

Missional Leadership

**The Qualities and Functions of New Testament
Elders & Deacons in Missional Churches**

by Matt Boswell

A large, stylized, grey 'R' logo is positioned on the left side of the cover. The 'R' is bold and blocky, with a thick vertical stem and a curved top. It is set within a circular frame that consists of two concentric grey rings. The background of the cover is white, and the overall design is clean and modern.

Introduction

Beginning anything with the word missional, instantly provokes confusion. Add the word leadership, and the potential for misunderstanding is doubled. Under both labels there is a variety of definitional species, and all - like any ecosystem - have their reason for existence.

In this book the adjective missional is used in its purest form so that a leader understands that they are called to conduct mission. In this case, mission is defined as the development and deployment of everyday missionaries as cultural subversives who advance the gospel and kingdom of Jesus. Such an audacious mission then requires a solidly biblical ecclesiology.

Often, the model of leadership that is developed for the local church is preoccupied with a select set of values, some of which may - or may not - be congruent with the priorities Jesus Himself established within the canon of the New Testament. These values are usually connected to decisional, representational, or practical leadership. Yet, the most important aspects of leadership that must always be considered are; is it biblical, and is it missional? While both pragmatism and traditionalism play heavy roles within the modern church environment, neither is authoritative. While both can be defended for functional reasons, functionality does not guarantee that such paradigms please Jesus as the Senior Architect of His Church. Biblical structure, mission, leadership and obedience are all integrated into the worship of the Godhead. Therefore all must be of first importance in the organization of all local churches.

Most central to the leadership structure are the leaders themselves. If proper leaders are not established to guard the gate of biblical missional leadership, such priorities eventually succumb to mission drift. Therefore, if a missional church hopes to fulfill the objectives Jesus established for His Church, it must protect the biblical parameters and standards of leadership established by Jesus and His New Testament witnesses. It is to this very objective we must cleave - for the glory of Jesus - and to this purpose the current work turns its attention. May Jesus grant us the wisdom, grace, objectivity and examination necessary to fulfill His ideal.

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Commentary On The Qualities and Qualifications of New Testament Elders.

God is particular, not only in matters of Soteriology or Christology, but also in matters of Ecclesiology. This means that the topic of New Testament eldership is both of central and principal importance. Central, in that church leadership dominates more space in the New Testament than instruction on matters such as baptism, communion or social justice. Principal, in that Jesus set forth a design for His Church that must be maintained regardless of pragmatic or traditional impulses. Based on this, every elder must be uniquely called and equipped for such delegated ministry...a calling that is mobilized by God's Spirit so that an elder is morally approved, spiritually equipped and biblically outfitted for the task. Throughout the purview of the New Testament, the core areas of measure for the qualities and qualifications of an elder are outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9 and 1 Peter 5:1-4.

Qualities and Qualifications Abbreviated and Thematic

Moral Qualities

- An elder is to be blameless. 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:6
- An elder must be self-controlled. 1 Timothy 3:3 & Titus 1:8
- An elder is to be temperate. 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:8
- An elder must be gentle. 1 Timothy 3:3
- An elder is not to be given to drunkenness. 1 Timothy 3:3 & Titus 1:7
- An elder must not be violent. 1 Timothy 3:3 & Titus 1:7
- An elder is not to be a lover of money. 1 Timothy 3:3 & Titus 1:7
- An elder is not to be quarrelsome. 1 Timothy 3:3
- An elder is not to pursue dishonest gain. Titus 1:7
- An elder is not to be overbearing. Titus 1:7
- An elder is to be one who loves what is good. Titus 1:8

Domestic Qualities

- An elder must be faithful to his spouse. 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:6
- An elder is to be hospitable. 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:3
- An elder must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. 1 Timothy 3:4 & Titus 1:6

Spiritual Qualities

- An elder must be teachable. 1 Timothy 3:2
- An elder must not be a recent convert. 1 Timothy 3:6
- An elder must be of good reputation with those who do not follow Jesus. 1 Timothy 3:7
- An elder is to be upright. Titus 1:8
- An elder is to be holy. Titus 1:8
- An elder must be disciplined. Titus 1:8
- An elder must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught. Titus 1:9
- An elder must be able to encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. Titus 1:9
- An elder is to lead by example and gentle persuasion. 1 Peter 5:3
- An elder is to lead because they care, not because they must. 1 Peter 5:2
- An elder is to care for people. 1 Peter 5:2

Breakdown of the Qualities and Qualifications Of New Testament Elders ~ Expanded In Canonical Order

Commentary On 1 Timothy 3:1-7

It is a trustworthy statement: If any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. - 1 Timothy 3:1

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 1 (1 Timothy 3):

In the Greek culture the word **overseer** (*episkopos*) was used to describe a variety of civic, judicial and political functions.¹ Overseers were sent to dependant states within the Roman jurisdiction to ensure order and correct state constitutions. They were also used as city administrators, managers or inspectors. Additionally, the word was used of Roman deities to describe the function of watching over a country or people.²

In the early Christian movement the word was commandeered to describe the office of oversight within the local church. What is of note here, is that **overseer** is a word used interchangeably in the New Testament with the word elder (*presbyteros*) and pastor/shepherd (*poimēn/poimnē*). We see an example of this in Acts 20 where Paul calls for the elders of the church in Ephesus (vs 17) and addresses them as **overseers** (vs 28) who pastor/shepherd the flock of God (vs. 28). Based on this, there is no notable difference between the concept of an elder, a pastor and an **overseer**. All three are descriptions of the same office.³

Now, some will call attention to the singular tense of the word **overseer** and conclude that this offers support for either a moniscopacy⁴ or a hierarchical "senior pastor" design.⁵ However, the context is a letter written to a leader in Ephesus, about others in Ephesus, who may **aspire** to **the office of overseer** in Ephesus. In other words, Paul describes the conditions of an office that more than one person holds in the local church.⁶ Thus, **overseer** is not a descriptor of a presidential or papal office, but rather one that is senatorial or cardinal in nature.

In the context at hand, the office of **overseer** is something to which one **aspire**s. Generally, the word *oregō* here means, "to stretch oneself or reach out one's hand for."⁷ However, the concept here is more than human aspiration. Elder oversight is an

¹ John Stott, *Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996), 91.

² Colin Brown, "episkopos" *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids, MI: Regency/Zondervan, 1986), 189.

³ Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth, 1995), 31-34.

⁴ For the generic usage of the singular *episkopos* see Thomas Lea and Hayen Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy and Titus: New American Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992), 109. Lea and Griffin untimely conclude that this text offers no support for the requirement of an exclusive solo pastor or senior pastor model based on the singular usage of *episkopos* since the plural *episkopoi* is used later in 1 Timothy 5:17 to describe the functional difference between financially supported and unsupported overseers in the same Ephesian church context. For a fuller treatment see William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles: Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Nelson, 2000), 160-166.

⁵ Wayen Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 928-32.

⁶ See 1 Timothy 5:17 as an evidence for plural elder-overseers in Ephesus.

⁷ John Stott, *Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus*, 92.

irresistible calling from Jesus as the Senior Pastor of His Church.⁸ Therefore, there is to be a sense of passion and provocation in the eldership call, especially since all elders within every church will be called upon by God, to give an account of their leadership⁹ and teaching.¹⁰

As Paul continues, he strengthens the idea of aspire with the word **desire** (epithumeō - a passionate compulsion). In the genitive form used here, it communicates “a longing of heart” and would be comparable with having one’s heart set on something.¹¹ This means a potential elder-overseer must have more than just a willingness to serve or the right moral skill set. Pastoral/elder-oversight must grip a person with a sense of pastoral passion and purpose...a deep compulsion that cannot be extinguished.¹² This is to be the first quality of anyone seeking the office of an elder; desire and pursuit of the office as a **fine work**.

Expositional Notes for Verse 1 (1 Timothy 3):

Elder-Overseers are born not made - a gift granted by Jesus, as He pastor’s His Church. What this means is, that one does not climb the church ladder to earn the title elder. A person is either made for such a role or they are not. Now, in a culture where the prevailing motto is, “a person can do anything they set their mind to” this may sound exclusive, unfair or even un-American. Yet, the truth remains that for one to be an overseer, they must have a passion, a striving, and a compulsion for the office. Willingness to serve is insufficient – it must be a want. This want is then reinforced by exhibition of gifting, pastoral investment and leadership.

Another important feature that must be maintained is that, while there are different giftings and abilities within an overall eldership, the moral, reputational and personal standards often established for paid elder-overseers (i.e. pastors) are to be the same standards for all elder-overseers. Functional expectations may differ, but character and quality issues remain consistent for all. Thus, anything that would prevent a church from hiring a “senior pastor” should prevent a church from establishing anyone as an elder. While never desiring legalism or perfection, there must still be a high bar for all who serve as an elder.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 1 (1 Timothy 3):

First, since aspiration and desire are the initial prerequisites to eldership, we believe that anyone who is feeling led to the office should be expected to make the first move. Therefore, instead of a nominating group who selects an individual, the individual who aspires to the office of elder, needs to seek out the eldership and express their sense of calling.

Second, since elders are born by the Spirit through gifting,¹³ we do not believe it is our responsibility to make someone an elder. Rather it is our responsibility to identify those who are called to be elders among us, and to ensure that those who are not

⁸ 1 Peter 5:4 w/ Colossians 1:18.

⁹ Hebrews 13:17.

¹⁰ James 3:1.

¹¹ George Knight, *Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles: New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992), 154.

¹² Charles Spurgeon, *Lectures to My Students* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1979), 25-28.

¹³ 1 Corinthians 12:11 & Ephesians 4:11.

called should not be appointed to the position. To pursue this, we have developed a vetting process we call *Praxis*: Redemption Church's Leadership Discovery Track. *Praxis* is an 18 module overview course that covers the fundamental issues necessary for all eldership candidates. The modules break down as follows:

Mod 1: General Ecclesiology as it relates to NT Leadership
Mod 2: Model and Function of NT Eldership
Mod 3: Qualities of NT Elders 1
Mod 4: Qualities of NT Elders 2
Mod 5: Hermeneutics
Mod 6: Theology 1 (Father, Son, Spirit & Scripture)
Mod 7: Theology 2 (Satan, Humanity & Sin)
Mod 8: Theology 3 (Atonement & Gospel)
Mod 9: Theology 4 (Church, Mission & End of Time)
Mod 10: Theology 5 (Hot topics and where Redemption Church stands)

Eval 1: Personal interview and evaluation with oral intensive designed to see if one can retain information, refute error and teach with skill. The oral intensive is to be conducted by the elders and is based on the content of the first ten modules.

Mod 11: Elder Disciplines (Prayer, Fasting, Studying, Solitude, Teaching & Service)
Mod 12: Teaching (Homiletics, small venue and one on one)
Mod 13: Shepherding (multiplying investors and raising up leaders)
Mod 14: Counseling and Consoling (Biblical counseling, visitation and bereavement)
Mod 15: Correcting and Confronting (Biblical parameters for when and why)
Mod 16: Defending and Refuting (Apologetics)
Mod 17: Who We Are (Redemption Vision, Values and Vibe)
Mod 18: What We Do (Ministry Walkthrough Week)

Eval 2: Final Interview and evaluation with second oral intensive designed to see the synthesis of doctrine and practice. The second oral intensive is to be conducted by the elders and has an open invitation for the whole church.

Praxis Guidelines and Prerequisites:

Anyone is eligible to attend in an "audit" capacity. For anyone attending *Praxis* with the intent of participating in formal leadership at the Board level, the following applies:

One cannot miss more than 4 of the 18 modules. If a module is missed, it must be reviewed via video before the next scheduled module.

One must be a functioning member and serving in a ministry capacity. This may be formal outlets such as Youth, Children's, leading a Small Group, leading a Bible Study/Class, or informal outlets that are recognized by the Board as things equal to the above standards.

One must successfully navigate both the Modules and Evaluations of *Praxis*, so as to be considered for nomination and then affirmation by the membership through a vote.

An overseer, then, must be: - 1 Timothy 3:2a

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 2a (1 Timothy 3):

The participle *de* (**must**) is designed to maintain that the following qualities must already be established and must be maintained for a person to serve as an elder-overseer.¹⁴

Expositional Notes for Verse 2a (1 Timothy 3):

Obviously, while Paul would not anticipate perfection in these qualities; equally the standards for eldership should never be reduced to accommodate moderate maturity or discipline, nor should the qualities of eldership be loosened, so as to create a training ground designed to grow people into eldership. Even Paul's previous usage of the word **aspire** in (verse 1), implies that elderring is an elevated standard toward which one stretches upward to display, not a standardization which is bent downward to accommodate the majority. Therefore, the character traits of eldership must be firmly guarded within the core of eldership, since the elders are the under-shepherds of the pillar and ground of the truth.¹⁵

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2a (1 Timothy 3):

Here at Redemption Church, eldership will not exist as a training ground to groom individuals to learn to exhibit these qualities. Things such as family, reputation, time, ministry, service, and Praxis will all exist as outlets for individuals to display these eldership traits.

above reproach – 1 Timothy 3:2b

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 2b (1 Timothy 3):

The etymology of the phrase *anepilēptos* (**above reproach**) here suggests the meaning, "not able to be held."¹⁶ It describes a person who is "not open to attack or criticism in terms of their Christian life in general, and in terms of the characteristics that follow in particular."¹⁷ Because of such personal and public character, no one can properly bring a charge against them as unfit, inconsistent or unreliable.

Expositional Notes for Verse 2b (1 Timothy 3):

One of the major features of eldership is being an example of what it means to love Jesus, and - by Jesus' own words - the evidence and outpouring of true love is grounded in obeying His commands.¹⁸ It is this very thing that is to be profoundly exhibited within the life of an elder. Paul relied on this same form of example based shepherding when he encouraged others to imitate him as he imitated Jesus.¹⁹ Elders teach by how they live, and thus, they must live impeccably. Now, as it has

¹⁴ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 169-70.

¹⁵ 1 Timothy 3:15.

¹⁶ John MacArthur *1 Timothy: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1995), 103.

¹⁷ George Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 155-56.

¹⁸ John 15:1-17.

¹⁹ 1 Corinthians 11:1.

been stated, perfection will elude every person this side of the resurrection; however, an above average expectation must be maintained, so that an elder does not fall victim to legitimate accusations of immoral behavior, sinful attitudes, or poor modeling.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2b (1 Timothy 3):

Before anyone serves within the eldership of Redemption Church, the sitting Elder Board will conduct some personal interviews and key background checks. This in no way is designed to be threatening, but rather to thoroughly invest into knowing the potential elder and how they conduct themselves privately, domestically, publicly and professionally. In this, four layers of investment will be perused; a self-evaluation of the individual as set against the qualities outlined in the New Testament, an interview with the family, an open invitation to the church community to raise any concerns or informal affirmations, and a State certified criminal background check.

For elders who are already serving in an official capacity, but find themselves facing accusation or disqualification the process of 1 Timothy 5:19-22 is undertaken. For more information see the section, *Elders Protect, Rebuke and Remove Fellow Elders* (pg.41).

the husband of one wife - 1 Timothy 3:2c

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 2c (1 Timothy 3):

Literally this reads, "a one woman man." Several different aspects of this quality can be theorized with some having less cultural merits than others. The least likely understanding is that one is required to be married, seeing that Paul, as well as Jesus, was single. A second assumed interpretation deals with the practice of polygamy. But, this too, is highly unlikely since polygamy was both technically illegal²⁰ and socially unpopular²¹ within Roman culture. However, marital infidelity was commonly practiced within Roman society - a society from which Ephesus was adopting its cultural norms. The general attitude on infidelity is easily captured from Demosthenes when he wrote, "Mistresses we keep for the sake of pleasure, concubines for the daily care of the body, but wives to bear us legitimate children."²²

Within this, a secondary consideration must be addressed; the role remarriage may play in infidelity. Of course, in this area, specific factors must be assessed; such as the nature of one's divorce and the broader Biblical voice that allows for remarriage. Yet, it is clear that Jesus viewed some remarriage conditions as acceptable and others as adulterous.²³ Based on this, any divorce and remarriage in the life of a potential elder must be properly vetted, so as to maintain the heart and words of Jesus Himself.²⁴

²⁰ As cited in the *lex Antoniana de civitate* of 212 AD

²¹ Philip Towner, *The Letters To Timothy and Titus: New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 250 footnote 42.

²² *Oration 59.122* cited in Gordon Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus: New International Biblical Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 84.

²³ See Matthew 5:27-32; 19:1-11.

²⁴ See Craig Keener, *...And Marries Another* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1991) for an excellent treatment of divorce and remarriage in the teachings of the New Testament. Especially "Jesus on Divorce" and "Jesus vs the Pharisees" (21-49) and "Can Ministers Be Remarried?" (83-103).

