

## What God Looks For in a Pastor/Elder (Ephesians 4-6, Titus 1, 1 Timothy 3)

*Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on June 17, 2012*

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Please turn back in your Bibles to Ephesians and in light of this day being Father's Day and in light of where we are in the life of our church, before we move on to our next section in Ephesians in our verse-by-verse study through this book, I want us to look again at the man of God as a shepherd back in Ephesians 4, and how that applies to all men who are fathers in their homes in Ephesians 5-6. What does God look for in a father? A family shepherd.

Today's study applies also to shepherds of local churches, who are called pastors or elders/overseers in NT. Pastor Kevin is preaching the next 2 Sundays. He's a man that the shepherds of the flock here at GCBC are pursuing bringing on as a 2<sup>nd</sup> full-time shepherd of this local church if the Lord confirms and His flock affirms that desire. So this is a timely and vitally important study to remind us of what we should be looking for in our next pastor, but ultimately we need to see What God Looks For in a Pastor/Elder. For future elder/pastor nominees this is the key message. Eph 4:11 is the only verse where "pastor" occurs, but ESV 2007 doesn't use the word *pastor* in any verse; it uses the more picturesque word *shepherd*:

*<sup>11</sup> And he [this is Christ] gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the **shepherds and teachers**, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ ...*

Jesus gave the NT apostles and prophets to found the early church. Evangelists and church planters continue to found churches in our day, but the ongoing building of each body of Christ in any day is by God's design through a team of shepherds/teachers/elders who lead and feed the sheep and equip them to do the ministry. We are not looking for someone to do "ministry" that I don't want to or so you don't have to, but someone to help us shepherd and teach and equip all of you for the work of ministry God calls all of you to. We've sensed a need for a shepherd more gifted in administration, organization, assimilation, mobilization of ministry, to fulfill Eph 4.

Ephesians 4 uses the language of sheep and shepherds. Eph. 5 uses the language of family: children/father (5:1), husbands (v. 25). The Lord is the pattern for shepherds over families and church families. Jesus said "*I Am The Good Shepherd*, [same word translated *pastor* in Eph 4:11] *the Good Shepherd lays His life down for His sheep.*" Good Shepherd-leadership leads by loving and laying self down. Similar language is used not for just the people in the office of pastors or teachers in the church, official shepherds, but for all men in how they are to relate to their wives:

**5:25** *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, <sup>26</sup> that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word ...*

Christ the Good Shepherd gave Himself up for His sheep, for His church, and He calls every married man to be a good shepherd of his wife. This is a high calling, a sobering and convicting challenge that we cannot do in our own strength. We must look to the Perfect Shepherd who is our pattern as we pursue this in our imperfections, because man's leadership and relationships are to reflect Christ's:

*<sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.*

Biblical headship doesn't dominate, it nourishes/cherishes (v. 29). We are called to shepherd our wives, leading them spiritually, as it says in v. 26, with the sanctifying influence of the Word. It's not just those with the office of shepherd/pastor who teach publically the Word (Eph 4:12) in the house of God. All Christian husbands are called to shepherd their wives privately in their own house in the Word of God as well (5:26). This is an area for us men to grow in, myself included, learning from other godly men. Frank Iarossi is one example. His wife Laura told me while care-giving for him: "As I wash him in his hospital bed, he's washing me in the Word." God gives us examples and enabling grace to pursue His standard.

Look at Eph 6:4, where there is shepherding application for us on Father's Day: *Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

That's the image of a shepherd's rod and staff, both discipline and instruction. Fathers are called to shepherd their children in God's Word. Mothers can have a part, but this verse singles out fathers as the primary disciplers and instructors of their children. We can't think supporting mom to be at home with the kids or just paying for Christian education resources is a fulfillment of the intent and extent of this command. Don't think because you bring your kids to church on Sunday or Thursday night or VBS that's enough (as exciting as this VBS stage behind me looks)! Fathers are to be the shepherds of their home, raising their children in the nurture and admonition of a shepherd; loving, leading, feeding them the truths of the Word. A mom can help, and a church can *supplement*, but nothing else can *substitute* for the dad as his kid's main shepherd.

