



Church Offices **Overseers**

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My wife, Beverly Allen, has devoted herself to ChristAssembly.org and other publications. Most days her body gives her trouble, but she spends time helping ChristAssembly.org and other publications. She brings her doctoral training in biochemistry and molecular biology to her work and greatly improves the quality of publications. She has spent many hours creating graphics, reviewing articles and books, and providing careful proof reading, even when she does not feel her best. Other friends from Korea have helped in proof reading books for ChristAssembly.org, with our thanks in Christ Jesus for their friendship and faithful labors.

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1

Introduction



1.1 New Testament Offices. The New Testament Church Offices include Apostle, Overseer and Deacon, and perhaps others. This study concerns only the Church Office of Overseer. Because God inspired each word in the original autographs of the Scriptures, we must pay special attention to those Holy Words to understand God's revelation to us regarding church offices. We must also ignore traditions outside the Scriptures to avoid those traditions blinding us to spiritual truth found in the Scriptures. If the Scriptures confirm common church practices or traditions, then we should continue those practices and traditions. If the Scriptures contradict those practices and traditions, the practices and traditions must be changed to conform to the Scriptures. God revealed the Scriptures, not the traditions

and practices in the local church. The Scriptures must always be primary in setting the church in order.

2

Basics of Church Offices



2.1 Jesus the Overseer. Jesus described Himself as the Overseer of our souls. The believers under persecution had returned to Jesus, the Shepherd (Ποιμένα) and Overseer (Ἐπίσκοπον) of their souls (1 Peter 2:25). Please take notice of the dual role of Jesus as both the Shepherd and Overseer of souls. Both of those related terms characterize the leadership of the church, functioning under the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

2.2 The Epoch of The Overseer of You. Jesus warned the people in Jerusalem that the city will be leveled, not leaving a stone upon stone, against which they did not know the epoch (τὸν καιρὸν) of the oversight (τῆς

ἐπισκοπῆς) of them (Luke 19:44). Therefore, because the people did not know Jesus when He appeared and displayed the grace, glory and truth of God to those people, a day of divine oversight had come upon them and they spurned Jesus. Therefore, oversight can also refer to a special time of the Overseer, referring the personal deacony in the flesh of Jesus Christ as Overseer of the Israel. Compare the titles of Guardian and Overseer to describe Jesus in 2 Peter 2:25 and the people returning to Him. Likewise, see also the saints glorifying God in the day of oversight (1 Peter 2:12).

2.3 What Is a Church Office? God established offices in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. At Pentecost following the Ascension of Jesus, God created the Church when Jesus baptized believers with the Holy Spirit and those saints became part of His body, the church. At that same instant, God Created Church Offices. Church Offices referred to a position God created for leadership of the church. Each Church Office held its own spiritual qualifications and each Church Office served particular needs of the church. Saints were set down into each particular Church Office.

We should be careful to distinguish the Old Testament Office from the Church Office. Consider the following points about offices. In the points below, I am using the term Old Testament to refer to the 39 Books of the Old Testament and the term New Testament to 27 Books of the New Testament. Please do not confuse the New Testament with the church because the New Testament covers a period of time greater than the time of the church. Please keep in mind that the church did not start until Pentecost, and many things had happened in the New Testament before that date.

- ◆ God created the office of overseer in the Old Testament.
- ◆ In the Old Testament many elders were unbelievers.
- ◆ In the Old Testament the term elder did not describe an office and was never used interchangeably with the term overseers.
- ◆ In the Old Testament elders had well defined duties, including guidance, leadership, and acting as civil magistrates.
- ◆ In the Old Testament many unbelievers held the office of overseer, just like Judas Iscariot did in the New Testament.

- ◆ God continued the office of overseer in the New Testament.
- ◆ In the New Testament Jesus began baptizing believers into the Body of Christ (the Church).
- ◆ In the New Testament each Church Office had particular functions.
- ◆ In the New Testament each Church Office has a plurality of equal members.
- ◆ In the New Testament God created the Church Office of Overseer.
- ◆ In the New Testament God recognized all old male saints as church elders, just like all old males in the Old Testament were called elders.
- ◆ In the New Testament God never created a Church Office of Elder.
- ◆ In the New Testament church elders took on new deaconies.
- ◆ Church Offices should not be confused with spiritual gifts.
- ◆ Church Overseers perform shepherding duties, but Church Overseers do not necessarily possess The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.
- ◆ Anyone may aspire to be a Church Overseer, but only God distributes The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds as He sees fit.
- ◆ Unbelievers like Judas Iscariot may hold an office, but no unbeliever could meet the spiritual qualifications of Church Overseer.
- ◆ Unbelievers never receive a spiritual gift, because Jesus never baptized unbelievers with the Holy Spirit, and so they never became a member of the church, the Body of Christ.

3

The Office of Overseer in the Old Testament



3.1 Office of Overseer. In Acts 1:20 Peter said the Judas Iscariot held the Old Testament Office of Overseer (ἐπισκοπῆν), and he quoted Psalm 109:8 using the Hebrew term (פְּקֻדָּה) for the Old Testament Office of Overseer. Therefore, God provided clear evidence that the Office of Overseer was well known in the Old Testament. For example, Potiphar made Joseph overseer of his house (Genesis 39:4). In turn, Joseph told Pharaoh to make overseers (פְּקֻדִּים) over the land of Egypt (Genesis 41:34). Other people also became overseers, and the overseer had set duties as part of his position. A few examples provide insight into the Office of Overseer in the Old Testament.

3.2 Eleazer. Eleazer, the son of Aaron, held the office of overseer (תִּזְמָן--noun feminine singular) and his duties included overseeing other priests (Numbers 3:32; 1 Chronicles 26:30, 2 Chronicles 24:11).

3.3 Hashabiah. Hashabiah and his relatives, 1,700 capable men, held the office of overseer (תִּזְמָן--noun feminine singular) over Israel west of the Jordan. “As for the Hebronites, Hashabiah and his relatives, 1,700 capable men, oversight over Israel west of the Jordan, for all the work of Yahweh and to service of the king” (1 Chronicles 26:30).

3.4 Joash and the Money Chest. In the days of King Joash, the chest containing the daily payments of the people of Israel would be brought to overseer (תִּזְמָן--noun feminine singular) of the king by hand of the Levites. “When they saw much silver, then came scribe of the king and overseer of the high priest and emptied the chest and took it and returned it its place; thus they did day to day and gathered much money” (2 Chronicles 24:11).

3.5 Judas Iscariot. In the New Testament, Judas held the Old Testament Office of Overseer and had the oversight of the money box. “Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it” (John 12:6). “For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, “Buy the things we have need of for the feast”; or else, that he should give something to the poor” (John 13:29).” Therefore, it appears from the Old Testament usage of the term overseer (תִּזְמָן) that the New Testament term overseer (ἐπισκοπήν) refers to a particular Office of Overseer with particular duties assigned to that office. The oversight given to Judas Iscariot was watching the money box and following the directions of Jesus about how to spend the money (see 2 Chronicles 24:11). Please keep in mind that Judas Iscariot was never a Church Overseer because Judas Iscariot died before the church began at Pentecost following the Ascension of Jesus.

3.6 Summary of The Office of Overseer in the Old Testament.

♦ In the Old Testament, various men and groups of men held the office of Overseer and it was a well-known office.

♦ The Overseers of the Old Testament were in put in charge of various things requiring spiritual and physical attention.

♦ Hashabiah and his 1700 relatives held the Office of Overseer.

♦ Some priests served as Overseers.

♦ Joash was the Overseer of the money chest.

♦ Judas Iscariot was in charge of the money box for Jesus.

4

Basic Facts about the Church Office of Overseer



4.1 Fact One. A great deal of confusion has arisen about elders, overseers and deacons. The New Testament provides more clarity that many people realize. We can bring clarity by following the basic facts of New Testament leadership. Judas Iscariot held the office (τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν) of apostle. When he died, the office of apostle needed to be filled by another person meeting the right qualifications to hold that office (Acts 1:20--quoting Psalm 109:8).

