

Quoted Constitution	Comments
<b>Section 1: Classification:</b>	
The leadership of Foundation Baptist Church shall be composed of the following and shall be selected as the need may arise and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit:	
<b>Administration</b> - Pastor (s) and Elder(s).	Here is an error already, and evidence of mixing Roman Catholic tradition with Baptist tradition. They have adopted the Catholic term “pastor,” and have equated it with elder – something that is not found in the Bible.
<b>Service</b> - Deacon(s), Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Secretary, Sunday School Superintendent, Teachers, Musicians, Ushers, and other ministers as the need may arise.	Evidently Paul’s instructions to Timothy were incomplete! Actually, all of the other additions to the Bible’s instructions are due to the practice of following after the heathen (once again, the Roman Catholics). We have been deluded into thinking that we need large groups, buildings, programs, etc – when the <i>ekklesia</i> is simply to gather for mutual exhortation and encouragement in the Lord.
<b>Section 2: Qualifications:</b>	
The leadership shall be elected from among the active members (Article IV Section 4) who give evidence of the qualifications laid down in the Word of God.	The Article referred to defines active membership as, “One who attends regularly the meetings of this church, and who contributes to and participates in the work of this church according to the New Testament.” This definition sounds spiritual, but is really quite nebulous. The leadership is elected under the sacred Western rite called democratic rule, certainly not a Biblical practice (as we will see).
<b>Personal endowments</b> (Romans 12:1-8; I Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4:1-16; I Peter 4:10-11)	These passages refer to more than “personal endowments,” which by definition is a natural ability or quality. <sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, these are definitely not speaking of natural abilities, but of the particular gifting that has been given by the Spirit of God. The emphasis in several of these passages is on the ONE Body, and that we are many members but only ONE Body. It is the Spirit Who has gifted us and placed us specifically according to His pleasure for the benefit, development and growth of the whole Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16). My natural ability may or may not be the gifting

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<sup>1</sup> Encarta Dictionary, “endowment.”

	from the Lord; I believe our God-given gifting can change from time-to-time as the need will demand.
<b>Moral and spiritual standards</b> (Acts 6:1-4; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-11): All leadership shall strive to be separated from practices which discredit our Christian testimony and cause others to stumble. (Romans 14:21; I Corinthians 8) Therefore, any individual in leadership who is no longer willing to maintain moral and spiritual standards or is unwilling to fulfill his duties shall resign. If voluntary resignation is not forthcoming, the matter shall be referred to the Pastor and Elders to take the necessary action.	The high standard of Scripture for those who would oversee the <i>ekklesia</i> , or who would serve the local assembly is very clear, and it is good to place the spotlight on these. The real difficulty, with the last statement made, becomes all too apparent when you consider the indicated process in light of the Pastor's responsibilities (below) if he should be the problem.
<b>Section 3: Responsibilities:</b>	
The responsibilities of those in leadership shall commensurate with their titles and according to the teaching of the Word of God.	This sounds good, but the problems begin immediately: there is no Biblical responsibility attached to "pastor," other than attending to sheep and goats.
<b>Pastor (s)</b>	
The Pastor shall be the executive head of the church and the president of the corporation. He shall have the general oversight of the entire church and shall perform all necessary duties relating to such oversight. (I Thessalonians 5:12-13; I Timothy 2:7; <b>5:17</b> ; Titus <b>1:7</b> ; Hebrews 13:7,17; I Peter <b>5:2-4</b> ) He shall be moderator at all meetings except when matters concerning him are under consideration.	Herein is the profound problem with this particular Baptist structure: the pastor is made like unto the pope of Rome: he is the undisputed head over all things. If he fails in his responsibilities, he is beyond the reach of accountability within this structure. None of the passages referenced deal with "pastors," and the highlighted references specifically mention elders, or bishops. Underlying this glaring oversight is a tremendous assumption that the modern day "Pastor" is equivalent to the Biblical elder, and that the church of today is the same as the <i>ekklesia</i> of God's Word. Unfortunately for all those caught in the modern church movement, there is no sound basis for making this leap.
<b>Elder(s)</b>	
As the need arises, Elders shall be nominated by the Pastor and the Board of Elders and voted upon by the church. Each man shall be considered individually. Any Elder may be removed from office if he becomes physically incapacitated, spiritually unqualified, or his inability to serve is established in the minds of the Pastor and the Board of Elders.	The Biblical qualifications for the elders are strangely missing. They only appear under the position for "pastor," which would seem to indicate that the qualifications for this position are somewhat lower. Paul's charge to Titus was to "ordain [or appoint] elders in every city" (Titus 1:5). According to this, Paul had it wrong. We have already considered the will of