We'll study those passages more this summer but for today I want you to turn forward to Titus 1 to see how that shepherd imagery in families is important for shepherds of church families called elders. Titus is that little book before Philemon and Hebrews that is one of the letters we call "Pastoral Epistles" or "Shepherding Letters" and it covers the same relationships in the same order as Ephesians 4-6.

The end of Titus 1:5 says elders are to be appointed in every town or city where there was a church on the island of Crete. This is one of the clear passages that teach a plurality of elders is God's design for each church, not a solo pastor, but a team of shepherds. They are called "overseers" in v. 7, which is used interchangeably with "elders" in v. 5, two different titles for the same leadership office.

In old English they're "bishops," same as "shepherds" or "pastors" depending on the particular translation and text you're looking at. In Acts 20:17, 28, elders are overseers who "shepherd" (verb form of pastor), and the same root words are interchangeable in 1 Pet 5. Whether they minister vocationally (paid by the church as staff) or voluntarily is irrelevant to their title in the NT: Elder or Pastor. So in this church, I'm not more of an Elder/Pastor than the others, but the Elders here asked me to use my gifts as a Pastor-Teacher and they've kindly allowed me to do so vocationally among my fellow shepherds.

To evaluate a shepherd/pastor/elder, where to start? 4 key areas in Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3:

### **1. His Commitment To Be a Family Shepherd**

In v. 9 his task is that of a shepherd, both feeding the sheep and fighting off wolves. But before we get to his shepherding role over the house of God, the church, v. 6 starts with his own household. The first and foremost place where his shepherding is manifested and measured is in his shepherding in his home, v. 6, his wife and his children. His ability to lead and feed a church family is shown in his own family, that's where you look first in an elder/pastor as a potential shepherd. I've taught phrase-by-phrase through the list of character qualities in the past, and you can find that teaching on our website, but to make a long study short, "husband of one wife" isn't emphasizing only one wife at a time or in a lifetime, primarily and literally it can also be translated a "one-woman-kind-of-man."

A man of purity, fidelity in family, assuming he has one, a pattern of faithfulness to his wife and children, if he has, they're faithful. It is not a perfect family or marriage. There has only been one perfect marriage in history, but it didn't last too long that way (Genesis 3). There is only one perfect Shepherd, His name is Jesus, but men He calls to serve as under-shepherds must reflect His shepherding. Not as perfect husbands and fathers, exemplary husbands, faithful fathers, as 'examples to the flock' in loving leadership (1 Pet 5:3).

2 books by Stuart Scott are great resources along this line and I think the titles sum it up; *The Exemplary Husband, The Faithful Parent*. All men sin and fall short of the glory of God, but God expects and equips those He desires to shepherd His church to first be shepherds of their wives and children. Not sinlessly, but as an exemplary husband. Not as a flawless parent, but a faithful parent (Voddie Baucham has much to say about this in his 2012 Shepherd's Conference message, and in his book *Family Shepherds: Equipping Men to Lead Their Families*).

This has application to everybody in the church, not just leaders. In fact, those books are written for every husband or father. And the purpose of the biblical standard for leadership is that sheep follow shepherds, for better or worse, fathers impact and shape the lives of those who follow them (as dads we see that reality in our homes and it sober us as we see our sin in our kids). Paul told Timothy as a pastor/elder, "*set an example for the believers...*" (1 Tim 4:12).

Did you know that every trait required for elders in Titus 1:6-8 is also required of every Christian as well, not just of church leaders? There are some unique *tasks* Elders are called to do in the church in v. 9 and following, but these character *traits* are not unique to elders, but are qualities other passages call all Christians to have. Every man of God is to strive for these traits to be true of his life, whether he ever holds the office of elder or deacon or not. Every godly woman should aspire to these character qualities as well, not the preaching to the church in v. 9, but faithful to spouse/kids, and all of v.7-8. A shepherd is an example for men, women, young, old

Now turn back to 1 Timothy 3 where Paul spells this out further. The other "pastoral epistles/shepherding letters" Paul wrote were to a pastor of the same church the book of Ephesians is written to, a young pastor named Timothy shepherding the church in Ephesus. 1 Tim. 3 is the other list of traits God requires for a pastor/elder:

