

Majority or Minority Rule?

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Introduction: A local church must have a proper oversight in order to function.

- A. Any question of oversight begins with the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 1. Jesus must be in complete control of His church. **(Eph 1:22, 23; Col 1:18)**
 - 2. He has chosen to exercise that authority through His written word, the Bible. **(2 Tim 3:16-17)**
- B. When this authority given solely to Christ is given to men, then the head is severed. **(Gal 1:9; 5:2, 4)**
 - 1. The entire foundation of Denominationalism and liberalism is based upon Christ being a “little head” with the desires of men having the real control.
 - 2. The temptation within the Lord’s church is that we follow the wisdom of men and become “judges of the law”. **(Jas 4:11-12)**
 - 3. Consider the rise of the Roman Catholic Church. Their church government mirrored the pagan Roman government! If we follow this trend then we may want the church to be a Democracy!

I. The Local Government Specified by God.

- A. A local church should develop and appoint men as elders. **(Heb 13:17)**
 - 1. These are men who display spiritual abilities. **(Titus 1:5, 10-11)**
 - 2. Every church had men to oversee them. **(Acts 14:23)**
 - 3. These men are not Lord’s but overseers! They are accountable to the Lord. **(1 Pet 5:2-4)**
 - 4. Their oversight is based on principle and not sentiment.
- B. What does a church do while developing elders?
 - 1. They must be working towards qualifying men, or appointing men if qualified men are there. This too is scriptural!
 - 2. We must make decisions based upon the fundamental order laid down by God. **(1 Cor 11:3-4; 1 Tim 2:11-12)**
 - 3. How do the men of a congregation make their decisions? Here is where we have authority for our business meeting arrangement.
 - 4. One arrangement is not a substitute for another! However there is authority for both.
 - 5. In all action those making decisions should consider the whole church.

II. In the Lord’s Church there is no Majority of Minority Rule.

- A. There are commands that we must follow.
 - 1. We must assemble. **(Heb 10:25)**
 - 2. We must observe the Lord’s Supper. **(Matt 26:25-29)**
 - 3. We must practice church discipline. **(1 Cor 5:1-3)**
 - 4. There are many such areas that we must act in or cease to be the Lord’s church! He is the head!
- B. What about areas of judgment?
 - 1. Our goal is to show love towards all. **(Rom 14:13-21)**

2. We should see complete agreement on areas of judgment.
 3. In most cases the differences we face are those of opinion that men are willing to yield that the work may go forward. This is the right spirit!
 4. We must not vote and demand that the minority go along. Neither should we allow a minority to control the church.
- C. What if one considers the decision a matter of faith while another considers it a matter of judgment?
1. We must not force one to compromise their faith! (**Acts 4:19; 5:29**)
 2. When one considers something a matter of faith, then we should study “the faith” and become one. This will take time.
 3. We should not force something upon another that they believe is sin.
- D. How can there be a “Minority Rule”?
1. Some may try to take advantage of this principle.
 2. It is possible that one could make his opinion a matter of his conscience. This is a way of gaining a “veto control” of the decisions made.
 3. If one is sincere then give time and study to the situation.
 4. When a Christian decides that it must be “his way or no way” then there is a fundamental heart problem (**Phil 2:1-4**)
 5. Under the weapon of minority rule churches have canceled meetings, alienated brethren and paralyzed churches. This is evil. (**Rom 16:17-18**)
- E. How can there be a “majority rule”?

III. Some Evils of Majority and Minority Rule

- A. Division will follow. (**1 Cor 1:10-13**)
1. You will have parties vying for control. This is unity. (**Phil 1:27**)
 3. When people make control a priority then others will be run over. “Whose side are they on?”
- B. The Weak will have Control!
1. The weak are normally in the majority in a local church.
 2. The weak are more likely to join in a “control war”.
 3. Should a 13 year old boy have as much influence in a decision as a 70 year old mature Christian? Ex. J. W. McGarvey.
- C. The church will become filled with political activity.
1. Jesus said His kingdom would not be this way! (**Mark 10:42-45**)
 2. This approach will bring cliques, a canvassing of the church, special meetings, attempts to destroy another’s influence, and much trouble.
 3. When things are not done openly then there will be suspicions, pressure, and a grab for power. This is the will of Satan for a church. (**Jas 3:14-16**)
 4. Should a church circulate a Petition? No, this is a form of majority rule.
- D. These arrangements will eventually lead to a one man rule! (**3 John 9-10**)
1. When you have a struggle for power, someone will win.
 2. This arrangement guarantees you that an evil man will control the church.

Conclusion: Let us always make unity a priority! (**Eph 4:1-3**)