

The Call To Pastor

The apostle Paul had a problem. As he traveled from town to town preaching the gospel, and people responded, he started having regular meetings with those that were won. They met in homes. They met on roof tops. They met by streams. They met by synagogues. Paul would spend months and even years in one city or area winning the lost and training those he won.

But He always had to leave behind a group of disciples. He was called to be an apostle and not just a Pastor. His ability to continue to serve them as a Pastor was very limited.

Paul began to appoint men to serve in every church in every city as Pastors.

Paul called these Pastors, Elders. Elders are first mentioned in Acts 11:30.

Acts 11:29-30

29 Then the disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send relief unto the brethren which dwelt in Judaea:

30 Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

KJV

The first mention of an appointment of elders in the church is Acts 14-21-23.

Acts 14:21-23

21 And when they (Paul and Barnabas) had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch,

22 Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.

23 And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

KJV

Paul and Barnabas made these appointments.

The purpose of the elder was to shepherd the flock of God.

1 Peter 5:1-4

5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

KJV

**The word feed in verse two means “to tend as a shepherd.”
It is the same Greek word that is translated Pastor in Ephesians 4:11.**

Eph 4:11

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, **pastors** and teachers;
KJV

The church is called the flock. The elders are regarded as shepherds or pastors under the chief shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ.

From Ephesians 4:11, the word Pastor is the affectionate term that most evangelicals historically have chosen to call their elders. The reason for this is that Pastor describes the elder's duty.

This duty requires an elder to be an overseer. In I Peter 5:2, Peter admonished the elders
2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking **the oversight** thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

Oversight is the Greek word episkopeo. It means to look diligently. The elders looked diligently after the souls of the people.

Heb 13:17

17 Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: **for they watch for your souls**, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.
KJV

The number of Pastors in each city or in each church, the organization of the Pastors, and the chain of command among the Pastors is never defined in the New Testament. This was left up to the individual discretion of each local congregation.

What was recognized is that not all elders had the same authority, jurisdictions, responsibilities, or spiritual gifts.

1 Tim 5:17

17 Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.
KJV

The word rule is not the same Greek word in Heb. 13:17 that was used to describe the general duty of the elder over the souls of the people. The word rule in I Tim. 5:17 is the Greek word proistemi means to preside in rank.

There were some elders that presided in rank over others. There were some that labored in the word and doctrine. Timothy was one of these men.

There are epistles or letters in the New Testament that were written to just one man. Two of those letters are first and second Timothy in your bible. The other is Titus in your bible. These letters were not written to a church but were written to one man who was presiding over others.

Timothy was a young man.

1 Tim 4:12

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

KJV

He carried the responsibility of preaching and teaching.

1 Tim 4:12-13

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

KJV

The word translated "give attendance" is the Greek word prosecho. It means "to apply oneself to."

He also carried the authority and responsibility of appointing other elders.

2 Tim 2:1-2

2:1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

KJV

This was also true of Titus. He also had the authority and the responsibility to appoint other elders.

Titus 1:5

5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, **and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee:**

KJV

This difference in authority and responsibility was determined by the laying on of hands of a presbyter

1 Tim 4:12-14

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

KJV

The word presbytery is the Greek word presbuterion that means order of elders.

This word is derived from the Greek word presbuteros which means older or senior.

Strong's compares this group to the Jewish Sanhedrin.

To fulfill the responsibility Timothy received a Spiritual Gift.

1 Tim 4:12-14

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. KJV

It is clear that not all elders had the same authority, jurisdictions, responsibilities, or spiritual gifts.

It is also clear that it takes many Pastors to watch over the souls of a large group of people. In the Old Testament Moses had the responsibility of watching over the souls of the people and in judging between them on legal matters. His solution is found in Deut. 1:10.

Deut 1:10-17

10 The LORD your God hath multiplied you, and, behold, ye are this day as the stars of heaven for multitude.

11(The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as he hath promised you!)

12 How can I myself alone bear your cumbrance, and your burden, and your strife?

13 Take you wise men, and understanding, and known among your tribes, and I will make them rulers over you.

14 And ye answered me, and said, The thing which thou hast spoken is good for us to do.

15 So I took the chief of your tribes, wise men, and known, and made them heads over you, captains over thousands, and captains over hundreds, and captains over fifties, and captains over tens, and officers among your tribes.

If anything, this example demonstrates to us the number of men that it takes to adequately watch over the souls of a group of people.

In the New Testament, local churches did not meet in large sanctuaries that seated hundreds of people. They primarily met in homes and were not very large in number. The limitation in the size of their meeting place actually promoted multiplication of the number of meetings and the number of Pastors.

We know from James that there were normally at least two elders in each congregation.

James 5:14

14 Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:

KJV

We can have too few men to watching over the souls of the people but we cannot have too many.

Are you called to be a Pastor?

The call to Pastor is a call to watch over the souls of others. Every man who is married is called to Pastor his wife and children. A man who is called to be a Pastor in the church has the same calling to watch over the souls of others. And He will do it for free.

1 Peter 5:1-4

5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

The church may pay men who are Pastors because of their responsibilities but a man who is called to Pastor will do it whether he is paid or not.

The men who are called to Pastor are like the men who are called to preach. The men who are called to preach will make a pulpit if they do not have one in a church. The men who are called to Pastor will find sheep to Pastor even if they are not appointed in a local church. They aspire to assume the responsibility of being a shepherd.

They want to Pastor a Sunday School class. They want to Pastor a small group in their home. They become a chaplain and Pastor at a hospital or a place of business. They want to Pastor an FCA group. If they are not pasturing a specific group, they are always initiating meetings with other individuals to check on their condition.

Shad Glass

Jon Cook and Boe Parrish

Earl Gentry

John Cobbs

These men fulfill their calling to their flock in three ways.

- **They care.** They watch. They call. They communicate. They question. They comfort.
- **They carefully encourage, admonish, and instruct.** They shares words that inspire faith in difficult circumstances and they challenge you with difficult words when they see you making a bad decision.
- **They are very careful to be a good example.** At all costs, they seek to avoid injuring the souls of the sheep that they are called to protect by being a poor example or sinning against them.

Are you called to be a Pastor? There is a great need for more Pastors in the body of Christ; in Oklahoma City; in our congregation. Are you called and are you willing to be a Pastor?

I am not asking you if you think you qualify to be one. I am not asking you to become a Pastor in our church. I am asking you are you called and are you willing to be a Pastor?