

God's Design For The Church

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Voice From The Past



“ . . . [Ambrose] complains in the following terms: the old synagogue and afterward the church, had elders, without whose counsel nothing was done. It has fallen out of use, by what negligence I do not know . . .

John Calvin – 1600 A.D.

Who Are God's Leaders?

Paul and Timothy,
bond-servants of
Christ Jesus, to
in Christ Jesus
who are in Philippi,
including the
and

. . . all the saints

. . . overseers

. . . deacons



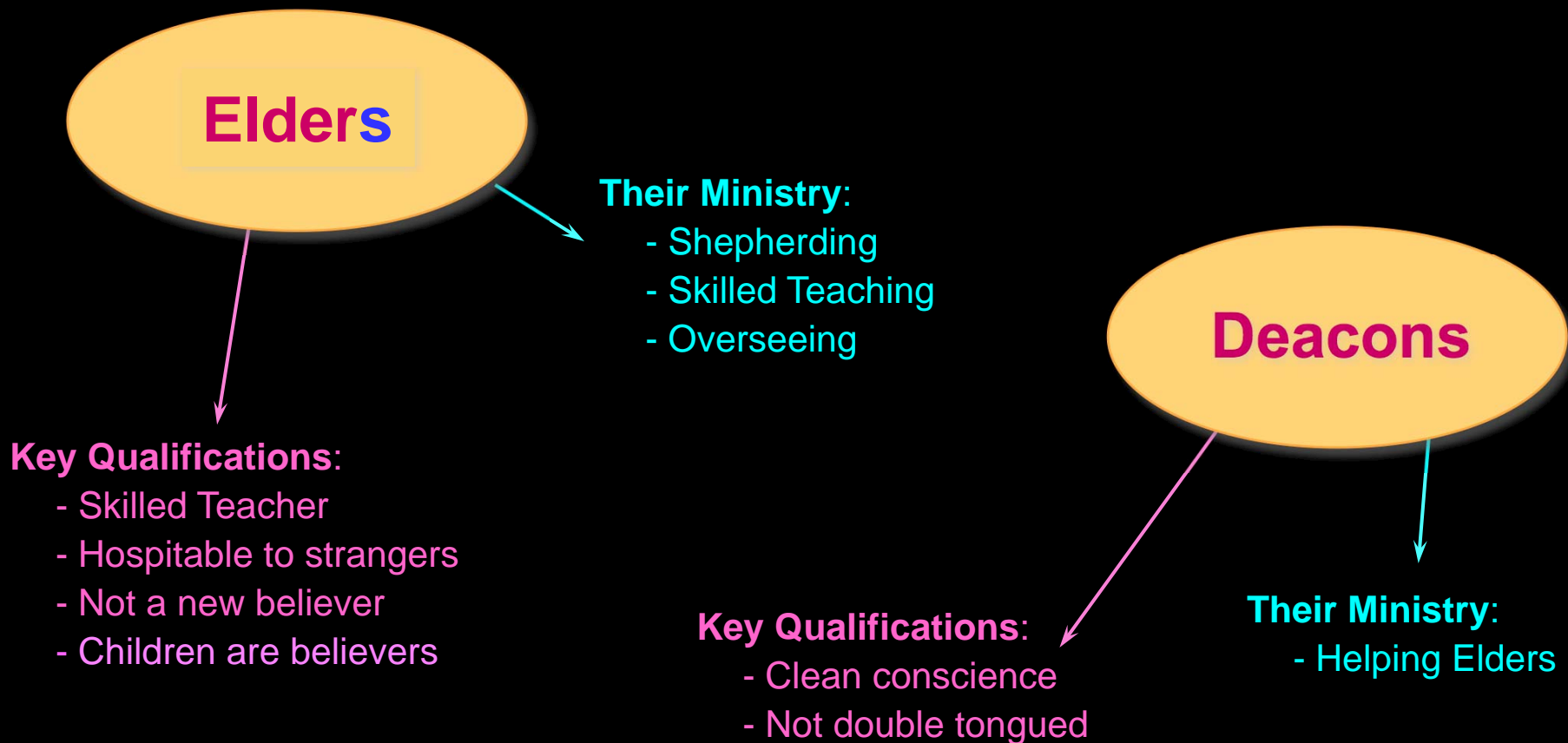
All of us



God's
Leaders

Philippians 1:1

Overview - How Are They Unique?



