

## ATTITUDES NEEDED IN ORDAINING OFFICERS

*John Edwards*

Elders and deacons pertain to the organizational structure of the Lord's church (Phil. 1:1). Elders are charged to *“Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof...”* (1 Pet. 5:2). It is the official duty of deacons to serve the local church under the oversight of the eldership (1 Tim. 3:8-13).

When men were appointed to do some special table serving in Acts 6, the selection was done by the membership (v. 3). The appointment of officers in the church is a work of an evangelist (Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5). There are some needed attitudes when men are being selected and appointed to the eldership and to the office of a deacon.

**BE SOBER.** To be sober is to be marked by seriousness, gravity or solemnity of conduct or character. The qualifications of elders and deacons require *“sober”* men with *“sober”* wives (1 Tim. 3:2, 8, 11). Ordaining officers in the church is serious business and must be taken seriously!

**SELECT AND APPOINT ONLY SCRIPTURALLY QUALIFIED MEN.** A proper understanding of the qualifications of elders and

deacons is needed before men are appointed to these offices. The qualifications of elders are recorded in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9, with the qualifications of deacons found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. If there's any question as to whether a man is qualified, you need to go and talk to the man involved personally.

**DO NOTHING BY PARTIALITY.** To show partiality is to show favorable prejudice or bias; a special fondness. A man is selected on the basis that he is Scripturally qualified, not because he's a relative, your best friend or you have a special liking for him. Paul said, *“Doing nothing by partiality”* (1 Tim. 5:21).

**TO ENDEAVOR TO KEEP UNITY.** The Ephesians were instructed, *“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”* (Eph. 4:3). If there are Scriptural objections to a man's appointment, he should withdraw his name without making a fuss over it. Don't cause a ruckus if a man isn't appointed who you think should be! Unity is precious and must be preserved (Ps. 133). This takes work!

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## GAMBLING VS. LOVE OF GOD AND MAN

*Ron Halbrook*

Though gambling has become socially acceptable and legal, it is not right according to what God teaches us in the Bible. God teaches us to love Him with all the heart, mind and soul, and to love our fellowman as we love ourselves (Mt. 22:37-40). Everything else God teaches us depends on these two principles (v. 40). *“Love,”* in this sense, comes from a Greek term, AGAPE, referring to the highest kind of love: a love based on principles of truth and right, and a love seeking the best interests of its object rather than mere self-gratification.

Since love of God and of fellowman must be the motives for all our conduct, how do these two principles relate to gambling? God teaches us that we may receive gain in ways which demonstrate love to all parties to any transaction. We may receive gain in the following ways: 1. The process of labor (Eph. 4:28); 2. Exchange of goods and services (Mt. 13:45-46); 3. Gifts (Mt. 6:1-4). Each of these methods of receiving gain is honest, showing respect for principles of truth and right and for the welfare of all parties involved.

Gambling is a wager on some chance event, with the result that the *“winner”* takes gain from others without respect for the principles of truth and right and without seeking the welfare of all parties involved. Therefore, gambling is a means of taking dishonest gain. The

fact that the other participants agreed to take part does not mitigate the dishonesty involved, any more than “kickbacks” in a business deal are mitigated from dishonesty by the agreement of the parties involved. Gambling is an exercise in covetousness, seeking mere self-gratification without regard for truth and right or the best interests of everyone involved.

Gambling is sinful, an offense against God and a curse to our fellowman. As a fellow-traveller from time to eternity, I urge you to turn away from gambling and to do everything in your power to convince others to turn away from it. Such a course is based on our love for God and our fellowman because we recognize that gambling is a curse to the human heart, to the home, to the church and to the nation. Our lawmakers act contrary to love of God and fellowman by legalizing gambling. Churches debase God’s standard of morality by promoting it. All who participate in it act to the detriment of themselves and others. There are no winners in gambling, whether it be in casinos, at the races, in bingo parlors or in lotteries and

raffles. No such activities meet the tests of true love for God and our fellowman.

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## A SOUND CHURCH

*John Edwards*

When talking about a church somewhere one might ask, “Is that church sound?” Soundness is not determined by reputation or popularity, but by “*sound doctrine*” (1 Tim. 1:10). For a church to be sound it must:

**WEAR THE NAME OF CHRIST.** The Lord’s church is identified by the Lord’s name (Rom. 16:16). Members of the body of Christ are called “*Christians*” (Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16).

**SPEAK WHERE THE BIBLE SPEAKS AND BE SILENT WHERE THE BIBLE IS SILENT.** Peter said, “*If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...*” (1 Pet. 4:11). A good way to determine if a church is sound is by what is taught, for

as goes the pulpit so goes the church! A sound church will continue “*steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine*” (Acts 2:42), practicing 2 John 9-11. Sound doctrine must be taught by the church to be sound (Titus 2:1)!

**BE ORGANIZED AFTER THE NEW TESTAMENT PATTERN.** God’s plan of organization for the local church is Christ as Head (Eph. 1:22-23), overseeing elders (Acts 14:23), serving deacons (1 Tim. 3:8-13), and working members (1 Cor. 15:58).

**DO THE LORD’S WORK THE LORD’S WAY.** The work of the church is altogether spiritual (Rom. 14:17). The work is threefold: Preaching the gospel (1 Th. 1:8; Phil. 4:15-16), building up itself (Eph. 4:16), and relieving needy saints (Acts 6:1-6). The work is financed through “*first day of the week*” giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2).

**WORSHIP AS THE LORD INSTRUCTS.** A sound church worships God “*in spirit and in truth*” (Jn. 4:24), through Acts 2:42; Ephesians 5:19 channels.

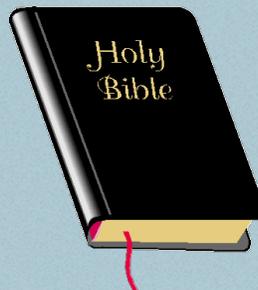
Is the church of which you are a member sound?

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***We Speak Where the Bible Speaks.***

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