<sup>2</sup> *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife ...* [first on the list in both, v. 4 explains more] <sup>4</sup> *He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive,* <sup>5</sup> *for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?*

Don't look first to resumes or rhetorical preaching abilities. God's Word prioritizes *shepherding* before teaching and in a home first. It starts in managing, or you could say shepherding, a household. How does he manage his family, affairs, finances, life, etc? Is he a 'one-woman-man' (v.2), faithful to one above all, seeking to be a shepherd to her (Eph 5:25-26)? If he's not first faithful to lead his bride spiritually, why would God entrust to that man the bride of Christ, the church, to spiritually lead? If the woman this man loves most in the whole world he hasn't led spiritually, and he doesn't disciple the children who are most precious to him, how do we expect he will spiritually lead people who are not so loveable and are not so cute and who he has no covenant commitment to? (note: "household" in v. 4-5 is used of church in v. 15)

The way a flock knows if a man can lead his church family starts with how he leads his family. His home life qualifies him, but bad home leadership disqualifies.<sup>1</sup> If his wife or children don't submit, respect, or respond to his governing, he shouldn't govern a church of many men, women, children and families. It's hard enough with a few sinners under a roof at home, I know, a church is many more sinners under a roof! But few churches examine home shepherding first (or much at all) to determine fitness as a church shepherd, potential or present. May God help us to.

I'm convicted by Paul's words to the Ephesians elders in Acts 20:

<sup>28</sup> *Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.* (NKJV)

May God help us to take heed, guard, pay careful attention to, and watch over ourselves and our families first as shepherds, another reason a plurality of elders is important to help in this. And then we are to do the same with church family, shepherding the flock God purchased with His own blood. If that verse doesn't convict or cause a shepherd to tremble, he probably shouldn't be a shepherd. We have to say with Paul "who is adequate for these things?" But then we look to the Holy Spirit who makes us this and equips us to this ministry and we repent of any sin and renew our commitment. And we don't lower the bar – we seek to rise up to it by His grace.

1. His Commitment To Be a Family Shepherd
- 2. His Calling To Be a Church Family Shepherd**

1 Timothy 3:1 ... *If anyone **aspires** to the office of overseer, he **desires** a noble task.*

It's a good work to be an overseer of sheep (old English "bishop" was just synonym for elder; overseer = shepherd in 1 Pet 2:25). We don't ultimately "make" a man an overseer / elder / shepherd / pastor, it is the Holy Spirit who makes them this in that verse I just read in Acts 20:28. What the church does is recognize those God has made shepherds and given a shepherd's heart, men already shepherding people in God's house and his own house. It's not a "job" to him, it's his life. When the Spirit calls a man to this ministry, the Spirit also gives a calling, a craving, a consuming desire (v. 1) to serve. "*sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires...*" (NIV)

There are 2 different Greek words here. The first is an aspiring that includes stretching out to reach for it, a longing, a love for it. The 2<sup>nd</sup> word "desire" is the same word in Psalm 42:1 (LXX) "As the deer *pants* for the water, so my soul *longs* for Thee," an insatiable internal passionate hunger to serve and care for souls. It becomes the burning burden of the man's heart, sometimes all he can think about, what he lives for and wants to pour his life into.

The desire is not for being in front of people, for a position or power, but to pastor, to shepherd and teach. Some men with this calling by God's providence are supported by a church part-time or full-time, others with whatever time that God allows them with other outside work (like Paul in his tent-making), but a salary or a seminary doesn't produce this, the Spirit does this.

I knew some young guys who went to seminary because they felt "called to preach" – but the NT never uses that language that I can tell – what we see is a God-given desire to shepherd, serve, teach. Preaching is one thing, shepherding another, but God's word joins them together in the grammar of Eph 4:11. They belong together. There must be a strong aspiring and desiring of this office and to its *work*, because there is much criticism and scrutiny. Some sheep will bite. So without a strong sense of calling to be a shepherd, many will not continue that ministry long-term, as often happens.

It's important his wife affirms his calling, supports him in it, is an evidence of his calling, and is growing under his leadership. And it's important his desires also be balanced and matched with godly believers affirming or confirming his ministry and gifting and call.