Where They Appear In The N.T.

Elder	Shepherd	Overseer	Deacon	Related Passages
πρεσβυτερος	ποιμην	επισκοπος	διακονος	
Acts 11:30 Acts 14:23 Acts 15:2-23 Acts 16:4 Acts 20:17 Acts 21:18 1 Tim. 5:17-19 Titus 1:5 James 5:14 1 Peter 5:1-5	Acts 20:28 Eph. 4:11 1 Peter 5:2	Acts 20:28 Phil. 1:1 1 Tim. 3:1-7 Titus 1:6-9	Acts 6:1-6 Phil. 1:1 1 Tim. 3:8-12	Acts 6:1-6 1 Thess. 5:12-14 Heb. 13:7, 17

Appear Together

Elders = Shepherds = Overseers

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Same Group of Men

All Aspects of Leadership Covered

Topic	Elders	Deacons	Together
Ministry Established	Acts 11:30 Acts 14:23 Titus 1:5	Acts 6:1-6	Phil. 1:1
Qualifications Given	1 Tim. 3:1-7 Titus 1:6-9	1 Tim. 3:8-12	
Responsibilities Implied & Stated	Acts 15:2-23 Acts 20:17-28 1 Tim. 5:17-19 James 5:14 1 Peter 5:1-5	Acts 6:1-6 1 Tim. 3:12	
Call To Honor	1 Thess. 5:12-14 1 Tim. 5:17-19 Heb. 13:7, 17	1 Thess. 5:12-14 Heb. 13:7	
Guidelines For Discipline	1 Tim. 5:17-19		



Selection Criteria

According To God's Perspective

1 Tim 3 Titus 1

Meaning

- v. 2 - "one who cannot be validly accused"
- v. 2 v. 6 "completely devoted to his wife"
- v. 2 - "avoids extremes and excesses"
- v. 2 V. 8 "wisely establishes priorities"
- v. 2 - "respected"
- v. 2 V. 8 "loves strangers"
- v. 2 - "skillful teacher"
- v. 3 v. 7 "not addicted to wine"
- v. 3 v. 7 "not given to physical violence"
- v. 3 - "forbearing"
- v. 3 - "not an arguer"
- v. 3 - "does not love money"
- v. 4 - "one who manages his household well"
- v. 4 - "children obey him with respect"
- v. 6 - "not a new believer"
- v. 7 - "good testimony to the outside world"

1 Tim 3 Titus 1

Meaning

- v. 6 "cannot be validly called to account"
- v. 6 "children who are believers"
- v. 6 "children are not in rebellion"
- v. 7 "not self-serving"
- v. 7 "longsuffering"
- v. 7 "does not dishonestly seek gain"
- v. 8 "a lover of goodness"
- v. 8 "one who is a believer & consistently fair"
- v. 8 "one who is holy"
- v. 8 "restrained in mind & fleshly desires"
- v. 9 "faithful to the Word"
- v. 9 "able to defend the truth."

NOT: wealth, position, power, friendship, charisma or skills . . .

Deacons – Fewer Qualifications

1 Tim 3

Meaning

- v. 8 “serious both inside and outside”
- v. 8 “not double talkers”
- v. 8 “not given to heavy drinking”
- v. 8 “free from love of money”
- v. 9 “his conscience does not condemn him about his relationship with Christ ”
- v. 12 "completely devoted to his wife"
- v. 12 “one who manages his children and household well”

NOT: wealth, position, power, friendship, charisma or skills . . .

“Able To Teach” – Elders Only

Apt to Teach - διδακτιχος:

“skillful in teaching”¹ - Leading Greek Lexicons , J. Calvin

“highly skilled teacher”² - J. MacArthur

“one qualified to teach”³ - A. T. Robertson

“not merely given to teaching, but . . . skilled in it”⁴ - K. Wuest

“ ‘Apt to teach’ includes both the willingness and the skill and ability to teach. ”⁵ - D. Heibert

Elders must be skilled in teaching the Word and they must know the book.

