

Theme: Elders are a group of men called by God to shepherd the local church.

## I. Intro – Who Will Care for Church?

- A. We do not know when Christianity first arrived on Crete – Acts 2?
- B. Paul on Crete briefly on way to prison (Acts 27)
- C. Paul had left Titus on Crete (v5) – not Acts 27
- D. Apparently a later visit – post Acts 28
- E. Short visit – Titus left to finish work (v5)
- F. Who will care for the flock?

## II. Key NT Words for Church Leaders

- A. Three main words (presbuteros, episcopos & poimen)
  - 1. “elder” (πρεσβύτερος) – v5; Acts 20:17
  - 2. “overseer” (ἐπίσκοπος) – v7; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3
  - 3. “shepherd/pastor” (ποιμήν) – Eph 4:11
- B. Three words – one office (Titus 1:5-7; 1 Pet 5:1-2; Acts 20:17,28)

## III. Elders – A Team of Pastor-Leaders

- A. Elders – a team of leaders
  - 1. Appoint elders in each town (v5) – note plural
  - 2. Elders almost always plural (61x vs. 5x)

## 3. Note plural when used of church leaders

- a. Acts 11:30; 14:23; 20:17; 1 Tim 5:17; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1
  - b. Acts 20:28; Phil 1:1 – all plural!!!!
  - c. Singular are example of group (generic) – v7
4. Note: not necessarily co-equality – primus inter pares
- a. Not every elder is equally gifted or mature
  - b. “First among equals” is a valid concept
  - c. But still function as a team – not rubber stamp

## B. Elders – a team providing pastoral care

- 1. Pastoral terms – Acts 20:17,28; 1 Pet 5:1-4
- 2. Elders – keeping watch over souls (Heb 13:17 ESV)

## IV. Thinking Biblically About Church Leaders Today

### A. The importance of team leadership

- 1. This is not the model of most churches
- 2. Many churches – pastor = Pope or dictator
- 3. Plurality is NT model and should be followed
- 4. More men = more gifts, time, care
- 5. Protection from the sins of leaders

### B. The importance of pastoral leadership

1. Elders are pastoral leaders – spiritual
2. They take care of souls – not church “business”
3. Just like Acts 6 – we need others to take care of other issues

#### C. Responding and helping the elders

1. Are you praying for all the elders, or just one?
2. Do you receive from all the elders?
3. Are you using your gifts, so elders can use theirs?

#### Elders: The Pastoral Leadership Team

Titus 1:5  
April 9, 2006  
???  
Numbers 6

<sup>17</sup> From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the **elders** of the church. Ac20:17

<sup>28</sup> 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

<sup>11</sup> It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be **pastors** and teachers, Ephesians 4:11

<sup>5</sup> The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint **elders** in every town, as I directed you. <sup>6</sup> An **elder** must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. <sup>7</sup> Since an **overseer** is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless-- not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Titus 1:5-7

<sup>1</sup> To the **elders** among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Be **shepherds** of God's flock that is under your care, serving as **overseers**-- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; 1 Peter 5:1-2

17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the **elders** of the church... 28 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 20:17, 28

<sup>30</sup> This they did, sending their gift to the **elders** by Barnabas and Saul. Acts 11:30

<sup>23</sup> Paul and Barnabas appointed **elders** for them **in each church** and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. Acts 14:23

<sup>17</sup> From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the **elders** of the church. Ac 20:17

<sup>17</sup> The **elders** who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. 1 Tim 5:17

<sup>14</sup> Is any one of you sick? He should call the **elders** of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. James 5:14

<sup>1</sup> To the **elders** among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 1 Pe 5:1

<sup>28</sup> 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

<sup>1</sup> Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the **overseers** and deacons: Philippians 1:1

17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the **elders** of the church... 28 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. <sup>29</sup> I know that after I leave, **savage wolves** will come in among you and will not spare the **flock**. Acts 20:17, 28-29

<sup>1</sup> To the **elders** among you, I appeal as **a fellow elder**, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> Be **shepherds** of God's **flock** that is under your care, serving as **overseers**-- not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; <sup>3</sup> not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the **flock**. <sup>4</sup> And when **the Chief Shepherd** appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. 1Pe 5:1-4

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. Hebrews 13:17 (ESV)