

Elders/Pastors

The Greek word for "elder" comes from a root word that means "to stand before or rule over." Overseer, pastor, shepherd, bishop, and elder all refer to the same Biblical office or role. Elders (pastors) and deacons, are not the same office or role in the church. God has called pastors to rule the local church.

We believe that a plurality of pastors (having more than one pastor) is the best way to run a local church. Our elders/pastors are called the Leadership Team. We believe the Biblical model is for all of the pastors to pastor the flock and to have a senior pastor who pastors the pastors, as well as the rest of the flock.

We will look at:

1. The Role of the Pastor
2. The Qualifications of the Office of Pastor

The Role of the Pastor

- **Titus 1:5**
5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,

Elders were to be appointed in every church. Note: elders, plural, not elder.
- **Acts 15:2,4,6; Acts 16:4**
2 And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, *the brethren* determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue. 4 When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. 6 The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.

4 Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe.

The elders made decisions for the local church.
- **1 Peter 5:1-4; Acts 20:17,28-32**
1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. 29 "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will

arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

31 "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears. 32 "And now I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build *you* up and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Pastors are to shepherd the flock of God that they are given by the Holy Spirit, caring for their spiritual well-being.

- **1 Timothy 5:17-19**
17 The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, "YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." 19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.

Some duties of the pastor given here are ruling, preaching, and teaching. For doing this role well, they are to be given monetary compensation and extra respect.

- **James 5:14**
14 Is anyone among you sick? *Then* he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;

Pastors are to pray over the sick and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.

The Qualifications of the Office of Pastor

- **1 Timothy 3:1-7**
1 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires *to do*. 2 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. 4 *He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity* 5 (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), 6 *and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.* 7 And he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Qualifications listed:

1. above reproach
2. a one woman kind of man
3. temperate, even tempered
4. prudent
5. respectable
6. hospitable
7. able to teach
8. not addicted to alcohol
9. not ready to fight
10. free from the love of money
11. gentle
12. uncontentious

13. a good ruler of their household
14. in control of their children
15. not a new believer
16. have a good reputation

- **Titus 1:5-9**

5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 6 *namely*, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. 7 For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, 8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, 9 holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

Qualifications listed:

1. above reproach
2. one woman kind of main
3. having believing or faithful children
4. not wild or disobedient
5. not self-willed
6. not quick-tempered
7. not addicted to alcohol
8. not a fighter
9. not in it for the money
10. must exhort people with sound doctrine
11. must refute those who attack the truth