This is not casual, lifestyle, or academic teaching.

1 Arndt, W. F. A Greek-English Lexicon, University of Chicago Press., 1973. p. 190.

Brown, Colin. Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Regency, Grand Rapids, MI., 1971, Vol. 3 p. 759.

Calvin, John. 1 Timothy, Calvin’s Commentaries, Baker Book House, 1996, Vol. 22, p. 79.

Thayer, J. H. The New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, Christian Copyrights, Inc., 1981, p. 144.

2 MacArthur, John, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary 1 Timothy, Moody, Chicago, 1995, p. 108 .

3 Balz, Horst, Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI., 1991, Vol 1., p. 316.

Robertson, A. T., Word Pictures in the New Testament, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI., 1931, Vol. 4, pp. 572.

4 Wuest, K. S., Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1995, p. 55.

5 Hiebert, D. Edmond, First Timothy, Moody Press, Chicago, IL, 1957. p. 66.



Elders' Ministry?

Jesus Called Peter – Teach & Shepherd

Jesus said to Simon Peter, “. . . do you truly love me?” (John 21:16-17)

Peter answered

Jesus replied

1st I love you

Feed my sheep

2nd I love you

Shepherd My sheep

3rd I love you

Feed my sheep

The
Priority

Apostle's Priority – Teach & Shepherd

Acts 6:1-2, 4

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*. 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 . . . But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

The Priority

The Elders' Priority – Word & Teaching

Let the elders who . . .

lead¹ well
be considered worthy of double honor,
especially those who

work hard at the word and teaching.

The
Priority

1 Timothy 5:17

¹Greek Word = “stand before, protective leadership *care for, help, give aid*”

Peter Called Himself – Your Fellow Elder

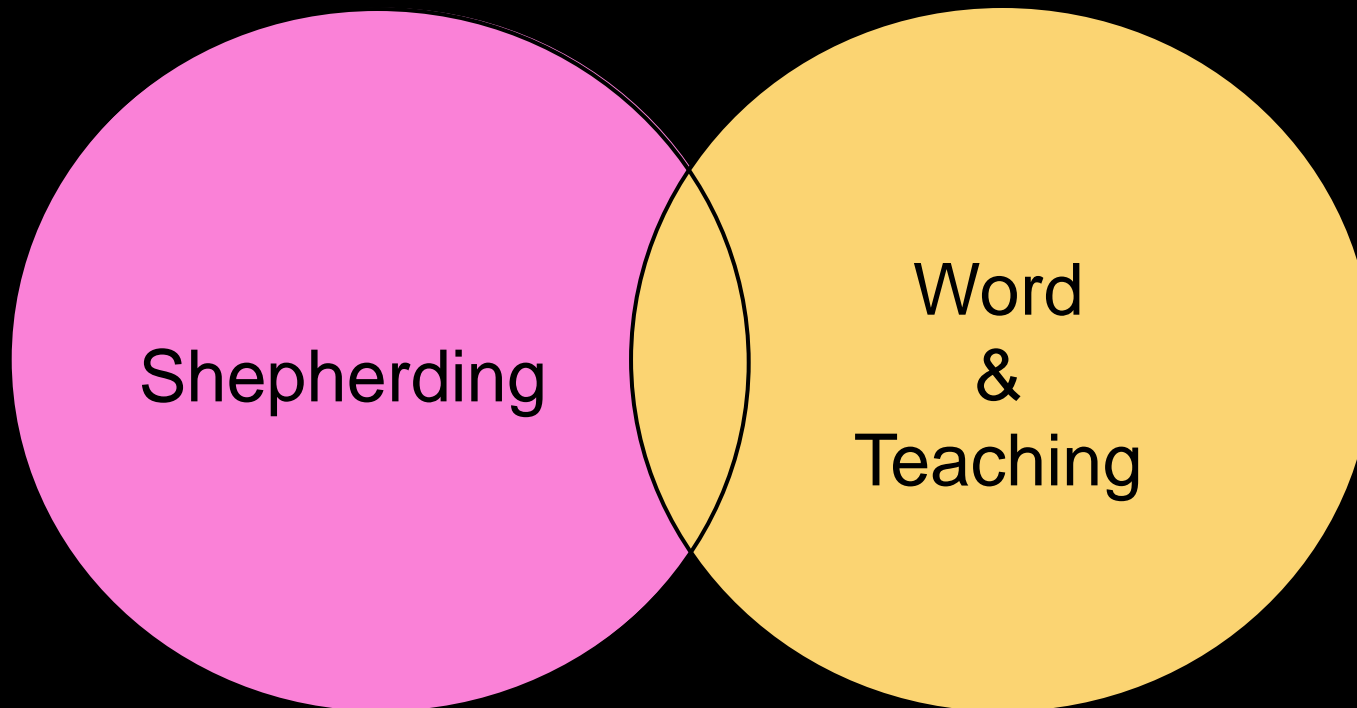
“Shepherd the flock of God”

