

INTRODUCTION

1. We've spent the last 4 weeks looking at the calling of pastors in leading the church.
2. We saw in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 that this ministry is limited to men who are qualified to lead.
3. I want to continue looking at the pastors of the church this morning by talking about their ministry itself.
4. What do pastors do in the church and community?

5. Before we answer that question, did you hear that there has been a perfect pastor found?
6. First let me say it's not me!
7. But there was one found.
8. He preaches exactly 15 minutes.
9. He condemns sin but never upsets anyone.
10. He works from 8:00 am to midnight and is also the janitor.
11. He makes \$50 a week, wears good clothes, buys good books, drives a good car, and gives about \$50 weekly in the

offering.

12. He is 28 years old and has been preaching for 30 years.
13. He has a burning desire to work with teenagers and spends all of his time with senior citizens.
14. The perfect pastor smiles all of the time with a straight face because he has a sense of humor that keeps him seriously dedicated to his work.
15. He makes 15 calls daily on church families, shut-ins, and the hospitalized.
16. He spends all of his time door-knocking and is always in his office when needed.¹

¹ <http://ministry127.com/resources/illustration/the-perfect-pastor>

17. For the past 4 weeks we learned how a pastor is called and what the biblical qualifications are for him to meet before he becomes a pastor of a church.
18. There were two words in the list that gave us some hint at his function.
19. The first was in 1 Timothy 3:1 which referred to him as a “overseer.”
20. This word appears 12 times in the OT (KJV) and once in the NT.
21. The NIV uses it at least six times in the NT to translate the word episkopos, which is derived from “peer” or “watch over.”
22. In the OT “overseer” is used to translate three words, which literally mean (1) to

visit with authority, (2) to be the preeminent one, or (3) to be the head writer.

23. Joseph was given authority to watch over and administer all aspects of Potiphar's house (Gn 39:4, 5), advising Pharaoh to appoint 50 men to regulate and watch over the abundant harvest for 7 years (41:34).
24. Solomon appointed 3600 overseers ("supervisors" NASB) to make the people work (2 Chr 2:18).
25. In Josiah's time of temple renovation there were overseers over all the workmen in every job (2 Chr 34:13, 17).

26. Nehemiah appointed men to oversee the rebuilding of the wall (Neh 11:9, 14), to oversee the Levites (Neh 11:22), and to be in charge of the levitical singers (12:42).
27. The word “overseer” speaks of one or many to represent the highest person of authority and to exercise authority over whatever was designated.
28. Included in this authoritative oversight was the idea of watching, directing, and protecting the master’s interests.
29. The NT carries these ideas also in regard to men appointed to serve the church on behalf of Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28; Phil 1:1; 1 Tm 3:1, 2; Ti 1:7).

30. Jesus Christ is the great Overseer (1 Pt 2:25).²
31. The second was at the end of verse 2 which said he was to be “able to teach” or “apt to teach.”
32. This means he is skilled in teaching and he is teachable.
33. In Ephesians 4:11 he is literally called a “teaching shepherd.”
34. In Acts chapter 6, when there arose a problem in the church, the apostles set the priority when they said, “We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word” (v.4).

² Elwell, Walter A., and Barry J. Beitzel. “Overseer.” Baker encyclopedia of the Bible 1988 : 1596–1597. Print.

35. So we can first answer our question, “What do Pastors do in the church?”, first, they oversee the church and they teach the Word of God.
36. Now let me take the remainder of our time together and show you how this fleshes out in the church.
37. And before we do that, let’s first see the structure of the church.
38. In summary, Christ is the head of the church. He mediates His rule in the church through godly men called pastors. Deacons serve and implement what the pastors teach and the congregation submits to their loving leadership.

LESSON

I. Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church

A. Colossians 1:18 (NASB) He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

B. Ephesians 5:23 (NASB) For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

II. Pastors Are the Shepherds of the Church

According to 1 Peter 5:4 they are undershepherds, under the “Chief

Shepherd.”

A. These Are Gifted Men that God Has Placed in the Church

1. Ephesians 4:8 says Jesus gave “gifts to men”
2. In verse 11 these men are referred to as “apostles, prophets, evangelists, and...pastors and teachers [pastor-teachers].”
3. 1 Timothy 3:1 and Titus 1:5-6 refers to pastors as men

B. In the NT There Were More Than One in a Given Church

Notice the use of the plural when

referring to them:

1. Acts 14:23 (NASB) When they had appointed **elders** for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.
2. Acts 15:2, 6, 22, 23
3. Philippians 1:1 (NASB) Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the **overseers** and **deacons**.”

Just a footnote: It's interesting that the church can have a number of deacons but only one pastor. Both terms are used in the plural. There

were more than one pastor and more than one deacon in a church.

4. Titus 1:5 (NASB) For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint **elders** in every city as I directed you.”

