



The Elders

WHO ARE AMONG YOU

Elders in the Will of God

The Pattern of Church Organization

- According to the pattern – **Hebrews 8:4-5**
- Christ's church – **Matthew 16:18; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:22-23 (4:7-12 – left “pastors”)**
- Localized organization – **Romans 16:16; Philippians 1:1; 1 Peter 5:4**
- Proper conduct in the church includes qualified men serving as elders and deacons – **1 Timothy 3**
- This the Lord's will we submit to – **Colossians 3:17**

Elders in the Will of God

The Possible Forms of Organization

- **Scripturally Organized** – A church with qualified elders according to God's pattern.
- **Scripturally Unorganized** – A church without elders due to a lack of qualified men according to God's pattern.
- **Unscripturally Organized** – A church with unqualified elders contrary to God's pattern.
- **Unscripturally Unorganized** – A church with men qualified to be elders according to God's pattern that refuses to appoint elders.



Scriptural Titles

Three Titles Used for the Same Office

- **1 Peter 5:1-4** – Elder (v. 1), Shepherd (v. 2), Overseers (v. 2).
- **Acts 20:17-38** – Elder (v. 17), Overseers (v. 28), Shepherd (v. 28).



Scriptural Titles

Elder

- *Presbyteros* (adj) – “the comparative degree of *presbus*, ‘an old man, an elder’” (VINE); “pert. to being relatively advanced in age, older, old” (BDAG)
 - “an official (cp. Lat. senator), elder, presbyter” (BDAG)
 - **1 Timothy 4:14** – “eldership” (noun) – *presbyterion* – “an administrative group concerned with the interests of a specific community” (BDAG)

Scriptural Titles

Elder

- The official use of “*elder*” refers to those who are “*bishops*” – **Titus 1:5, 7**
 - **1 Timothy 5:17** – they rule – *proistēmi* – “to preside rule,” (VINE); “to exercise a position of leadership” (BDAG)
- Such a position requires age – **cf. 1 Timothy 3:6** (“*not a novice*”); **1 Peter 5:4** (“*being examples*”)

Scriptural Titles

Bishop/Overseer

- *Episkopos* – “lit., an overseer” (*epi*, “over,” *skopeo*, “to look or watch”)” (VINE)
- “one who has the responsibility of safeguarding or seeing to it that someth. is done in the correct way, guardian” (BDAG) – **cf. 1 Peter 2:25** – Christ
 - “The term was taken over in Christian communities in ref. to one who served as overseer or supervisor, with special interest in guarding the apostolic tradition” (BDAG)

Scriptural Titles

Bishop/Overseer

- *Episkopos* – “lit., an overseer” (*epi*, “over,” *skopeo*, “to look or watch”)” (VINE)
- “a superintendent” (STRONG)
- “(1) an overseer (1A) a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian or superintendent (1B) the superintendent, elder, or overseer of a Christian church” (THAYER)

Scriptural Titles

Bishop/Overseer

- Ruling authority, not abused for personal gain – **1 Peter 5:2-4** – “*serving as overseers*”
 - “*being lords over*” – *katakyrieuō* – “to lord against, i.e. control, subjugate” (STRONG); “of exercising dominion for one’s own advantage lord it over, rule over, domineer over” (ALGNT) (cf. **Acts 19:16; Matthew 20:25; Mark 10:42**) (EX: **3 John 9-10**)
- Their authority is real, and must be submitted to – **Hebrews 13:17**

Scriptural Titles

Bishop/Overseer

- Oversight to ensure:
 - Adherence to pattern – **2 Timothy 2:13**
 - Decency and Order – **1 Corinthians 14:40**
 - Edification – **1 Corinthians 14:26**
 - Faithfulness of members – **1 Thess. 5:12-14;**
2 Thessalonians 3:6, 14-15

Scriptural Titles

Pastor/Shepherd

- *Poimēn* – “a shepherd (literally or figuratively)” (STRONG)
- “(1) a herdsman, esp. a shepherd; (2) metaph. (2A) the presiding officer, manager, director, of any assembly: so of Christ the Head of the church (2A1) of the overseers of the Christian assemblies” (THAYER)
- “(1) one who herds sheep; (2) one who serves as guardian or leader” (BDAG)

Scriptural Titles

Pastor/Shepherd

- “*Pastors*” given for edification – **Ephesians 4:11-14**
- To shepherd the church knowing false teachers will attempt to draw disciples away – **Acts 20:28-31**
- Are to “*exhort and convict those who contradict*” – **Titus 1:9-14**



Qualifications in Context of the Work

The Nature of the Qualifications

- **Qualification** – a quality or accomplishment that makes someone suitable for a particular job or activity. (New Oxford American Dictionary)
- **1 Timothy 3:2** – “A bishop then **MUST BE...**”
 - **Must** – *dei* – “(1) it is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper; (1C) necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end” (THAYER)
 - **Be** – *einai* – “to exist” (STRONG) – Present, Active

A shepherd wearing a dark cap and a denim jacket with a tan coat draped over his shoulders stands in a green field, holding a staff. In the background, several white sheep are grazing. The scene is set against a backdrop of rolling hills and a clear sky.

