

Biblical Eldership

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF ELDERSHIP

Acts 20:17–28; 1 Peter 5:1–4.

- In some Christian circles Elders are people respected for their knowledge, status, reliability, and influence within their denomination.
 - According to the New Testament: Elders (*who are also called pastors, teachers, ministers, overseers, or bishops*) and Deacons
 - Greek word for 'minister' is **diakonos** = 'a **servant**,' or
 - One who implements the command of another.
 - It is not about the individual but the office that matters.
- **Eldership** finds its roots in Old Testament Israel.

Did Moses choose 70 Elders for Israel?

– Numbers 11:16–17.

- ☞ No, God commanded Moses to select 70 Elders.
- ☞ God took the Spirit that was upon Moses and put the Spirit upon the 70 Elders chosen by Moses.
 - Israel adopted the symbol of "Shepherding" for their Elders.
 - New Testament Churches identified their Elders as shepherds as well.
 - Shepherding God's people is the chief role of Biblical Eldership.

3 key words used in the New Testament

for Elder.

Πρεσβύτερος (presbuteros) = *Elder/Presbyter*;
ἐπίσκοπος (episkopos) = *Guardian/Overseer* &
ποιμήν (poimēn) = *Shepherd*.

Eldership in Pauline Churches – Acts 20:17–28.

- Paul stops at Miletus, just south of Ephesus,
- He “calls for the Elders of the church” at Ephesus.
- The Greek word is ἐπισκοπους which literally means overseer and sometimes translated “bishop.”

Eldership in Non-Pauline Churches.

- “Elder” occurs 12 times in the Book of Revelation. with reference to the 24 Elders in heaven.
- In 2 & 3 John, John introduces himself as “The Elder”

1 Peter 5:1–4.

- The first thing to note is that Peter calls himself Elder.
- The Apostolic office overlapped with that of elder.
- Peter does not want them to “lord it over the flock”
- Peter, by his own example, encourages the Elders to fulfill their calling.
- Peter says all Elders are called to take the humble role as examples & Guardians of the flock of Christ.

NEW TESTAMENT CHURCHES RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF ELDERSHIP

Pastor Charles Lazaro

Sunday – 26th June 10.00 AM

Wonthaggi Baptist Church
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