

*“Be My Witnesses:” An Exposition of Acts*  
***Six Temptations Your Church Leaders Face***

Acts 20:28–38  
(Page 930 in Chair Bible)  
The Lord’s Day Morning  
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Jesus Christ is the head of the church (Col. 1:18), so ultimately and eternally, he is in charge of it. In Acts, we see Jesus initially ruling over his church through the apostles who were eyewitnesses to the risen Lord. As the gospel spreads to the nations, Jesus works through the apostles to raise up elders to lead local churches. As the office of apostle ceased with the death of the last apostle, it was replaced with the ongoing office of elder. Today, Jesus rules his church through elders.

The **elders** (*presbuteros* in v.17) of the church are experienced older brothers who provide for the family of God; qualified **overseers** (*episkopos* in v.28) who manage the people of God; and strong **pastors**, or shepherds, (*poimein* in v.28) who “care for” the flock of God. These three terms (elder, overseer, pastor) are interchangeable in the New Testament and refer to the same position.

The three main functions of the elders are to feed the church the Word of God, lead the church in the will of God, and guard the church from the enemies of God. Because their ministry is so crucial to the mission of the church, these men are also strategic targets for the enemy. Encourage and pray for your elders and pastors!

### **Six Temptations Your Elders Face**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ : Neglecting rigorous self-examination before the Lord (1 Cor. 11:28).
2. \_\_\_\_\_ : Forgetting who is really in charge of the church (Heb. 13:17).
3. \_\_\_\_\_ : Seeking or using the office for the love of money (1 Peter 5:1–4).
4. \_\_\_\_\_ : Failing to practice the Biblical sexual ethic we preach (1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Cor. 6:18–20).
5. \_\_\_\_\_ : Distorting God’s Word to accommodate public opinion (2 Tim. 4:2,3).
6. \_\_\_\_\_ : Stupidly accepting or selfishly retreating from wolves (Titus 1:9).