	<p>the people as exemplified within Scripture (and it was never good), yet today we do nothing without the consent of the majority. This is NOT Biblical! God has always worked with the remnant; modern churches always work with the majority. It is somewhat commendable that the Board is self-perpetuating and self-monitoring; however, this is subject to the approval of the majority. It is clear that there is no place for “submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God” (Ephesians 5:21) within this structure; this is top-down control with no variance. It might appear to be congregational rule, but the only ones who will stay in this type of arrangement are those who approve of the “Pastor”; everyone else will leave, thereby confirming the “Pastor’s” firm control.</p>
<p>1. Elders shall meet monthly with the Pastor and shall select their own chairman and secretary at their first meeting after the annual meeting. They are to assist the Pastor in the spiritual oversight of the church and are responsible to him at all times.</p>	<p>The elders are responsible to the pastor; according to Scripture they are to be appointed under the guidance of the Spirit, and, therefore, are responsible to God and accountable to the assembly that they oversee. In this example, they are not overseers (as they should be), but puppets under the control of the pastor.</p>
<p>2. The Elders are to authorize the preparation and distribution of the elements of the Lord’s Supper.</p>	<p>What is there to authorize; from 1 Corinthians 11 it would seem that the celebration of the Lord’s supper has already been authorized by the Lord Jesus for our remembrance of Him. Preparing the elements and serving them doesn’t require authorization; this looks like a crumb tossed out to justify even having elders.</p>
<p>3. The Elders shall act in advisory capacity concerning all matters of church business and in the employing and dismissing of other positions of leadership.</p>	<p>Again, advisory to the pastor - there is strong central control here!</p>
<p>4. When a vacancy occurs in the pastorate, the Elders of Foundation Baptist Church shall seek for a suitable Pastor. When they deem wise, they shall present to the church at a specially called business meeting the name of one of the candidates and conduct the voting on the same. It shall continue this procedure until a Pastor is chosen. Any</p>	<p>Based on the structure outlined, a vacancy would only occur when the pastor decided to move on; there is virtually no other way to get him out. When a vacancy occurs, these elders, who have functioned under the domination of the former pastor, are suddenly thrust into the full responsibility of finding a replacement. Yet again, the majority voice rules.</p>

<p>candidate recommended to the church must be voted upon by a three-fourths vote of the active members present and voting to be accepted as Pastor. The voting shall be by ballot, public notice of such action having been given from the pulpit two Sundays immediately preceding the date of the meeting.</p>	
<p>5. The Elders of Foundation Baptist Church shall serve as its Nominating Committee, the responsibility of which is to present annually to the church a slate of nominees for its various departments. (Secretary(ies), Clerk, Treasurer, Financial Assistant, Sunday School Superintendent, Teachers, Ushers, etc.)</p>	<p>The elders, who Biblically are charged with the oversight of the local assembly, get to present names to the church of those who are willing to fill the lower roles. What a sad departure from what God intended for the elders of the local <i>ekklesia</i>.</p>
<p><b>Deacon(s)</b></p>	
<p>The nomination and selection of deacons shall be done in the same manner as Elders.</p>	<p>Again, no qualifications are indicated; they are simply perpetuated via the elders.</p>
<p>1. The Deacons shall care for the physical needs of the church. (Acts 6:1-6) The Deacons shall meet monthly to discuss the business of the church, and shall elect their own chairman and secretary at their first meeting after the annual meeting.</p>	<p>Strong organization to support the central focus – the pastor.</p>
<p>2. The Deacons shall act in harmony and cooperation with the Board of Elders, and shall assist the Elders in dispensing the benevolence of the church.</p>	<p>The seven of Acts 6 were chosen so that the apostles wouldn't have to bother with the responsibility of meeting the needs of the huge gathering, unlike these deacons who are under the direct supervision of the elders. When the structure is not driven by God's standard, there is no room for trust, even in the small things.</p>
<p>Other ministers shall be appointed as the need arises and the Holy Spirit directs.</p>	<p>An ending that sounds spiritual to an otherwise flagrant departure from the Word of God.</p>