Expositional Notes for Verse 2c (1 Timothy 3):

The foundational thrust of Paul here, is that marital fidelity and sexual purity are essential requirements for the establishment and continuation of an elder. This is essential not only because of the issues of family unity, purity, honesty and obedience, but also because it demonstrates to others the value of self-discipline and foresight so as to avoid the consequences of sexual impurity.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2c (1 Timothy 3):

Six core areas besiege Christians today in the realm of sexual sin; adultery, promiscuity, pedophilia, homosexuality, pornography and the absence of sexual intimacy in marriage. Single people, who love Jesus, give in to pre-marital sex, homosexual sex and pornography. Married people, who love Jesus, give into infidelity or pornography, while other married people, who love Jesus, experience disconnect due to a lack of sexuality in marriage.²⁵ Tragically, even some who love Jesus, fall into the destructive decision to molest children. In all cases Jesus can - and does - forgive those who seek forgiveness; yet, what is equally true, is that all sexual sins have consequences attached to them. Some of these simply need attention before one should become or resume eldership (such as the absence of sex in ones marriage). Others need time to display consistent victory in that area before they serve as an elder (such as with pornography or unmarried sex). But then, there are some areas that have a permanent consequence for Christians, by which one can never assume or resume the office of an elder (such as infidelity, homosexuality or pedophilia).²⁶ During the Praxis Evaluation 1, a series of self-assessment and interview questions will be asked related to sexuality so as to ensure an aspiring elder possesses a healthy Biblical expression of sexuality. Tethered to this topic are two extension questions:

Q1: Does A Person's Pre-Christian Sexual Life Play A Role In Elder Qualifications?

We would affirm that salvation is an event of forgiveness and cleansing by which one's previous way of life is no longer charged to their eternal account.²⁷ One of the by-products of this is a functional reset by which, in most cases, their history is no longer held against them as a disqualification for eldership.²⁸ Because of this, many of the sexual sin issues above would no longer exist as reasons for why an individual could not be an elder - provided sufficient time and obedience have elapsed. With this, however, prudence would require that a serious inquiry be made by the current standing eldership as to one's pre-Christian history, so as to better ensure that sufficient time, restraint and corrective actions have been undertaken in relationship

²⁵ Which according to 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 puts a marriage at risk for infidelity.

²⁶ The differentiation here between infidelity, homosexuality and pedophilia/incest verses pre-marital sex or pornography is one part pragmatic and one part rooted in the Old Testament response to such matters. Practically speaking adultery is viewed as more destructive than pre-marital sex or pornography and with this holds a deeply negative stigma. In the realm of the Old Testament pre-marital sex or visual exposure to sexuality or nudity required repentance for the latter (see Leviticus 18-20) and payment with marriage for the former (see Deuteronomy 22:27-29). Infidelity on the other hand bore the penalty of execution as did homosexuality, pedophilia/incest and all forms of bestiality (see Leviticus 20).

²⁷ Hebrews 10:1-23.

²⁸ Paul as a former persecutor and the church would be a functional example. See Philippians 3:6 w/ Acts 8:1-4.

²⁹ This would be true for both active infidelity via deceiving a spouse or passive adultery via remarrying for reasons disallowed by the New Testament (see Matthew 5:31-32 & 19:9). See the next section on Divorce and Remarriage for more on passive adultery.

to sexual purity. This is uniquely true in the realm of adultery,²⁹ homosexuality, or pedophilia.

On Adultery:

If an aspiring elder was involved in an adulterous relationship before they began following Jesus, we would want to know how long ago the adultery was, the details of how the issue was reconciled and what lingering issues may exist in their marriage, kids, or general reputation. This will always be handled on a case-by-case basis by the standing eldership.

On Homosexuality:

If an aspiring elder was involved in a homosexual relationship before they began following Jesus, we would want to know how long ago they were living as an active homosexual, the details of how the issue was reconciled, and what lingering issues may exist in sexual identity. This will always be handled on a case-by-case basis by the standing eldership.

On Pedophilia:

Because of the exploitive nature of this sexual sin, no person will be considered for eldership if they have a known background in this area, regardless of how long ago it occurred; or what steps have been taken to reconcile the situation. This is to protect both the church and the individual from scrutiny or scandal.

Q2: Does Divorce and Remarriage As A Christian Play A Role In Elder Qualifications?

A clear differentiation between the issues is critical in this area. Divorce is one issue that is quite separate from remarriage. In the area of divorce without remarriage a person could potentially seek the office of an elder but, as with some of the matters above, all the details would be explored on a case-by-case basis so as to understand the nature of the divorce. Paul makes it clear that while divorce is neither ideal nor right, there is an allowance for it for reasons other than adultery or abandonment by a non-Christian, provided that the divorced Christian remains single or seeks reconciliation with their former spouse.³⁰

As to the remarriage of a Christian, only three reasons are permissible. The first is remarriage because one's former spouse has passed away.³¹ The second is that one's former spouse was an unbeliever who abandoned them.³² The third is that one's spouse committed adultery in the marriage, which brought the marriage to an end.³³ These are the only reasons that sanction the remarriage of a Christian. Therefore, while we fully believe Jesus can forgive remarriage for reasons not Biblically permitted, there are still reputational consequences. Based on such realities, we view the adultery of Christian remarriage, that is not Biblically sanctioned, in ways that are similar to examples of Christian adultery where the marriage still continues. Jesus can forgive and heal, but in matters of eldership this is a permanently disqualifying issue.

³⁰ See 1 Corinthians 7:10-11.

³¹ Romans 7:2.

³² 1 Corinthians 7:12-15.

³³ Matthew 5:31-32 & 19:9.

temperate - 1 Timothy 3:2d

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 2d (1 Timothy 3):

The word *nēphalios* (**temperate**) originally had a cultic usage that means, "holding no wine", including objects made from the wood of the grape vine.³⁴ By the first century it carried the common idea of sobriety of mind or clear thinking.

Expositional Notes for Verse 2d (1 Timothy 3):

Here the focus is the ability to think objectively and obediently in times where emotion or reaction desires to dominate.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2d (1 Timothy 3):

During the Praxis Evaluation 1, a series of questions will be asked of one's spouse and kids as to whether or not they perceive the aspiring elder to be a level headed non-reactive personality. This will be in tandem with a self-evaluation. For established elders ongoing personal evaluation and submission, the eldership as a whole must be maintained.

prudent - 1 Timothy 3:2e

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 2e (1 Timothy 3):

The essence of *sōphrōn* (**prudent**) is connected to self-control and possesses within it, the ability to control ones passions. It is an internal fortitude that can transcend an impassioned reaction or impetuous disposition.

Expositional Notes for Verse 2e (1 Timothy 3):

Insecurity and eldership do not mix. An insecure elder is a risk to those they shepherd and to the church at large. This is primarily true for two reasons: The first, is that insecurity produces feelings of hurt, anger or resentment, that cloud one's ability to effectively shepherd in difficult times. Especially, when it comes to loving and shepherding people who verbalize their low opinions of one's ministry, leadership, abilities or style. The second, is that insecurity can cause an elder to acquiesce convictions or direction simply because of the pressure of others. Both are exhibitions of reactive, instead of proactive, leadership.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2e (1 Timothy 3):

During the Praxis Evaluation 1, a series of questions will be asked of one's family and those who work alongside the aspiring elder in ministry. The purpose is to see if the person is known for maintaining solid reactions and disposition in times when personally pressured or criticized. This will be in tandem with a self-evaluation. For established elders, a continued example of level mindedness must be maintained.

respectable - 1 Timothy 3:2f

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 2f (1 Timothy 3):

Kosmios (**respectable**) is the external outplay of the **prudence** described above. In this way **prudence** is internal fortitude and **respectable** is external follow through.

³⁴ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 173.

Also, implied within the word is a cultural sensitivity to the stated norms and expectations of a given environment.³⁵

Expositional Notes for Verse 2f (1 Timothy 3):

Elders must act as shepherds regardless of how they feel. Elders must react like shepherds regardless of how personal an attack may be. Elders must proceed as shepherds regardless of how exposed or uncomfortable they become. Elders must overcome like Jesus - the Chief Shepherd - who faced horrific opposition with the words, "forgive them for they know not what they do."³⁶ Elders cannot afford the pride of insecurity that spills out in aggression, moodiness, or politics.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2f (1 Timothy 3):

Since the previous quality (prudent) is so intimately connected to this one (respectable), the same related questions will be asked during Evaluation 1 of Praxis, along with the self-evaluation and interviews of people who work closely alongside the aspiring elder in their ministry context.

hospitable - 1 Timothy 3:2g

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 2g (1 Timothy 3):

Philoxenia (***hospitable***) literally translates as "a love of strangers" displaying the calling to open ones home to others. This quality not only has practical implications, but also instills the continuing value of caring for others and displays the importance of hospitality to mission.³⁷ It was this model of early Christian hospitality that later became the catalyst for the advancement of pioneering efforts such as hospice and hospitals.³⁸

Expositional Notes for Verse 2g (1 Timothy 3):

Much of the effectiveness of an elder is bound up in proximity. By shepherding in the context of hospitality, an elder creates more opportunity to speak into the lives of those they are called to shepherd.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2g (1 Timothy 3):

Ultimately we believe that hospitality is about availability, proximity and real life interaction. One of the best ways this is accomplished, is by inviting people into our real lives so they can see our personal example of how Jesus meets real life. Unlike the last few characteristics that were dispositional, this quality is only displayed in action – elders spend time with people. Now, while in no way are we prepared to prescribe the volume of hours an elder is required to be in an hospitable environment; however, the general tone of an elder is that they open their home, or they are in the homes of others. Casual interactions with intentional investments are the essence of hospitable eldership toward those who are established in the church, but especially toward those we seek to see move from "stranger" to "friend".

³⁵ Colin Brown, "kosmos/kosmos" *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids, MI: Regency/Zondervan, 1986), 521-25.

³⁶ Luke 23:34.

³⁷ See Acts 16:15; 21:7; 28:14; Romans 16:4; 3 John 5.

³⁸ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 173.

skilled in teaching - 1 Timothy 3:2h

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 2h (1 Timothy 3):

The word *didaktikos* conveys two conjoined meanings: In a passing sense the word nuances the idea of teachability since it is the only function in a list of character qualities.³⁹ In this way, every elder-overseer must possess an adjustable disposition when Spirit or Truth requires it. Actively an elder-overseer must be **skilled in teaching**⁴⁰; that is to say things such as study, equipping, exhorting and guarding the gate against error, sin and heresy.⁴¹ This function is what sets the elder-overseers as unique from deacons or other leaders in the church.

Expositional Notes for verse 2h (1 Timothy 3):

Teaching takes place in a variety of contexts spanning a variety of age ranges. Some teach groups, while others teach one-on-one. Some teach kids, some teach teens, and some teach adults. Some teach theology, some teach disciplines, and some teach practical living. In other words the term teaching has a great deal of bandwidth. Because of this an elder does not need to be the finest orator or writer, but they must be skilled in the variation of teaching they do exhibit. Without question, every elder must know and be fluent when it comes to imparting doctrinal, moral, directive and practical truth.⁴² In addition to this, they are to be engaged in the activity of teaching. Nothing in the Ephesian setting assumes this to be a dormant qualification that is occasionally called upon when necessary. This is an active function and describes why elder-oversight exists within the local church. To be an active elder-overseer, is to be an active teacher.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2h (1 Timothy 3):

Every individual who aspires to eldership must already be engaged in an area of teaching and service prior to their application for eldership. During their time in Praxis, they are also expected to demonstrate a moderate degree of aptitude and competency in all modules covered. For all standing elders, a consistent outlet of equipping and teaching in some fixed capacity is required.

not addicted to wine - 1 Timothy 3:3a

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 3a (1 Timothy 3):

The injunction here, is paralleled elsewhere in the Pastorals⁴³ with the general understanding that alcohol consumption is permitted, but that misuse, abuse or addiction is prohibited.⁴⁴ The phrase used by Paul literally renders, "not one who lingers long next to their wine."

³⁹ Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin, *1,2 Timothy and Titus*, 111.

⁴⁰ Here and 2 Timothy 2:24 are the only New Testament occurrences of this form of *didaskō*. Where as *didaskō* simply requires a capability to teach, *didaktikos* requires expertise or knack in teaching.

⁴¹ See 2 Timothy 2:23-26 as well as the general heretical concerns of 1 Timothy 1:3-11; 4:1-5; 6:2b-10 and 2 Timothy 3:1-9 that required active skilled teaching.

⁴² Walter Liefeld, *1 & 2 Timothy/Titus: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999), 130-31.

⁴³ See 1 Timothy 3:8; Titus 2:3.

⁴⁴ See Ephesians 5:18.

Expositional Notes for Verse 3a (1 Timothy 3):

Never in the Bible is alcohol supraculturally forbidden.⁴⁵ In fact, the most common commands related to alcohol, are commands for - or the blessing of - consumption.⁴⁶ One sees that God created it; commends it to His people⁴⁷ and promises to reward obedience with the blessing of it.⁴⁸ In fact, God is so far from discouraging the production of wine and beer that He commands that it be included as a necessary part of the sacrifices that his people offer to him.⁴⁹ Therefore, one sees that God both permitted and commanded the use of alcohol in order to rejoice in the presence of the Lord⁵⁰ as a good gift given by God to cheer the hearts of men.⁵¹ Therefore, when anything of a prohibitive or censuring nature does arise regarding alcohol, it is not related to consumption, but inebriation or abuse.⁵² What is critical in this context is that Paul exhorts a sobriety of mind and leading of the Holy Spirit that must never be impeded within the life of the elder through artificial means.⁵³

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 3a (1 Timothy 3):

The spirit of all legal substances that we ingest is responsibility, not abstention. Put more simply - don't get drunk!

not pugnacious - 1 Timothy 3:3b

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 3b (1 Timothy 3):

The word **pugnacious** (mē plektēs) translates as "not a striker or one who delivers blows."⁵⁴ While having the appearance of physical restraint alone, the word implies an absence of assault "in tongue or hand."⁵⁵ Self-possession and sensibility are required of all elder-overseers.

Expositional Notes for Verse 3b (1 Timothy 3):

Defensive, short, snide, belittling, mocking, vindictive, frustrated or passive-aggressive interactions (in word, letter or posture) are not the tools of sound shepherding. All elders are to display a proclivity toward restraint in moments where frustration or irritation can come easily.

⁴⁵ Exception to this would be toward three groups in the Old Testament: kings, priests, and Nazirites. In all three cases select vows with several prohibitions, not simply alcohol, are undertaken by the one who establishes the pledge. See John the Baptizer for an example of prohibitive vows (Luke 1:15) versus Jesus who both partook of and provided alcohol (Luke 7:33-34 & John 2:1-12).

⁴⁶ Ecclesiastes 9:7; Psalm 104:14-15; Amos 9:14 & Isaiah 55:1.

⁴⁷ Psalm 104:14-15.

⁴⁸ Deuteronomy 7:13, 11:14; Proverbs 3:10 & 2 Kings 18:32.

⁴⁹ Exodus 29:38-40; Leviticus 23:13; Numbers 15:5-7 & 10; 28:7.

⁵⁰ Deuteronomy 14:22-26.

⁵¹ Psalm 4:7, 104:14-15 & Judges 9:13.

⁵² Leviticus 10:9; Numbers 6:3; Deuteronomy 29:6; Judges 13:4, 7, 14; Proverbs 20:1, 31:4; Isaiah 5:11, 22, 24:9, 28:7, 29:9, 56:12.

⁵³ For an excellent work on alcohol in the Scriptures see, <http://www.biblicalhorizons.com/rite-reasons/no-48-concerning-wine-and-beer-part-1/>

⁵⁴ John MacArthur *1 Timothy*, 111.

⁵⁵ John Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 97.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 3b (1 Timothy 3):

There is a very fine line between clarity and insult in the minds of some. All elders are to communicate with honesty, precision and even at times passion, but these things are to be filtered through a spirit that seeks love and unity. In the evaluation phases of Praxis, family, friends and even one's employer will be asked to rate the irritation threshold of the aspiring elder. For the established elder consistent personal evaluation and mutual submission to the overall eldership must be maintained.

but gentle - 1 Timothy 3:3c

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 3c (1 Timothy 3):

The disposition of being **gentle** (*epieikēs*) is set juxtaposed to the previous word **pugnacious**. Thus the meaning is that an elder-overseer is kind, understanding and sympathetic to others faults and weaknesses.