The
Priority

- serve as overseers
- serve willingly
- not for gain
- not as lords
- but as examples . . .

1 Peter 5:2

Summary – Elders' Ministry

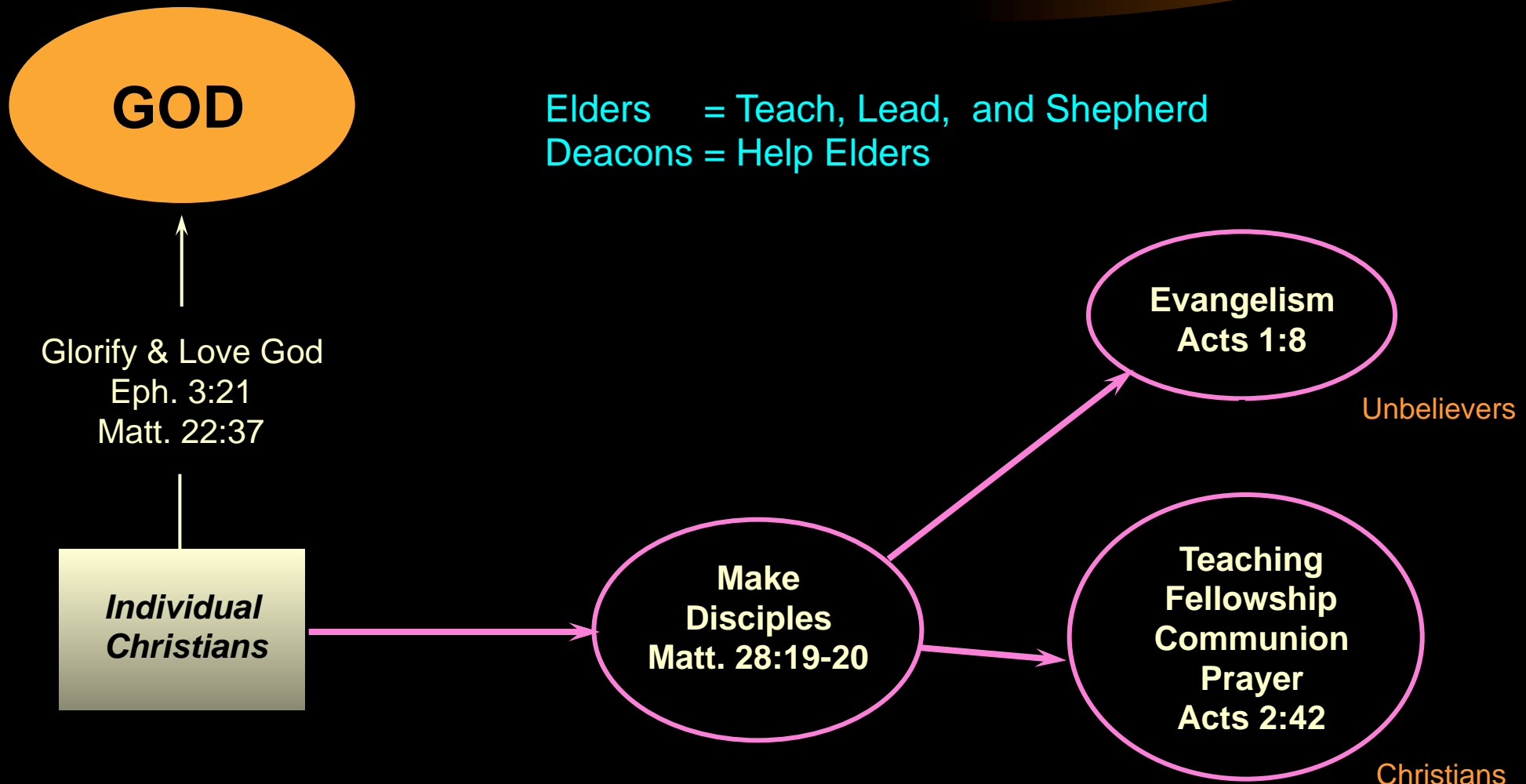


... Oversight is 2nd priority ...



Usually Forgotten . . .

God's Ministries Involve Everyone



Elders ~ A Team Ministry

Church Was Local

“to Apphia our sister,
and to Archippus our
fellow soldier, and to
the **church in your
house**”

Philemon 2

Multiple Elders In Every Church

Acts 11:30

“sending their gift to the elders . . .”

Acts 14:23

“elders in every church”

Acts 15:2-23

“received by . . . the elders”

Acts 16:4

“determined by the . . . elders”

Acts 20:17

“called for the elders”

Acts 21:18

“went with us into . . . the elders”

1 Tim. 5:17-19

“Let the elders”

Titus 1:5

“appoint elders in every city”

God wants a committed, supportive team ministry

Team Decisions - Spirit Led Unanimity

Principle From Acts 15

- Issue Presented and Discussed
- Unanimous Decision Reached



“It seemed good to . . .”

- . . . the apostles and the elders, with the whole church . . . v. 22
- . . . us, having become of one mind,. . . v. 25
- . . . the Holy Spirit . . . v. 28

- Unanimity comes by the Spirit.
- Requires Spirit-filled elders.
- Disagreement means that either an elder is in sin or the Spirit is not in the decision
- Principle is found in Rom. 12:16; 15:5; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 13:11

Elders Are To Be Spiritual Models



