledge of the Bible and spiritual relationship with God that will prepare you to lead His church.

..... Terry Broome

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