C-A-L-L      Confirmation (from God and godly people)  
                  Abilities (shepherding/teaching/oversight)  
                  Longing (motive to serve for God's glory)  
                  Lifestyle of integrity (leads to next point)<sup>2</sup>

1. His Commitment To Be a Family Shepherd
2. His Calling To Be a Church Family's Shepherd
- 3. His Character Like Christ the Good Shepherd**

<sup>2</sup> *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach ...*

This list (v. 2-9) is all about character, as many have noticed, but not as many have noticed is it's also all about Christ, the Shepherd. 1 Peter 2:25 says of Christ "*For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.*" Jesus is the Good Shepherd (Jn 10), the Great Shepherd (Heb 13). A human shepherd and overseer is to reflect the character of Jesus, the ultimate "blameless" one, ultimate Shepherd and Overseer, the only Perfect Pastor who perfectly fulfilled everything in this list, and who enables and empowers imperfect servants to reflect Him.

v. 2 "*husband*"-same Grk word used of Christ and church in Eph. 5  
 "*sober-minded/prudent*" – sobriety, seriousness, reverence of Jesus  
 "*self-controlled, respectable*" – Jesus was certainly all these things

"*hospitable*" – lit. one who shows love to strangers. Jesus didn't have a house or a place to lay down his head at night, but He was hospitable, friendly and loving to strangers, and those who serve as shepherds of His church must be as well. Look for his hospitality, his genuine interest and initiative to get to know those he doesn't know as well, showing he loves them more than his own comfort. Look for a man who stays after a service to talk to those he doesn't know, who wants to make people feel at home in his presence, who has people to his home, and enjoys and expresses warm fellowship.

“*able to teach*”– Christ was the greatest teacher in various settings. Some pastoral search teams focus almost entirely or exclusively on this one but there’s a lot more to it than “can he preach?” This is one part of a bigger list. It’s the main difference with the deacon requirements in v. 8-13, elders must be literally “skilled teachers.” An Elder can preach or teach before a group with some skill, and Titus adds that he must be able to proclaim sound doctrine and to refute its challengers, and able to biblically confront error or sin. When he is confronted or challenged, how has he handled criticism or opposition? This can make or break a pastor.

Look at 1 Timothy 5:17 where it talks about the elders’ preaching: <sup>17</sup> *Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.*

The context is those who the church gives wages to in v. 18, the staff elders, so to speak. An elder is worthy of financial support or he can decline financial support and serve voluntarily. Some may work full-time in other occupations, but others may be worthy of double honor or greater support for their labors that a church may want to support him to do full-time. All elders can preach or teach, but some in v. 17 will work especially hard and lead well and labor in the Word and it’s evident as they preach and teach, so a church supports them to do it. Their governing or gifting is to be honored and supported, financially if possible, to free the man from outside employment and distraction to pour himself into full-time ministry.

But we need to not be too hasty to appoint someone to the public ministry, v. 22 warns us, which is where we’re at in the process. In v. 19 the congregation is to bring forward concerns to the elders of sin they have witnessed for the elders to look into. In v. 24, it talks about how sinful patterns can be evident to God’s people, and then v. 25 says their good works also are evident and observable. And that takes us back to 1 Tim 3, qualities God’s people are to observe

**3:3** “*not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money*” – again Jesus is the ultimate picture and pattern. It doesn’t take a dictionary to be able to know what each word means Think of Christ in the gospels, and a man who is Christ-like. The Good Shepherd is perfect in these areas, His undershepherds must be pursuing Him in all these areas. There can be no reproach or blame or valid accusation that can stick to a church shepherd in:

1. His Commitment to Be a Family Shepherd
2. His Calling to be a Church Family’s Shepherd
3. His Character Like Christ the Good Shepherd
- 4. His Care For People as Their Shepherd**

We’ve looked at v. 4-5 already, but look again at the end of v. 5:  
 “... *how will he care for [or take care of] God’s church?*”

This Greek word is only used in one other place, to describe the compassionate care of the Good Samaritan in who took care of the hurt man, while other religious leaders who were bad shepherds did not care for him (Luke 10:34-35). Jesus said the Samaritan man had “compassion” (v. 33) which moved him to care for the man, and Luke’s gospel also says Jesus had “compassion” on a widow whose son had died (7:12-13). The gospels tell us of compassion Christ felt for people like sheep without a shepherd (Mark 6:34).

