

How Shall They Hear?

(Part 1)

All faithful members of the church of Christ are concerned with the fact that lost souls are dying everyday. God entrusted His people with the duty and obligation of taking His saving message to “all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:15-16). Many faithful and sincere individuals have questioned whether they are doing enough to fulfill that responsibility. Certainly, ensuring that the entire world hears the Gospel would be an unconquerable task if it were left to only one individual. However, it is not left to just one person, “for the body is not one member, but many” (1 Corinthians 12:14). The Bible clearly teaches that each individual is to do his/her part and by doing such, the whole body is edified.

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love (Ephesians 4:15-16).

This Bible principle is further explained when paralleled with the work of elders in the Lord's church. An elder is placed in charge of

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake (Titus 1:9-11).

Logically, no one would expect one elder to convince all the gainsayers of the world. Nor would anyone espouse that one elder must stop the mouths of all false teachers. Paul told Titus, “for this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city” (Titus 1:5, emphasis mine). God's plan, in organizing the church, is that a plurality of elders oversee the local congregation of which they are members. Thus, the eldership, made up of more than one elder, makes decisions for that local congregation and is in charge of protecting the flock which they oversee. If every eldership does its job as God has designed, then each congregation, and therefore all of the flock of God, will be protected and fed spiritually. The grave responsibility of overseeing the children of God was not given to just one man nor just to one eldership. Each individual eldership, doing its part, “maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:16).

– *Brad Green*