An elder is one who is **FOLLOWABLE** . . .

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

Hebrews 13:7


MIMIC = mimeomai

Elders To Be Examples & Mentors

... In Life & Ministry

... set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 Timothy 4:11-12

... Mentoring

Train faithful men ...

2 Timothy 2:2

People's Response – Respect & Trust

... respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work.

1 Thess. 5:12-13

Elders Affect The Church's Health . . .

Tone of the church is a barometer of the leaders' spiritual lives

- Pursuing An Intimate Friendship With God

Phil. 3:8

- Seeking Him
- Prayer
- Word of God
- Repentance

Jer. 9:23-24; 29:12-14
Eph. 6:18
Ex. 33:13
1 John 1:9

- Spiritual Maturity

1 Tim. 3:1-8

- Personal holiness

1 Tim. 5:19-20

- Mutual accountability among the elders

Gal. 2:11-13

- Faithful in ministry

Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 5:17

Elders Serve The Great Shepherd

Jesus said to Simon Peter, “. . . do you truly love me?” (John 21:16-17)

Peter answered

Jesus replied

1st I love you

Feed **My** sheep

2nd I love you

Shepherd **My** sheep

His
Priority

3rd I love you

Feed **My** sheep

God Calls Elders To Be Faithful

Moses Was God's Servant

- But He sinned in HOW he hit the rock
- So Moses could not enter the promised land
- He pleaded with God to let him enter
- His ministry abruptly ended

Num. 20:7-13

Num. 20:12

Deut. 3:23-26

Deut. 34:5-7

God wants "Moseses" who
are "Yes Men" . . .