

What Does an Elder Look Like?

Contributed by Bill Hooper
Thursday, June 19 2008

Many disciples around the world have never met an elder. Through the global connection of the internet, we can introduce you to them.

The Shepherding Service Team organized by the Delegates at the International Leadership Conference have assembled some quick looks at the elder who serve on the team. [Click here](#) for the rest of the stories. Disciples Today is working on a new tool that will allow you to "Ask an Elder."

I serve as a fulltime elder and my wife Sally serves as a Women's Ministry Leader in the Dallas/Ft. Worth Church of Christ.

We have been married for 41 years and have lived in the "country" of Texas (most Texans believe their state is a country!) for over 15 years. We entered the full-time ministry in Boston in 1987 and moved to Los Angeles in 1990 to serve in the early years of the church planting there before moving to Dallas in 1992.

We are blessed with three children, all of whom are married. And we have eight wonderful, adorable, and talented grandchildren. Our son Dave and his wife Angela were married while serving in Moscow on the mission field. They lead the church in Austin, Texas, (home of the University of Texas Longhorns), and they have three daughters Stasya (11), Savannah (9), and Callia (5). Our daughter Leigh Anne and her husband Derik were also married in Russia, shortly after planting the St. Petersburg church. They now serve as Region Leaders in the Dallas church. They have two daughters, Haley (13) and Emma (4) and our only grandson, Joshua (9). Our son Steve and his wife Trish live in San Antonio, Texas where Steve teaches Texas History in the public school system and serves in the San Antonio Church. They have two daughters Katianna (6) and Allison (1). We feel so blessed by having them all live near us. The greatest blessing is that they all love the Lord and are faithfully serving Him with their lives.

As I consider things that I've learned, I just can't help thinking about all the blessings of the wonderful relationships God has given us. Before becoming a part of God's Kingdom I had never experienced such deep, rich, "one another" relationships. God has always put people in our lives at just the right time to help us in our marriage, our parenting, and in our spiritual walk. I am so thankful for the Kingdom of God and for our spiritual family. Our desire is to let God use us to help other families experience the joys of the Christian life. One of God's great blessings in our lives is that we have been able to stay in Dallas/Ft. Worth long enough to see couples begin their lives together, have children and now baptize those children as disciples! It is wonderful to see God's plan for the generations being fulfilled!

One scripture that always comes to mind when I think of lessons that I have learned is Romans 8:28. In it Paul says "And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him." Over the years I have read, meditated on, prayed about, and struggled with God's promise to bring about good in difficult situations. God's love is so perfect and good and He has continually allowed me to see what I need to learn through challenging times. I look forward to seeing God's great plan continue to unfold in my life and my marriage, in the lives of my children and grandchildren, and in God's church all over the world!