4.2 Fact Two. Judas Iscariot, an unbeliever, was chosen by Jesus to hold the Old Testament Office of Overseer. He never held the Church Office of

Overseer. The office Judas held was known in the Psalms (שָׂרֵדָה--his office-- Psalm 109:8) and dated back to Moses (Numbers 3:32). The concept of the office was not a new thing in the New Testament, but the Church began at Pentecost, and so began the Church Office of Overseer. At the moment Jesus baptized the new saints with the Holy Spirit, they received at least one spiritual gift. At Pentecost, when Jesus baptized the twelve apostles with the Holy Spirit, they left their Old Testament Office of Overseer and immediately entered the Church Office of Overseer. The duties of the Old Testament Office of Overseer which Judas Iscariot held included looking after the money box and following the orders of Jesus regarding money (John 12:6; 13:29). I found no verse indicating that the term "elders" in the Old Testament was interchangeable with the term "overseer." No doubt some elders were overseers in the Old Testament, but some elders were not overseers. Likewise, some overseers were not elders in the Old Testament. The Office of Overseer was well known in the Old Testament and the meaning did not change in the New Testament. Clear proof in the New Testament would be required to show the meaning and function of the term overseer changed radically in the New Testament.

4.3 Fact Three. Priests and others were appointed to the Office of Overseer in the Old Testament (examples include: Eleazar held the Office of Overseer over priests, overseeing other priests--Numbers 3:32; Hashabiah and his 1700 men held the Office of Overseer of Israel of West of the Jordan--1 Chronicles 26:30). The particular office came with particular duties.

4.4 Fact Four. Elders exercised leadership and authority over civil matters in the Old Testament by applying revelation in the form of law, commandments, ordinances, etc. from God to resolve disputes (see [Scripture Words](#)). Moses called all the elders of Israel (Exodus 12:21). (Moses called the elders of Israel to him (לְכָל־זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), indicating a specific group of people.) The elders of Israel had administrators over them (Numbers 11:16). (The elders had administrators (שׁוֹטֵר--participle singular) over them (יֹאמֵר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה אֶסְפֹּה־לִּי שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ מִזִּקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִדְעֹת פִּי־הֵם וְזִקְנֵי הָעָם וְשִׁטְרֵיוֹ וְלִקְחָתָם אִתָּם אֶל־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְהִתְיַצְּבוּ שָׁם עִמָּד: (Numbers 11:16).) The elders sat in the city gate and rendered legal decisions (for example, Deuteronomy 22:15; Joshua 20:4).

4.5 Fact Five. The New Testament provides qualifications for overseers (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and deacons (1 Timothy 3:8-13), but never mentions qualifications to be an elder.

4.6 Fact Six. God set some elders to become Church Overseers, so that some elders came to hold the Church Office of Overseer (see the discussion of Titus 1 below). Not all New Testament elders held the Church Office of Overseer, but only the elders set to hold the Church Office of Overseer. This plan followed the pattern of Old Testament offices.

4.7 Fact Seven. The Church Office of Overseer required occupants to be apt to teach, distinguishing them from deacons (some deacons, like Philip and Stephen, also taught). Some elders led and taught (see the discussion of 1 Timothy 5:17 below).

4.8 Fact Eight. Anyone could aspire to be an overseer (1 Timothy 3:1).

4.9 Fact Nine. Elders do not rule, but they must lead (προεστῶτες) (1 Timothy 5:17). See [Do Elders Rule or Lead](#).

4.10 Fact Ten. In the Old Testament, the Office of Overseer meant a sphere of particular responsibility of oversight over a given group of people.

4.11 Fact Eleven. In Titus 1:7, some elders were set into the Church Office of Overseer. Only those particular elders became Overseers. Other elders continued to labor in the church, but did not hold the Church Office of Overseer.

4.12. Fact Twelve. All people holding the Church Office of Overseer were elders, but not all elders held the Church Office of Overseer, just like not all elders in the Old Testament held the Old Testament Office of Overseer.

4.13. Fact Thirteen. Deacons are not all elders, but they do hold the Church Office of Deacons.

4.14 Exceptions. I understand that people will take exception to the facts I described above, but the evidence flows from the text itself, not tradition. Let me know what facts you dispute by email to friend@ChristAssembly.org.

4.15 Summary of Facts about Overseers.

♦ Judas Iscariot held the Old Testament Office of Overseer, but he was never born again.

♦ Even unbelievers could hold the Old Testament Office of Overseer.

- ♦ Anyone can aspire to be a New Testament Overseer.
- ♦ No one picks their spiritual gift, because God distributes the spiritual gifts to individual Christians solely according to His will.
- ♦ Never confuse the Office of Overseer with The Spiritual Gift of Shepherd.

5

The Placement of Church Overseers



5.1 Elder and Officers. In the New Testament some elders became Church Officers. Many other elders never became Church Officers. The New Testament describes various aspects of how the Holy Spirit placed some elders into the Church Office of Overseer. God revealed New Testament practices related to placing Church Overseers into the Body of Christ.

5.2 Setting Elders. As Paul traveled to Jerusalem, knowing chains awaited him there, Paul called the Ephesian elders to Miletus to meet with him (Acts 20:28). Paul commanded those elders to take heed to themselves and to all

the flock in whom the Holy Spirit has set them as overseers. Please take notice that the Holy Spirit set those elders as overseers of the flock. Those particular elders became Church Overseers, because the Holy Spirit set them into the flock as overseers. They were elders in the flock (ἐν ᾧ) and then the Holy Spirit set them (ἔθετο) into the flock as overseers (ἐπισκόπους) to shepherd (ποιμαίνειν) the church of God (τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ), which He purchased with His own blood (perfect proof of the deity of Jesus). This verse provides much useful information about the Church Office of Overseer and clears up much confusion.

5.3 The Means of Setting Elders into the Church. In the New Testament, God used three basic terms to describe setting elders into the local assembly as Church Overseers. Three passages provide direct evidence about how elders were placed into the Church Office of Overseers. Those passages help us understand various aspects of the Church Office of Overseer.

5.3.1 Set (ἔθετο). In Acts 20:28, the Holy Spirit set some elders into the Church Office of Overseer. The verb set (ἔθετο--aorist middle indicative, 3 singular) comes from the root τίθημι and means to set in place within a larger arrangement. “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit set you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). The Holy Spirit set some elders into the Church Office of Overseer. (God used the term ἔθετο to describe the movement of specific elders into the Church Office of Overseer. God used the aorist tense (ἔθετο) here to describe finality of setting in place, with continuing action once set in place. To understand the use of the term ἔθετο in Acts 20:28, we may review other pertinent other uses. In Acts 1:7 the Father set (ἔθετο) times and seasons. In Acts 12:4 Herod had Peter arrested and then set (ἔθετο) him into prison. In Acts 19:21 Paul set (ἔθετο) in the Holy Spirit to go to Jerusalem. In 1 Corinthians 12:18 God set (ἔθετο) the members in the body, each one of them in the body as He desired. In 1 Corinthians 12:28 God set (ἔθετο) some in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, and the list continues. In 1 Thessalonians 5:9 God has not set (ἔθετο) us for wrath, but for obtaining salvation through the Lord of us, Jesus Christ.) God set specific elders into the Church Office of Overseer and they became Church Overseers. The Holy Spirit had a specific purpose for those Church Overseers: to shepherd the church. (The use of ποιμαίνειν as a present active infinitive emphasized the continuing, active purpose of the Church Overseers to shepherd.) The Holy Spirit did not create elders that

day. He set some men who were already elders as Church Overseers. God did not set elders to become shepherds, but to do the work of shepherds. While one may argue that all people who shepherd can be called shepherds, the New Testament describes The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. Therefore, the term ἔθετο describes placing something into a particular place, as part of a greater arrangement. The emphasis is that God puts specific things in place, as part of an arrangement of the greater thing. So, God set some elders into the body of Christ as overseers. Elders were set into the Church Office of Church Overseers. The church has many elders, but only some elders are set into the body as Church Overseers (placed into the greater arrangements). (Consider 1 Corinthians 12:28. God was not emphasizing that the creation of apostles, prophets, teachers, pastors, miracles, gifts of healings, helps, navigations, kinds of tongues; God emphasized He set the pre-existing gifts into the body of Christ as He willed. God emphasized movement into a particular place within the body of Christ. In other words, God did not emphasize the creation of the eye, but He set the eye in the right place in the body.) Therefore, God set elders into the Church Office of Overseer in each church. The place for each Church Overseer depended upon the tasks assigned to them, the particular function they were to fulfill. Yet, all elders holding the Church Office of Overseer hold a common duty to shepherd the church, among other specific duties. The twelve apostles all held the Church Office of Apostle after Pentecost, and they all had a duty to testify about Jesus as eyewitnesses, but they also had more specialized duties, such as overseeing the money box.

