

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

I & II Timothy, Titus and Philemon

“God Speaks to His Church”

Duties of Elders—I Timothy 3:1-7
March 21, 2010

A. CONTEXT

1. False Teaching in Ephesus
2. Teaching related to public worship
3. The officers of the church: Elders and Deacons

B. TEXT

1. **Jesus is the Head of the Church. He exercises His headship through spiritually mature elders.**

2. **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).

3. **Names of and duties of elders:**

All terms refer to the same office.

- a. *Presbuteros*

Emphasis on the character of the man, he is to be spiritually mature.

- b. *Episkopos*

Emphasis on his role as a guardian and giving oversight to the Church.

- c. *Poimen* (shepherd or pastor)

Emphasis on the work of caring, guarding, protecting, feeding and leading the Church.

4. **Principles of Elders**

- a. Difference between teaching and ruling elders
- b. A plurality of elders, functioning as a group
- c. Note: the “presbytery” is a group of elders meeting
- d. *Book of Church Order* for the Presbyterian Church in America

I Tim. 5:17

5. **Jesus as the Lamb and the Shepherd**

Psalm 23:1 God is our Shepherd

John 1:29 He is the Lamb of God

John 10:10-11 Jesus is our Shepherd

I Peter 2:25 He is the Shepherd and the Guardian of our souls

C. APPLICATION