

CHURCH FOR DUMMIES

Part 3: WHO CARES?

February 24, 2002

Roddy Clyde

No one debates that a vital aspect of New Testament churches is their care for and ministry to their members.

Gal. 6:9-10 *"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."*

The controversy occurs when answering the question about who's responsible for that care and ministry.

A popular opinion shared by many church staff and members alike is that churches hire professionals to do ministry for them.

Simply stated: Members expect their needs to be met by staff and staff expects to meet them.

As a result, the average size of American churches is dictated by the number of families for whom a single pastor can provide care. (Currently 90 adults, down 12% from an all time high of 102 in 1992.)

What Does The Bible Say?

1. Pastors should care for and minister to their churches.

John 21:16 *"Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."*

2. Care and ministry to the church means the pastor is responsible for preparing the members to care for and minister to one another.

Ephes. 4:11-16 *"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴Then we will no longer be*

infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."

3. The members are responsible for the caring ministry of their church.

Acts 6:1-7 *"In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ²So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." ⁵This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. ⁷So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith."*

What Does It Look Like?

It looks like Life Links.

Acts 2:42-47 *"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."*

What Is The Result?

1. The needs are met. Acts 2:45
2. The word of God spreads. Acts 6:7
3. The church is unified. Eph. 4:13
4. The members mature into Christ likeness. Eph. 4:13