5.3.2 Set Down (καταστήσης). In Titus 1:5, Paul commanded Titus to set down elders in every city. “For this reason, I left you in Crete, that you may set in order what remains and may set down elders in every city as I directed you,” (Titus 1:5). Paul used the term "may set down" to describe Titus setting down the elders into the Church Office of Overseer. Paul used the term καταστήσης (aorist active subjunctive, second person singular from καθίστημι. Paul was concerned about the things lacking in the churches of Crete. Paul explained that he left Titus that he (1) may set in order the things lacking; and (2) may set down elders in every city; and (3) may complete the tasks as Paul directed him. The text provides: Τούτου χάριν ἀπέλιπόν σε ἐν Κρήτῃ, ἵνα τὰ λείποντα ἐπιδιορθώσῃ καὶ καταστήσῃς κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγὼ σοι διαταξάμην. The term "καταστήσης" means to set down a person into a new position with specific duties (Titus 1:5). In Titus 1:5, consider that the term elders (πρεσβυτέρους) occurs in the accusative case. Compare Matthew 24:45 that the faithful slave is placed over the

master's possessions (ὑπάρχουσιν--dative plural participle). The term slave occurs in the nominative case (δοῦλος) case and he was set down (κατέστησεν) over the possessions. Normally, the nominative case describes the subject of the sentence. Compare Acts 12:14 where the term judge occurs in the accusative case. Jesus was asking who set down Him as a judge. See similarly Acts 7:10, 27, 35. Based on that evidence, a strong case exists that some men were appointed as elders in Titus 1:5, because the term elders (πρεσβυτέρους) occurs in the accusative case and seems very similar to Acts 12:14 and Acts 7:10, 27, 35. Yet, Matthew 24:22 and 24:23 describe the Lord saying to the faithful slave, "over many I will set (καταστήσω) you (σε--accusative pronoun)." See similar uses of the accusative following various uses of the root καταστήσω in Acts 6:3, Romans 5:19, Hebrews 2:7. See also Acts 17:15 where people were setting down (καθιστάνοντες--nominative masculine participle) Paul (accusative case) and taking him Athens. In Hebrews 5:1, men are taken from among men and set down (καθίσταται--present indicative) as high priest on behalf of men. In my mind, acknowledging the strong case that Titus was to set down elders, meaning he took some men and set them down as elders, I am swayed by the other uses that some men were set down as elders to the Church Office of Overseer, because of the other uses of the verb set down with the accusative described above and Acts 20:28 where Paul said the Holy Spirit set (ἔθετο) those elders as overseers. I do not have a strong argument from the usage of the term "set down," but it fits the overall context and wider context the best. In short, it appears to me that some elders were set down to into the Church Office of Overseer, based upon the next verses and Acts 20:28. Not all elders were appointed Church Overseers under any view of the term set down in Titus 1:5, but only some of them. Therefore, elders remain distinct from overseers. Three important words relate to each other, each with great meaning.

5.3.2.1 Set in Order. First, the word "set up in correct order" ("ἐπιδιορθώση") means that Paul wanted to bring a specific, correct order to the new churches in Crete through proper church leadership. These new leaders would bring order. Titus must straighten out (ἐπιδιορθώση--aorist middle subjunctive) the churches--indicating Titus must take the action himself to straighten out and correct the things lacking.

5.3.2.2 Set Down. Second, Titus must set down elders in every city. The term καταστήσης (aorist active subjunctive, second singular) means may set down. In Titus 1:5, people assume Titus appointed elders meaning those men suddenly became elders. What if those men were already elders and

Titus set down existing elders to the Church Office of Overseer? Actually, Paul wrote that Titus should set in order (ἐπιδιορθώση) the things lacking (τὰ λείποντα) and may set down (καταστήσης) elders, as I directed you (διεταξάμην). Often when people say that Titus appointed elders, they mistakenly mean that some men instantly became elders. They then mistakenly equate elders with overseers and pastors. Paul did not actually say that Titus "appointed" men to become elders, but that Titus follow Paul's direction in setting down elders into the Body of Christ as Church Overseers. A few examples illustrate the use of the term "set down."

5.3.2.2.1 Moses. Egyptians asked Moses who set down him as ruler and judge over us (Acts 7:35). They used this term to describe being placed into an office of ruler or judge. Notice the object of the set down is the office of ruler or judge. Of course, I can hear people arguing that this verse supports the view that the men were set down into the office of elder. The better view is that term "set down" describes placing a person into a recognized office. You must be placed into the office by someone with the authority to do so, or else people will question why you are acting like you hold the office when you actually do not hold the office. See also Matthew 24:47--slave set down over possessions; Luke 12:42--house manager set down over slaves to care for slaves; Acts 7:35; Acts 17:15--put in charge of Paul; Hebrews 5:1--High priest set down on behalf of men; Hebrews 8:3--High priest set down to offer sacrifices; James 3:6--tongue set over members of us; James 4:4--friend of the world set down as enemy of God.

5.3.2.2.2 Tables. Consider the selection of men in Acts 6:3. The Twelve Apostles in Jerusalem became aware of a particular need in the church. They directed the "brethren:" "examine among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may set down over this need" (Acts 6:3). Those men were examined and set into the Church Office of Deacon. Even if you disagree that those men held the Church Office of Deacon, you cannot dispute they were the same men who took on a position of being in charge of deacony to a particular need. Furthermore, notice the brethren selected them and then they were seated down into the position by the Twelve Apostles.

5.3.2.2.3 Sinners. Consider Paul's theology of sinners. Of course, Paul wrote under the inspiration of God and expressed God's theology of sinners. Paul wrote that through the disobedience of the one man, the many were set down (κατεστάθησαν--aorist passive indicative, third plural) as

sinners (Romans 5:19). Please take notice that the men were now declared sinners. Likewise, through the obedience of the One, many will be set down (κατασταθήσονται--future passive indicative, third plural) as righteous. Setting down in that context means the person had been given a new description: sinners became righteous. Same person, new standing. (See also Matthew 24:47 (the slave doing the will of his master will be set down (καταστήσει--future active indicative, third singular) over all the possessions)--same person, new duties; Matthew 25:21 (the faithful slave will be set down (καταστήσω--future active indicative, first singular) over many things)--same person, new duties; Acts 6:3 (the apostles commanded the multitude of the disciples to examine (ἐπισκέψασθε--aorist middle imperative, second plural) seven men whom we (the apostles) will set down (καταστήσομεν--future active indicative, first plural) over the need of the widows for daily food service)--same person, new duties; Hebrews 2:7 (with glory and honor God set down (κατέστησας--aorist active indicative, second singular) Jesus over the works of God's hands)--same Person, new position; Luke 12:14 (Jesus asked: Who set down (κατέστησεν--aorist active indicative, third singular) Me (Jesus) as a judge or divider over you?)--same Person, new position; Acts 7:10 (Pharaoh set down (κατέστησεν--aorist active indicative, third singular) Joseph as Esteemed One (ἡγούμενον--present middle/passive participle, accusative masculine singular) of Israel--same person, new position; notice the syntax here of how Joseph became Esteemed One as a title; Acts 7:27 (Hebrew slave asked Joseph: Who set down (κατέστησεν--aorist active indicative, third singular) you as ruler (ἄρχοντα) and judge (δικαστήν) over us? A New Testament elder does not become a ruler (ἄρχοντα), but he does become one of the esteemed ones (ἡγούμενοι), like Joseph--same person, new title and new position.))

5.3.2.3 Directions. Third, Titus must follow the directions Paul had already provided to him. Paul used the word διευτάξάμην (aorist middle indicative, first singular) to describe the fact that he had already directed Titus to set down elders. The issue involves just what directions did he give to Titus. Did Paul already provide the names of the elders to set down as Church Overseers? Did Paul provide the procedure to set down elders as Church Overseers? Did Paul provide both the names and the procedures? I did not find clear answers to those questions in this passage. Consider Felix giving directions (διατάξαμενος) to the centurion so that Paul would have some freedoms; Felix provided the scope of freedom for Paul with his directions (Acts 24:23). Consider also Paul saying that when he came to Corinth, then he would give directions about resolving the remaining

matters. Notice that in 1 Corinthians 11 Paul gave very specific guidance about the procedure for Breaking Bread (διατάξομαι--future middle indicative, first person singular (1 Corinthians 11:34). Therefore, we have Scriptural evidence showing that the both the scope and the procedure have been associated with word διατάσσω.