Qualifications in Context of the Work

The Nature of the Qualifications

- The Holy Spirit makes overseers – **Acts 20:28**
 - Through the qualifications in the word (**cf. Ephesians 6:17**).
 - Through the transformation of a man to be one who exhibits such qualifications (**cf. Galatians 5:22, 25**).

Qualifications in Context of the Work

The Nature of the Appointment of Qualified Men

- **Acts 14:23** – “appointed” – *cheirotoneō* – ““to stretch forth the hands” (*cheir*, “the hand,” *teino*, “to stretch”)” (VINE)
- “(1) to elect or choose someone for definite offices or tasks; (2) On the other hand, elders (πρεσβύτεροι) in Lycaonia and Pisidia were not chosen by the congregations, but it is said of Paul and Barnabas χειροτονήσαντες αὐτοῖς κατ’ ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους Ac 14:23. Cp. Tit 1:9 v.l. and subscr.; 2 Ti subscr. This does not involve a choice by the group; here the word means appoint, install, w. the apostles as subj.” (BDAG)

Qualifications in Context of the Work

The Nature of the Appointment of Qualified Men

- **Acts 14:23** – “*appointed*” – *cheirotoneō* – ““to stretch forth the hands” (*cheir*, “the hand,” *teino*, “to stretch”)” (VINE)
- “Acts 14:23, RV, “had appointed,” i.e., by the recognition of those who had been manifesting themselves as gifted of God to discharge the functions of elders” (VINE)

Qualifications in Context of the Work

The Nature of the Appointment of Qualified Men

- **Acts 20:28** – “made” – *tithēmi* – “(5) to cause to undergo a change in experience/condition, make, consign; (5b) mid. w. a double acc. make someone someth.” (BDAG)
- **Titus 1:5** – “appoint” – *kathistēmi* – “(1) to set, place, put; (1B) to appoint one to administer an office” (THAYER).
 - “AS I commanded you” – *hōs* – “a comparative particle, marking the manner in which someth. Proceeds” (BDAG) (**vv. 6-9**)

Qualifications in Context of the Work

Qualifications – Character:

- Desire for the office
- Holy
- Just
- Gentle
- Of good behavior
- Hospitable
- A lover of what is good
- Temperate
- Self-controlled
- Not given to wine
- Not quick-tempered
- Not self-willed
- Sober-minded



Qualifications in Context of the Work

Qualifications – Reputation:

- Blameless
- Blameless, as a steward
- A good testimony among those who are outside
- Not quarrelsome
- Not greedy for money
- Not covetous
- Not violent



A shepherd wearing a dark cap and a light-colored jacket is seen from behind, standing in a green field. In the distance, several sheep are grazing. The background shows a hazy landscape under a bright sky.

Qualifications in Context of the Work

Qualifications – Domestic Relations:

- Husband of one wife.
- Rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence.
- Having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.

A photograph of a shepherd from behind, wearing a dark cap and a denim jacket with a tan raincoat draped over his shoulders. He is holding a long wooden staff and looking out over a green field with several sheep grazing. In the background, there are rolling hills under a clear sky.

Qualifications in Context of the Work

Qualifications – Teaching Aptitude:

- Able to teach.
- Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught.
 - Able to exhort.
 - Able to convict.
- Not a novice.

A shepherd wearing a dark cap and a denim jacket with a brown coat draped over his shoulders stands in a green field, looking towards a flock of sheep. The background shows a river and hills under a bright sky.

The Flock Which is Among Them

Attitudes and Responsibilities

- Humility – 1 Peter 5:5
- Honor Them – 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Timothy 5:17-18
- Know Them – 1 Thess. 5:12; John 10:4
- Imitate Them – Hebrews 13:7
- Be Submissive and Obey – Hebrews 13:17
- Avoid Making Their Work Grievous – Hebrews 13:17; Philippians 2:14; 1 Thess. 5:13
- Call On Them – James 5:14



The Elders

WHO ARE AMONG YOU