

Today we are going to talk about some very special men in the Lord's Church. They are called "elders". Can you say elders? There are other words that are used in the Bible for elders. They are "bishop, pastor, shepherd, overseer". We have a poster with their pictures here for you to see. Can anyone tell me their names? (read the names as you point to the pictures) Let each child have a turn repeating the names as you point to the pictures.

Now, let's talk about what makes these men so important. In the Bible, Paul writes about how each church needs to have men that watch over the other Christians. They are to be like shepherds who watches over sheep. What do shepherds do for the sheep? They make sure they don't wander off too far and get lost. If a sheep does get lost the shepherd searches for him and brings him back to the fold. He makes sure they have plenty to eat and drink. The shepherd watches for danger, such as wolves, cliffs, etc. In this same way, elders watch over Christian's souls, to try and help them go to heaven. If a Christian has not been coming to worship God, then the elders should worry about him and try to get him to come back to the fold. If someone is teaching things that are not found in God's word, the elders must protect the other Christians from this false teacher. The elders make sure the money given to the Lord is used in a way that the Bible teaches. These are just a few of the things elders are supposed to do.

Now, how does one become an elder? Does he just decide he wants to be an elder and then he automatically becomes one? NO! He has to be a certain type of person which is taught about in I Timothy. He must be the husband of one wife, wise, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, gentle, temperate, not addicted to wine, not contentious, not a lover of money, a good manager of his home, one who controls his children well and has faithful children, not a new Christian. After he meets all of those requirements, he must want very badly to be an elder.

The work done by the elders takes many hours. All members (deacons, preachers, teachers, every member) are under the elders and must obey and respect them.

Now, everyone cover your eyes with your hands. Can each one of you tell me at least one of the elder's names. (go back over their names after each child has a turn)

(I used Betty Luken's flannelgraph of a shepherd and sheep and the background of land as I was talking about what a shepherd does)
(Handed out a coloring sheet of a shepherd watching out for his flock)

SING: The chorus of "When the Roll is Called up Yonder"

2 Timothy 2:15 - Memory Builders tape

Songs: When the Roll is called up Yonder

Discussion

Refer to pictures on elder poster and talk about qualities: (taken from New Century Version) there is no reason to criticize him (blameless)

Husband of one wife

Good behavior

Does not like to fight but is gentle (not violent)

Not a new believer (recent convert)

Not loving money

Ready to welcome guests (hospitable)

Able to teach

Must not drink too much wine

A leader of his family (manage his family)

Must have the respect of the people who are not Christians

Have one of the elders come to visit the class and have them ask him questions about his qualifications

“How many years have you been a christian?”

“Do you have one wife?”

“Do you have children?”

“Do you fight?”

“What do you do if you are an elder?”



guarding the flock



Elders love and care after Christians, just as shepherds love and care after their sheep.