5.3.3 Having Reached Hands (Χειροτονήσαντες). Having reached hands to them for the church elder, they placed them to the Lord in whom they believed (Acts 14:23). “Having reached hands to them for the church elders, having prayed with fasting, they placed them to the Lord in Whom they had believed” (Acts 14:23). Paul and Barnabas traveled through Lycaonia and Pisidia (Acts 14:23). During their travels to the churches which they planted in those areas, Paul and Silas were involved with selecting overseers. Luke wrote: χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς κατ’ ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους, προσευξάμενοι μετὰ νηστειῶν παρέθεντο αὐτοὺς τῷ κυρίῳ εἰς ὃν πεπιστεύκεισαν. Paul and Silas having reached the hands for elders in each church, having prayed with fasting, they placed them to the Lord in whom they had believed. Luke used the term "having reached hand" to describe the means of putting those men into office. Luke use the term Χειροτονήσαντες (aorist active participle, nominative masculine singular). In this context some people say that the term Χειροτονήσαντες means appointed. That translation misses the mark when not differentiated from the term set (ἔθετο) in the context of selecting elders to hold the Church Office of Overseer. Instead of using the term set (ἔθετο), (interestingly, Paul and Barnabas set before them (παρέθεντο--aorist middle indicative, third person plural from παρατίθημι), in the Lord, in whom they had believed, again emphasizing the placement of the elders) to, Paul and Barnabas used their hands. Some uses of the term outside the Bible indicate a vote by raising the hand. Elders in Lycaonia and Pisidia were not necessarily chosen by the congregations, but Paul and Barnabas having reached hands to them in the church elders. The first question concerns who reached the hands. In this context, apparently Paul and Barnabas reached their hands, with Χειροτονήσαντες being co-ordinate with having prayed. The issue concerns whether the whole phrase means that the congregation reached hands to select elders in every church. In the alternative, did Paul and Barnabas reach hands to select elders in every church. The call seems fairly close because πρεσβυτέρους may serve as an adjective modifying ἐκκλησίαν. The prepositional phrase χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς κατ’ ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους used the preposition kata with the accusative, often meaning according to or for each. So, the choice could be according to the will of each

church. In Acts 20:20, Paul told the elders he went teaching publicly and house to house (ὥς οὐδὲν ὑπεστειλάμην τῶν συμφερόντων τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ' οἴκους). Therefore, the phrase κατ' ἐκκλησίαν may mean going church to church and the term elder modifies the term church (both feminine nouns--church elders--already elders, but now set into Church Office of Overseer). See John 10:3 where Jesus calls them according to name. They could have done a hand count according to the church, just as Jesus called each name in John 10:3. In the alternative, the term πρεσβυτέρους could be used functionally as a noun, describing an office. For the reasons outlined elsewhere in this study, I disfavor that approach. The better view appears to be that some of the existing elders were appointed to the Church Office of Overseer. They were not made elders, but Paul and Barnabas reached hands toward some church elders (already existing as elders) and they were set in the body as Church Overseers. (Paul and Barnabas did not seem to be laying on hands; see the different language employed in Acts 14:3--then fasting and praying and having laid hands upon them they departed (τότε νηστεύσαντες καὶ προσευξάμενοι καὶ ἐπιθέντες τὰς χεῖρας αὐτοῖς ἀπέλυσαν); Acts 8:18--laying on of hands to receive Holy Spirit (ιδὼν δὲ ὁ Σίμων ὅτι διὰ τῆς ἐπιθέσεως τῶν χειρῶν τῶν ἀποστόλων δίδοται τὸ πνεῦμα προσήνεγκεν αὐτοῖς χρήματα); Acts 19:6. And when Paul had laid his hands (ἐπιθέντος) upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they *began* speaking with tongues and prophesying (καὶ ἐπιθέντος αὐτοῖς τοῦ Παύλου [τὰς] χεῖρας ἦλθεν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἐπ' αὐτούς, ἐλάλουν τε γλώσσαις καὶ ἐπροφήτευον.) Interestingly, the verse could also suggest a two-step process of selecting the elder by vote, and then placing them with the Lord as the second step in the service. Another use of the term hand reaching provides more insight into the meaning of hand reaching. Paul also wrote: “and not only this but also the hand-reached one under the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being administered by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and to show our readiness,” (2 Corinthians 8:19). In 2 Corinthians 8:19, the term hand reaching (χειροτονηθεῖς--aorist passive participle, nominative masculine singular) described Titus as a hand-reached one (χειροτονηθεῖς) by the church to be a fellow traveler. (2 Corinthians 8:19 provides: οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ χειροτονηθεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν συνέκδημος ἡμῶν σὺν τῇ χάριτι ταύτῃ τῇ διακονουμένῃ ὑφ' ἡμῶν πρὸς τὴν [αὐτοῦ] τοῦ κυρίου δόξαν καὶ προθυμίαν ἡμῶν.) The passive voice there emphasizes the act, but then the prepositional phrase describes the people who reached hands in support of Titus joining the missionary team. Regarding the use of the prepositional phrase ὑπὸ τῶν + noun, see 1

Corinthians 1:11--people under Chole (ὑπὸ τῶν Χλόης); 1 Corinthians 10:9--under the serpents were being destroyed (ὑπὸ τῶν ὄφρων ἀπώλλυντο); 2 Corinthians 2:6--rebuke under the many (ὑπὸ τῶν πλειόνων; 1 Thessalonians 2:14--suffered under your own countrymen (ὑπὸ τῶν ἰδίων συμφυλετῶ). In Acts 20:20, Paul told the elders he went house to house teaching. Acts 20:20 provides: ὥς οὐδὲν ὑπεστείλαμην τῶν συμφερόντων τοῦ μὴ ἀναγγεῖλαι ὑμῖν καὶ διδάξαι ὑμᾶς δημοσίᾳ καὶ κατ' οἴκους. If Acts 14:23 means Paul and Silas hand reached elders, then it may have been the only place. The church (ekklesia) made the choice about Titus by hand reaching, perhaps by a vote.

5.4 Related Words. God also provided further information about putting people into places in the Body of Christ. The nuances here are beyond the scope of this study, but tend to show that God used different words to differentiate particular kinds and means of placements in the Body of Christ. He takes great care in placing the right person, and not others, into positions of service and authority over saints.

5.4.1 You Seat (καθίζετε). In 1 Corinthians 6:4, Paul asked the Corinthians why they seat people who are no account in the church as judges over them? Paul used the verb seat (καθίζετε--present active indicative, second person plural from καθίζω). Paul meant that effectively the Corinthians had seated judges over the saints, contrary to the will of God, because those "judges" were of no account in the church.

5.4.2 I Am Set (κεῖμαι). In Philippians 1:16, Paul said people spread the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ out of love, knowing that I am seated for the defense of the Gospel. Paul used the participle κεῖμαι (present middle/passive participle, first person singular) to describe his placement by God for defense of the Gospel.

5.4.3 He Was Set (ἐτέθη). In 1 Timothy 2:7, Paul recounted that he was set as a preacher and an apostle. Paul used the term τίθημι--aorist passive Indicative first person singular.

5.5 Summary of the Placement of Church Overseers.

- ♦ Church Overseers were placed into office through various means.
- ♦ Paul and Barnabas placed many overseers into various churches.

♦ Paul directed Timothy to place overseers into the various churches of Crete.

