



Grace Life Church *of Dallas*

The doctrines of grace, the life of the Spirit, to the glory of God



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Elders/Pastors/Overseers

An Overview

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Acts 14:23 *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.*

Titus 1:5 *This 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*

What is the difference between an elder (presbyteros), a pastor (poimēn) and an overseer (episkopos)? Biblically-They are different words/names describing the same person (Used interchangeably in Scripture)

- **Titus 1:5** *This is why I left you in Crete...appoint **elders** in every town*
 - *V7 For an **overseer**, as God's stewards, must be above reproach*
- **Acts 20:17 & 28** *Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the **elders (presbyteros)** of the church to come to him...v28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers (episkopos)**, to **care (NASB shepherd-poimainō)** for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood*
- **1 Peter 5:1-2** *So I exhort the **elders (presbyteros)** among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 **shepherd (poimainō)** the flock of God that is among you, exercising **oversight (episkopeō)***
- **Elder** is the position given, **Pastor** is the role he fulfills (shepherding), **Overseer** is the ruling authority.

Elder, Pastor, Overseer is one person, but Scripture points us to a plurality with the local assembly

- **Acts 14:23** *And when they had appointed elders for them in every church,*
- **Philippians 1:1** *Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:*
- **Titus 1:5** *This 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*
- **1 Timothy 5:17** *Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.*
- Plural in number, equal in authority, and shared responsibility

Role and Responsibility of Elders, Pastors, Overseers

Acts 20:28-31 *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. 29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.*

Hebrews 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.*

Pastors lead (by example), feed (Word), protect (wolves/false doctrine), and serve (through love)

Qualifications-Titus 1:5-9 & 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Paul is instructing Timothy and Titus to find men of godly character and faithful stewards

1 Timothy 3:1-7 *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach:* Overarching qualification: *blameless, unproveable, unaccused, cannot be called into account*, (Does not mean perfected)

the husband of one wife: one woman man (faithfulness/purity in marriage/stewardship)

Sober-minded: temperate (abstaining from wine)

Self-controlled: curbing one's own desires (discipline, prioritizing)

Respectable: well arranged, orderly

Hospitable: generous to guest, love of strangers

Able to teach: skillful in teaching (God's Word) Rightly divide the word (2 Tim 2:15), correct opponents (2 Tim 2:24), equip saints for the work of the ministry (Eph 4:12), admonish/counsel (1 Thess 5:12, 14)

Not a drunkard: not under influence of things other than Holy Spirit and Word of God (Eph 5:18, Col 3:16)

Not violent, but gentle: ready for blows / Gentle (2 Tim 2:24-25, 1 Thess 5:14, Galatians 6:1, Titus 3:2)

Not quarrelsome: not contentious, abstains from fighting (Seeks and promotes unity)

Not a lover of money: affections (heart) for money/power (1 Peter 5:2 *not for shameful gain*)

Qualifications-Titus 1:5-9 & 1 Timothy 3:1-7

1 Timothy 3:1-7

Manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive. For if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

Not be a recent convert or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil

Well thought of by outsiders so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil

These qualifications demonstrate the character of mature Christian men, who have demonstrated faithful stewardship in their life

As an elder, my role is to prayerfully and carefully discern whether a man meets these qualifications and if so, then to determine if a man is called to be an elder

The Church's Responsibility To Their Elders

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 *We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work.*

Hebrews 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.*

Acts 14:23 *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.*