



Elders

Shepherds of the
Household of God

Elders: Who and What?

- ◇ Elders/overseers/pastors are God-ordained shepherds of local churches, primarily responsible for guarding and promoting the spiritual health, teaching and macro-level leadership of the church. (Acts 20:28-35; Pet. 5:1-5)
 - Steward finances (Acts 11:29-30)
 - Judge theological issues (Acts 15:1-6)
 - Provide counsel/resolve conflict (Acts 21:18-25)
 - Teach and guard the doctrine of the church (1 Tim. 5:17; Tit. 1:9)
 - Encourage and help the weak (Acts 20:35)
 - Manage and administrate the activity of the church at a macro-level (1 Tim. 3:4-5; 5:17)

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- ◆ The norm we see in the New Testament is that a plurality of elders work together to oversee individual local churches.
 - In Acts 15, the apostles partnered with the *elders* of the Jerusalem church to decide what to do in light of the Gentiles.
 - James urges those who are sick to call on the *elders* of the church for anointing with oil and prayer (Jas. 5:14)
 - Paul sees to it that *elders* are appointed in every church founded as the result of his first missionary journey (Acts 14:23)
 - Notice that *elders* are appointed after the church is founded. Despite not having yet reached completeness or full maturity, these churches are still considered genuine churches *prior to having elders*.

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- ◇ Paul meets with the *elders* of the church at Ephesus (Acts 20:17), and later instructs Timothy (in Ephesus) about the elders who rule and teach there (1 Tim. 5:17)
- ◇ Paul greets the *overseers* and deacons at the church at Philippi (Phil. 1:1)
- ◇ Titus is instructed to appoint *elders* in every city in/around Crete (Tit. 1:5)
- ◇ When writing to churches scattered throughout five Roman provinces (1 Pet. 1:1), Peter exhorts the *elders* to shepherd the flock of God (1 Pet. 5:1)

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- ◇ Qualifications

- ◇ 1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1