Expositional Notes for Verse 3c (1 Timothy 3):

Gentleness is especially necessary when dealing with people from whom criticism, weakness or foolishness is abundant. The real requirement of an elder-overseer here is two pronged. First, they must possess the security necessary to ward off resentment, retaliation or retreat when attacked or undermined. When others are harsh, an elder remains gentle. Second, they must possess the grace that is required for displaying genuine sympathy, or kindness, in the midst of people's poor decisions or perpetual (sometimes draining) needs.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 3c (1 Timothy 3):

See Expectations above from verse 3b

peaceable - 1 Timothy 3:3d

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 3d (1 Timothy 3):

While occasionally manufactured as a positive in English, *amachos* (**peaceable**) carries more the idea of "reluctant to fight", as opposed to not permitted to fight. At times, elder-overseers are called upon to engage in heretical disputes or divisive doctrines.⁵⁶ Guarding the congregational gate or exhorting those who are in sin, does not always feel like a peaceable enterprise; yet, elder-overseers are not called to peace at any cost. An elder is to desire and promote peace as much as they can, while equally guarding the gospel, unity and truth.⁵⁷

Expositional Notes for Verse 3d (1 Timothy 3):

Peace is housed in the context of love, obedience, unity and truth. Thus, elders strive to bring these features to the body through promoting diplomacy and health – but, not at all costs. Paul was both a promoter of peace and a combatant against the

⁵⁶ 1 Timothy 1:18-20; 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

⁵⁷ 1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:14.

pagans of Ephesus.⁵⁸ Peace is not a synonym for weak, docile or dispassionate. The gospel of peace is equally a sword that divides.⁵⁹ Therefore, reluctance to fight, but the readiness to do so if truth or congregation is at risk, is at the heart of eldership.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 3d (1 Timothy 3):

We expect elders to function - in many ways - like benevolent kings. The primary job of a king is to maintain the wellbeing and stability of the realm they oversee. In this sense, their primary role is that of peace and diplomacy. Yet, when diplomacy reaches an impasse, a benevolent king must be prepared to maintain the greater peace through confrontational means. In transposed fashion, we expect all aspiring and acting elders to be people who are reluctant to pick a fight, but prepared to fight when divisive people are reluctant to obey.

free from the love of money. - 1 Timothy 3:3e

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 3e (1 Timothy 3):

The phrase here is captured from the single word *aphilargyros* and conveys the idea of one who is absent of greed. In the Greco-Roman world, greed was widely denounced in favor of its counterpart, generosity. Therefore the description Paul employs expects not only a lack of materialism, but assumes the presence of generosity.

Expositional Notes for Verse 3e (1 Timothy 3):

To love money is to misdirect our loyalty to God, limit our faith, divert our attention and skew our priorities. Out of a love of money, some have neglected their families, violated their ethics, overextended their lives, frayed their emotions or robbed their God. Jesus made it clear that God and money are often at odds for our commitment, and that money can distract from the things that matter most.⁶⁰ Later, in Timothy, Paul speaks to the reality that the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.⁶¹

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 3e (1 Timothy 3):

The elders of Redemption Church must maintain a high standard in relationship to their spiritual, personal and professional dealings with money. Every aspiring or sitting elder must exhibit faithfulness to giving in ways that advance the Kingdom of Jesus, allow for a demonstration of generosity, and help those in need. In addition to this all elders are expected to be free of excessive debt or financial burdens that limit their ability to provide for their families or maintain their commitments. Finally, any individual who has a criminal record due to tax evasion, work related theft or fraudulent matters would need to share the situation and length of time since the events with the sitting eldership.

⁵⁸ 1 Corinthians 15:32. The wild beasts of Ephesus were "the bloodthirsty human antagonists who would eagerly tear him to pieces." An antagonism first generated at the hands of Demetrius the silversmith in Acts 19. See David Garland, *1 Corinthians: The Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003), 721.

⁵⁹ Ephesians 6:15 & Matthew 10:34

⁶⁰ Matthew 6:19-34.

⁶¹ 1 Timothy 6:10.

He must be one who manages his own household well - 1 Timothy 3:4a

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 4a (1 Timothy 3):

Three words are central in the text here, **manages** (proïstamenos), **household** (oikos) and **well** (kalos). The original etymology of **manages** was "one who goes before to lead," but in time evolved to encompass the emotive aspects of care and protection.⁶² In this case, the caring leadership that is required is first displayed in the **household**. If an elder is negligent spiritually, emotionally, physically or financially toward his wife and kids, then he will be ill equipped to lead God's household.⁶ Beyond making an average investment, an elder must manage their home *kalos* (**well**). This word has a range meaning anything from doing things commendably to achieving desired results.⁶⁴

Expositional Notes for Verse 4a (1 Timothy 3):

The base idea here is that an elder's home reflects their ability to display Christ centered affection, influential leadership, and Biblical wisdom. Leadership, whether it is in the home or the church, is not a dictatorial position, but a practice of direction, protection, and care that is to be lived **well**.

By way of extension, this quality also speaks to the receptive nature of one's household. The actions, attitudes, and reputation of an elder's family and others under his care play a corollary role in his overall reputation and qualification.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 4a (1 Timothy 3):

An elder is only as effective as their home is stable. Therefore, every elder of Redemption Church is expected to invest into their family as their primary responsibility. A leader can only model a healthy church by way of a healthy family dynamic. In the Praxis evaluations, an aspiring elder's family will be interviewed so as to assess their perspective on the spiritual, emotional, physical and financial wellbeing of the home. For all functioning elders the same priority is to be expected, protected and lovingly confronted if appearing absent.

Keeping his children under control with all dignity - 1 Timothy 3:4b

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 4b (1 Timothy 3):

Until the end of the first century, Roman law stipulated that both daughters and sons were technically under a father's authority as long as he lived,⁶⁵ unlike American culture that insists on age or independence as the cutoff for parental responsibility. Thus, in the Ephesian setting the actions of an adult child would be as equally important to the qualities of an elder as those of an adolescent or small child.⁶ Therefore, an elder is to keep his children **under control** (hupotagē); a military word

⁶² William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 178.

⁶³ See 1 Timothy 3:5.

⁶⁴ Colin Brown, "kalos" *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* Vol. 2, 102-05.

⁶⁵ Craig Evans and Stanley Porter, et al., "Children In Late Antiquity" *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000), 197-98.

⁶⁶ The use of *teknon* (child), as opposed to *teknion* (little child) or *paidarion* (youth), linked with the words dissipation and rebellion in Titus 1:6 reinforces that adult children were realistically in view.

that speaks of lining up in rank under the one in authority.⁶⁷ This means, in one sense an elder is to establish an investment by which his children are respectful, well disciplined, and faithful/faith-filled.⁶⁸ Yet, such an investment maintains the previous injunction to lead with caring (i.e. **manage**). An elder is to love, lead and discipline their children in such a way that they develop submissiveness rather than require submission: fully aware of the “fine line between demanding obedience and gaining it.”⁶⁹ Paul reinforces this by stating that the keeping of ones children is to be done with **all dignity**. They must show that they lead their family with respect, as opposed to manipulation or force.

Expositional Notes for Verse 4b (1 Timothy 3):

An elder is called to leadership, not dictatorship. However, in this leadership their children must submit themselves both to the headship of the home and the Lordship of Christ.⁷⁰ Because of this, an elder is to display God, Faith, and Truth, in a way that is both gracious and reverent: striking the right blend of a compulsory obedience that flows from love, fear and delight.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 4b (1 Timothy 3):

When children are young, a parent exercises jurisdiction in parenting. As children age, jurisdiction is replaced by influence. For every elder of Redemption Church we seek that the evidences of Biblically informed direction and grace-based influence be displayed in the fruit of obedient children. Now, obviously, not all children will be obedient at all times. The same is true for the elders themselves. Yet, a general desire to please Jesus, obey parents and repent when they let both down is the essence of children under control. In connection to this, the children of an elder should display affection for parents and fondness for faith. If a child of any age is angry or rebellious against the Christian faith due directly to the influence of their parents, this often reflects on the aspiring or functioning elder’s capacity to lead in spiritual matters. Therefore, while a person can serve in several areas of the church regardless of the faithfulness of their children, only those with obedient children can hold the office of elder.

but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God? - 1 Timothy 3:5

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 5 (1 Timothy 3):

In this continuation of the previous topic, Paul shifts the word for **manage** from *proïstamenos* in vs. 4 to *epimelomai*. Where as **manage** in vs. 4 was about one who goes before, here it describes one who “comes behind or binds up” as seen with the Good Samaritan.⁷¹ If an elder cannot bring health to their home, they are ill-equipped to bring it to God’s home as His steward.

⁶⁷ John MacArthur, *1 Timothy*, 116.

⁶⁸ See Titus 1:6.

⁶⁹ Gordon Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, 45.

⁷⁰ See notes for Titus 1:6

⁷¹ Luke 10:34-35.

Expositional Notes for Verse 5 (1 Timothy 3):

Resolving conflict, motivating holiness, cultivating unity and stimulating love are all forms of caring management that must first be established in the home before one is prepared to model them to the church. To be unable to legitimately maintain this within one's personal sphere of influence automatically equals an inability to legitimately maintain this in the broader arena of the church at large.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 5 (1 Timothy 3):

In short, all elders of Redemption Church should establish homes that exhibit love, fidelity, obedience, peace, and - above all - Jesus in real life contexts.

and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. - 1 Timothy 3:6

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 6 (1 Timothy 3):

Here one is not to be a *neophytos* (literally: one who is newly planted) in Jesus. Spirituality, ethics, doctrine, leadership, and wisdom must run deep. An absence of rooting and maturity, risks the clouded judgment of **conceit**.⁷² Such conceit can lead to the same **condemnation incurred by the devil**. This **condemnation** refers to both the devil's acts of imprudent judgment and his impending judgment. For Paul, a new convert who is placed in authority prematurely, can mistake power for leadership and, consequently, use that power to lead people toward various self-interests.

Expositional Notes for Verse 6 (1 Timothy 3):

For the security and spiritual development of the church as a whole, only those who exhibit spiritual maturity and a proven Christian walk should be placed in an eldership context. This maturity helps ensure wise counsel, selfless priorities, and a Christ centered confidence.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 6 (1 Timothy 3):

Anyone, aspiring to the office of elder, is expected to have displayed a consistent, vibrant, and service oriented faith for a minimum of five years. This includes involvement in focused equipping opportunities such as Bible studies, Bible courses, or other vehicles of doctrinal learning.

And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. - 1 Timothy 3:7

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 7 (1 Timothy 3):

Here again Paul moves to the paramount issue of an elder's *marturia* (**reputation**). Specifically, he addresses the need for a **good reputation** with those **outside the church**. This reputation is a sound testimony measurable by obvious actions. Later this word morphed into a descriptor of those known as *martyrs*.⁷³

⁷² *Tuphoō* – “to wrap in smoke” thus implying clouded judgment due to pride. See William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 181.

⁷³ John MacArthur, *1 Timothy*, 119.

Expositional Notes for Verse 7 (1 Timothy 3):

Obviously, the absence of a positive reputation with those not a part of the local church will result in a poor reputation for both the local church and Jesus Himself. Also, unlike pride, which is the trap the Devil himself fell into, a questionable or **reproached** reputation is the Devil's ambition for God's leaders. Therefore, his persistent mission is to place **snaring** opportunities before elders in an attempt to discredit and disgrace the Savior in the eyes of those who need saving.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 7 (1 Timothy 3):

Here is one of the few times that non-Christians hold the definition of what constitutes a qualified elder. Any character flaw or issue of reputational consequence that would cause a non-Christian to reasonably question the overall prudence of Redemption Church is sufficient grounds for an individual to not serve as an elder. Now, this is not at all connected to a select Christian being disliked due to direct persecution, but rather due to questionable or immoral conduct. This issue of good reputation extends not only to the aspiring or functioning elder, but also to their direct family, seeing that their reputation is inextricably connected to those under their care.⁷⁴

Commentary On Titus 1:5-9

For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, - Titus 1:5

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 5 (Titus 1):

Two priorities are highlighted in Paul's intent for leaving Titus on the Mediterranean island of Crete. First, Titus is to **set in order what remains**. The word **set** (*epidiorthoō*) is connected in etymology to words such as orthodontist or orthopedics and speaks to the straightening or aligning of something that is crooked. For Titus, it means straightening that which **remains**. The issues that **remain** are either ideas known to Titus, but undisclosed within the letter, or the usage of "**and**" (*kai*) carries the explicative meaning of "that is", thus stating, **set in order what remains, [that is] appoint elders in every city as I directed you.**⁷⁵ Either way this leads to the second priority for Titus; the appointment of elders. **Appoint** (*kathistēmi*) means "to lay hands on" and carries the concept of placing someone in charge. Unlike the popular model of nominations and votes, Titus was called to install elders at his own discretion based on scriptural qualities. This is evidenced in the middle voice phrasing, "**that you would... appoint elders**", thus establishing the appointment process as Titus' charge.⁷⁶ Of equal note here, is that Titus is to **appoint elders** (*presbyteroi* - plural) **in every city** (singular). This reinforces that eldership is a plural arrangement within the local church and not a hierarchal order. There were to be multiple qualified elders in each city/church.

⁷⁴ See the structure of Titus 1:6-7 where the quality of a good reputation is duplicated and sandwiches matters of family reputation, thus showing that part of the assessment of an elder's reputation is the collective reputation of their family members. Fairly or unfairly an elder's spouse and kids are as much a part of their reputation as their own personal actions and disposition.

⁷⁵ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 387.

⁷⁶ George Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 288.

Expositional Notes for Verse 5 (Titus 1):

The formation and maintenance of a Biblically constructed eldership is rooted both in appointment and plurality. In the opening chapter of a church, an evangelist-planter is often required to appoint the first kernel of elders. However, this is a transitional feature designed to segue into the normative pattern of plural eldership. It would be this established eldership that observes and appoints future elders.⁷⁷

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 5 (Titus 1):

Every elder of Redemption Church possesses mutual authority and submission. What this means is that there is no elder, paid or lay, who possesses greater authority than another. Equally, no elder, paid or lay, is exempt from a submission to the eldership. Therefore, just as every elder guards, leads and admonishes the Body, they are guarded, led and admonished by their fellow elders as a member of the Body. With this in mind, every aspiring and functioning elder is accountable to this model of plurality.

As to the potential appointment of an elder, a series of conditions must be met. First, the individual must express a calling to eldership. Second, they must have successfully fulfilled the conditions of the Praxis Discovery Track. Third, they must have the unanimous approval of the current eldership. Fourth, they must have been positively affirmed by the membership of the church through a positive vote of 90%. Upon the conclusion of this affirmational process, the aspiring elder is publicly appointed through the laying on of hands by the current eldership of Redemption Church. This eldership is a lifelong appointment undone only by choice, disqualification or death. In this however, a lifelong appointment does not require perpetual service within the elder board.

namely, if any man is above reproach, - Titus 1:6a

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 6a (Titus 1):

The phrase **above reproach** (*anenklētos*) is formed from the negative prefix *a* and the verb *enkaleō*, which combined means “not to be called into account.” Fundamentally, this was a judicial concept used to describe someone who was not even subject to indictment, much less a trial.⁷⁸

For Exposition and Expectations on Titus 1:6a see notes on 1 Timothy 3:2b.

the husband of one wife, - Titus 1:6b

For Exegesis, Exposition and Expectations on Titus 1:6b see notes on 1 Timothy 3:2.

having children who believe, - Titus 1:6c

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 6c (Titus 1):

⁷⁷ The obvious nature of this is most seen in that planters such as Paul, Timothy and Titus all moved on from planted churches and eventually passed away with no apparent successors who carried on the sole responsibility of appointing elders.

⁷⁸ Philip Towner, *The Letters To Timothy and Titus*, 265. Especially footnote 26.

In western culture, the word **children** usually implies younger ages, however word usage by Paul here is *teknon* and can refer to a child of any age.⁷⁹ Nevertheless, regardless of the cultural constraints that may or may not have existed due to age, elders are to have children who **believe** (*pistos*). The requirement of belief here has been the subject to varied interpretations with little definitive resolve.⁸⁰ The grammatical variation of *pistos*, employed here, is a verbal adjective that can either be translated in the passive voice as “faithful” or the active voice as “believing”. Unfortunately, much of the debate as to passive or active usage is rooted in theological presupposition, since there is no definitive evidence grammatically. As a result, some believe that - since a parent has no control over whether their children embrace Christ - an elder’s children simply must be faithful to obey and honor their parents. Others feel that the salvation of an elder’s children is central in their ability to manage their own household, and, thus, the church. Since this quality is followed up by the behavior of the elder’s children, the latter concept may have moderate exegetical advantage.⁸¹

Expositional Notes for Verse 6c (Titus 1):

While either interpretation above can be vigorously defended, one must focus on the broader intent of this qualification. The most critical element for any elder is a home that is united in ideology and anchored in propriety. In this way, the issue is not whether it is fair to require that an elder have believing children, but that a believing family is best for the church when it comes to those who serve as elders.⁸² As painful or unfair as it may seem, not all the qualifications can be achieved by the resolve, obedience or personal merit of one who desires to be an elder.⁸³ Elders are primarily a gift granted, not an office earned. With this in mind, children who believe are far healthier for the church when it comes to those who serve as elders.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 6c (Titus 1):

Every elder of Redemption Church is to have a believing family that is supportive of their service in that capacity. While every parent desires that their children will follow in the faith of their forefathers into adulthood, the main focus here is children who profess and exhibit faith while in the home. Once an adult child transitions from parental authority we lean in the direction of believing that an elder is no longer directly accountable to the actions of their child, except in the case of sin against their child. Equally however, the sitting eldership would desire to better understand the issues surrounding an unbelieving adult child as an aspiring elder navigates the Praxis Discover Track.