6

The Qualifications of the Overseer



6.1 Stretching. Paul concentrated his instructions to Timothy regarding Church Overseers on identifying men suited to be a Church Overseer. Paul started by indicating that some men will identify themselves as seeking to be a Church Overseer. Timothy may identify them because they stretch themselves towards the Church Office of Overseer. (Paul used the term ὀρέγεται (present middle indicative, third singular) which means here to stretch out himself for something. This nice picture coincides with the hand-reaching of setting men into the Church Office of Overseer. Paul contrasted the ones stretching themselves towards the Church Office of Overseer with

the ones stretching themselves (ὁρεγόμενοι--present middle participle, nominative masculine participle) towards money and wander away from the faith (1 Timothy 6:10). Consider also the patriarchs stretching themselves (ὁρέγονται--present middle indicative, third plural) towards Fatherland in the heavens (Hebrews 11:16). Notice that all uses occur in the middle voice, indicating action both originating within himself and acting upon himself. The object they seek is outside the self, something to be obtained with effort.) Paul provided: "Faithful the word. If any man overseership stretches himself, good work he desires" (1 Timothy 3:1). Paul described some men who stretch themselves towards the Church Office of Overseer. Paul indicated that Church Overseership itself constitutes a good work. Men who stretch themselves toward the Church Office of Overseership desire a good work. Therefore, the Church Office of Overseership may be populated with men who seek the position, by stretching themselves toward it. They must, however, meet certain spiritual qualifications. (By using the genitive noun ἐπισκοπῆς, the meaning becomes clear: if any man stretches himself towards overseership, he desires a good work." Paul also used middle voice (ὁρέγεται) to describe the effort within the man to stretch himself toward the overseership.) By implication, only the faithful men should be placed into the Body of Christ as Church Overseers. In other words, merely stretching themselves toward the Church Office of Overseer is not enough. Two steps must be kept in mind. First, the man must stretch himself to be a Church Overseer. Second, the man who stretches himself to be Church Overseer must also meet the spiritual qualification of a Church Overseer. One without the other will not produce good results. Therefore, the faithful man stretching himself towards a Church Overseer must also meet certain qualifications which Paul outlined to Timothy (1 Timothy 3:1-7).

6.2 The Qualifications for Church Overseers. Paul wrote Timothy that a Church Overseer must possess certain spiritual qualifications in addition to stretching forward. Because some elders are appointed to the Church Office of Overseer, the qualifications described in Titus 1 apply to Church Overseers in particular, not elders. Notice that Paul related the qualifications to the "overseer" ("ἐπίσκοπον") and not elders ("πρεσβυτέρους") who were set down into the Church Office of Overseer (Titus 1:5). Paul provided: "An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach," (1 Timothy 3:2).

6.2.1 Above Reproach. The first qualification for being a Church Overseer is "above reproach." (1 Timothy 6:14 provides: τηρῆσαι σε τὴν ἐντολὴν

ἄσπιλον ἀνεπίλημπτον μέχρι τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. Paul used the term "ἀνεπίλημπτον" meaning "above reproach.") In 1 Timothy 6:14 Paul urged Timothy to keep the commandment "above stain" and "above reproach" until the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. In 1 Timothy 5:7 Paul urged Timothy to help the widows be part of the group of people above reproach. (1 Timothy 5:7 provides: καὶ ταῦτα παράγγελλε, ἵνα ἀνεπίλημπτοι (noun-nominative masculine plural) ᾤσιν.) The Church Overseer must have a reputation giving no cause for reproach (disapproval) until the Lord Jesus appears and the Church Overseer must be a part of the group known as "above reproach ones."

6.2.2 One Woman Man. The second qualification for being a Church Overseer was one woman man. (Paul used the phrase "μὶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα.") The term "μὶς" often means a certain one out of more than one (see [One](#)). (Luke 14:18--beginning from one all excused themselves; Luke 17:34--two (δύο) on one (μὶς) bed, the one (ὁ εἷς) taken; Luke 22:59--one hour; Acts 24:21 one voice among many; Hebrews 12:16--sold birthright for one meal.) Paul used this expression "one woman man" in 1 Timothy 3:2; 3:12; Titus 1:6. By choosing the term one ("μὶς"), Paul emphasized that the Church Overseer must not have more than one wife and no sexual connections to any other woman. Because Paul was single and urged others to be single (1 Corinthians 7:1), he was not excluding single men from being a Church Overseer. By emphasizing that a man must have only one wife, He was also emphasizing that when a man sins sexually with a woman, they become one flesh (1 Corinthians 6:16). (To describe becoming "one flesh" with a prostitute, Paul wrote ἐν σῶμα (1 Corinthians 6:16), which stands in contrast to σὰρξ μία Matthew used to describe joining in marriage, so that they are no longer δύο (Matthew 19:6).) Therefore, Paul emphasized a man must have one wife and must not be joined sexually to other women. (Regarding the term γυναικὸς, Matthew used the definite article τῆς γυναικὸς in the context of the disciples saying that it is better to marry than to be stuck for life with a wife who commits immorality without any chance of divorce (Matthew 19:10). Luke used also used the definite article τῆς γυναικὸς to describe Herod having the wife of his brother Philip (Luke 3:19). Jesus used the definite article τῆς γυναικὸς to describe the wife of Lot (Luke 19:32). John described a Samaritan woman as γυναικὸς, but she had five husbands, but the one with her then was not her husband (John 4:27). John also used the definite article τῆς γυναικὸς to describe the Samaritan woman who testified to the City of Sychar (John 4:39). Luke used the definite article τῆς γυναικὸς to describe the wife of Ananias conspiring with him (Acts 5:2).

Luke also described Timothy's mother as a γυναικὸς Jewish believer (Acts 16:1). Paul said it is good for man not to touch a γυναικὸς (1 Corinthians 7:1). Those examples show the varied uses of the term γυναικὸς with and without the definite article. In 1 Timothy 3:11 Paul used the term Γυναῖκας (noun--accusative feminine plural). Paul used the term γυναικας in 1 Corinthians 7:29; Ephesians 5:25; 5:28; Colossians 3:19; 1 Timothy 2:9, 3:11), describing both women and wives.) The Julian Laws on Marriage prohibited polygamy and imposed taxes on unmarried people in the Roman Empire. Therefore, because of existing secular law against polygamy, the translation husband of one wife seems disfavored. Some people argue that a divorced man cannot be a Church Overseer. Jesus described all people who file for divorce as sinful, no exceptions (Matthew 19:1-12; see [Divorce and Remarriage](#)). When people file for divorce and no sexual immorality has occurred during the marriage, then the person filing for divorce adds the sin of adultery. Paul, however, did not use any of the words related to marriage (γάμος) or adultery (μοιχεία) or immorality (πορνεία) or divorce (ἀποστάσιον). (See the terms used in Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-4, 11-12; Luke 16:18 and 1 Corinthians 7:11-12.) Jesus directed His discussion of marriage, divorce and remarriage to isolated acts of sin, not necessarily continuing sinful states, such as a continuing condition of immorality (see [Permanent Disqualification from Church Offices?](#)). Paul focused upon present actions and present character. Certainly, at the moment of salvation every person becomes a new creation in Christ, and all the old things have passed away (1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Therefore, actions and character before salvation should have no bearing on the qualifications for being a Church Overseer.

6.2.3 Temperate. The third qualification for being a Church Overseer was temperate. (Paul used the term "temperate" ("νηφώλιον"), translated as sober or temperate. It has limited use in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:2; 1 Timothy 3:11; Titus 2:2; all those occurrences related to qualifications for church leadership).)

6.2.4 Prudent. The fourth qualification for being a Church Overseer was sober. (Paul used the term "prudent" ("σώφρονα"), translated as sober, self-controlled, sensible (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; Titus 2:2, 5).)

6.2.5 Respectable. The fifth qualification for being a Church Overseers was respectable. (Paul used the term "respectable" ("κόσμιον"), translated as proper, modest, seemly (1 Timothy 3:2, 2:9).)

6.2.6 Hospitable. The sixth qualification for being a Church Overseer was loving strangers. (Paul used the term "loving strangers" ("φιλόξενον"), translated as hospitable, generous to guests (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8; 1 Peter 4:9).)

6.2.7 Able To Teach. The seventh qualification for being a Church Overseer was apt to teach. (Paul used the term "able to teach" ("διδασκτικόν"), translated as apt or able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2; 2 Timothy 2:24).)

6.2.8 Not Addicted to Wine. The eighth qualification for being a Church Overseer was not given to wine. (Paul used the phrase "not given to wine" ("μὴ πάροινον"), translated as not addicted to wine, not given to wine (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7). Also, please note that Paul used the negative "μὴ" to describe a greater possible realm of disqualifiers, in addition to those well-known qualities in actual reality.) Paul left no doubt that people with unresolved addictions, or who still follow the false teaching that they remain alcoholics for life (see [Seven Reasons](#)), remain disqualified.

6.2.9 Not Pugnacious. The ninth qualification for being a Church Overseer was not pugnacious. (Paul used the phrase "not pugnacious" ("μὴ πλήκτην"), translated as not a striker, not pugnacious, not a brawler (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7).)

