

Biblical Qualifications for Pastors and Elders
Sunday School; 09.06.2026

Session 2: What Must an Elder Do?

1 Timothy 3:1–7

Lesson Goal: To understand that elders and pastors are called to teach God's Word, shepherd God's people, and lead the church humbly under Christ's authority.

Point 1 — An elder must teach and guard sound doctrine.

1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Acts 20:27-31; Jude 3-4

- A Pastor/Elder must teach truth.
- A Pastor/Elder must confront error.
- The Word of God governs the church.

A pastor is not called to invent a message. He is called to faithfully proclaim the message God has already given in Scripture.

Point 2 — An elder must shepherd and protect Christ's flock.

1 Peter 5:1–4; John 10:11–15; Ezekiel 34:1–6; Hebrews 13:17

- The Biblical picture of pastoral ministry is not primarily corporate or managerial; it is shepherding.
- Every elder and pastor serves as an under-shepherd beneath Jesus Christ.
- The church does not belong to the pastor. The church belongs to Christ.

A shepherd cannot care for the flock without guiding it, warning it, and helping it move in the right direction.

Point 3 — An elder must lead humbly under Christ and with other elders.

Acts 14:23, 20:17, 20:28; 1 Timothy 5:17

- The New Testament regularly presents local church leadership as a plurality of elders.
- The lead pastor is normally an elder with a particular responsibility.
- All pastoral authority is exercised under Christ, who alone is the Head of the Church.

When we put these responsibilities together, a clear biblical picture emerges. The elder is called to teach the truth, shepherd the flock, and lead with humility.

Homework Questions

1. According to Acts 20:28–31, what kinds of dangers must elders guard the church against?
2. What is the difference between biblical pastoral authority and domineering leadership? Compare Hebrews 13:17 with 1 Peter 5:2–3.
3. Why is a lead pastor strengthened and protected by serving alongside other qualified elders? Consider Acts 14:23 and Proverbs 11:14.