⁷⁹ See footnote 43 above.

⁸⁰ For counter perspectives see George Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 289-90 and William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 388-89. Knight advances a passive voice conclusion while Mounce contends for the active voice.

⁸¹ For a counter proposal see Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 229-30. Strauch’s exegesis would lead to the idea that the passive “faithful” is set juxtaposed to “dissipation or rebellious”. Thus he sees where the minimum requirement for an elder is a moral unbelieving child.

⁸² If the choice were between faithful unbelieving kids or obedient believing kids, it would seem theologically and functionally prudent to error on the side of salvation and not simply ethics.

⁸³ Two such examples would be “skilled in teaching” since it is a grace gift given by the Spirit (Romans 12:6-8) and “husband of one wife” since, at least in Paul’s context, it was an office reserved for males; a condition they did nothing to establish and that women could not invoke.

not accused of dissipation or rebellion. - Titus 1:6d

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 6d (Titus 1):

Here Paul says an elder's children are to live in such a way that they cannot legitimately be accused of **dissipation** or **rebellion**. **Dissipation** (asōtia) is used to describe the chosen lifestyle of the prodigal son⁸⁴ and thus has connection to a pleasure seeking and uncontrolled way of life. **Rebellion** (anupotaktos) was traditionally used in regard to political or military insurrection.⁸⁵ In this context it describes a child unwilling to submit to parental or social authority.

Expositional Notes for Verse 6d (Titus 1):

In our culture, accusations can be as destructive as conclusive verdicts, regardless of the factual merits. This is why an elder and their family are to live above the standard reputational line.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 6d (Titus 1):

An aspiring or functioning elder of Redemption Church is not only to have believing children, but generally obedient children who are not known for disrespect, disobedience, or delinquency. This is predominantly true for children in the home, but it is also a consideration for grown children outside of the home.

For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, - Titus 1:7a

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 7a (Titus 1):

Several important factors emerge within the transition of verse 7. Of first importance is the linkage maintained between verses 6 and 7 with the word "**For**" (gar). From this, Paul is extrapolating that fidelity in marriage, belief of family, and behavior in the home are all factors in displaying an **overseer** (episkopos) as **above reproach**.⁸⁶ An elder-overseer never stands alone in their qualifications for leadership, since all family dynamics, fairly or unfairly, will be viewed as a reflection on their ability to **steward**.

The idea of a **steward** (oikonomos – a compound of oikos = house and nemō = order) described one who managed a residence for an owner. In this case the owner of the Church is **God**. From this, one can see the importance in maintaining elevated qualifications for elders, since they represent God's care, authority, and supervision within the church.⁸⁷

For Exposition and Expectation on Titus 1:7a see notes on 1 Timothy 3:2b.

not self-willed - Titus 1:7b

Exegetical and Expositional Commentary on Verse 7b (Titus 1):

Jesus grants eldership authority for the intent of shepherding responsibility. Therefore, the elder-overseer must purge the temptation to be *authadē* (**self-willed**). This egocentric feature is displayed primarily in a self interested or arrogant drive that

⁸⁴ Luke 15:13.

⁸⁵ John MacArthur, *Titus: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1996), 31.

⁸⁶ On *anenklētos* see commentary on Titus 1:6.

⁸⁷ 1 Peter 5:1-3; Hebrews 13:17; Titus 1:7.

disregards what is best for the church for the sake of one's own emotional or personal endeavors.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 7b (Titus 1):

The elders of Redemption Church are just that - the elders of the collective whole. Because of this, an elder is not to represent a single personal agenda or use their authority to press for reform in an area not embraced by the overall eldership. This means elders are to submit their will to the will of the whole by seeking the unifying will of the Holy Spirit.

not quick-tempered, - Titus 1:7c

Exegetical and Expository Commentary on Verse 7c (Titus 1):

Orgilos (**quick-tempered**) is found only here in the New Testament, but its common usage describes the general disposition of a person's life. One, who is prone to frequent outbursts or generally has a short fuse, will be ill equipped for the challenges of spiritual leadership within the church where spiritual wisdom must prevail.⁸⁸

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 7c (Titus 1):

A Redemption elder is to be known for displaying clarity of mind and an even keeled disposition in the face of challenge or attack.

not addicted to wine, - Titus 1:7d

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 7d (Titus 1):

The problem of drunkenness and general overindulgence was a concern of Paul's more than once in regard to the Cretans.⁸⁹ See notes on 1 Timothy 3:3a for further commentary.

For Exposition and Expectation on Titus 1:7d see notes on 1 Timothy 3:3a.

not pugnacious, - Titus 1:7e

Exegetical, Expository and Expectations Commentary for 7e (Titus 1):

As in Ephesus, Paul links the dangers of verbal and physical abuse with alcohol abuse. See notes on 1 Timothy 3:3b for further commentary.

not fond of sordid gain, - Titus 1:7f

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 7f (Titus 1):

Here Paul speaks of *aischrokerdē* (**sordid gain**), a compound of *aischros* (shameful) and *kerdos* (profit). Integrity in one's personal fiscal stewardship is key to a sound reputation in and outside of the local church.

For Exposition and Expectation on Titus 1:7f see notes on 1 Timothy 3:3e for further commentary.

⁸⁸ See James 3:13-18.

⁸⁹ See also Titus 1:12; 2:3.

but hospitable, - Titus 1:8a

Exegetical, Expositional and Expectations Commentary for 8a (Titus 1):

To freely open one's home is the practical application of the free gift of the gospel. See notes on 1 Timothy 3:2f for further commentary.

loving what is good, Titus 1:8b

Exegetical, Expositional and Expectations Commentary for 8b (Titus 1):

Here the English retains the compound wording found in Greek. An affectionate **love** (*philos*) of what is **good** (*agathos*), be it good people or things, is to characterize the disposition of the elder-overseer.

sensible, - Titus 1:8c

Exegetical, Expositional and Expectations Commentary for 8c (Titus 1):

Here Paul repeats his qualities from 1 Timothy 3:2 expecting that an elder-overseer be *sōphrōn*, or literally "saved" (*sōzō*) "of mind" (*phrēn*). See 1 Timothy 3:2d on **prudent** for further commentary.

just, - Titus 1:8d

Exegetical, Expositional and Expectations Commentary for 8d (Titus 1):

The essence of *dikaios* (**just**) inhabits the moral fiber of an elder-overseer. A passion for justness, equality and righteousness is the proper display of the **sensible** mind described in the previous quality.

devout, - Titus 1:8e

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 8e (Titus 1):

In qualifying an elder as **devout** (*hosios*), Paul uses a derivative of holy (*hagios* – to be uncommon or set apart). Based on this, all church elders are to possess an uncommon nature that positively catches the attention of believer and unbeliever, alike.⁹⁰ It is additionally noteworthy, that *hosios* is consistently used to describe the holiness of God throughout the New Testament⁹¹ and thus, God's elders are called to represent His uncommon holiness.

Expositional Notes for Verse 8e (Titus 1):

Holiness is often seen as a synonym for words such as pure or righteous. However, holiness should be seen as adding perspective to other features that are displayed in an elder's life. For example if holy means uncommon, then holy love would be uncommon love. The very fact that God is holy, holy, holy,⁹² actuates the fact that God is radically uncommon from the trappings and definitions of the world. In the same way an elder is to live a profoundly uncommon life for the things of Jesus.

⁹⁰ See also Matthew 5:13-16.

⁹¹ See Acts 2:27; 13:35; Hebrews 7:26; Revelation 15:2, 4; 16:5.

⁹² Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4:8

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 8e (Titus 1):

Since the elders of Redemption Church are examples to the church, they are to live above the fray of commonness in how they handle self, family and life. Again, this is not to expect perfection, but to promote striving for perfect love, just as God is perfect.⁹³ It is much like the stars, while none of us will reach the perfection of God's holiness, we can use that perfection to navigate by.

self-controlled, - Titus 1:8f

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 8f (Titus 1):

An essential virtue among Greek philosophers was *enkrateēs* (**self-control**). A mastery of one's action externally exists due to a diligence toward one's impulses internally. In the life of the elder-overseer, this is directed by submission to the Holy Spirit.⁹⁴

Expositional Notes for Verse 8f (Titus 1):

While the Holy Spirit works dynamically within the life of the elder, this empowerment must be met with a willingness to submit one's sinful wants, to the will of God. In a culture known for downplaying moral self-control, the Church stands as a model of self-mastery. It is the elders who stand as examples of self-discipline and obedience as rooted in the calling of Jesus.⁹⁵

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 8f (Titus 1):

A self-control over mind, body, will, time, talents and treasures is essential for every elder at Redemption Church. A lack of self-control is exhibited through things such as sinful vices⁹⁶, poor habits, stress due to overbooked schedules, excessive debt due to impulsive or impatient purchasing, or physical unfitness due to gluttony or idleness. Obviously, these are not areas where self-righteous judgment should be passed, but since elders are examples, these are areas where self-control is clearly required within the church and world today.

holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. - Titus 1:9

Exegetical Commentary on Verse 9 (Titus 1):

Here, the culminating quality also holds within it, one of the fundamental directives of elder oversight. Where the majority of the listed qualities are moral in orientation, this standard requires a theological dimension. Of additional notice, is the poignant nature of this qualification. In 1 Timothy the quality of skilled teaching is required of all

⁹³ Matthew 5:48

⁹⁴ Galatians 5:22-23.

⁹⁵ John 14:15

⁹⁶ These can include matters that are black and white as well as those that are gray. Gray areas would be things such as gambling, collecting, tobacco use, alcohol consumption, use of prescription drugs, hobbies, food consumption, sports, time on the internet, shopping, etc. These areas all can be undertaken in moderation or within the limits of Christian liberty, but if they become an agent of lost control, infatuation, obsession, abuse, abdication of responsibilities, poor health or addiction they convert to a vice and hence sin. Black and white areas would include things such as the use of illegal narcotics, pornography and sexual sin, drunkenness, theft, deceit, violence, etc.

elders⁹⁷, but here Paul advances further and reinforces that eldering is not for the timid or those who would avoid confrontation. An elder-overseer must be prepared to **exhort** (parakaleō – to call alongside or help) those growing in their faith and to **refute** (antilegō – to speak against) those who counter teach (**contradict**) theological, ecclesial, or moral truth. Every person who sets their foot to the path of eldership must embrace that both, investment and confrontation, awaits their calling. Because of this, an elder must be **holding fast** the **faithful word** (pistos logos). **Holding fast** (antechō) means to adhere or strongly cling to someone or something.⁹ In this case, elder-overseers are to “cling” the flock to the **faithful word that can be trusted**.⁹⁹ Any person who is unable to embrace the *logos* on faith, or proclaim the *logos* through faith, would do well to forgo eldership until such reservations are settled.

Not limited to the raw unexposed *logos*, Paul precedes by stating that an elder must **hold fast the faithful word that is in accordance with the teaching** (didaskalia). Both knowledge of and skill in the *logos* via learning is critical.¹⁰⁰ The reason for such instruction is so that the elder-overseer possesses a synthesized understanding of **sound doctrine**. The word **sound** translates *hygiaino* from which we derive the English hygienic. Thus all **doctrine** is to be wholesome, untainted, and dispensing the dividends of pure worship and healthy belief.

Expositional Notes for Verse 9 (Titus 1):

Elders are to be a general repository of Biblical, theological and traditional knowledge. Now this does not mean that every elder must possess technical comprehension. Nor does it mean that every elder must know every theological word or current debate. What it does mean is that every elder is comfortably familiar with the most foundational element of Christian orthodoxy and Biblical interpretation. From this base, they are then able to hold fast, encourage and rebuke from the faithful Word of God.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 9 (Titus 1):

Every elder of Redemption Church is required to participate in the Praxis Discovery Modules, so as to display both the ability to learning sound doctrine and hermeneutics as well as the ability to articulate those truths in real life situations. With this, the elders are also to function as some of the primary teachers within the church in the areas of small groups, Bible studies, workshops or other equipping outlets.

⁹⁷ 1 Timothy 3:2.

⁹⁸ George Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 293.

⁹⁹ Some see this command directing elders to personally cling to the truth. However, since eldership is about advancing the truth and shepherding the church a better rendering sees this as both personal adherence and holding fast the word in the face of apathy, disobedience or opposition.

¹⁰⁰ Note the definite article “the” connected with the passive form of “teaching”. Combined, this represents the exclusive nature of the teaching as that which was handed down from Jesus and the Apostles. In other words Paul speaks directly to the continued implementation of the gospel among the Cretan churches. See William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 391-92.

Commentary On 1 Peter 5:1-4

Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, - 1 Peter 5:1-2a

Exegetical Commentary on Verses 1-2a (1 Peter 5):

Here Peter, as a **fellow elder** within the local church, comes alongside to **exhort** the **elders** (plural - presbyteroi) of several dispersed churches.¹⁰¹ The idea of **exhort** here (parakaleō) is identical to how the Holy Spirit is described as the Paraclete; the One who comes alongside to aid, comfort and help.¹⁰² In this way, Peter acts as a vessel of the Spirit's help and comfort toward fellow comforters.

In this act of comfort, Peter's emphasis is not simply the upholding of an office, but rather the execution of a function; to **shepherd** (poimanein - the verbal variation of the noun poimēn [pastor] in Eph. 4:11) **the flock**. Shepherding, or "pastoring" was a common motif within Old Testament narratives¹⁰³ and Peter builds on this theme within his first epistle.¹⁰⁴ As such, the core responsibility of every pastor/shepherd/elder is to give the sheep, not what they desire, but what they require. Moreover, such requirements are not concluded by the shepherds of the church, but by Jesus the Senior Pastor¹⁰⁵ of all churches and God the owner of the **flock**. The local church is never the church of a person, a group of persons or an organization. It is solely the property and prize of **God** alone and His Son who purchased her with His own blood.¹⁰⁶

Expositional Notes for Verses 1-2a (1 Peter 5):

Contrary to the popularized notion that pastors are the paid people, all elders - regardless of compensation - are to be seen as the pastors of the church. Pastoring/shepherding is the holistic image of an elder by which they feed, protect and hold the flock together.

Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 1-2a (1 Peter 5):

Pastoring requires two things; time and proximity. For the elders of Redemption Church, this means that every elder is involved at a moderately high level. A general pattern would be a minimum of five hours per week involved in prescribed leadership dynamics,¹⁰⁷ as well as, an intentional investment on Sundays by way of meeting, connecting, serving, or praying with the people of the church.

¹⁰¹ The plural form again shows that church leadership and pastoral authority rested, not with an external entity, nor with an individual, but with a group of elders. See J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter: Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco, TX: Word, 1988), 277.

¹⁰² See John 14:16; 14:26; 15:26; 16:7.

¹⁰³ See especially Isaiah 53 and Ezekiel 34

¹⁰⁴ See 1 Peter 2:21-25.

¹⁰⁵ 1 Peter 5:4.

¹⁰⁶ 1 Peter 1:17-20.

¹⁰⁷ These dynamics are things such as elder meetings, small groups, Bible studies or collective prayer times.

exercising oversight - 1 Peter 5:2b

Exegetical Commentary on Verses 2b (1 Peter 5):

Where as 1 Timothy and Titus speaks of the office an overseer (*episkopos*), the English phrase **exercising oversight** translates the functional Greek verb *episkopeō*. All elders are to possess the ability to assess the spiritual and missional condition of the church, and then, lead, guard and feed accordingly.

For Exposition and Expectations on Verse 2b see Verse 2a above (1 Peter 5).

not under compulsion, but voluntarily, - 1 Peter 5:2c

Exegetical Commentary on Verses 2c (1 Peter 5):

Compulsion (*anankēs*) here is the same word used of Paul to describe the antithesis of cheerful giving.¹⁰⁸ Thus, in the same way, Paul wards off obligatory giving, Peter waves off compulsory pastoring. Whatever the mechanism created for the installation of elder-overseers, one should never allow adherence to a term-limit, personal pride or situational dilemma to govern their service as an elder. The mainstay of an elder's heart is **voluntary** (*hekousiōs* – "of free will") leadership.

