

# THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

## I & II Timothy, Titus and Philemon “God Speaks to His Church”

### Overview of Church Leadership—I Timothy 3:1-13

March 14, 2010

A. **CONTEXT**

B. **TEXT**

1. **Issue of church leadership**

a. **The basic principle of church government is Jesus Christ is the Head of His church.**

It is *His* church; He bought it with His blood. The local church does not belong to the pastor, to the elders, or to the congregation. It belongs to Jesus Christ who alone is the Head.

Matthew 16:13-20 and Ephesians 5:23-24

b. **Christ exercises His headship through spiritually mature elders.**

c. **Important truths about church leadership:**

1) Priesthood of all believers

2) Universal versus local church

3) Churches are to be orderly

Titus 1:5; I Timothy 3:15; I Corinthians 14:40

4) All churches have some form of government and tradition

2. **Three types of government**

a. Hierarchical—Strong, central authority

b. Representative—Some centralized authority

c. Democratic—No centralized authority

3. **Two types of church officers**

a. **There are elders (overseers) and deacons** **Philippians 1:1**

b. **There is a distinction in their roles and responsibilities**

**Acts 6:1-4; I Timothy 3:1-13**

c. **Definition of an elder**

An elder is a spiritually mature man who leads and teaches the church. Such a man is also referred to as a pastor, overseer, presbyter, shepherd, and bishop. "Elder" refers to the spiritual maturity of the individual; "bishop" and "overseer" refer to his leadership responsibility; and "shepherd" and "pastor" refer to his responsibility to nurture the flock. Each term describes a different facet of the same office (cf. Acts 20:28; Titus 1:5; 1 Pet. 5:1-2).

4. **History of Elders**

a. **Old Testament Elders**

b. **Development of Sanhedrin in Jerusalem (elders in the Gospels)**

c. **New Testament Elders**

1) Upper Room and Pentecost

2) Development of Elders in the Jerusalem Church

Acts 11:30 the first mention of NT elders

Acts 15 the apostles and elders at first church-wide Council

Acts 21:18 James and the elders in Jerusalem

3) Development of elders in the new churches established by Paul's mission teams

Acts 14:23 appointed elders in the new churches

Acts 20:17 the elders at Ephesus

5. **Relationship of Apostles and Elders**

C. **APPLICATION**

1. **Esteem them in love — I Thessalonians 5:12-13**

2. **Obey them — Hebrews 13:17**

3. **Pray for them — Hebrews 13:18**