The men Christ calls to shepherd His sheep must share His heart of compassion and care for them, and to care for them spiritually. It says when Jesus had compassion on the multitudes of sheep in need of a shepherd, He began to teach them. That's exactly what Eph 4:11 talks about, a "shepherd-teacher," and that's exactly what we should be looking for in any elder/pastor, a shepherd's heart, a teacher who truly cares for the sheep and meets their spiritual need.

The last part is how is his compassion and interactions with others in the flock? 1 Timothy 5:1–3 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> *Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers,* <sup>2</sup> *older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.* <sup>3</sup> *Honor widows who are truly widows ...*

Does he show care and sensitivity with young and old, and seek to honor the older like parents, and come alongside the younger with love like their brother? In some ways, his ability with people is just as important as his ability with preaching, or more so. 1 Tim 3:6 highlights his maturity, humility. Does he come across as proud? Look at **3:6**: *He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

Far more important than preaching ability is his humility. Is he puffed up or conceited in how he comes across? Is he someone who is approachable, easy to talk to, open, transparent, meek?

<sup>7</sup> *Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders ...*

This is something we as Elders have been looking into, character and reputation by those who know him and have observed him in his home with his family and at work, including those outside the church, to make sure he has a good reputation there also. We've literally called and talked to people going down the list of what it says in v. 6-7, and have spent hours talking with him, but part of the process is also for leaders and discerning people of the church who will be getting to know him and his family this week. And if any of you have any concerns in any of these areas as you observe him these next 2 weeks, please be sure to let any of us Elders know

This is also a good time as we did last summer, if as we go through this passage, a name stands out as someone you see developing and growing into these areas that you would want us to consider as an elder in the future, there's a 2-sided form in your bulletin for that. It goes through each of the qualifications of elders and deacons, and it's also a way if you have questions or concerns for men who are serving in those offices to communicate which scripture you're concerned about for elders to look into in line with 1 Tim 5:19. In some cases, men who have been nominated for an office we have asked, and some have declined a desire to serve or their schedule is not one that allows them to serve, but there are men in this room I believe God may have to serve in the future as servants, shepherds.

There's also a bulletin insert called 'pastor search job description.' The Bible doesn't use the term 'associate pastor,' but if that term is used for a 2<sup>nd</sup> full-time pastor, just know that biblically what we're talking about is a 'fellow elder/shepherd' (to use 1 Pet 5 language). The NT also doesn't use the term 'senior pastor.' I told you before, if anything I'm more of a 'freshman pastor'! What I lack in age I make up for in even less experience!! There's nothing senior about me, but good news for you is "I'm not *The Pastor*" (senior or solo).

God didn't design His church to depend on one man. I'm part of a plurality of Pastors or Elders, who biblically equally share pastoral shepherding with me: Mark Freeman, John Rucker, Cliff Peppers. The word "pastor" is just the biblical word for "shepherd." There is not a different office in the NT for Pastor vs. Elder, it's one office. The NT doesn't talk about *staff* in the way we use the word but it talks about the shepherd's "rod and *staff* that comforts" in Ps 23. The Lord is my Shepherd/Senior Pastor, or Chief Shepherd (1 Pet 5:4).

He ordained under-shepherds and teachers for local flocks. In most corporations or governments, there are staff members in a pyramid structure with one at the top and other levels below him, but in the church government of the NT, there's no human hierarchy like that. The head of the church is not me, it's Christ (end of v.15), and underneath is a plurality and equality of shepherds/pastors/elders. In your bulletin: 'Pastor Search Job Description: Scriptural Study':

*Collective Priorities of Elders (also called Overseers or Pastors in NT) as a Body*

1 Timothy 3:5b "take care of God's church" [as exemplified in their leadership in their families]

James 5:14-16 – praying over and with the weak together, helping if needed with spiritual or sin issues

1 Peter 5:1-2 "shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight ..."

Acts 6:4 "devote ... to prayer and the ministry of the Word" [the apostles were the original preaching shepherds of the church, as offices of Elder and Deacon developed. Others were needed to handle day-to-day ministries so that the preachers and teachers would not neglect their most vital ministry of the Word, not just in the pulpit, but "house to house" (Acts 20:20), "day and night...admonishing each one" (v. 31)]

Acts 20:28 [to the Ephesians Elders] "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood."