6.2.10 Gentle. The tenth qualification for being a Church Overseer was gentle. (Paul used the term "gentle" ("ἐπιεικῇ"), translated as gentle, patient, moderate (1 Timothy 3:2; Philippians 4:5; Titus 3:2; James 3:17; 1 Peter 2:18).)

6.2.11 Peaceable. The eleventh qualification for being a Church Overseer was peaceable. (Paul used the term "peaceable" ("ἄμαχον"), translated as peaceable, without fighting, not contentious (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 3:2).)

6.2.12 Free from the Love of Money. The twelfth qualification for being a Church Overseer was not loving money. (Paul used the term "no loving money" ("ἀφιλάργυρον"), translated as free from the love of money, not avaricious, not loving of silver (1 Timothy 3:3; Hebrews 13:5).)

6.2.13 Good House Manager. The thirteenth qualification for being a Church Overseer was good leader of his own house. (Paul used the phrase "the house of him well leading" ("τοῦ ἰδίου οἴκου καλῶς προϊστάμενον"),

meaning he leads well at home (see Section Two, Leading at Home, in [The Spiritual Gift of Leading](#)).)

6.2.14 Keeping Children under Control. The fourteenth qualification for being a Church Overseer was keeping children under control, with all dignity. (Paul used the phrase "children under control, with all dignity" ("τέκνα ἔχοντα ἐν ὑποταγῇ, μετὰ πάσης σεμνότητος"), translated as children under control, subjection, obedience (2 Corinthians 9:13; Galatians 2:5; 1 Timothy 2:11; 1 Timothy 3:4; with all dignity (1 Timothy 2:2; 1 Timothy 3:4; Titus 2:7) see Section Two, Leading at Home, in [The Spiritual Gift of Leading](#)).) Paul argued that a man who cannot lead his own household well will not be able to care for the church of God.

6.2.15 Not a New Convert. The fifteenth qualification for being a Church Overseer was not a new convert. (Paul used the phrase "not a new convert" ("μὴ νεόφυτον"), translated as newly planted, new convert, neophyte, novice (1 Timothy 3:6).) The danger with new converts is that becoming a Church Overseer may: (a) make them puffed up (Paul used the term "puffed up" ("τυφωθείς"), translated as blowing smoke, clouding the air, muddled, moral blindness, prideful, conceited, high-minded (1 Timothy 3:6; 1 Timothy 6:4; 2 Timothy 3:4).) and (b) so subject to falling into judgment of the devil. (Paul used the phrase "into judgment may fall of the devil" ("εἰς κρίμα ἐμπέσῃ τοῦ διαβόλου"). The danger of pride causing the devil to sin against God because of his lofty position bringing judgment upon the devil poses a similar danger to neophytes becoming Church Overseers.) This entire discussion underlines the high standing of the Office of Church Overseer.)

6.2.16 Good Reputation. The sixteenth qualification for being a Church Overseer was having a good testimony with outsiders. (Paul used the phrase "δεῖ δὲ καὶ μαρτυρίαν καλὴν ἔχειν ἀπὸ τῶν ἔξωθεν", translated as "and then to have testimony good from the outsiders.") Paul linked the testimony from people outside the church with the lurking problem of falling into reproach and the snare of the devil. (Paul provided: ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὀνειδισμὸν ἐμπέσῃ καὶ παγίδα τοῦ διαβόλου. Please take notice of the ἵνα clause with the subjunctive to describe the related problems of (a) falling into reproach in the community and then the church; and then (b) the snare of the devil (Romans 11:9; 1 Timothy 3:7; 1 Timothy 6:9; 2 Timothy 2:26; Luke 21:35).) The devil lays snares for people who lack a good testimony in the secular community by placing them in church offices and then they fall into reproach for their evil behavior. Even so, they may not be disqualified permanently from office;

consider Saul of Tarsus (see [Permanent Disqualification](#) and the [Denial of Peter](#)).

6.2.17 Children Who Believe. The seventeenth qualification for being a Church Overseer was having faithful children. (Paul used the phrase "having faithful children" ("τέκνα ἔχων πιστά").) Paul used the term "children" to describe minors (for example, 1 Thessalonians 2:7) and adults (for example, Galatians 4:28; 31). The issue here concerns what happens when a child leaves home and acts badly. Should a man be disqualified from church office because his adult children, having left home years ago, act badly? Because of the context of leading his own household well in 1 Timothy 3:4-5, I favor the view that so long as the child remains part of the household, then the child must be faithful. (See Matthew 24:45; Luke 16:10 for the passive use of πιστά.) and a believer. (See 1 Timothy 4:3; 10; Titus 3:8 where πιστά describes believers.) We must keep in mind that only God the Father draws people to Jesus for salvation, and then Jesus reveals the Father to them (Matthew 11:27; 16:17; John 14:6). Parents cannot save their children, only God can give that gift. Evens so, Paul may have meant that the children at home must be both faithful and a believer. (When Abraham rescued Lot, his nephew, Abraham took three hundred eighteen men, able to wield a sword, all born in his household (בְּיָהוּ) (Genesis 14:14). Please take notice that God chose Abraham so that he would command his children (בְּנָיִ) and his household (בְּיָהוּ) to keep the way of Yahweh (Genesis 18:19). God distinguished children from household (which included everyone living in the "house" of Abraham). Therefore, we may also keep that distinction in mind in the New Testament, particularly when considering the qualifications for church office. Likewise, children once married leave their parents and form a new household with their wife (Matthew 19:5, quoting Genesis 2:24), indicating they are no longer part of the household of their parents (although some may argue that married people were part of Abraham's household). The point seems to be all married people leave their parents and become one flesh with their spouse. Some married people establish their own household, separate from their parents (Genesis 12:1; Ruth 2:11; Matthew 19:29). Adult children may be cast out of the family for unrepentant sinful behavior (Matthew 18:15-20). The unwillingness to follow disciplinary procedures with their own adult children render them unfit to follow disciplinary procedures in the church.

6.2.18 Not Accused of Dissipation. The eighteenth qualification for being a Church Overseer was not in accusation of dissipation. (Paul used the

phrase "not in accusation of dissipation" ("μὴ ἐν κατηγορίᾳ ἀσωτίας"), translated as not in accusation of (or charged with) dissipation, riot or debaucher (Titus 1:6; John 18:29; 1 Timothy 5:19.) In effect, people who drink to excess or eat to excess or otherwise have addiction problems would be disqualified.

6.2.19 Not Accused of Rebellion. The nineteenth qualification for being a Church Overseer was not accused of rebellion. Paul used the phrase "not accused of rebellion" ("μὴ ἐν κατηγορίᾳ ἀνυπότακτα"), translated as rebellion, unruly, insubordinate (Titus 1:6; 1 Timothy 1:9; Titus 1:10; Hebrews 2:8). They should not be insubordinate (ἀνέγκλητον), because they are stewards of God, taking His orders (Titus 1:7).

6.2.20 Not Self-Willed. The twentieth qualification for being a Church Overseer was not self-willed. Paul used the term "self-willed" ("αὐθάδη"), translated as self-willed, self-satisfied, arrogant, stubborn (Titus 1:7; 2 Peter 2:10).)

6.2.21 Not Quick-Tempered. The twenty-first qualification for being a Church Overseer was not quick-tempered. Paul used the term "quick-tempered" ("ὀργίλον"), translated as quick-tempered and soon angry (Titus 1:7) (see [Angers of God](#), page 52.)

6.2.22 Not Fond of Sordid Gain. The twenty-second qualification for being a Church Overseer was not fond of sordid gain. Paul used the term "sordid gain" ("αἰσχροκερδῆ"), translated as fond of sordid gain, dishonest gain, base gain (Titus 1:7). See [Sordid Gain](#).

6.2.23 Loving What Is Good. The twenty-third qualification for being a Church Overseer was loving what is good. Paul used the phrase "loving what is good" ("φιλόξενον φιλάγαθον"), translated as loving what is good, lover of good, lover of good (Titus 1:8).

6.2.24 Just. The twenty-fourth qualification for being a Church Overseer was righteous. Paul used the term "righteous" ("δίκαιον"), translated as just, right, righteous (Titus 1:8; Matthew 1:9; Matthew 20:7; Romans 3:26; Philippians 1:7; Colossians 4:1).

6.2.25 Devout. The twenty-fifth qualification for being a Church Overseer was holy. Paul used the term "holy" ("ὅσιον"), translated as holy, devout and

pious (Titus 1:8; Acts 2:27; 13:4; 13:35; 1 Timothy 2:8; Hebrews 7:26; Revelation 15:4; 16:5.)