You have probably already noticed that a pastor is referred to by other terms: overseer, bishop, elder. We have already talked about the first two terms, but what about the term “elder.”

- a) The term “elder” is a neglected term in many churches today

- b) This term though carried great significance in both the Old and New Testament
- c) The term occurs about 70 times in the NT
- d) This is the Greek word presbuteros
- e) Out of the 70 times it is used, nearly 20 times it occurs in the book of Acts and the Epistles “in reference to a unique group of leaders in the church.”³
- f) The term is of Old Testament origin

³ John MacArthur, Shepherdology, 154.

- g) The Hebrew word zaqen is used in Num.11:1, Deut.27:1 of the 70 tribal leaders who assisted Moses
- h) Here it refers to a special category of men who were set-apart for leadership
- i) Deut.1:9-18 indicates that these men were charged with the responsibility of judging the people
- j) Exod.19:7 and Deut.31:9 tells us that Moses communicated through them to the people
- k) Later the elders were specifically involved in the leadership of cities

but they still their function was decision making--applying wisdom to the lives of the people in resolving conflicts, giving direction, and generally overseeing the details of an orderly society

- l) The OT refers to them as elders of Israel, elders of the land, elders of Judah, elders of each city, and elders of the congregation

- m) So this term, as it is used in the OT, has reference to a special category of men who were set apart for leadership

- n) In the time of Christ presbuteros was a familiar term
- o) It was used 28 times in the NT to refer to a group of ex officio spiritual leaders in Israel
- p) They were called the chief priests and elders, the scribes and elders, officers of the temple and elders, and rulers and elders of the people
- q) In each of those instances and every similar usage, presbuteros refers to recognized spiritual leaders in Israel who aren't defined as priests of any kind. They seem to be the Sanhedrin, the highest ruling

body of Judaism in Jesus' time

- r) So the NT church was literally Jewish
- s) It would be natural that the concept of elder rule was adopted for use in the early church
- t) Elder was the only common used Jewish term for leadership that was free from any connotation of either the monarchy or the priesthood
- u) That is significant because in the church each believer is a co-regent with Christ, so there could be no earthly king and

unlike national Israel, the church has no specially designed earthly priesthood, for all believers are priests

- v) So all the Jewish concepts of leadership, the elder best transfers to the kind of leadership ordained for the church.⁴
- w) There were elders in the churches of Antioch, Lystra and Iconium, Jerusalem, Ephesus, Crete and Philippi
- x) The office of elder is mentioned in Acts, Philippians, 1 Timothy, Titus, James, and 1 Peter

⁴ Ibid., MacArthur, 154.

So there are a few terms for pastors. Pastor being one, overseer or bishop, elder.

So what do they specifically do?

III. Pastors Have a Specific Function

John MacArthur, in his book *Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry*, said, “Of all the titles and metaphors used to describe spiritual leadership, the most fitting is that of shepherd. As shepherds, pastors are to guard their flocks from going astray, lead them to the green pastures of God’s Word, and defend them against the savage wolves (Acts 20:29) that would ravage them.”⁵

Peter used this imagery when he said in 1

⁵ MacArthur, John, F., Jr, Richard Mayhue, and Robert Thomas L. [Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry: Shaping Contemporary Ministry with Biblical Mandates](#). Electronic ed. Dallas: Word Pub., 1995. Print.

Peter 5:2-4 (NASB) shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

A. To Feed the Flock By Teaching

Charles Jefferson says, “That the feeding of the sheep is an essential duty of the shepherd-calling is known even to those who are least familiar with shepherds and their work. Sheep cannot feed themselves, nor water themselves. They must be conducted to the water

and the pasture.... Everything depends on the proper feeding of the sheep. Unless wisely fed they become emaciated and sick, and the wealth invested in them is squandered.... When the minister goes into the pulpit, he is the shepherd in the act of feeding, and if every minister had borne this in mind, many a sermon would have been other than it has been. The curse of the pulpit is the superstition that a sermon is a work of art and not a piece of bread or meat.”⁶

1. Teaching equips the saints
(Eph.4:11-12; Col.1:28)
2. Teaching equips the pastor

Richard Baxter said of pastors,

⁶ Charles Jefferson, *The Minister As Shepherd*, 59, 61.

“There are some who desire to know that they may edify others, and that is praiseworthy; and there are some who desire to know that they themselves may be edified, and that is wise.”⁷

To shepherd the flock the pastor must first feed his soul (he must study the Word)

a) 2 Timothy 2:15 (NASB) Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.

⁷ Baxter, Richard. [The Reformed Pastor](#). electronic ed. taken from the 1974 Banner of Truth ed. edited by William Brown. Simpsonville SC: Christian Classics Foundation, 1996. Print.

b) 1 Timothy 4:13 (NASB) Until I come, give attention (pres.act.imp.) to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.

