

## Title #2: Pastor or Shepherd

### NOUN - ποιμήν (poimēn)

Used in NT 18x NT (17x "shepherd," 1x "pastor")

- Real Shepherds – Luke 2:8 Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.
- Jesus Calls Himself a Shepherd – John 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.
- Pastors – Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some *to be* ... pastors and teachers,

### VERB - ποιμαίνω (poimainō)

Used in NT 11x (4x "to shepherd," 3x "to tend," 3x "to rule," 1x "to serve")

- John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, *son* of Jonah, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep."
- Acts 20:28c Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, ... to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.
- 1 Cor 9:7c Or who tends a flock (ποιμνη) and does not drink of the milk of the flock?
- 1 Pet 5:2a Shepherd the flock of God which is among you,

It is interesting to note that the Greek word for "flock" is very similar to the Greek word for pastor or shepherd:

**ποίμνιον** - (poimnion) flock - 5x

**ποίμνη** - (poimen) flock - 4x

This title for God's spiritual leaders in the local church highlights the responsibility:

to feed,

to care,

to equip, and

to protect the church family.

The bishop or pastor or elder is responsible to care for the local church as a shepherd cares for his flock.



## Title #3: Elder or Older (Ones)

This is by far the most common term used for God's leaders in the local church.

### ADJECTIVE - πρεσβύτερος (presbuteros) – literally "older [ones]"

Used in NT 67x (62x "elder," 1x ea "older son, oldest, old men, older man, older women")

- Acts 14:23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.
- Acts 15:4 And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.
- Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.
- 1 Tim 5:17 Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.
- 1 Tim 5:19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.
- Titus 1:5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you--
- 1 Pet 5:1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: (2x)

### NOUN - πρεσβυτέριον (presbuterion)

Used in NT 3x (1x "elders" Lu. 22:66; 1x "council of the elders" Acts 22:5; 1x "eldership")

- 1 Tim 4:14 Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.

This title for God's spiritual leaders in the local church highlights the responsibility:

to be wise,

to be seasoned (experienced in life),

to be stable in order to lead the church family.

The bishop or pastor or elder is expected to be able through his age and experience to lead the local church wisely.



## How do we know these 3 terms are talking about the same positions?

1. **Forms of All 3 Terms Are Used for the Same Men in Acts 20**
  - 17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the *elders* of the church.
  - 28 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.
2. **Forms of All 3 Terms Are Used for the Same Men in 1 Peter 5**
  - 1-4 The *elders* who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: <sup>2</sup> *Shepherd* the flock of God which is among you, *servicing as overseers*, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; <sup>3</sup> nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; <sup>4</sup> and when the Chief *Shepherd* appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

### Summary

So, we conclude that bishops referred to in 1 Timothy 3 are also known as overseers, and they are the same as pastors (shepherds) and elders who are God's leaders in the local church.

Pastor  
Shepherd  
Bishop  
Overseer  
Elder

## What Is a Bishop?

This *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. <sup>2</sup>A bishop then must be blameless, (1 Tim 3:1-2a)

The word "bishop" is used as one of several terms in the New Testament for what we in our circles most often call a "pastor." There are 3 primary terms the New Testament uses as titles for the same position: bishop, pastor, and elder. This morning, we will look at all 3 titles along with their meanings, and what they teach us about the position of a bishop or pastor.

### Title #1: Bishop or Overseer

There are 3 forms of this word used in the New Testament:

#### NOUN - PERSON: ἐπίσκοπος (episkopos)

Used in NT 5x (2x "overseer" – 3x "bishop")

- Acts 20:28 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.
- Phil 1:1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:
- 1 Tim 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless..., (also Titus 1:7)

#### NOUN - POSITION: ἐπισκοπή, (episkopē)

Used in NT 4x (2x "visitation," 1x "office," 1x "position of a bishop")

- 1 Tim 3:1 This *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

#### VERB: ἐπισκοπέω (episkopeō)

Used in NT 2x (1x "to look carefully," 1x "to serve as an overseer")

- 1 Pet 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, servicing as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; (also Heb 12:15 "looking carefully")

This word is made up of two Greek words: *epi* (upon) and *skopos* (look carefully). Thus, the words overseer or supervisor would be good translations. This title for God's spiritual leaders in the local church highlights the responsibility:

- to direct,
- to supervise, and
- to organize the church family.

The bishop or pastor or elder is to be in charge of and responsible for the church family, the flock.

