

I. Introduction:

II. Peter exhorts the elders. v. 1

A. The New Testament reveals a structure for the church.

1. Jesus Christ is the head of the church. Col. 1:18
2. The apostolic office is foundational. Eph. 2:20 Acts 1:21-22 I Cor. 11:2,23
3. Local churches are led by elders. I Pet. 5
4. The ceacons hold a distinct serving office. I Pet. 4:10-11 I Ti. 3:8-13 Acts 6:1-4
5. The Lord has given the local church all the resources it needs to do His work.

B. Elders are to give spiritual leadership over each local church.

1. Overseer (bishop) and elder (presbyter) refer to the same office. I Pet. 5:1-2 Acts 20:17,28
2. Is there an office of Pastor? Eph. 4:11 I Pe. 5:2 Acts 20:28
3. A plurality of elders is to lead every local church. 5:1 I Ti. 5:17 Phil. 1:1 Js. 5:14 Titus 1:5 Acts 14:23 20:18 He. 13:17 I Th. 5:17
4. We do not make a man an elder, rather we recognize those whom God has appointed according to their qualifications and gifts. Acts 20:28
5. What are the qualifications of our elders? I Ti. 3:1-7 Titus 1:5-9 I Pe. 5:3
6. How old must an elder be? I Tim. 3:6 4:12 Luke 3
7. There is parity among elders. All meet the same qualifications, share the same responsibilities, are due the same respect, and are equal in value, power and rank.
8. There is distinction in function among the elders according to their gifts. I Ti. 5:17 Rom. 12:3-8

C. What are the benefits of God's design of plurality and parity among our elders?

1. Balance.
2. Shared burdens. Ecc. 4:9-12 Pr. 11:4 24:6 Ex. 18:12-23
3. True accountability. I Ti. 5:19-20 Pr. 15:12,31-32 17:17 19:25 27:6,17 Ga. 2:11f
4. Keeps the focus on Christ as the head of the church. I Co. 3:4 Heb. 11:1ff

D. The church needs dedicated leaders who are prepared to suffer. I Pet. 5:1

III. To the elders – shepherd God's flock. v. 2-4

A. The sheep belong to God. Acts 20:28

1. Jesus is the true Chief Shepherd who tends God's flock. 5:4 2:24-25 John 10:11 Eze. 34:11f Jer. 23:3-4 Isa. 40:11 Ezek. 37:24 Mic. 5:2,4,6 Mt. 2:6 26:31 15:24
2. The Lord has sent undershepherds who are to follow in His steps. John 21:15-17 Isa. 40:11 Ps. 23 78:52 100:3 Mk. 10:45 Heb. 13:20 Mt. 9:36

B. We are to imitate Christ in caring for His sheep. v. 2a Ps. 23 Acts 20:28f Jo. 21:15ff

1. Lead them. I Ti. 5:17 Heb. 13:17 Ps. 23:2-3 Ro. 12:8 I Th. 5:12 Mt. 2
2. Feed them. 1 Tim. 3:2 4:13 5:17 Ps. 23:5a I Th. 5:12 Titus 1:9 Acts 6:4 20:20 II Ti. 4:1ff 2:2 Eph. 4:11-12
3. Protect them from wolves. 1:3,18-20 Ps. 23:4 Tit. 1:9.11 3:10 Acts 20:28-31 Ga. 6:1-2 Mt. 18:15-20 I Cor. 5:13
4. Pray for them. Acts 6:4 Js. 5:14

C. **Serve faithfully: Not like the wicked false shepherds.** v. 2b-3 Ezek. 34:1-16 Jer. 10:21 23:1-4

1. **Serve with the right attitude: not reluctantly, but voluntarily.** v. 2b I Ti. 3:1 4:8ff
 - a. Why might a man be hesitant? 5:1 He. 13:17 Js. 3:1f I Th. 5:12 II Co. 11:23f
 - b. Jesus gave Himself for us voluntarily. John 10:18
2. **Serve with the right motive: not for financial rewards but with a sincere zeal for God's work.** v. 2c I Ti. 3:3 Titus 1:7,11 Acts 20:33 II Th. 3:8-9 I Co. 9:6f
 - a. Some minister for the money. Ezek. 34:2-3 Mark 12:40 I Ti. 6:5
 - b. Instead zealously spend yourself in ministry. II Ti. 4:6 Phil. 2:17 Ro. 1:15 Acts 20:37 I Co. 9:7-18 II Th. 3:7-9
 - c. Jesus spent Himself for us. II Co. 8:9 Phil. 2:5-8 Mark 10:45
3. **Serve in the right manner: not domineering, but serving.** v. 3
 - a. Proud and abusive leaders destroy the Lord's flock. Ezek. 34:4-6 III Jo. 9-10 Mt. 23:4,6,11 20:25 Mark 10:42 Phil. 1:15 Lu. 22
 - b. Jesus came to be a servant. 2:21f Jo. 13:1f Mark 10:43-45 Phil. 2:5ff Eph. 5:2

D. **Set an example to the flock.** v. 3b 2:21 I Tim. 4:12-16 Titus 2:6-8

1. **In your speech.** James 3:1ff 1:19 I Tim. 4:13-15 II Tim. 4:1ff
2. **In your conduct.** I Cor. 11:1 Js. 3:13 I Tim. 4:8-10
3. **In your love for God's people.** I Th. 2:7-12 John 10:11-13 Luke 15:4 Mt. 9:36
4. **In your faith.** 3:9 4:6
5. **In your purity.** I Tim. 5:2,22 I Jo. 3:3 Js. 3:17 II Co. 6:6 Mt. 5:8

E. **Your faithfulness will be rewarded.** I Pe. 5:4,1 1:4,9 II Pe. 2:13 II Co. 5:10 I Ti. 4:8 Col. 3:25 Mt. 25:21 Jer. 23:1-4 34:10 Js. 3:1 Eph. 6:8 Heb. 11:26-27 13

IV. To the congregation – respect your elders. v. 5a

A. **Follow them.** Heb. 13:17,7 I Thess. 5:12-24 Acts 2:42 Pr. 19:20

B. **Pray for them.** I Th. 5:25 Eph. 6:19

C. **Support them in their work.** I Th. 5:12-13 I Ti. 5:17-18 I Co. 9:7,14 Acts 6:2 Ga. 6:6

V. Conclusion.

Discussion Questions for Family Worship

1. Who is the head of the church?
2. Do we have apostles today?
3. What is the role of the elders in the local church?
4. What is the role of the deacons in the local church?
5. Is there a difference between an elder, a pastor, and an overseer (bishop)?
6. How many elders should each local church have?
Why would there be plurality under the New Testament, when there was always one dominant leader under the Old Testament?
7. What are the qualifications for the office of elder?
How old must an elder be?
8. How is the Lord the model shepherd (pastor)?
9. What is the work of the elders?
10. What sins do elders need to avoid?
11. What are the duties of church members to elders?