3. Teaching fulfills the pastor's responsibility to God and the flock

a) 2 Timothy 4:1-4

b) Titus 1:9; 2:1

c) 1 Timothy 5:17 (“labor” Gr.kopiao, “to work, to labor, to work until one is exhausted⁸)

“Preach” (Gr.kerusso is an imperative)

B. To Lead the Flock By Example

⁸ Fritz Rienecker and Cleon Rogers, The Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament. 631.

1. 1 Timothy 4:12 (NASB) Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an **example** of those who believe.
2. Paul told the Philippians in Philippians 3:17 (NASB) Brethren, join in following my **example**, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.
3. Paul told Titus in Titus 2:7-8 (NASB) in all things show yourself to be an **example** of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, & sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say

about us.

4. James urged the same in James 5:10 (NASB) As an **example**, brethren, of suffering and patience, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.
5. The Thessalonians followed Paul's example (1 Thess.1:5-10)

C. To Protect the Flock By Guarding From Error

1. By rebuking those in error - Tit.1:9-13
2. By warning the leadership - Acts 20:28-31

CONCLUSION

Here is a summary of what Timothy was to do in the church at Ephesus. This is an example of what all pastors are to do in the church.

He must:

1. Correct those teaching false doctrine and call them to a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith (1 Tim. 1:3-5).
2. Fight for divine truth and for God's purposes, keeping his own faith and a good conscience (1:18, 19).

3. Pray for the lost and lead the men of the church to do the same (2:1-8).
4. Call women in the church to fulfill their God-given role of submission and to raise up godly children, setting an example of faith, love, and sanctity with self-restraint (2:9-15).
5. Carefully select spiritual leaders for the church on the basis of their giftedness, godliness, and virtue (3:1-13).
6. Recognize the source of error and those who teach it, and point these things out to the rest of the church (4:1-6).
7. Constantly be nourished on the words of Scripture and its sound teaching, avoiding

all myths and false doctrines (4:6).

8. Discipline himself for the purpose of godliness (4:7-11).
9. Boldly command and teach the truth of God's Word (4:12).
10. Be a model of spiritual virtue that all can follow (4:12).
11. Faithfully read, explain, and apply the Scriptures publicly (4:13, 14).
12. Be progressing toward Christlikeness in his own life (4:15, 16).
13. Be gracious and gentle in confronting the sin of his people (5:1, 2).

14. Give special consideration and care to those who are widows (5:3-16).
15. Honor faithful church leaders who work hard (5:17-21).
16. Choose church leaders with great care, seeing to it that they are both mature and proven (5:22).
17. Take care of his physical condition so he is strong to serve (5:23).
18. Teach and preach principles of true godliness, helping his people discern between true godliness and mere hypocrisy (5:24-6:6).
19. Flee the love of money (6:7-11).

20. Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, and gentleness (6:11).
21. Fight for the faith against all enemies and all attacks (6:12).
22. Keep all the Lord's commandments (6:13-16).
23. Instruct the rich to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous (6:17-19).
24. Guard the Word of God as a sacred trust and a treasure (6:20, 21).
25. In his second epistle, Paul reminded Timothy to keep the gift of God in him

fresh and useful (2 Tim. 1:6).

26. Not be timid but powerful (1:7).

27. Never be ashamed of Christ or anyone who serves Christ (1:8-11).

28. Hold tightly to the truth and guard it (1:12-14).

29. Be strong in character (2:1).

30. Be a teacher of apostolic truth so that he may reproduce himself in faithful men (2:2).

31. Suffer difficulty and persecution willingly while making the maximum effort for Christ (2:3-7).

32. Keep his eyes on Christ at all times (2:8-13).
33. Lead with authority (2:14).
34. Interpret and apply Scripture accurately (2:15).
35. Avoid useless conversation that leads only to ungodliness (2:16).
36. Be an instrument of honor, set apart from sin and useful to the Lord (2:20, 21).
37. Flee youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, and love (2:22).
38. Refuse to be drawn into philosophical and theological wrangling (2:23).

39. Not be an arguer but kind, teachable, gentle, and patient even when he is wronged (2:24-26).
40. Face dangerous times with a deep knowledge of the Word of God (3:1-15).
41. Understand that Scripture is the basis and content of all legitimate ministry (3:16, 17).
42. Preach the Word-in season and out of season-reproving, rebuking, and exhorting with great patience and instruction (4:1, 2).
43. Be sober in all things (4:5).
44. Endure hardship (4:5).

45. Do the work of an evangelist (4:5).
46. As you can see that a pastor has a lot a responsibility.
47. But his first and foremost responsibility is to Christ who is the head of the church.
48. Hebrews 13:17 (NASB) Obey your leaders and submit to them, **for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.** Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.
49. Do you know Jesus today?
50. Are you obeying Him by walking in the Spirit and not fulfilling the desires of the flesh? (Gal.5:16)

51. If you're not living a righteous life, you may be lost and need to obey the Gospel.
52. Examine yourself as we pray.
53. Let's pray.