6.2.26 Disciplined. The twenty-sixth qualification for being a Church Overseer was disciplined. Paul used the term "disciplined" ("ἐγκρατῆ"), translated as disciplined, temperate, self-control (Titus 1:8; Acts 24:25; 2 Peter 1:6).

6.5.27 Holding the Faithful Word. The twenty-seventh qualification for being a Church Overseer was holding the word of faith. Paul used the phrase "holding the faithful word," which is according to the teaching ("ἀντεχόμενον τοῦ κατὰ τὴν διδαχὴν πιστοῦ λόγου"), translated as holding the faithful word, which is according to the teaching (Titus 1:9, Matthew 6:24 (hold, devoted), Luke 16:13 (hold, devoted)). Please take notice that the Church Overseer must personally hold to the faithful word, according to the teaching. Both the teaching and the faithful word must be kept, as reflected in Scripture.

6.2.28 Able to Encourage with Sound Teaching. The twenty-eighth qualification for being a Church Overseer was "so that may be able to encourage with the sound teaching." Paul used the phrase "so that may be able to encourage with the sound teaching" ("ἵνα δυνατὸς ᾦ καὶ παρακαλεῖν ἐν τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ τῇ ὑγιαίνουσῃ) translated as so that he may be able to encourage with the sound teaching (Titus 1:9). Please take notice that Paul used the "ἵνα" clause with the subjunctive "ᾦ" to describe the necessity of the Church Overseer to be ready "παρακαλεῖν" ("to call with") in the sound teaching, so that they will silence those people who oppose the Scriptures, particularly the teaching in the Scriptures.

6.2.29 Able to To Convict the Contradicting Ones. The twenty-ninth qualification for being a Church Overseer was "able to convict the contradicting ones." Paul used the phrase ("τοὺς ἀντιλέγοντας ἐλέγχειν"), translated as able to convict those people who contradict (Titus 1:9; Paul used the term "ἐλέγχειν" which often refers to conviction of sin (1 Timothy 5:20; Titus 1:13; Titus 2:15; John 8:46; 1 Corinthians 14:24; Revelation 3:19; 5:13; James 2:9; Ephesians 5:13; Luke 3:19; Hebrews 12:5; James 3:20; Jude 1:5; John 16:8; Matthew 18:15; 2 Timothy 4:2). Please take notice that Paul required that the Church Overseer must hold fast to the Scriptures because the Church Overseer must be ready to encourage sound teaching and

refute contradictory teaching and use the Scriptures to achieve those spiritual results.

6.3 Summary of the Qualifications of Overseers.

- ♦ Paul described specific qualifications for Church Overseers.
- ♦ The New Testament never mentions any qualifications to obtain The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.
- ♦ Church Overseers must possess many spiritual qualities, lead their own households well, and provide strong spiritual leadership for the church.

7

The Examples of Overseers



7.1 Definition. God appointed, literally set down ("καταστήσης"), “elders” (“πρεσβυτέρους”) within the local church. Titus 1:5 shows that the practice of appointing elders was well established by the time Paul ordered Timothy to appoint elders in Crete. God created the office of overseer to fulfill many different functions. Some people have confused the work of “overseeing” (“ἐπισκοποῦντες”) with the Church Office of Overseer (“ἐπίσκοπος”) and elders (“πρεσβυτεροί”), which remain separate groups in the congregation. Please recall I use the term presbuteroi to make it simpler for English only

readers. All people who hold the office of overseer in the local church must come from the group of elders (“πρεσβυτέρους”) in the local church. In other words, all people holding the Church Office of Overseer should be elders (presbuteros), but not all elders (presbuteros) are Church Overseers (episkopos) in the sense that they hold the Church Office of Overseer. To avoid such confusion, we must carefully distinguish several terms used in the New Testament to describe church leadership.

7.2 The Overseers at Ephesus. As Paul knew he was headed to prison, he visited Asia Minor and called the Ephesian elders of the church (“τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας”) to gather to him (Acts 20:17). Referring to those same men, he told them to be on guard for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers (“ἐπισκόπους”), in order to shepherd (“ποιμαίνειν”) the church of God (Acts 20:28). God called these men “elders” (“πρεσβυτέρους”) and they held the Church Office of Overseer. We should take careful note of Paul's use of terms there. He called the elders (presbuteros) of the church. The Holy Spirit appointed elders, literally set some elders (ἔθετο) as Overseers (ἐπισκόπους). God started with some elders (presbuteros) and appointed some of those elders as Overseers (episkopos). Therefore, not every elder may be an Overseer. God appoints some elders as Overseers, but not all elders are Overseers. All elders do the work of overseeing the congregation, but not all elders hold the Church Office of Overseer. At Ephesus, the elders were set into the Church Office of Overseer. “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (Acts 20:28).

7.3 The Overseers at Philippi. Please take notice that Paul addressed the Philippian "Overseers" (episkopos) and deacons (Philippians 1:1). They were two offices present in the church at Philippi. The Deacons were not called Overseers. Both Overseers and Deacons had qualifications for office. Paul provided: “servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:” (Philippians 1:1).

7.4 The Overseers of Crete. Paul directed Titus to set down (καταστήσης) elders in every city as Paul directed him. Paul then described the qualifications of Overseers (ἐπίσκοπον) (Titus 1:7). Paul provided: “For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,” (Titus 1:7).

7.5 Summary of the Examples of Overseers.

♦ Some of the elder at Ephesus were also made Church Overseers by the Holy Spirit.

♦ Paul addressed the Church Overseers and Deacons in his greeting to the Philippian church.

♦ Paul ordered Timothy to appoint elders who became Church Overseers in the churches of Crete.

8

The Duties of Overseers



8.1 Overseer: Duties. The Church Overseers have particular duties in the New Testament. Those duties included all the duties of elders, but also included other duties.

8.2 Guarding the Flock. All elders must guard the flock of God. They must first guard themselves, and then guard the flock. The Holy Spirit set some of the Ephesian elders into the Church Office of Overseer. Paul provided: “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has

set you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28).

8.3 Shepherd the Flock. The Church Overseers must also shepherd the flock of God. The Holy Spirit set (ἔθετο) the elders as overseers (noun masculine plural) to shepherd (ποιμαίνειν--present active infinitive) the church of God. Peter provided: “Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:1-3).

8.3.1 Not under Compulsion. The Church Overseers must also shepherd (ποιμάνετε) the in you sheep of the God (τὸ ἐν ὑμῖν ποίμνιον τοῦ θεοῦ), overseeing (ἐπισκοποῦντες) not under compulsion (1 Peter 5:2).

8.3.2 Voluntarily. The Church Overseer must exercise oversight voluntarily, down from God (1 Peter 5:2). We learn about how to exercise oversight as not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God.

8.3.3. Not for Sordid Gain. The Church Overseer must not exercise oversight for sordid gain (αἰσχροκερδῶς).

8.3.4 Eagerly. The Church Overseer must exercise oversight eagerly (προθύμως).

8.3.5 Not Lording. The Church Overseer must not be lording down (κατακυριεύοντες) of the inheritors (τῶν κληρῶν),

8.3.6 Examples. The Church Overseers must fulfill their service, examples becoming (τύποι γινόμενοι) of the flock (τοῦ ποιμνίου).

8.3.7 Unfading Crown of Glory. The Church Overseer will receive the unfading crown (τὸν ἀμαράντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον) when the Chief Shepherd appears (φανερωθέντος τοῦ ἀρχιποίμενος).

8.4 Overseeing Saints. The Church Overseers have a duty, shared by all believers, to pursue peace, overseeing (ἐπισκοποῦντες--see same word in 1

Peter 5:2) so that no one will be falling away from the grace of God (Hebrews 12:15), and no root of bitterness should spring up and trouble believers (Hebrews 12:16).

8.5 Resolving Doctrinal Disputes. The church elders at Jerusalem joined with the apostles in resolving doctrinal disputes at the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:2,4, 6, 22, 23). Once the doctrinal dispute was resolved, they provided a letter to be circulated to various churches regarding the resolution of the dispute (Acts 16:4).

8.6 Receiving and Guiding Missionaries. The elders in Jerusalem received Paul and Barnabas and gave them guidance (Acts 15:2,4, 6, 22, 23) and later met with Paul and his companions as they returned to Jerusalem after several missionary journeys (Acts 21:18).

