

CHAPTER ONE

KINGDOM GOVERNMENT

VERSUS UNRESTRAINED DEMOCRACY

Here are the problems:

1. Most pastors have to be in a church for 8 to 10 years before they get enough influence to lead effectively. During that time, much of the ministry the Lord has for that church and that pastor suffers or never gets done. Multiply that times the number of churches that change pastors every 8 to 10 years (or sooner) and that is the number of under achieving churches there are. This represents most churches.
2. Most evangelical churches spend far too much time fighting at business session. These fights harm the testimony of the church in the community and stunt the growth of the church.
3. Far too many pastors live unhappy and unproductive lives.
4. Churches struggle for finances, when they should be financially well-off.
5. God does not seem to intervene during times of church unrest, and we don't know why.
6. Churches are not growing.

The solution to many of these problems are presented in this book.

When there is trouble in a church the root cause is usually related to a disagreement about who is in charge. We call it a “power struggle.” Often the **deacon board** claims rights of being in charge. Sometimes **those who give the most money** claim they should be in charge. The Church **matriarch** often pushes herself to the place of final say so. Sometimes the one in charge **is the person who is strong enough to take charge.**

Some believe the **whole church** is in charge. Others feel the **pastor** should be in charge. Many feel that **no one** should be in charge. There are always those who say that only **God** is in charge.

Reread the previous paragraph. Those who could take charge are in bold print and underlined. Below, circle the person or group who you feel should be “in charge” of the matters of the church. By “in charge” I mean, “has the final word,” or “final authority” relative to matters of church life and ministry.

Draw a circle around the individual or group that you believe the Word of God directs to be “in charge” of the church:

1. Deacon board
2. Church matriarch
3. The person who is strong enough to take charge
4. The whole church
5. The pastor
6. No one
7. Only God
8. I do not know
9. Other:

This book could be entitled “God’s Plan for Church Government,” or “Honoring the Biblical Role and Authority of Your Pastor.” I am not a politically-correct individual. I do not have a church-upbringing. Not until age 21 did I begin to attend church habitually. By age 24 I was a senior pastor! Without a church background, and at the time of my first pastorate, without official advanced theological training, I thought the only place to go for direction on how to operate the church was the Bible. While I still believe that, I have learned that most theologians and church people see the Bible as a secondary source for church government, a secondary source

for determining the role of the pastor, a secondary source for establishing the role of the congregation, and a secondary source for determining what is right or wrong in church life. Few will admit that, but people are what they do – not what they say, and the behavior of the vast majority of theologians (including pastors) and church members (including the saved among them), tell me by their actions and reaction to clear Bible truth that tradition is more highly-honored among them than the Word of God when their tradition is in conflict with scripture.

As long as their tradition correlates with scripture, the average theologian and church member holds the Bible up and praises its content. However, when the Bible contradicts their tradition elaborate moves, worthy of gold medals if such moves were gymnastic rather than mental gyrations, are employed to downplay or alter the Word of God in order to hold tight to traditions that make null and void the Word. I find such behavior shameful and disgusting.

Even though I have advanced theological training now, I have not moved from my roots of confidence in the Word of God, and (I guess) because I have no early childhood church traditions, I have no trouble rejecting the church traditions of man for the Word of God. Others do, and I understand that. For those who love their tradition more than the Word of God and for those who believe beloved tradition qualifies as the will of God or the Word of God, this will be a difficult book to read. I am in prayer that God will deliver you from tradition that is contrary to the Word of God to the biblical standard. That will not be an easy thing for most people to do for a number of reasons; the strongest being that the traditional church world around you will constantly applaud your behavior that supports their church tradition even if it is contrary to the Word of God, and they have skewed the Bible content (or had it skewed for them) for so long, that nothing other than their

tradition makes sense to them. Like the Apostle Paul who felt killing Christians was serving God, these poor individuals believe lies to be the voice of God. I would rather the Bible-trained than church-trained. There is a difference.