

Shepherdology: Principles on Pastoring

The Biblical Titles of a Pastor

Why this lesson? Why are titles important? They describe the place and purpose these leaders fill by God's design.

THE BIBLICAL TITLES FOR A PASTOR

1. **Pastor (Shepherd) – (1) feeding, (2) caring, (3) equipping, and (4) protecting**

ποιμήν (poimēn) noun – 18x in NT (17x “shepherd” – 1x “pastor”)

Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

ποιμαίνω (poimainō) verb – 11x in NT (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 20:28 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.

1 Cor 9:7 Who ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?

1 Pet 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

2. **Overseer (Bishop) – (1) supervision and (2) organization**

ἐπίσκοπος (episkopos) noun – 5x in the NT (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, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

Titus 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,

ἐπίσκοπέω (episkopeō) verb – 2x in the NT (1x “to look carefully” – 1x “to serve as an overseer”)

1 Pet 5:2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

ἐπίσκοπή (episkopē) noun – 4x NT (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.

3. **Elder – (1) wisdom, (2) seasoning, (3) stability, and (4) experience**

πρεσβύτερος (presbuteros) adj – 67x NT (62x “elder” – 1x ea: “older son, oldest, old men, older man, older women”)

Acts 11:30 This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

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 15:2 Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.

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 15:6 Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

Acts 15:22 Then it pleased the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, *namely*, Judas who was also named Barsabas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren.

Acts 15:23 They wrote this *letter* by them: The apostles, the elders, and the brethren, To the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings.

Acts 16:4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

Acts 21:18 On the following *day* Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

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--

James 5:14 Is anyone among you sick? 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.

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)

1 Pet 5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

πρεσβυτέριον (presbuterion) noun – 3x NT (1x "elders" – 1x "council of the elders" – 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.

DO THESE TITLES REFLECT 3 POSITIONS? NO. THEY DESCRIBE DIFFERENT ASPECTS OF ONE POSITION.

1. **Forms of All Three Terms Are Used for the Same Men in Acts 20**

Acts 20:17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the *elders* of the church.

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.

2. **Forms of All Three Terms Are Used for the Same Men in 1 Peter 5**

1 Pet 5:1-5 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: ² *Shepherd* the flock of God which is among you, *servicing as overseers*, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴ and when the Chief *Shepherd* appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. ⁵ Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your elders*. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

3. **Forms of Two Terms Are Used for Jesus (Why Not All Three?: Elder deals with wisdom. Jesus is God!)**

1 Pet 2:25 For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

ARE ALL PASTORS THE SAME, THEN? NO.

1. **Pastors Differ in Spirit-Appointed Types of Ability**

***Rom 12:4-8** ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them...*

2. **Pastors Differ in Levels of Capability – giftedness or development**

Rom 12:3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.

1 Pet 4:10-11 ¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified...

3. **Pastors Differ in Levels of Quality – "who rule well"**

****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.

4. **Pastors Differ in Levels of Intensity – "who labor"** [κοπιᾶω – kopiao – to labor to the point of being exhausted]

5. **Pastors Differ in Levels of Responsibility**

1 Tim 1:3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

6. **Pastors Differ in Levels of Authority**

1 Peter 5:5a Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to *your* elders.

7. **Pastors Differ in Levels of Maturity**

2 Tim 2:2b ...commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

8. **Pastors Differ in Personality** – Barnabas: encouraging; John: caring; Paul: logical; Peter: reactive; Timothy: timid