

A Study in Biblical Eldership

Elders
Acts 20:28
August 30, 2020

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. - Acts 20:28

I. WHAT IS AN ELDER?

- The words 'shepherd', 'overseer' and 'elder' are used interchangeably in the Bible. (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-2; Titus 1:5-7)
- A shepherd feeds, leads, oversees, protects and cares for the sheep.
- Some elders serve in full-time ministry and are paid. (1 Timothy 5:17-18)
- Every elder is a pastor and every pastor is an elder.

II. WHAT IS A PLURALITY AND EQUALITY OF ELDERS?

- Each church is to have a plurality of elders. (Acts 14:23; James 5:14)
- All elders are equal in authority. (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1-2)
- A plurality and equality of elders is shared leadership with accountability.

III. WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS OF AN ELDER?

- Potential elders must be examined thoroughly. (1 Timothy 5:22)
- An elder's character must be above reproach. (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3)
- An elder must be able to teach, shepherd and oversee.

IV. WHAT IS THE MINISTRY OF AN ELDER?

- To lead the flock
- To protect the flock
- To teach and feed the flock
- To shepherd and pastor the flock

KNOW: Eldership is important to God, and thus should be important to every local church and every Christian. Elders are to oversee, protect, shepherd and teach God's church.

DO: Elders are to keep watch over themselves and the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. The church is to obey and submit to the authority of the elders as they follow God's word so that their work is a joy and not a burden.

Suggested Reading:

Biblical Eldership by Alexander Strauch (LifePoint Library #262.15 STR)

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please read Acts 20:17-31

1. In what ways did the sermon and elder installation better inform you concerning elders?
2. According to the Bible, why are elders so important to each church?
3. Biblically, what is the ministry of an elder?
4. What are you doing to grow in the character qualifications required of elders that are also commanded by God for all believers? (Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9)
5. Read Hebrews 13:17. What kinds of things can make the ministry of an elder a burden? What are some ways to make it a joy?
6. Please pray now and regularly for your elders. We need it! Thank you!