*Preaching Staff Pastors/Shepherds Within Elders: Equal Office but More Focused Time*

One or more Elders may be supported by the church to focus labors in the Word/teaching (1 Tim. 5:17-18).

However, being called a "pastor" or supported financially by the church full-time or part-time does not put a man in a different office/position biblically. The NT only has 2 offices: 1) Elders/Pastors, and 2) Deacons

Christ appointed all His Apostles to lead His early church, but in a special way He singled out Peter in John 21:15-17 to be a leader among the leaders, particularly devoting himself to leading and feeding the sheep out of love for Christ. In the book of Acts, Peter preaches more than the others, but this did not give him a higher rank or office than other apostles/elders (1 Peter 5:1-3). Peter wasn't a "Senior Pastor/Shepherd" (an extra-biblical title), but was "a fellow elder" under the only "Chief Shepherd" (Jesus, 1 Peter 5:1, 4). If we speak of an "Associate Pastor," keep in mind the biblical office is simply Elder/Pastor, with no hierarchy or pyramid. But there can be a leader among leaders (recognized gift or role of Pastor-Teacher among equals who share the shepherding) like Peter or James in Jerusalem (Acts 15), and Timothy (1-2<sup>nd</sup> Timothy).

After describing the Elders role as taking care of the church (1 Tim. 3:5, 15), Paul instructs Timothy in the next chapter: "Until I come, give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you ... Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things..." (1 Tim 4:13-16). Pastor Timothy would need support in other tasks to not neglect these priorities.

Paul solemnly charges Timothy as an individual pastor further in 2 Timothy 4:2, 5: "preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction ... do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." Pastor(s) must fulfill the ministry God gives them. Titus as a pastor is also told to give special attention to teaching older believers to apply God's truth (Titus 2:1-3) and to disciple younger men in the faith (v. 6-8) whereas the discipleship of younger women is not the pastor's personal responsibility, but older women are to fulfill that role (v. 3-5). Discipleship is a responsibility of all God's followers (Matthew 28:19-20, "make disciples" includes "teaching them to obey all I have commanded").



But Titus 2 and 2 Timothy 2:2 seem to emphasize the important role of pastor(s) in discipleship.

Eph 4:11-13 *He gave ... pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.*

This is the only passage in the NT that uses the noun “pastors” (ESV “shepherds”), so this is the important starting point of defining the role of a pastor biblically. Each church needs pastors and teachers (whether on staff or volunteer) not to do all the ministry but to equip the saints to do the work of ministry and service to the body, not to do shepherding instead of the other Elders, but with them as a fellow shepherd (1 Peter 5).

Prayer Requests as of June 2012 [at the bottom]:

1. Pray for the current shepherds of this church for wisdom and guidance in regards to Kevin
2. Pray for this congregation that they would love and support Kevin and his family and welcome them, and that the Lord would knit the hearts of sheep and shepherd, according to the Lord’s will
3. Pray for Kevin and Mandy and their children to sense Christ’s leading and the love of His flock, in their transparency and this transition time for them considering a new community and church
4. Pray for deepened relationship with the Lord and each other for them in this busy season of life, and for relationships to begin with this church family even this next week, according to God’s will

Hebrews 13 (ESV) <sup>1</sup> *Let brotherly love continue.* <sup>2</sup> *Do not neglect to show hospitality ...* <sup>7</sup> *Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith ...* <sup>17</sup> ***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.*** <sup>18</sup> ***Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.***  
 ... <sup>20</sup> *Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant,* <sup>21</sup> ***equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.***

<sup>1</sup> For more on this, listen to Voddie Baucham’s excellent message at The Shepherd’s Conference (aptly titled), General Session 4, 2012

<sup>2</sup> Jim George, “The Call to Pastoral Ministry,” in *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry* (Word Publishing, 1992), chap 6.