Exposition and Expectations for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2c (1 Peter 5):

Since eldership is a calling, a person should only serve because they feel called. Of course, with the various contours of life, an elder may request a sabbatical, because ministry begins to feel more like a compulsory act than a voluntary one. This is highly encouraged so that an elder is never serving from a drained or frustrated posture.

according to the will of God; - 1 Peter 5:2d

Exegetical Commentary on Verses 2d (1 Peter 5):

Here Peter reinforces that it is God's mission, model and agenda that is to prevail with the church. While tradition, contextualization, and culture are all critical factors to be considered for missional purposes, the primary way in which God's flock is to be overseen is **according to the will of God** and not the will of social constraint or religious dogma.¹⁰⁹

Exposition and Expectation for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2d (1 Peter 5)

During the Reformation, the Protestant leadership realized that the only way to not fall victim to the same extra-Biblical dogmatics of the Catholic Church was to not allow the traditions of men to become canonized. This was captured in the identity of *semper reformanda* or always reforming. Based on this, the responsibility of the eldership at Redemption Church is to humbly and Biblically ensure that this tradition of not canonizing tradition remains in tacked. Since Jesus is the Senior Pastor of the

¹⁰⁸ See 2 Corinthians 9:7.

¹⁰⁹ For an excellent description of contextualization serving Christ and not the other way around see Mark Driscoll, *Vintage Church* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 218-39.

church, the will of God as revealed in the Word of God must always prevail as the supreme standard for faith and practice.

and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; - 1 Peter 5:2e

Exegetical Commentary on Verses 2e (1 Peter 5):

Aischrokerdōs (**sordid gain**), is the same compound of *aischros* (shameful) and *kerdos* (profit) used by Paul when he outlined the qualities for eldership.¹¹⁰ The elder-overseer is not to use their office in order to gain connections, solicit clients, promote reputation or land contracts. Rather their intent is to invest into people with *prothymōs* (**eagerness**). The idea of *prothymōs* was used in secular writings to characterize the benefactor of a city who enthusiastically provides time and money for the betterment of the civic whole.¹¹¹

Exposition and Expectation for Redemption Church Elders based on Verse 2e (1 Peter 5):

Eldering at Redemption Church is not only a voluntary act, but also one of affection. Willingness is not enough. There is to be an eagerness for shepherding and instructing which emanates for the call to eldership. For issues related to sordid gain see notes on 1 Timothy 3:3e for further commentary.

nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 1- 1 Peter 5:3

Exegetical, Expositional and Expectations Commentary for Verse 3 (1 Peter 5):

Peter speaks more deeply to the spirit of **eagerness** when he states that an elder is not to be **lording it over those allotted to [their] charge**. The wording for **allotted** is of particular significance, since it nuances a divine distribution of people and elders.¹ In this way, providence connects congregations and pastors for sovereign purposes...God Himself assigns His people to the care of His elders according to His will. Because of this, **lording** is forbidden and **example** is to be maintained. *Katakuriēuō* (**lording**) is never the same as leading. The latter invites followers, where as the former requires subjects. The essence of pastoral eldership is leading by example and influence, not guilt or force.

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. - 1 Peter 5:4

Exegetical, Expositional and Expectations Commentary for Verse 3 (1 Peter 5):

Jesus is the *archipoimenos* (**Chief Shepherd**). When a flock would grow too large a **Chief Shepherd** was called upon to oversee under-shepherds. The elder-overseers of every church are to understand themselves as the underlings of Jesus, the Senior Shepherd. For those who capture and execute this calling, they **will receive the unfading crown of glory**.

¹¹⁰ See Titus 1:7.

¹¹¹ Karen Hobbs, *1 Peter: The Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005), 305.

¹¹² Karen Hobbs, *1 Peter*, 306.

Commentary on the Responsibilities and Dynamics of New Testament Elders.

The topics unpacked below are a compilation of both the described activities of elders in the New Testament period (i.e. Acts) and prescribed responsibilities of all elders in all local churches (i.e. epistles). In this current work little effort has been applied to distinguish between descriptions of elders and prescriptions for elders. All texts will be viewed as guidance for local church eldership.

Responsibilities and Dynamics Abbreviated:

Elders Pray and Promote the Word

Acts 6:1-4

Elders Receive and Distribute Funds

Acts 11: 29-30

Elders Resolve Doctrinal Controversy

Acts 15:1-2, 4-7a; 22-25 & 16:4

Elders Provide Guidance and Protection

Acts 20:17-18 & 28-31

Elders Lay Hands on the Sick with Prayer

James 5:14-16

Elders Admonish, Encourage and Help With Patience

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

Elders Appoint Elders and Train Future Leaders

Acts 13:2-3 (with Acts 14:23 & 1 Timothy 4:14), 1 Timothy 5:22 & 2 Timothy 2:2

Elders Protect, Rebuke, and Remove Fellow Elders

1 Timothy 5:19-21

Elders Who Lead, Preach and Teach Well Are Worthy Of Financial Support

1 Timothy 5:17-18

Elders Possess Authority and Expect Accountability from God and Jesus.

Hebrews 13:17 & James 3:1

Elders Partner With and Oversee Deacons

Philippians 1:1 & Acts 6:1-6

Responsibilities and Dynamics Expanded:

Elders Pray and Promote the Word¹¹³

Acts 6:1-4

1 Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. 2 So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

Acts 6:1-4

As the gospel advanced throughout the mixed Semitic and Hellenistic population¹¹⁴, the rapid expansion of the Jerusalem church required a definitive anchoring of apostolic investment when it came to the teaching of the **word** and the commitment to **prayer**. This formalization was further pressed by the social disruption of perceived favoritism (Semitic widows over Hellenist widows) all of whom were now **disciples** of Jesus. To solve the dispute, the apostles required the church at large to **select from among [themselves] seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom [they] may put in charge of this task**. This act would later become much of the basis for the diaconate. However, the reason for the proto-diaconate was so that the apostles would not **neglect the word of God in order to serve tables**. While service is both a command¹¹⁵ and a tribute to Jesus by way of imitation¹¹⁶, the **word of God** and its communication is of first importance for the health and worship of the church.¹¹⁷ This is further reinforced when the apostles state that to **neglect the word** in order to **serve tables** would not be **desirable**. The word translated as **desirable** in the NASB is misleading in English and should not imply that such service is beneath the dignity of the apostles.¹¹⁸ Rather *ouk areston estin (it is not desirable)* communicates that to serve tables would be inappropriate and wrong when compared to the priorities of the church and the importance of the **word** and **prayer**.¹¹⁹ Priority and importance are again reinforced as the apostles state that the proto-deacons will be in charge of serving widows, so that they can **devote [themselves] to prayer and to the ministry of the word**. The word **devote** (*proskarterēsomen*) is a compound form derived from the root *kartereō* (endure.) When the prefix *pros* is injected, the description becomes even more robust as far as showing that the apostles were to be faithfully attached to the word and prayer with

¹¹³ While this passage in Acts refers exclusively to the work of the apostles and proto-deacons, the current study will regard this narrative as a pattern that should be imitated within the standardized ecclesiastical structure of elders and deacons.

¹¹⁴ Here Semitic is used in the native sense as those who were Hebrew speaking Jews where as Hellenists were Greek speaking non-native Jews.

¹¹⁵ Galatians 5:13.

¹¹⁶ Mark 10:45.

¹¹⁷ John MacArthur, *Acts 1-12: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1994), 179.

¹¹⁸ John R.W. Stott, *The Spirit, The Church & The Word* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1990), 121.

¹¹⁹ Darrell Bock, *Acts: The Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2007), 259.

tireless devotion.¹²⁰ Therefore, as the proto-deacons have the ministry of serving tables, the apostles (or elders) have the unceasing task of **prayer** and **word**. Through **prayer**, the Holy Spirit brings unity, direction, blessing, and healing. Through the **word**, Father and Son reveal, correct, inspire, and move the Church unto completion.

Elders Receive And Distribute Funds

Acts 11: 29-30

29 And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. 30 And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders. Acts 11: 29-30

Two elements of note appear within this passage; one of text and one of context. As to context, this is the first appearance of Christian elders within the Acts account. Thus, eldership formed up relatively early within the local church environment, even with an Apostolic presence. As to textual considerations, the passage displays elders as a union of charitable trustees. Presumably the Jerusalem elders were charged with the distribution of funds as well as receiving them for distribution.¹²¹

Elders Resolve Doctrinal Controversy

Acts 15:1-2, 4-7a; 22-23 & 16:4

1 Some men came down from Judea and began teaching the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved." 2 And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue... 4 When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. 5 But some of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses." 6 The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter. 7 After there had been much debate, Peter stood up... Acts 15:1-2; 4-7a

Several matters are worthy of reflection within this first recorded church council. Fundamentally at the heart of the situation is a well-intended conviction regarding God's expectation for covenantal responsibility. Unlike some of the anti-Christian Jewish opponents that oppose the Jesus sect (example: see Gal. 2:1-5), this debate seems to be fueled from within the infant church (example: see Gal. 2:11-21).¹ Since the phrase "**Some men came down from Judea**" does not set a negative description upon those who arrived at Antioch, realistically this is a group of Christian Jews who have deep convictions about the role circumcision plays in *displaying faithfulness* within God's covenant community.¹²³ Therefore, in this sense the phrase, "**Unless you are circumcised...you cannot be saved**" is not connected to "earning" salvation via circumcision, since much of Second Temple Judaism as well as the

¹²⁰ Ceslas Spicq, *proskartereō/proskarterēsis Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* Vol. 3 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 191-94.

¹²¹ Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 124-25.

¹²² N.T Wright, *Justification* (Downers Grove, MI: IVP, 2009), 114-22

¹²³ Ben Witherngton III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 450.

early Jewish church both embraced the concept of divine covenant apart from works.¹²⁴ Rather, the situation identifies a significant misunderstanding about what constitutes true faithfulness within the new covenant of Jesus.¹²⁵ In the “Judean” assessment, truly **saved** people would embrace circumcision as the demonstration that they are truly **saved**.¹²⁶ It is within this context that Paul and Barnabas debate the merits of displayed Christian living. The phrase, **great dissension and debate** (staseōs kai zētēseōs) is used elsewhere to describe riots or acts of revolution.¹²⁷ This shows that conflict among **brethren** can run deep in matters of Christian liberty and behavior. Due to this deep divide, the issue is taken to **the apostles and elders** in Jerusalem. It will be their arbitration that will establish a working expectation for the Jewish Christians coming in contact with Gentile Christians. Yet, as the situation unfolds, there is also much **debate** (zētēseōs) among the Jerusalem leadership as they **look into this matter**. The critical component within the text is that it is the leadership of the church, not the congregation, that is commissioned with facing and discerning difficult matters of doctrine and practice.¹²⁸ Sometimes this erupts in hot discord, but the fires of debate often establish a fertile soil that nourishes the roots of sound doctrine. This is why spiritually mature, doctrinally sound individuals must be the ones who serve within the leadership core.

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren, 23 and they sent this letter by them, "The apostles and the brethren who are elders, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings 24 "Since we have heard that some of our number to whom we gave no instruction have disturbed you with their words, unsettling your souls, 25 it seemed good to us, having become of one mind, to select men to send to you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul... 4 Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe. Acts 15:22-23 & 16:4

Here plurality and unanimity are in view among the apostles and elders. There is no hint of voting, no echo of a hierarchy descending from apostles to elders to congregation or congregation to elders and apostles. Rather they say that **it seemed good to us, having become of one mind**. The word for **one mind** (homothymadon) is a compound of *homo* “together or common”, and *thymos*

¹²⁴ See Deuteronomy 7:6-8 and Luke 3:7-9.

¹²⁵ James D.G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul and the Law* (Louisville, KY: WJKP, 1990), 11-12. For those aware of the current dialogue related to the “New Perspective on Paul” this reconstruction of the division that the Jerusalem leadership needed to decide upon does not need to have a connection to the theological implications regarding the nature of justification and imputed righteousness. Reformational soteriology need not be questioned based on this interpretation for Acts 15. For an excellent synthesis of the New Perspective view remaining linked with Reformational soteriology see Tim Gallant, *Covenantal Nomism? A Comparative Review of Sanders and Carson et al* <http://www.rabbisaul.com/articles/nomism.php>; Tim Gallant, *Without Justification A review of Guy Waters, Justification and the New Perspectives on Paul* <http://www.rabbisaul.com/articles/watersreview.php>

¹²⁶ A modern equivalent would be if a select group of Christians were rejecting baptism. While Christianity at large would deny the idea that baptism saves, equally Christianity would struggle to see how any group could be truly saved if they reject the sacrament of baptism.

¹²⁷ Darrell Bock, Acts, 495. See also Acts 19:40; Luke 23:19-25.

¹²⁸ John MacArthur, *Acts 15-28: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1996), 66.

“intense feeling”.¹²⁹ The combined sense is that of “rushing along in unison or unanimously”.¹³⁰ The New Living Translation captures the essence best when it says, “*having unanimously agreed on our decision.*” It is the responsibility of the elders to place themselves in a position of learning from and listening to the Unifying Spirit.¹³¹ In this situation the Spirit guides the leadership to a proper decision, forging unity out of conflict, and the congregation finds the decision to be **good**. Of special note is that it was a matter **decided upon by the apostles and elders**. While the congregation found the decision to be **good**, there is no sense that they were formally involved in making or ratifying the decision.¹³² This is why in Acts 16:4, the decision for Jewish interaction with Gentiles is said to be **the decrees which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders**.

Elders Provide Leadership & Protection

Acts 20:17-18 & 28-31

17 From Miletus he (Paul) sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church. 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them... 28 "Be on guard for yourselves and for 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. 29 I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears." Acts 20:17-18 & 28-31

In this text we see the three-fold description of New Testament eldership. Paul calls the Ephesian **elders** (presbyteroi - plural) to fulfill their appointment as **overseers** (episkopoi – protectors) by **shepherd(ing)** (poimainein – from the derivative root *poimainō* for “pastor” in Ephesians 4:11 and “pastoring” in 1 Peter 5:2). Thus in a single Biblical context one sees the unification of eldership as being described in terms of office, responsibility and function.¹³³ In addition to this, one sees that the eldership was appointed by **the Holy Spirit [who] made [them]... overseers**. This appointing process, while not fully described in the New Testament, can be inferred from texts such as Acts 13:2-3 or Acts 14:23.¹³⁴

To the elders Paul instructs several things; First he says, **Be on guard for yourselves**. **Prosechete (on guard)** is a present imperative, which means, “perpetually scan for attack and danger.”¹³⁵ A more spirited rendering would be “Watch out!”¹³⁶ First Paul tells the elders, watch out for **yourselves**. The strength of an elder is not their skills,

¹²⁹ *thymos* be an intensely positive or negative feeling depending on context.

¹³⁰ Ceslas Spicq, *homothymadon/homophron Theological Lexicon of the New Testament Vol. 2* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 580-82.

¹³¹ 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Ephesians 4:4-6; Philipians 2:2.

¹³² F.F. Bruce, *Acts: New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 298.

¹³³ See also Mark Driscoll, *On Church Leadership* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 14; Wayen Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 913; Philip Towner, *The Letters To Timothy and Titus*, 241-74; and Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 31-34.

¹³⁴ See the “Appointing Elders” section below for more detail.

¹³⁵ Darrell Bock, *Acts*, 629.

¹³⁶ John R.W. Stott, *The Spirit, The Church & The Word*, 326.

insight or tenacity, but their union with Jesus. All leaders lead from their interior and thus spiritual vitality, moral integrity and passion for Jesus is required. Paul would later tell Timothy, *"If you keep yourself pure, you will be a special utensil for honorable use. Your life will be clean, and you will be ready for the Master to use you for every good work."*¹³⁷ Based on this Paul says, *"Keep a close watch on how you live and on your teaching. Stay true to what is right for the sake of your own salvation and the salvation of those who hear you."*¹³⁸ Elders are the conduits Jesus uses to shepherd His church and thus their own moral and spiritual integrity must be guarded. Then they will have what is needed for **all the flock**.

The theme of guarding the flock is continued as Paul speaks of their need to **shepherd the church of God**. Since **shepherd(ing)** (poimainein) is being used functionally as the work of pastoring, it is the responsibility of the overseers to engage in the work of feeding, tending, leading, and protecting. The sobriety of this calling is found in the reality that elders pastorally oversee **the church of God which He purchased with His own blood**. Textually and theologically this reads more accurately as, "the church of God which He purchased with the blood of His One."¹³⁹ In this sense God is calling elders to a very serious effort as caretakers of His priceless Church. Priceless, not due to the value of the Church itself, but because of the infinite cost in acquiring it – the blood of His One: Jesus.¹⁴⁰ Since the value and affection is so high, so too the standard and level of alert are equally high.

