

“If I preach a passionate message without living a passionate life, I preach a lie”

Open your copy of the Scriptures to Mark 12:29-31 “Put your finger on the verse in the Word of God” and repeat after me:

²⁹ Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”

“**Lord**, help me to love You, with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my mind and with all my strength, and to love my neighbor as myself...because of Christ” **Pray**

Perhaps one way of describing this Series on “The Elder Led Church” is to use the analogy of building a home. In our case, we are building our church home.

An Elder Led Church

1. Polity Overview (What types of homes have others built?)

Elders

- 1. Historicity of Elders** (What does the biblical Historical Home look like?)
- 2. Necessity of Elders** (Do we even really need a home?)
- 3. Equivalency of Elders** (Let’s lay the foundation of our Church Home. Christ is the Chief Cornerstone)
- 4. Purpose of Elders**
- 5. Selection of Elders**
- 6. Authority of Elders**
- 7. Plurality of Elders**
- 8. Qualifications of Elders**
- 9. Protection & Removal of Elders**

1-2. Congregationalism:

- 1. Church Offices**
- 2. Church Offenses**

The Polity of Texas Oaks Baptist Church needs to Ardently, Adamantly, Argumentatively and Always proclaim that “Jesus is the Head of the Church.”

Ephesians 5:23

*For the husband is the head of the wife even as **Christ is the head of the church**, his body, and is himself its Savior.*

Colossians 1:18

***And he is the head of the body, the church.** He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.*

Part 2. The Necessity of Elders

1 Timothy 1:3

³As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, **remain at Ephesus** so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different **doctrine**,

1 Timothy 3:14-15, then 1-7, 14-15

¹⁴I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, ¹⁵if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

Paul is giving instruction on how people are to conduct themselves in the church of the Living God.

Elders (and Deacons) to Timothy

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer (Elder...next week's message), he desires a noble task.

Titus 1:

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth,

⁴To Titus, my true child in a common faith:
Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

⁵This is why I left you in **Crete**, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you—

appoint elders in every town (not just Crete) as **I directed you** (Indicative or Imperative?)
note that with Paul not present, the appointment of Elders is NOT an Apostolic act.

Acts 14:19-23

¹⁹But Jews came from **Antioch and Iconium**, and having persuaded the crowds, **they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead.**

²¹When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,

²²strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. ²³**And when they had appointed elders for them in every church**, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

- **And when they had appointed elders for them in every church,**

Timothy was instructed to **appoint Elders** to ensure “proper behavior in the church at Ephesus”.
And Titus was instructed to **appoint Elders** in Crete and the surrounding cities.
Barnabas was present for the **appointment of Elders** in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch.

Part 3. The Equivalency of Elders

It is critical to note at this point, that what we are about to discuss concerning the titles of the office of the New Testament church is the NT definitions. Why stress this point? Because as the church polities (Episcopalianism, Presbyterianism, Congregationalism) developed out of the NT time period, these titles and definitions changed.

Translations, Definitions and Demonstrations

Greek Translations (of Titles and Names)

| Greek | Older | Newer | Distinctive |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Presbyteros</i> | Presbyter | Elder | (Jewish Title, Character Title) |
| <i>Episkopos</i> | Bishop | Overseer | (Gentile Title) |
| <i>Poimen</i> | Pastor | Shepherd | (Functional Title) |
| <i>Hēgeomai</i> | Ruler | Leader | (Descriptive Title) |
| <i>Didaskolos</i> | | Teacher | (Functional Title) |
| <i>Oikonomos</i> | | Steward | (Functional Title) |

Greek Definitions

Presbyteros (Elder or Presbyter), Elderly when speaking of age. Is the most common title used in the NT for a member of the ruling council of the church.

72 times in 66 verses in the NT

12 Matt

7 Mark

5 Luke

1 John

18 Acts

43 Total

10 in the Epistles dealing primarily with Leaders in the church.

Episkopos (Overseer or Bishop) a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly. The name suggests watchman, guardian and public officer sent by a higher authority (Acts 20:28)

5 times in 5 verses in the NT

This title is only used in the New Testament with reference to the Gentile churches of Ephesus (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3:1-2),

Philippi (Phil 1:1),

Crete (Titus 1:7)

1 Peter 2:25 Used when speaking of Jesus Christ as the “Shepherd and Overseer of your souls”

Poimen (Shepherd or Pastor) a herdsman, esp a shepherd. The presiding officer, manager, director of a church assembly. It is the person to whose care and control others have committed themselves to, and whose precepts they follow.

18 times in 17 verses in the NT

15 of these are in the Gospels, leaving only 3 in the Epistles

1 Peter 2:25 (used for Christ, which we just heard above)

Heb 13:20 (again a reference to Jesus Christ...*Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep....*)

Eph 4:11 *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and **some pastors** and teachers,*

Hēgeomai (Leader or Rulers) To rule, command or to have authority over. To lead or govern the church.

29 times in 27 verses

Heb 13:7

*Remember your **leaders**, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.*

Heb 13:17

*Obey your **leaders** and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

Didaskolos Pastor-Teacher (Eph 4:11)

Oikonomos Steward, one whom the Master puts in charge of other servants

Demonstrations of their Equality/Equivalency

1. Acts 20:17, 28

¹⁷ Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders [gk presbyteros] of the church to come to him.

²⁸ Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers [gk episkopos], to care for [gk poimaino] the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

2. 1 Peter 5:1-2

So I exhort the elders [gk presbyteros] among you, as a fellow elder [gk sympresbyteros] and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: ² shepherd [gk poimaino] the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight [gk episkopeo], not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly;

3. 1 Timothy 3:1-2; 5:17,19

3:1-2:

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer [gk episkope], he desires a noble task.

² Therefore an overseer [gk episkopos] must be above reproach,

5:17, 19:

¹⁷ Let the elders [gk presbyteros] who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching..... ¹⁹ Do not admit a charge against an elder [gk presbyteros] except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

4. Titus 1:5,7

⁵ This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders [gk presbyteros] in every town as I directed you— ⁶ if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷ For an overseer [gk episkopos], as God's steward [gk oikonomos], must be above reproach.

5. Phil 1:1

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseer [gk episkopos] and deacons:

Here, the argument is that Paul told Titus to setup two offices: Elder and Deacon. Therefore, Paul is either ignoring the Elders of the Church to greet the Overseers and Deacons, or the Apostle Paul, in writing both Epistles, simply used the terms interchangeably.