

STUDY GUIDE

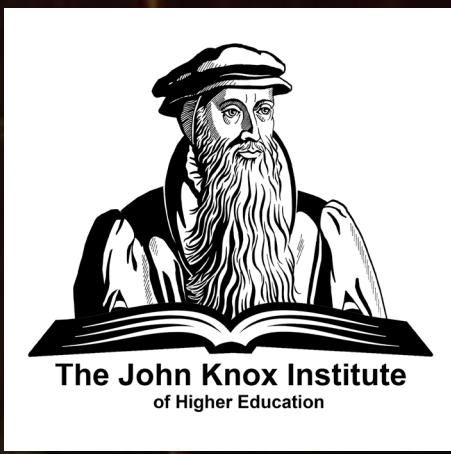
for

Biblical Eldership

VIDEO LECTURE SERIES

by Rev. Robert D. McCurley, ThM

Lecture #2
The Office



John Knox Institute of Higher Education
Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide

© 2023 by John Knox Institute of Higher Education

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means for profit, except in brief quotations for the purposes of review, comment, or scholarship, without written permission from the publisher, John Knox Institute, P.O. Box 19398, Kalamazoo, MI 49019-19398, USA.

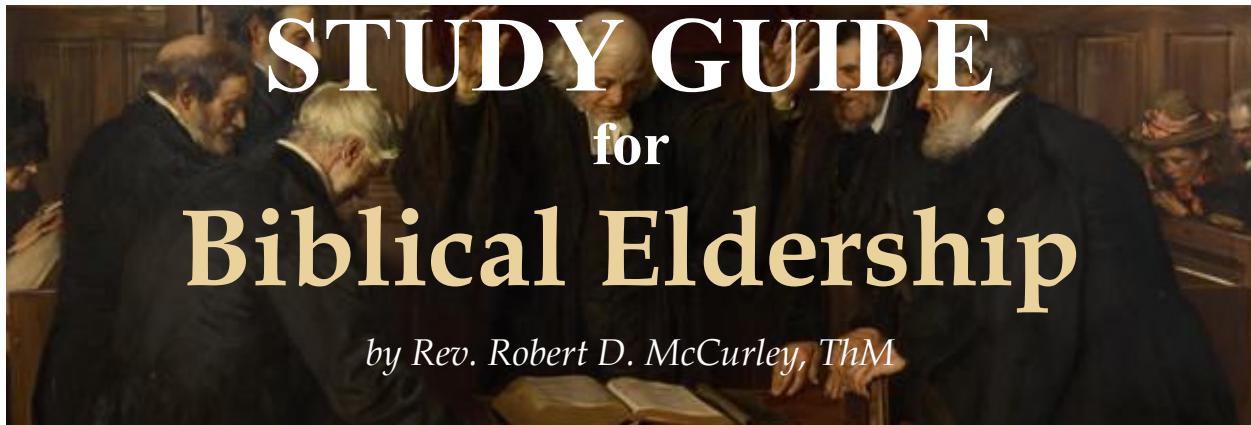
Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

Visit our website: www.johnknoxinstitute.org

Rev. Robert D. McCurley, ThM, is minister of the gospel at Greenville Presbyterian Church, in Taylors, South Carolina, USA, a congregation of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing), Presbytery of the United States.

www.greenvillepresbyterian.com

Cover image: “The Ordination of Elders in a Scottish Kirk,” 1891, John Henry Lorimer