Paul continues by warning of the certainty that is to come from those who will **come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them**. Elders must be able to face, confront and refute both false ideas from the outside world (i.e. **savage wolves will come in among you**) and from within the church itself (i.e. **and from among your own selves men will arise**). This is to be a proactive effort that is enforced by being **on the alert**. Alertness for Paul is further unpacked in stating that it is a preventative activity; **not ceasing to admonish**. Elders don't simply wait for wolves to show up, they also prevent wolves from being born by properly admonishing and teaching sound doctrine. For every elder "unceasing vigilance is the essential requirement."¹⁴¹

Elders Lay Hands on the Sick With Prayer

James 5:14-16

14 Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord 15 and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. 16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much. James 5:14-16

¹³⁷ 2 Timothy 2:21.

¹³⁸ 1 Timothy 4:16.

¹³⁹ Ben Witherngton III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 623.

¹⁴⁰ 1 Peter 1:17-19.

¹⁴¹ David Gooding, *True to the Faith: Charting the Course Through the Acts of the Apostles* (Port Colborne, ON: Gospel Folio Press, 1995), 360.

Here quality of character and maturity of faith intersect with the spiritual functionality of eldership toward those in need of prayer, healing and/or forgiveness. In the primary context here it is **prayer** for the *astheneō* (**sick**). Of the 33 occurrences of this word and its cognates in the New Testament 19 are translated as describing physical sickness, but the additional 14 are connected to emotional, spiritual, ethical or mental weakness or sins.¹⁴² Based on this there is a broad range of ailments that may cause someone to **call** (*proskaleō* – to come alongside) upon the elders. This call of the elders is to pray (1) **in the name of the Lord**, (2) **in faith** as people of (3) **righteous** living so as to (4) engage in effective prayers¹⁴³ that **accomplish much**. For James to state that such prayer is **in the name of the Lord** highlights that it's Jesus who is the mediator¹⁴⁴ and healer¹⁴⁵. The **faith** that prayers are offered in is the faith of the elders who bring surrogate devotion on behalf of the one who is suffering, and by extension may lack conviction. The faith of the elders is reinforced through their moral lifestyle of **righteous** living as “exemplars committed to doing God's will.”¹⁴⁶ It is this combination of elements within the prayerful elders that will **accomplish much**.

Elders Admonish, Encourage and Help With Patience

1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

12 But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, 13 and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. 14 We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. 15 See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

In the overall Thessalonian context, two things are worthy of record before we enter the text. First, the leadership structure of the church appears to be in a primitive state, and thus the formal labels of “elder”, “overseer” and “pastor/shepherd” are lacking within the Thessalonian correspondence.¹⁴⁷ This is due in part to the early nature of the Thessalonian letters (mid 40's AD) and also due to the fact that Paul had only invested a handful of weeks within the Thessalonian community before he was forced to flee the city.¹⁴⁸ Thus, formal eldership may not have been established by the time of Paul's letters. This leads to the second notable aspect, which is that leaders/pre-elders were emerging within the church, and their emergence was rooted in both character and action.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴² Douglas Moo, *The Letter of James: Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 236.

¹⁴³ See Excursus I in James Adamson, *The Epistle of James: New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1976), 205-10 on how this isn't stating that the harder one prays the more likely it is to be answered. Rather this highlights that the activity of prayer itself is powerful since God is the agent who is being appealed to. See also: Peter Davids, *Commentary on James: New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1982), 197.

¹⁴⁴ 1 Timothy 2:5.

¹⁴⁵ Both of sin and sickness – Matthew 9:1-7 with James 5:15

¹⁴⁶ Ralph Martin, *James: Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Nelson, 1988), 211.

¹⁴⁷ Gene Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians: Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 247.

¹⁴⁸ Acts 17:1-9 w/ Charles Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians: New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 6-16.

¹⁴⁹ Ben Witherngton III, *1 and 2 Thessalonians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006), 159-60.

Beginning in verse 12, Paul speaks to the general congregation and **requests** that they **appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction**. Here three functions of the leadership come to the forefront as things to be appreciated. The first is that the people are to **appreciate** the elders who **diligently labor among** the congregation. The legitimizing agent of an elder is not instillation by vote, bestowment of title or social standing within culture, but *kopiontas* - the engagement of difficult or exhausting labor¹⁵⁰- on behalf of Jesus and His church. Second, the church is to **appreciate** those who **have charge over you in the Lord**. The elders are the delegates of Jesus within the local church context. They alone are the ones who **have charge over** the congregation. This concept of **charge** (*proistēmi*) literally means, "to stand before" and conveys the idea of presiding, leading and directing. Yet, in its cultural framework this is an authority that is appointed. Benefactors who would contribute heavily to the well-being of a city would be said to **have charge**, not simply due to endowed authority, but displayed personal ownership.¹⁵¹ In this instance, the **charge** elders have is **in the Lord**. Jesus alone is the one who grants authority, since all authority is His.¹⁵² He appoints and removes elders and churches alike and displays an intimate leadership toward His flock by exercising authority through His elders.¹⁵³ One of the ways this happens is seen in the third function of eldership; **giving instruction**. The *noutheteō* (**instruction**) that is given is not merely the imparting of academic data, but admonition that brings personal, spiritual, doctrinal and moral transformation.¹⁵⁴ It is due to this commitment to leading the church that the people are to **esteem the elders very highly in love because of their work**. Not only is this a command for the church, but also the elders of the church are to realize that their leadership is to generate love and community, thus establishing **peace with one another**.

Moving into verse 14 Paul actively outlines the minimal responsibilities leaders are to fulfill in shepherding the church. First, elders are to **admonish the unruly**. The word *ataktos* (**unruly**) was used to describe soldiers who fell out of rank and acted in an insubordinate fashion.¹⁵⁵ Toward such a disposition the elders bring admonition. The King James Version translates **admonish** as "warn" and perhaps this gives the proper flavor. Admonition is neither to be critical nor judgmental, but rather to speak the authority of Jesus, His word and His will in a parental spirit.¹⁵⁶ Second, elders are to **encourage the fainthearted**. The word **fainthearted** literally means "small souled"¹⁵⁷ and describes those unwilling to place themselves in a potentially persecuted or spiritually uncomfortable position. To these, the elders are to bring *paramutheomai* (**encouragement**). The idea is that of one who comes alongside and speaks courage and conviction into the soul of another. Third, elders are to **help the weak**. The weak here may be a broad category enlisting the morally weak due to history,

¹⁵⁰ *κοπιαῶ/κωπος Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament Vol. 2* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1990), 307.

¹⁵¹ John Stott, *The Gospel and the End of Time: The Message of 1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1991), 119-21.

¹⁵² Matthew 28:18.

¹⁵³ Revelation 1-3.

¹⁵⁴ John MacArthur, *1 and 2 Thessalonians: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2002), 169-70.

¹⁵⁵ Ben Withernigton III, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 162.

¹⁵⁶ See 1 Corinthians 4:14.

¹⁵⁷ John MacArthur, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 178.

financially weak due to poverty, and physically weak due to sickness.¹⁵⁸ Whatever the weakness, the elders are literally to hold such people firmly and keep them propped up until they find the strength to stand. Finally, Paul brings this sentence of expectations to a close by calling the elders to **be patient with everyone**. In dealing with the unruly, the fainthearted and the weak it is easy to become impatient with imperceptible growth or habitual failure. Yet elders are to have unlimited patience with tiresome sheep just as God has patience with all His people.¹⁵⁹

In verse 15, Paul continues with his direction for the leaders of the church by imploring them to **see that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people**. The bulk of humanity suffers from an impending disposition of vengeance that lies in waiting until provoked by **evil**. It is this vengeance that Paul tells the elders to counter by **always seeking after that which is good for one another and for all people**. In the Thessalonian environment, the potential for revenge is underscored since they were among the first followers of Jesus to suffer persecution.¹⁶⁰ Yet instead of inciting a vengeful mob, leaders are to aid the church in seeing the big picture, coach them through their angry and assaulting feelings, and then create ways **good** can be extended. This **good** is indiscriminate and is expressed both inside the church toward other believers and outside the church toward those who stand apart from Jesus.¹⁶¹

Elders Appoint Elders And Train Future Leaders

Acts 13:2-3 (with Acts 14:23 & 1 Timothy 4:14), 1 Timothy 5:22 & 2 Timothy 2:2

The Means of Appointing an Elder

2 One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, 'Dedicate Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.' 3 So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. Acts 13:2-3

The Spirit directs His elder appointments in various ways, including worship, prayer, fasting, calling, character, qualification, and a time of proving.¹⁶² The elders of any local church should seek all such means of discernment, and they must do so with spiritual diligence. The diligence of the leadership in Acts 13 is displayed most profoundly in that they were **worshiping the Lord and fasting** when the **Holy Spirit** spoke concerning the **dedication** of **Barnabas and Saul**, but then they **fasted** and **prayed** even **more** before they **laid their hands on them**. This shows deep dependence on divine leading, both in identification, and in confirmation. The same concept of prayer, fasting and the laying on of hands is seen elsewhere in Acts as they **appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, commending them to the Lord in whom they had believed**¹⁶³, and with Timothy when

¹⁵⁸ Gene Green, *The Letters to the Thessalonians*, 253-54.

¹⁵⁹ Romans 2:5 in the NLT.

¹⁶⁰ Acts 17:5-9; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16; 2 Thessalonians 1:4.

¹⁶¹ See 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12.

¹⁶² See also 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

¹⁶³ Acts 14:23.

he received *the spiritual gift within [him], which was bestowed on [him] through prophetic utterance with the laying on of hands by the elders.*¹⁶⁴

Sobriety In Appointing an Elder

Do not lay hands upon an elder too hastily and thereby share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin. 1 Timothy 5:22

Neglecting the process of worship, prayer, fasting, calling, character, qualification, and a time of proving, may result in ***laying hands upon an elder too hastily***. More than simply being unfortunate or challenging, it is to ***share responsibility for the sins of others***. A lack of discernment that places an uncalled or unqualified elder in authority risks the spiritual credibility of the entire eldership.¹⁶⁵

Training Future Leaders

1 You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. 2 Timothy 2:1-2

As Paul writes to Timothy he reminds him of the reality that the church is always moving forward and thus needs to pass on the legacy of the gospel of grace. In this he says first that the message of grace must be ***entrusted*** to ***faithful men***. The idea to ***entrust*** (paratithemi/paratheke) means to deposit into a trust and is a familiar admonishment to Timothy (see 2 Timothy 1:12 & 14). ***Faith men*** are those who have displayed a proven character in both their life and competency. Thus in turn they can deposit the faithful message of the gospel to the next generation of the church or church planters.

Elders Protect, Rebuke, And Remove Fellow Elders

1 Timothy 5:19-21

19 Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses. 20 Those who continue in sin, rebuke in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning. 21 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of His chosen angels, to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality. 1 Timothy 5:19-21

Here one sees both a clear standard of protecting an elder against false or destructive accusation and an equally stern posture toward an elder who is found engaged in a scandalous or disqualifying sin. The protective clause follows OT precedent.¹⁶⁶ Not only will an elder not be convicted of a sin apart from ***two or three witnesses***, the ***accusation*** (literally to speak against publicly) will not even be ***paradechomai*** (entertained or brought to mind). Elders are not simply to disregard the investigation of an elder apart from two or more witnesses, but rather they are to ignore the accusation completely.¹⁶⁷ But, if there are two or more personal witnesses connected to the accusation, the elder is to be, ***rebuked in the presence of all, so that the rest also will be fearful of sinning***. The word ***rebuke*** here has a range of meaning stretching from confrontation to exposure to discipline.¹⁶⁸ Whatever the

¹⁶⁴ 1 Timothy 4:14.

¹⁶⁵ Hebrews 13:17.

¹⁶⁶ Deuteronomy 19:15.

¹⁶⁷ John Stott, *Guard the Truth*, 138-39.

¹⁶⁸ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 313.

weight of this word the **rebuke** is **in the presence of all so that the rest** [loipos – those of same kind, i.e. the elders]¹⁶⁹ **also will be fearful of sinning**. Seeing the real life pain and consequences of sin should act as a powerful motivation for elders to strive for a life of purity, truth and grace.

Of final consideration in this text are two critical phrases; The first is, **those who continue in sin**. Does a single sin warrant rebuke, or must it be habitual sin? Does repentance annul any rebuke, or is rebuke the consequence regardless of repentance since rebuke hones the purity of the eldership? Does such an event disqualify an elder, or is it rebuke with continued service? Textually speaking the wording describes continual sinning, not simply in a particular area, but as a general practice.¹⁷⁰ Any elder known for a generally sinful lifestyle must be confronted. However, some single acts of sin are more threatening or scandalous as they relate to the reputation of Jesus and the health of His church. For example, some sexual sins or sins of divisiveness require swift or dramatic action,¹⁷¹ where as other sins simply require coaching.¹⁷² The willingness of the sinning elder to come under corrective authority also plays a key role. Some sins may permanently disqualify, while others temporarily disqualify. Some sins deeply affect the qualities of eldership,¹⁷³ where others only graze qualities for a season. Ultimately it will be the eldership itself that must decide on the scale and scope of both the sin and the response, since they are **to maintain these principles without bias, doing nothing in a spirit of partiality**.

The second key phrase says that the reprimand of a sinning elder is **in the presence of all**. Is the “**all**” here meaning the full body of elders, or the full body of the congregation? Textually this can be debated either way, but the passage that Paul uses from Deuteronomy 19:15 to direct the need for two or three witnesses goes on to say that anyone who sins in relationship to this is to be dealt with publicly so that “the rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you.”¹⁷⁴ While hardly conclusive, the echoes of the text lean toward a full congregational **rebuke**.¹⁷⁵ To some this appears harsh, but such measures were actually considered an act of grace by which the swift **rebuke** of one prevents the spread of sin in many. Either by right living or by rebuke for wrong an elder will be held up as an example to the church.

Elders Who Lead, Preach And Teach Well Are Worthy Of Financial Support

1 Timothy 5:17-18

The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages." 1 Timothy 5:17-18

¹⁶⁹ George Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 236-37. See also William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 314; John MacArthur *1 Timothy*, 223.

¹⁷⁰ Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 217-19.

¹⁷¹ See 1 Corinthians 5:1-12; Titus 3:10-11.

¹⁷² Galatians 6:1-2.

¹⁷³ As outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

¹⁷⁴ Deuteronomy 19:20.

¹⁷⁵ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 314.

Here a unique category within the overall **elders** comes to light with those who are **worthy of double honor**. Now, if in this context **honor** simply meant “respect”, then Paul would have been creating a hierarchy of church leadership in which specifically gifted elders would receive double respect. However, it’s clear that all elders are to be respected equally, since there is no senior elder.¹⁷⁶ Thus, **honor** must have a more specific connotation. In Acts **honor** (*timē*) was used to describe how Ananias sold property and kept back part of the *timē* (honor/proceeds) of his property transaction.¹⁷⁷ This same usage for **honor** is repeatedly employed throughout the New Testament as a description for financial value.¹⁷⁸ Pressing into verse 18 that is precisely Paul’s usage when he illustrates his point by stating, “**you shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing**”¹⁷⁹ and “**the laborer is worthy of his wages.**”¹⁸⁰ Based on this Paul seems to be communicating that specific elders are to receive a double wage for their work. This was in fact the secular meaning of the phrase “**double honor**” and its connection to the pay scale of select soldiers who were exceptionally worthy of double compensation.¹⁸¹ Based on this, Paul appears to be stating that certain elders within the overall rank of elders are to be set apart with double pay,¹⁸² not to execute greater authority, but to facilitate bolder ministry. This ministry is connected to their being gifted to **rule well, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching**. Three things mark the kind of elders that are **considered worthy of double honor**. First, it is elders who *kalos proistēmi* (**rule well**). The word **rule** literally means, “to stand first”.¹⁸³ To **rule well** means that these financially supported elders are the “ones who stand out as firsts” or “first(s) among equals.”¹⁸⁴ Again, this role is not rooted in increased authority, but rather specialized ability. Every elder, lay and paid, have equal authority. The paid elders simply guide and execute the direction of the full eldership due to their gifting. Their gifting in **preaching and teaching** is unique to their leadership, and thus frees them financially to lead/rule. **Preaching** captures the application of God’s Word to the church. **Teaching** on the other hand is the ability to collect and impart doctrines from Scripture that establish the foundation of the church.

The general principle here is that paid elders are no different than lay elders when it comes to office, moral qualification, and authority. The difference is exclusively in abilities, gifts and function. All elders must fulfill the pre-set qualities necessary to lead, which includes “able to teach”. However, those elders who are paid are uniquely gifted to serve as the first(s) among equals.

¹⁷⁶ 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17.

¹⁷⁷ Acts 5:3.

¹⁷⁸ See Matthew 27:6,9; Acts 4:34, 7:16, 9:19; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23.

¹⁷⁹ Quote from Deuteronomy 25:4.

¹⁸⁰ Quote from Luke 10:7.

¹⁸¹ Craig Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993), 618.

