

**Date:** June 8, 2025  
**Series:** Back to Basics  
**Title:** Life in the Body – Elders  
**Text:** Miscellaneous Scripture



## INTRODUCTION

*“Some of the worst havoc wrought to the Christian faith has been a direct result of unscriptural forms of church structure. Only a few centuries after the apostles’ death, for example, Christian churches began to assimilate both Roman and Jewish concepts of status, power, and priesthood. As a result, church government was clericalized and sacralized. Under Christ’s name an elaborately structured institution emerged that corrupted the simple, family structure of the apostolic churches, robbed God’s people of the lofty position and ministry in Christ, and exchanged Christ’s supremacy over His people for the supremacy of the institutional church.” (Alexander Strauch)*

### I. BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR ELDERS

- The Word of God has much to say about church polity and it is clear that God intends the local assembly of believers to be led by elders.

Acts 11:30; 14:23; 20:17; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 5:17; Titus 1:5-9; Philippians 1:1; James 5:14; 1 Peter 5:1-3

### II. BIBLICAL FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE FOR SHARED LEADERSHIP

- This shared leadership was not a foreign concept to the early church.

Exodus 3:16-18; Numbers 11:16-17

- The New Testament is very clear and provides conclusive evidence that the local assembly of believers is to be led by a team, not a single individual.

Acts 14 & 15; Titus 1:5

- Benefits of Shared Leadership
  - Make up for weaknesses - Ecclesiastes 4:12
  - Lighten the load - Exodus 18:13-23

- Accountability - *“power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely” - Lord Acton ((1834-1902).*
- Encouragement - Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

### III. BIBLICAL ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY FOR ELDER SHEPHERDS

- Protect the flock - Acts 20:28-31; Titus 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:12
- Feed the flock - John 21:15; 1 Timothy 3:2, 9
- Lead the flock - 1 Peter 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:4-5
- Care for the flock - 2 Corinthians 2:14

### IV. BIBLICAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR OVERSEERS

- Those that are to be the leaders in the local fellowship of believers are the same as those that are to be the leaders in the family.

1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23-24

- Live like Christ
- Serve like Christ
- Love like Christ

1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

### CONCLUSION

- The structure or form of government over a body of constituents is very important as it relates to the purpose and ongoing success of the body in terms of it meeting the purpose and goals with which it was established.
- A plurality of elders shepherding the flocks works.
  - Consistent with the family institution
  - Consistent with the purpose and mission of the church
- God is protecting the bride for His Son and He will accomplish what He wills... I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (Matthew 16:18)