STUDY GUIDE for Biblical Eldership

by Rev. Robert D. McCurley, ThM

1. Introduction

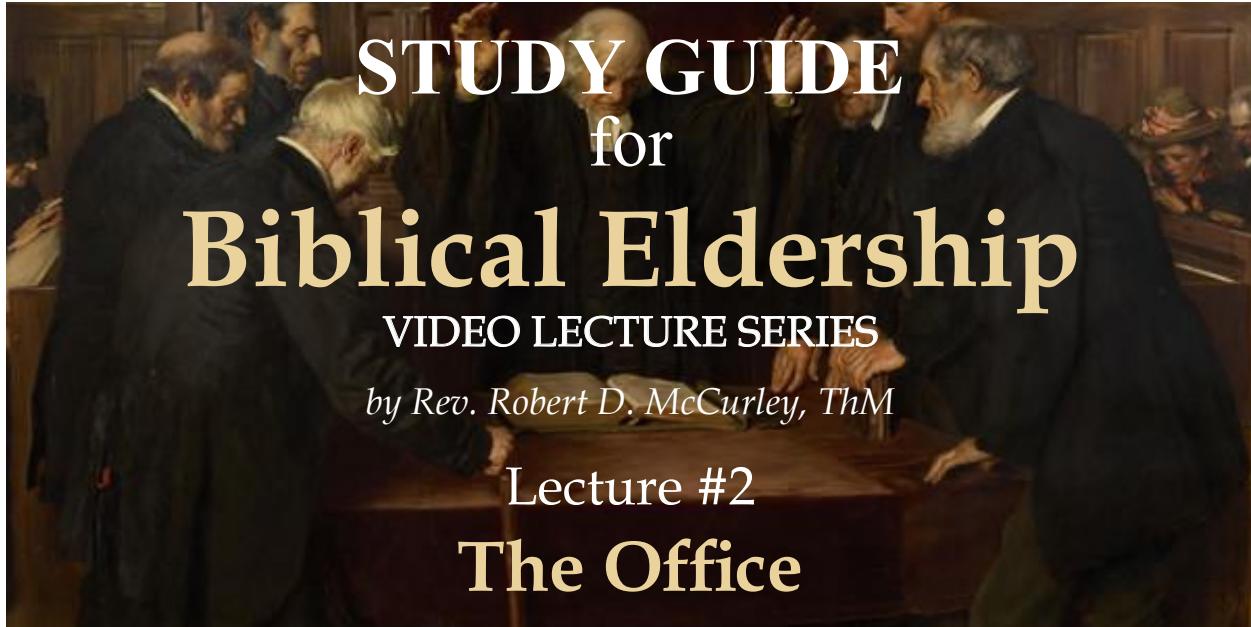
2. The Office

3. Qualifications

4. More Qualifications

5. Doctrine

6. Shepherding



STUDY GUIDE
for
Biblical Eldership
VIDEO LECTURE SERIES
by Rev. Robert D. McCurley, ThM
Lecture #2
The Office

Introduction

Most people enjoy stories of powerful kings, beautiful castles, and vast kingdoms. We find awe-inspiring the accounts of heroism of knights and generals, and victories and defeats. And it is intriguing to trace the tangled path associated with the rise and fall of these great men. But Christians know that the great men of this world are not the main focus of history. History is God's story, and he has placed at the center of his story his King and his kingdom. That means that men, both great and small men, are measured by their attachment to Christ, and service to his interests.

Theme

The citizenry of Christ's kingdom, and the offices Christ prescribed to serve them.

Key Points

1. The citizenry of Christ's kingdom requires a public profession of faith and membership in a local, visible church.
 - a. Members must be baptized and committed to the church.
 - b. Members must be numbered and distinct.
 - c. Distinction between those inside the church, and those outside the church.
 - d. Elders only have the rule and oversight over church members.
 - e. Church discipline involves removing or restoring church membership.
 - f. Elders can provide letters of reference and commendation to members who are travelling.
 - g. The biblical titles of the church are founded on church membership.

- h. Elders need to verify the credibility of a person's claim to be a Christian.
 - i. *The household principle*—the children of professing Christians.

2. Church officers according to the New Testament.
 - a. Ministers or pastors, primarily called to preach, teach, and administer the sacraments.
 - b. Ruling Elders, called to church government, shepherding and overseeing the members of the church.
 - c. Deacons are called to tend to the practical works of mercy and compassion in the church.
3. Biblical authority vs. Authoritarianism.
4. Biblical principles for the election and ordination of church officers.
 - a. No man can appoint himself to church office.
 - b. Men must be tested, examined, and proved by Elders.
 - c. Men must be selected by popular election among members of the congregation.
 - d. The privilege of appeal to higher assemblies of Elders
5. Summary

Study Questions

1. If "History is God's story," then how should men, both great and small, be measured? How does this help us to view the great men we read about in history? What are all men called to do, according to Psalm 2, verse 11?

2. What do the New Testament Scriptures teach us about the importance of church membership? How does the necessity of church membership flow from what we have already seen about the nature of the church?

3. What are some of the New Testament passages that show us that new believers were baptized and added to a local, visible church?

4. Why is it important to be able to count or number the people who are members in a congregation? What New Testament Scriptures depict this for us?

5. What is *the household principle* as seen in the Old Testament and the New Testament? How do we know that God deals with his people as households?

6. What are the three biblical church offices Christ has appointed in the New Testament church? What are the duties and responsibility for each of them?

7. What are the original biblical words translated as “elder” in the New Testament? Do these imply different offices? How do the duties of the minister and the elders serve the church in the same capacity?

8. What is the nature of the deacon’s responsibility?

9. Please define Authoritarianism. What are the differences between Authoritarianism and the Scriptural authority of church officers? How does Rev. McCurley define biblical authority?

10. Does a man have a right to take upon himself an office in Christ's church? What are the two biblical principles which must be applied and upheld in the election and ordination of church office-bearers?

Further Study

1. Rev. McCurley states that God gives church officers positions of authority for the sake and benefit of those committed to their care in the church, and not for the benefit of themselves. How might a congregation avoid Authoritarianism in church government? How can healthy cooperation be maintained and increased among officer-bearers in the church?

2. Please look up and define the terms:

1) "session" or "consistory" _____

2) "presbytery" or "classis" _____

3) "synod" or "general assembly" _____

What does it mean to appeal to higher assemblies of Elders? _____