¹⁸² See Hendriksen who states, “elders who do their duties well should be considered as deserving twice the salary they get.” William Hendriksen, *I-II Timothy: New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), 180. See also Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin, *1,2 Timothy and Titus*, 155.

¹⁸³ John MacArthur *1 Timothy*, 219.

¹⁸⁴ Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 45-48; Mark Driscoll, *On Church Leadership*, 20-24.

Elders Possess Authority and Expect Accountability from God and Jesus.

Hebrews 13:17 & James 3:1

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you. Hebrews 13:17

Three elements emerge from the text; first, the congregation is called to **obey** and **submit** to the **leaders** of the church. While this is worthy of investigation as far as church policy is concerned, the current scope of this study is more preoccupied with eldership implications. Based on this we see the second element emerge which is that the congregation obeys and submits because the leaders **keep watch over [their] souls as those who will give an account**. While often discussions arise over the “balance of power” within a local church, such discussion reveals a lowered view of God’s present involvement within His church and the seriousness of God’s accounting toward elders. The only power to be considered is Jesus’ and it is not balanced. The focus is not on a balanced structure that seeks to prevent abuse, but in a Biblical structure that maintains standards, and fulfills responsibilities of, leadership, and loves and fears both the Father and the Son.¹⁸⁵ Elders are saddled with authority and accountability whether their ecclesiastical structure warns of such an expectation or not. No formal church leader will find immunity behind policy or structure when Jesus seeks an account of the condition of the church in which they served. If one is a leader, one **keeps watch over souls**. This image is that of under-shepherds¹⁸⁶ who are accountable to “our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep.”¹⁸⁷ One day every elder will present their **account**¹⁸⁸ to Jesus for the state of their local church; for good or bad. In order to make the accounting process as profitable as possible, a third element emerges when the writer tells the congregation, **Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you**. A people who submit and obey their under-shepherds as unto the Great Shepherd of the sheep will generate a joy for their leaders that creates cyclical blessing.

Let not many of you become teachers, my brethren, knowing that as such we will incur a stricter judgment. James 3:1

Since all elders must both possess and exercise teaching gifts¹⁸⁹ they must also retain a sense of sobriety in dispensing what is taught. Perhaps James as the brother of Jesus is reflecting on his brother’s warnings against the errant teachers of his day and how they would incur the strictest judgment.¹⁹⁰ Of course an elder will not be negatively judged simply for teaching, but teaching exposes an elder to the danger

¹⁸⁵ Hebrews 12:28-29; Revelation 1:9-3:22.

¹⁸⁶ Paul Ellingworth, *Commentary on Hebrews: New International Greek Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 723.

¹⁸⁷ Hebrews 13:20.

¹⁸⁸ The idea here is equivalent to that of a modern day audit. All elders must be able to reconcile the spiritual, doctrinal and moral books of the church. See David deSilva, *Perseverance in Grace: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Epistle “to the Hebrews”* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 509.

¹⁸⁹ Titus 1:9.

¹⁹⁰ See Matthew 23:1-33; Mark 9:42; 12:40; Luke 20:47.

of judgment because poor teaching affects the souls of many.¹⁹¹ This is again why purity of doctrine and qualities of eldership are held to such a high standard within the church.

Elders Partner With and Oversee Deacons

Philippians 1:1

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons: Philippians 1:1

The existence of both **overseers** and **deacons** in Philippi shows that plurality exists in both categories within a single church.¹⁹² There is no absolute overseer or absolute deacon. Therefore, in order to have the overseeing eldership focus on leading the church, additional servant leaders are required to take up various other service ministries.

¹Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ²And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. ³Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ⁴But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." ⁵And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. Acts 6:1-6

While the dynamic here is that of the Apostles deploying the first proto-deacons, the concept is clear that the appointment of these **picked out** servants was official (**appoint**), directed by the teaching arm of the church (**the twelve – But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word**), possessed spiritual requirements (**seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom**), and acted as an extension of the leadership so that they could focus on the teaching of the Word of God and prayer (**It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables**).

Commentary On The Qualities and Qualifications of New Testament Deacons.

Deacons are critical to the health and unity of the church. Because of this, the role of the New Testament deacon should never be perceived as a lesser office within the church. Nor is it to be established as a rung to the office of an elder, but rather, the diaconate is a complementarian office that works in congruity with the elders, so as to secure the elderships directives to teach, lead and protect. They do this by absorbing the servant oriented needs of the church. Therefore, the qualities and

¹⁹¹ Peter Davids, *The Epistle of James*, 136-37.

¹⁹² Gerald Hawthorne, *Philippians: Word Biblical Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Nelson, 2004), 9.

qualifications of a deacon are as important as those of the overseeing elders. These qualities are displayed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Qualities and Qualifications Abbreviated and Thematic

Moral Qualities

A Deacon is to be esteemed by others. 1 Timothy 3:8 & 3:11
A Deacon is to be consistent. 1 Timothy 3:8
A Deacon is not to be given to drunkenness. 1 Timothy 3:8
A Deacon is not to be a lover of money. 1 Timothy 3:8
A Deacon is to be blameless. 1 Timothy 3:9
A Deacon is to be objective. 1 Timothy 3:11
A Deacon is to be able to keep confidences. 1 Timothy 3:11

Domestic Qualities

A Deacon is to be faithful in their marriage. 1 Timothy 3:12
A Deacon is to manage their children and household well. 1 Timothy 3:12

Spiritual Qualities

A Deacon is to know Truth and obey it. 1 Timothy 3:9
A Deacon is to be proven in acts of service. 1 Timothy 3:10
A Deacon is to be faithful in all situations. 1 Timothy 3:11
A Deacon is to serve well. 1 Timothy 3:12

Qualities and Qualifications Expanded In Canonical Order

Commentary On 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Deacons likewise must be - 1 Timothy 3:8a

The label **deacon** is an illusive word in English simply because it offers nothing more than a transliteration from the Greek *diakonos* (servant) and its related terms *diakoneō* (to serve) *diakonia* (service).¹⁹³ Now in one sense, understanding the meaning of “deacon” gives general direction to their purpose and role, but equally the word lacks precision as to how exactly such “servants” serve. In this way, the deaconate is a fluid office that is tailored to the ever-changing needs of the local church and its eldership.¹⁹⁴

Regardless of the needs that call upon the deacons of the local church, every deacon **must** exhibit specific character qualities.¹⁹⁵ It is not enough that a deacon is proficient in select duties, but they must also dispense the spiritual and moral qualities that align with the servant model of Jesus Himself.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ While the word *diakonos* and its cognates appear over 100 times in the New Testament, only here and Philippians 1:1 is the usage transliterated to imply an official office. A third technical occurrence may be that of Phoebe in Romans 16:1. See Alexander Strauch, *The New Testament Deacon* (Littletton, CO: Lewis & Roth, 1992), 71. On Phoebe the deacon see Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans: New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 913-14.

¹⁹⁴ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 198. Especially the three basic usages of *diakon*: waiting tables, general service and service to the Christian community as extensions of grace gifts.

¹⁹⁵ “The phrase *dei...einai* (must be) is grammatically assumed from its usage in verse 2 thus tying the requirements of a deacon to those of an elder.” In William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 197.

¹⁹⁶ See Mark 10:45; John 13:14; Philippians 2:5-8.

men of dignity, - 1 Timothy 3:8b

The addition of **men** is not found in the original Greek, but the NASB foresees the upcoming transition to women deacons in verse 11 and thus injects the addition to delineate the qualities of male deacons and female deacons. This is especially important since **dignity** is listed as the first character requirement for both the male and female deacons.¹⁹⁷

The word **dignity** captures in a simple sense, "one who is worthy of respect."¹⁹⁸ Yet, even this is a narrow vision of the full richness the word employs. As Hawthorne notes, "it is impossible to equate it with any one English word" even though it suggests ideas such as "noble", "esteemed" or "majestic." From this he concludes that "it refers to lofty things, majestic things, things that lift the mind from the cheap and tawdry to that which is noble and good and of moral worth."¹⁹⁹ Of course, some could find it curious that Paul would require such a weighty character trait of those who are called to acts of rudimentary service. Yet one must also recall that Christ-centered service, and modeling such service to others, is the trademark of the Kingdom.²⁰⁰ It is from this platform that Paul moves to the deacons need for "self-control in speech, drink, and a desire for wealth."²⁰¹

not double-tongued, - 1 Timothy 3:8c

The phrase *mē dilogous* (**not double-tongued** – a compound of *dis* "two" and *logos* "word" literally meaning "two sayings") is a rare phrase appearing only here in the New Testament, and never within known first century literature. As a result, a concrete meaning is impossible. Perhaps the lack of clarity allows for a range of meanings including: repeating what others have said (gossip), saying one thing and meaning another (insincerity), telling one person one thing and another person something else (manipulation) or speaking out of both sides of the mouth (deceit). In all such areas, deacons are to have a well-established control of their speech.²⁰²

or addicted to much wine - 1 Timothy 3:8d

The word *prosechō* (**addicted to**) describes a pre occupation with or devotion to a person or thing. It is used both negatively of those who have an addiction to their heretical myths²⁰³ and positively of Timothy's devotion to the public reading of Scripture.²⁰⁴ Here the negative is intended, showing that deacons, just as their elder counterparts, are to be free from the abuse of alcohol.

or fond of sordid gain, - 1 Timothy 3:8e

As with elders, Paul speaks of *aischrokerde* (**sordid gain**), a compound of *aischros* (shameful) and *kerdos* (profit). Integrity in one's personal fiscal stewardship is key to a sound reputation in and outside of the local church. This would be distinctively true

¹⁹⁷ See 1 Timothy 3:8; 3:11.

¹⁹⁸ George Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 168.

¹⁹⁹ Gerald Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 188.

²⁰⁰ See Luke 22:24-28.

²⁰¹ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 199.

²⁰² See James 3:1-12.

²⁰³ 1 Timothy 1:4.

²⁰⁴ 1 Timothy 4:11.

for deacons who may be called upon to distribute resources to the poor or widows.²⁰⁵

but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. - 1 Timothy 3:9a

Here, Paul makes a strong appeal to the union of faith and practice in the life of the deacon: a connection common to the Pastorals.²⁰⁶ The first requirement is that all deacons are to be **holding to the mystery of the faith**. This phrase is a Pauline device referring to the **mystery** that has been revealed in the person and work of Jesus.² Therefore, the **mystery of the faith** is the victory of Christ over Satan, sin, division and death.²⁰⁸ It is to this gospel that deacons are to display a firm allegiance.

In addition, one also sees that deacons are called to hold to the faith rather than teach the faith; again displaying an office that is complementary to the elders.² This allows the elders to exercise their aptitude in teaching,²¹⁰ because the deacons exercise their dedication in serving. However, a deacon is to exercise **the faith with a clear conscience**. This describes a properly calibrated conscience that does not falsely condemn due to misapplied standards, while equally establishing a true obedience to Jesus.²¹¹

These must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. - 1 Timothy 3:10

In connection with faith and practice, a deacon must also be *dokimazō* (**tested** to the point of receiving and maintaining an approval).²¹² If a potential deacon has displayed faithfulness and a life that is **beyond reproach**,²¹³ then they are to be officially established as those who serve the church.

Women must likewise be - 1 Timothy 3:11a

The transition into verse 11 crosses the boarder into a whole host of interpretative concerns that the English reader only encounters when comparing miscellaneous versions. The core of debate surrounds whether *gynaikeis/gynē* is to be understood as "the women who are deacons/deaconesses" or "the wives" of those who are deacons. Grammatically, either option has viability, and scholastically, both have been defended ad nauseum.²¹⁴

²⁰⁵ John MacArthur *1 Timothy*, 128.

²⁰⁶ See 1 Timothy 1:19. See also William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, cxxx-cxxxv; for an excellent examination on the union of faith and works in the Pastorals.

²⁰⁷ See 1 Timothy 3:16.

²⁰⁸ See Colossians 1:24-29. Also note that "gospel" intends a full range meaning that intends to convey the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham to bless the nations (Genesis 12-18). In this way the gospel deals both with the salvation and sanctification of a unified church (including all matters of doctrine) and the eschatological glorification of God's unified creation.

²⁰⁹ This is not to say that a deacon is forbidden to teach or that deacons lack the capacity to teach. Certainly Stephen would be the prototype of a teaching deacon in Acts 6-7. The real issue is that teaching is not required of a person in order to be a deacon.

²¹⁰ 1 Timothy 3:2.

²¹¹ The Ephesian heresy Paul appeared to be combating possessed a strange blend of both misapplied liberty (1 Timothy 2:9-10 & 2 Timothy 3:1-9) and misdirected legalism (1 Timothy 1:3-11 & 4:1-5). Both are equally toxic to the gospel and thus both ends of the conscience spectrum must be guarded by the truth of the gospel.

²¹² The word "tested" is in the present tense and implies an ongoing test, not simply a probationary period.

²¹³ See commentary on "above reproach" for elders in 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:6.

²¹⁴ For an interpretative defense of "women" see Philip Towner, *The Letters To Timothy and Titus*, 265-66. For a defense of "wives" see George Knight, *Pastoral Epistles*, 170-73.

For those who would advance, this as a list of qualities for a deacon's wife, the basic evidence rests in the fact that Paul chose to sandwich the discussion about the women/wives between the qualities of male deacons. In this sense, it is an ABA construction. (A) He qualifies male deacons. (B) He qualifies their wives. (A) He returns to some final qualifications on male deacons. This, connected with the fact that Paul does not employ the term "deacon" for the section on the women/wives, are the two strongest pieces of evidence for maintaining that this section is a list of qualities a deacon's wife must maintain.

Countering these are three critical elements that offer an alternative reading; the word *homoiōs* (**likewise**), the absence of a possessive pronoun or definite article before *gynaikes* (**women/wives**), and the presence elsewhere of female deacons in the canon.²¹⁵ Taking these considerations in order, the first issue is connected to the use of **likewise**: a bridge that introduces a new, yet related category. In this way Paul is saying, "In the same way the male deacons need to be... Female (deacons) need to be..."²¹⁶ The second matter deals with the absence of a grammatical trigger that would warrant *gynaikes* to be translated as "wives". Were either a possessive pronoun (i.e. their) or a definite article (i.e. the) present, the result would be, "their wives" or "the wives" of deacons. But, in the absence of both, the required result is "women". Maintaining this strand of thought and linking the word "**likewise**," the reading becomes "Deacon-like women must be..." Since the word "deaconess" would not be fabricated until the second or third century, such makeshift usage fits well in the early evolution of the diaconate.²¹⁷ This is perhaps why in the earliest period of the diaconate, women such as Phoebe were given the masculine description "deacon".²¹⁸

Based on the assorted evidence above, this commentary maintains that female deacons are in view and work alongside male deacons, in joint service and under the leadership of the elders. These "deacon-like women", as with their male counterparts, are to maintain the select personal qualities which are listed below.

dignified, - 1 Timothy 3:11b

The same requirement that launched the section on male deacons leads off the female deacons. A noble, esteemed and majestic character maintains a powerful influence among those who are being served. See notes on 1 Timothy 3:8 for further commentary.

not malicious gossips, - 1 Timothy 3:11c

²¹⁵ See Phoebe in Romans 16:1.

²¹⁶ The addition of the word "deacons" should be implied because of the use of "likewise" at the outset of the list.

²¹⁷ Evidence of deaconesses exists extra-biblically from as early as the 2nd century as documented in a letter from Pliny of Bithynia to the emperor Trajan (AD 111). Pliny refers to "two maid-servants" as deaconesses whom he tortures to find out more about the Christians. This reinforces the existence of the office of the deaconesses in parts of the eastern Roman Empire. However, it is more commonly believed that the institution of the deaconesses began in the 3rd century around the time the Didascalia was written. It is the first document that specifically discusses the role of the deacons and the deaconesses in the region of Syria. See J.D. Douglas, et al., "deaconess" *New Bible Dictionary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993), 270.

²¹⁸ *Diakonos* is a masculine form and the only form that was available in the first century. Seeing that Romans was written prior to the Pastoral letters, it appears that the evolution of describing women servants went from the pure masculine form "deacon" (Romans) to the hybrid "deacon-like" (1 Timothy) to "maid-servants" (Pliny) to eventually "deaconesses" (the Didascalia).

This injunction becomes evident when one notes that the Greek word here for **malicious gossips** is *diabolos*, the same word used to describe the Devil himself.² Later Paul would discuss a growing fear that the young widows who were going from house to house as gossips, busybodies and slanders had gone astray to follow Satan.²²⁰ In both instances an improper use of words is linked to acts of the Devil. Perhaps just as Jesus is the true *logos* that offers life and creation, the Devil promotes false *logos* that offers death and destruction. Therefore, just as male deacons must be straight talkers, female deacons must be discrete talkers.

but temperate, - 1 Timothy 3:11d

The word *nēphalios* (**temperate**) was rooted in a cultic usage that meant, “holding no wine”, including anything made from the grape vine.²²¹ By the first century, it held the common idea of thinking objectively and obediently in times where emotion or reaction can dominate.

faithful in all things. - 1 Timothy 3:11e

This is the catch-all requirement in the list that emphasizes complete reliability.²² Many different requirements can dominate the deaconate, often without direct accountability or follow-up. Based on this every deacon, male or female, must maintain a consistent dependability.

Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, - 1 Timothy 3:12a

Here Paul shifts back to the male deaconate. As with elders, a deacon must be a one-woman man. Marital infidelity was commonly practiced within Roman society; a society from which Ephesus adopted many cultural norms. Based on this, marital fidelity is an essential requirement in the establishing of a deacon. See notes on 1 Timothy 3:2 for further commentary on the implications of infidelity do to remarriage.

and good managers of their children and their own households. - 1 Timothy 3:12b

The original etymology of a **manager** (*proistamenos*) was one who goes before to lead, care and protect. In this case the servant-leadership that is required of a deacon must first be displayed toward their **children** and their **household**. If a deacon is negligent spiritually, emotionally, physically or financially in regard to their primary sphere of influence, then they will be ill equipped to serve the needs of God's household. Every leader in the church is only the leader they are in their home.

For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. - 1 Timothy 3:13

While there are future rewards that come from serving Christ, Paul states there are also the temporal rewards of a good reputation in the community and deepening confidence in the faith for those who have **served well** as deacons. The former is seen in a *bathmos* (**standing**) that is *kalos* (**high/excellent**). While a deacon should never seek to

²¹⁹ See 1 Timothy 3:6-7; 2 Timothy 2:26.

²²⁰ See 1 Timothy 5:11-15.

²²¹ William Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 173.

²²² *Pistos/pistas* is used here in its passive sense indicating trustworthy, faithful or dependable as opposed to an active sense which would pertain to faith in all things.

be elevated, a true deacon is worthy of being elevated and imitated as those who are first and greatest in the Kingdom.²²³ In addition to the respect that comes externally by way of others, there is also a fortitude that develops internally by way of a **great confidence in the faith**. *Parrēsia* (**confidence**) is often used to describe an openness or clarity of speech due to a bold disposition.²²⁴ Thus as deacons serve in the likeness of Christ, they form the mind of Christ which allows them to courageously express their **faith** in **Christ Jesus**.

²²³ Mark 9:33-35; Luke 22:24-27.

²²⁴ Philip Towner, *The Letters To Timothy and Titus*, 268. See also Acts 4:29-31; 28:31; Ephesians 6:19.

Excursus 1: On Eldership Plurality In The New Testament.

The Bible Recognizes Only One Senior Pastor – JESUS.

Peter encourages his fellow elders²²⁵ with these words, “**when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.**” The title **Chief Shepherd** is a rare compound of two Greek words *archē* (ruler, senior, chief, in charge) and *poimēn* (pastor/shepherd – the same word used in vs.1-3 when describing the under-shepherds/elders/pastors of the local churches). This is the only Biblical reference to a senior pastor and it is reserved for Jesus alone. A search of every available version of the Bible shows that there is never a reference to any person being called a senior pastor nor did the title exist outside of its application to Jesus Himself.

The Title “Pastor” Is A Rare Term In The New Testament – And It Is Always Used In A Plural Context.

Noun/Title Form:

Ephesians 4:11

“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as **pastors** (*poimēn*) and teachers.” It is critical to note that this speaks of pastors (plural) without any hint of hierarchy or descending labeling.

Verb/Function Form:

Acts 20:17-31 (select scriptures)

17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. 18 When they arrived, he said to them... 28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be **shepherds** (*poimainein* – the present infinitive form that means *to act as poimēn/pastors*) of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. 31 So be on your guard!

1 Peter 5 1-2a

Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, **shepherd** (*poimante*—the aorist imperative form that means *to act as poimēn/pastors*) the flock.

The Title “Elders” Is The Dominate Term For Church Leadership In The New Testament And It Is Used Interchangeably With The Concept Of “Pastors/Pastoring” And “Overseers/Overseeing”.

In the Greek culture the word **overseer** (episkopos) was used to describe a variety of civic, judicial and political functions.²²⁶ Overseers were sent to dependent states

²²⁵ That Peter was a fellow elder (vs.1) shows that he was also not their senior pastor nor their “superior” even as an apostle.

²²⁶ John Stott, *Guard the Truth: The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1996), 91.

within Roman jurisdiction to ensure order and correct state constitutions. They were also used as city administrators, managers or inspectors. Additionally, the word was used of Roman deities to describe the act of watching over a country or people.²²⁷

In the early Christian movement, the word was commandeered to describe the office of oversight within the local church. What is of note here is that **overseer** is a word used interchangeably in the New Testament with the more common word **elder** (presbyteros) and rare word **pastor/shepherd** (poimēn/poimnē). We see this again in Acts 20 where Paul calls for the **elders** of the church in Ephesus (vs 17) and addresses them as **overseers** (vs 28) who **pastor/shepherd** the flock of God (vs. 28). Based on this, there is no notable difference between the concept of an **elder**, a **pastor**, and an **overseer**. All three are descriptions of the same office.²²⁸ In addition, one also notes that within the Ephesian church these descriptors are all plural and there is never a hint of an authoritative senior pastor/elder/overseer. Thus, **overseer** is not a descriptor of a presidential or papal office, but of a senatorial or cardinal one.

Responsibilities, Dynamics and Qualities of Plural Eldership

Responsibilities and Dynamics of Plural Eldership

Elders Pray and Promote the Word. Acts 6:1-4

Elders Receive Funds Acts. 11: 29-30

Elders Resolve Doctrinal Controversy Acts. 15:1-2, 4-7a; 22-25 & 16:4

Elders Provide Guidance and Protection. Acts 20:17-18 & 28-31

Elders Lay Hands on the Sick with Prayer. James 5:14-16

Elders Admonish, Encourage and Help With Patience. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-15

Elders Appoint Elders. Acts 14:23, 1 Timothy 4:14 & 1 Timothy 5:22

Elders Protect and Rebuke Fellow Elders. 1 Timothy 5:19-21

Elders Who Lead, Preach and Teach Well Deserve Financial Support.
1 Timothy 5:17-18

Elders Possess Authority and Expect Accountability from God and Jesus.
Hebrews 13:17 & James 3:1

Elders Accept Aid From Deacons. Philippians 1:1

Qualities of Plural Eldership

Moral Qualities

An elder is to be blameless. 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:6

An elder must be self-controlled. 1 Timothy 3:3 & Titus 1:8

An elder is to be temperate. 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:8

An elder must be gentle. 1 Timothy 3:3

An elder is not to be given to drunkenness. 1 Timothy 3:3 & Titus 1:7

An elder must not be violent. 1 Timothy 3:3 & Titus 1:7

An elder is not to be a lover of money. 1 Timothy 3:3 & Titus 1:7

An elder is not to be quarrelsome. 1 Timothy 3:3

An elder is not to pursue dishonest gain. Titus 1:7

An elder is not to be overbearing. Titus 1:7

An elder is to be one who loves what is good. Titus 1:8

²²⁷ Colin Brown, "episkopos" *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Regency/Zondervan, 1986), 189.

²²⁸ Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 31-34. See also 1 Peter 5:1-3 for the same three fold description of elders who pastorally oversee.

Domestic Qualities

An elder must be faithful to his spouse. 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:6

An elder is to be hospitable. 1 Timothy 3:2 & Titus 1:3

An elder must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. 1 Timothy 3:4 & Titus 1:6

Spiritual Qualities

An elder must be teachable. 1 Timothy 3:2

An elder must not be a recent convert. 1 Timothy 3:6

An elder must be of good reputation with those who do not follow Jesus. 1 Timothy 3:7

An elder is to be upright. Titus 1:8

An elder is to be holy. Titus 1:8

An elder must be disciplined. Titus 1:8

An elder must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught. Titus 1:9

An elder must be able to encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. Titus 1:9

An elder is to lead by example and gentle persuasion. 1 Peter 5:3

An elder is to lead because they care, not because they must. 1 Peter 5:2

An elder is to care for people. 1 Peter 5:2

While There Is A Plurality of Pastoral Overseeing Elders Who Hold Equal Authority, There Is A Place For Functional Responsibility – Paid Elders.

1 Timothy 5:17-18

The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," and "The laborer is worthy of his wages."

Here a unique category within the overall **elders** comes to light with those who are **worthy of double honor**. Now if in this context **honor** simply meant "respect" then Paul would have been creating a hierarchy of church leadership in which specifically gifted elders would receive double respect. However, it's clear that all elders are to be respected equally since there is no senior elder.²²⁹ Thus, **honor** must have a more specific connotation. In Acts **honor** (*timē*) was used to describe how Ananias sold property and kept back part of the *timē* (honor/proceeds) of his property transaction.²³⁰ This same usage for **honor** is repeatedly employed throughout the New Testament as a description for financial value.²³¹ Pressing into verse 18, that is precisely Paul's usage when he illustrates his point by stating, "**you shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing**"²³² and "**the laborer is worthy of his wages.**"²³³ Based on this Paul seems to be communicating that specific elders are to receive a double wage for their work. This was in fact the secular meaning of the phrase "**double honor**" and its connection to the pay scale of select soldiers who were exceptionally worthy of double compensation.²³⁴ Based on this, Paul appears

²²⁹ 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17.

²³⁰ Acts 5:3.

²³¹ See Matthew 27:6,9; Acts 4:34, 7:16, 9:19; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 7:23.

²³² Quote from Deuteronomy 25:4.

²³³ Quote from Luke 10:7.

²³⁴ Craig Keener, *IVP Bible Background Commentary*, 618.

to be stating that certain elders within the overall rank of elders are to be set apart with double pay,²³⁵ not to execute greater authority, but to facilitate bolder ministry.

The idea of bolder ministry is connected to them being gifted to **rule well, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching**. Three things mark the kind of elders that are **considered worthy of double honor**. First, it is elders who *kalos proistēmi* (**rule well**). The word **rule** literally means, "to stand first".²³⁶ To **rule well** means that these financially supported elders are the "ones who stand out as firsts" or "first(s) among equals."²³⁷ Again, this role is not rooted in increased authority, but rather specialized ability. Every elder, lay and paid, have equal authority. The paid elders simply guide and execute the direction of the full eldership due to their gifting. Their gifting in **preaching and teaching** is Unique to their leadership, and thus frees them financially to lead/rule. **Preaching** captures the application of God's Word to the church. **Teaching** on the other hand is the ability to collect and impart doctrines from Scripture that establish the foundation of the church.

The general principle here is that paid elders are no different than lay elders when it comes to office, moral qualification and authority. The difference is exclusively in abilities, gifts and function. All elders must fulfill the pre-set qualities necessary to lead, which includes "able to teach". However, those elders who are paid are uniquely gifted to serve as the first(s) among equals.

First(s) Among Equals.

Based on what was just explored in 1 Timothy 5:17-18, those who *kalos proistēmi* (**rule well**) are by way of a literal definition "the first(s) among equals" or "those who stand first." However, in this concept one must escape the prevailing idea that to be first is to be in charge. The first(s) are designed to function within a Biblically informed servant leadership as core leaders, not as corporate organizational leaders. This means that while in many ways the "first(s)" are often looked to for leadership since they are gifted in that area, the exercise of their leadership does not by default make them "the leader". In this way they bring leadership to the table without bringing the ego of "the leader". Equally, because "first(s)" bring the gift of leadership to the overall body of elders, those elders who are less gifted in ecclesiastical leadership should welcome such leading gifts. To refuse to acknowledge, allow, and even empower varying degrees of leading skills in an equal eldership may be as egotistical as the person who seeks to be the sole leader. Much like the prophets of the Corinthian assembly, the elders of any church are "subject to one another" as a collective whole.²³⁸

A parallel of this model is seen in the 12 Apostles. There were the 12 (the group), then there were the 3 (Peter, James & John) "firsts among equals", and then there was Peter "first among equals". Peter had no authority over the 3 or the 12, but he was a

²³⁵ See Hendriksen who states, "elders who do their duties well should be considered as deserving twice the salary they get." William Hendriksen, *I-II Timothy: New Testament Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1991), 180. See also Thomas Lea and Hayne Griffin, *1,2 Timothy and Titus*, 155.

²³⁶ John MacArthur *1 Timothy: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1995), 219.

²³⁷ Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership* (Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth, 1995), 45-48; Mark Driscoll, *On Church Leadership* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 20-24.

²³⁸ 1 Corinthians 14:29-32

type of spokesman and visionary for the 12. The 3 had no authority over the other 9, but their focus was more intense than the 9 others. It is a model of mutual submission with various gifts.

How This Looks In A Local Church Context.

Jesus Led + Elder Oversight (equals with first{s} among equals) + Deacon Empowered + Membership/Participant Invested = Biblically Informed Missional Church.

Jesus is the Senior Pastor and Leader of His Church.

The Pastor/Elder/Overseers lead under a plurality model with a core pastor functioning as a “first among equals.” The core pastor’s expertise is the vision and mobilization of the church in conjunction with the team of elders. He also is commissioned to mobilize, encourage, equip, and defend the overall staff elders, and deacons. The elder team is parceled into two areas of gifting: staff and laity. The staff elders, traditionally called pastors, are those uniquely gifted for leading, preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17) with the lay elders conferring with the staff elders for affirming direction and vision. The collective team of elders is called to guard, teach and lead the church.

The Deacons are the ministry engine of the church. These leaders are empowered to oversee select ministries as extensions of the church vision set by the elders. These leaders, like the elders, are a mix of supported and laity.

The Members and Participants are what make the church the church. Their investment into mission and ministry advance Jesus’ Kingdom. In the spirit of unity and oneness, the Members annually affirm/recommend church leadership and budget, as well as, affirm any buying and selling of property.

Further Questions & Objections

Weren’t Paul, Timothy and Titus “senior pastors”?

No! Each of these individuals served in an “establish and transition” role as missionary evangelists. The New Testament concept for an evangelist was less about being evangelistic in message (like we see today) and more about establishing churches from which evangelism and discipleship took place under a local plural eldership.²³⁹ In this way, the job of people like Paul, Timothy or Titus was to plant churches, establish elders, and then move on to duplicate the process. Once the eldership was established, the normative pattern for the local church was established as well. We see an example of this as the repeated pattern in Acts 14:21-23 when it says, “They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. ‘We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,’ they said. Paul and Barnabas appointed elders (plural) for them in each church (singular) and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust.” In this way we see that the pattern for the New Testament church is not to have a senior pastor, but a plurality of pastoral elders. This was true of all the early churches of

²³⁹ *Euangelistēs* (evangelists) was a technical term for those commissioned by an apostle to continue on in the work that was set forth – namely to establish churches. This is why it is listed before **pastors** and **teachers** in Ephesians 4:11 and it is listed as something different than **pastors** and **teachers** as well. See Ben Witherngton III, *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 290.

Acts,²⁴⁰ just as it was for the central church in Jerusalem.²⁴¹ In addition, we see that eldership commissioning was the primary calling to Timothy²⁴² and Titus,²⁴³ as well as, Paul.²⁴⁴

What about when God used people like Moses or David? Doesn't that show the centrality of a senior leader?

Yes, God has often used "senior leaders/shepherds" for His people. In the case of the church, that senior leader is Jesus. Just as Jesus became a better Moses, a better David, a better High Priest and a better Lamb sacrifice,²⁴⁵ He became the Senior Pastor of every local church – one that is better than any humanity can offer up. So, then, Jesus is the Senior Pastor of the local church, and Jesus leads His under-shepherds in a plural eldership.

Doesn't one person need to be in charge to get things done?

While a fair question, this is not a relevant question for one reason – God does not always establish models that are efficient or familiar. God did not send Jesus into the world until nearly 5000 years after the rebellion in Eden. Even after 2000 years the gospel has still not made it to the whole world. In other words, God sets up certain things to be done in certain ways regardless of how smoothly or timely they run. Therefore, while a single authoritative pastor or a main person in charge may be efficient in human terms, it is not Biblical. Jesus organizes His church for His glory and eldership is the way in which He established the local church.

Can plurality even work?

Yes, provided a high standard of Biblical eldership is applied and maintained. The key thing to note is that when it is not working, the solution does not lie in abandoning a model that Jesus Himself commands. Often it is not the model that is broken, but the fallible people who are seeking to understand the model.

²⁴⁰ Acts 14:21-23 & 20:17-38

²⁴¹ Acts 11:29-30 & 15-16:4

²⁴² 2 Timothy 2:2, 1 Timothy 5:17-22 & 1 Timothy 3:1-7

²⁴³ Titus 1:5

²⁴⁴ See Acts 13-14 as well as Paul's deployment of Timothy and Titus to the same cause.

²⁴⁵ See The Epistle to the Hebrews.

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