8.5 Summary of the Duties of Overseers.

- ◆ **Shepherd the Flock--the Work is Shepherding**
- ◆ **Overseeing**
- ◆ **Not for Sordid Gain**
- ◆ **Voluntarily**
- ◆ **Eagerly**
- ◆ **Not Lording Down The Sheep**
- ◆ **Examples Being to the Flock**
- ◆ **At the Manifesting of Christ, the Chief Shepherd, and the Elders Will Receive an Unfading Crown of Glory**
- ◆ **Prevent falling away of believers from the grace of God.**
- ◆ **Preventing a root of bitterness springing up to trouble believers.**

9

The Removal of the Overseer



9.1 The Qualifications of Overseers. Paul described the qualifications for the Church Office of Overseer to young Timothy (1 Timothy 3:2-7; Titus 1:5-9). Many people view those qualifications as essential for entering the Church Office of Overseer. Could a Church Overseer be removed for not having those qualifications? Certainly, some elders will have times when they do not demonstrate all of the qualifications. Do any special rules apply for removing or disciplining a Church Overseer? All Church Overseers are elders, but not all elders are Church Overseers. Therefore, the rules for

imposing discipline on Church Overseers follow the same rules for disciplining elders.

9.2 Accusations. Elders generally should not be sharply rebuked, but appealed to as a father (1 Timothy 5:1). Likewise, the church should not receive an accusation against an elder, except on the basis of two or three witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19).

9.3 Rebuked. If the elder continues in sin, then they should be rebuked in the presence of all (1 Timothy 5:20). Please note that they were not removed from being an elder, because they held no office to be removed from. Not all elders hold the Church Office of Overseer. Consider Paul rebuking Peter, who held the Church Office of Apostle, as a hypocrite by holding himself aloof from the gentiles in Antioch when the Judaizers visited from Jerusalem. In the presence of all, Paul rebuked Peter: "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?" (Galatians 2:14).

9.4 Disciplinary Process. The disciplinary process for elders and Church Overseers follows the same path as for any other member of the Church (Matthew 18:15-20). The secular courts will never be an appropriate forum for solving disciplinary problems in the church, meaning no Christian should ever file suit in a secular court against another Christian; it is better to be defrauded (1 Corinthians 6:1-6).

9.4.1 Private Talk. If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private ("Private Talk"), thus starting the formal disciplinary process described in Matthew 18:15-20. The Private Talk should not happen until the Church Overseer has been accused by two or three witness (1 Timothy 5:19), except that an informal talk will always be appropriate (Galatians 6:1-5; Luke 17:3). If he listens to you, you have won your brother (Matthew 18:15). A Private Talk may be anyone showing a Church Overseer that his conduct materially differs from the standards for Christian behavior found in the Scriptures. Without proof from the Scriptures, such private talks should be avoided, because only the Scriptures provide a guide to Godly behavior in all of us. The point of the Private Talk will always be restoration with a spirit of gentleness, bearing one another's burdens, with humility (Galatians 6:1-5). The Private Talk should address matters of sinful behavior, such as immorality, covetous, idolatry, reviling, drunkenness, and swindling (1 Corinthians 5:9-13). Likewise, doctrinal perversion must be confronted and

silenced (Acts 20:30; Titus 1:11; 1 Peter 2:15; 3 John 1:9-10; Jude 1:4, 8-13, 16, 18-23; 2 John 1:7-11). Also, exercising oversight under compulsion or for sordid gain or as lording down may be grounds for disciplining Church Overseers (1 Peter 5:1-5). In addition, any failure to meet the standards for Church Overseers described in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 also provide grounds for discipline of Church Overseers. After the Private Talk, if repentance and change are not forthcoming, then the disciplinary process proceeds to the next step. Again, the passages described above are not exhaustive; any Scriptural grounds for removing a Church Overseer should be presented and followed in the Private Talk.

9.4.2 Witnesses Talk. If the Church Overseer refuses to listen to the brother coming to him for the Private Talk, then take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed ("Witness Talk") (Matthew 18:16).

9.4.3 Church Talk. If the Church Overseer refuses to listen to the witnesses, then tell it to the church ("Church Talk") (Matthew 18:17). Public talk in the church shows everyone that everyone must follow the Scriptures, because they provide the only reliable guide to life and Godliness, with proper teaching, reproof, correction and training in righteousness (2 Peter 2:2; Timothy 3:16-17).

9.4.4 Gentile and Tax Collector. If the Church Overseer refuses to listen to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and tax collector (Matthew 18:17). The Church Overseers should be careful to take the lead in the promoting life and Godliness in the church, while maintaining doctrinal purity (Acts 20:28-31). While the church never withdraws its love for the unrepentant, it does withdraw its fellowship (Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:14).

9.5 Summary of the Removal of Overseer.

♦ Church Overseers should be removed following the same procedures as for elders and other members of the assembly.

♦ Accusations against the Church Overseer should only be heard if brought by two or more witnesses.

- ♦ Discipline of Church Overseers follows the same pattern of private talk, two witness talk, church talk, new treatment.
- ♦ Church Overseers, if found sinful, should be rebuked in the presence of all.

10

Judas Iscariot and the Office of Apostle



10.1 Judas Iscariot and the Office of Apostle. Judas Iscariot, one of the original twelve apostles, held the episkopen (τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν) (Acts 1:20) quoting Psalm 109:8 (יְהִי כְּכֹהֵן--Hebrew for ἐπισκοπὴν). Judas turned aside from his office. Luke provided: “For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO ONE DWELL IN IT’; and, ‘LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE HIS OFFICE.’” (Acts 1:20). In Acts 1:25, we see that Judas Iscariot held a deacony (διακονίας) and an apostleship (ἀποστολῆς). Therefore, we must understand the relationship

between the office (ἐπισκοπὴν), the deacony (διακονίας) and the apostleship (ἀποστολῆς) which Judas held. All three of those words must be understood and distinguished. (I will use certain English words to describe certain Greek words appearing in the New Testament. When I use my own Greek words, I will not reflect the exact form of the original Greek word, but use a general word to help English only readers. Therefore, I will use the word episkopos to describe all uses of the Greek term ἐπισκοπὴν in Acts 1:20.) Because Judas Iscariot died, the apostles came together to choose the successor to Judas Iscariot who would hold the office (episkopos) he vacated. From Acts 1 we see how God defined an office of overseer (episkopos) in the New Testament. First, Jesus chose the person to occupy the episkopos, knowing from the beginning that Judas Iscariot would betray Him (John 6:64). The apostles prayed that the Lord would show them which one the Lord had chosen to occupy the deacony (διακονίας) and the apostleship (ἀποστολῆς) from which Judas turned aside. Therefore, we know three details about Judas. Judas Iscariot was also allotted a share (κλῆρον) in the deacony (διακονίας) (Acts 1:17).

10.2 Selecting the Replacement for Judas. God provided only one method for selecting the replacement.

10.3 Overseer: Judas Iscariot. Judas held an office as episkopos. He was also an apostle. Therefore, Judas held the Old Testament Office of Overseer, which in this case amounted to overseeing the money box and using the money at the direction of Jesus. The Holy Spirit translated Psalm 109:8 regarding the "His יְהִי כִסֵּי" as "τὴν ἐπισκοπὴν αὐτοῦ" and it was something that could be taken ("λαβέτω") by another man. Because Jesus had already ascended, keeping the money box does not seem to be the only concern of the "overseer," but rather the oversight function. Apparently, each apostle may have had a particular oversight function. Jesus chose the twelve apostles to be eyewitnesses of Jesus and present with the eleven apostles from the Baptism of John to the Ascension of Jesus. Acts plainly states the qualifications and Jesus stated that the apostles would be His witnesses with the power of the Holy Spirit. The office therefore does not appear to be tied to the money box, but rather to the calling to be an eyewitness of Jesus and to be filled the Holy Spirit for world-wide testimony. An unbeliever, like Judas Iscariot, may hold a church office of overseer (episkopos), because an unbeliever may pretend to be a believer. The devil loves to place unsaved people in positions of authority in churches to attack the deacony of Jesus Christ from within that congregation. Please keep in mind that only saints

receive spiritual gifts, like The Spiritual Gift of Pastor, and so we should be very careful to distinguish spiritual gifts from offices. Therefore, an unbelieving imposter may hold the office of overseer but he will never possess a spiritual gift as an unsaved person. Second, a saint (believer) must meet special requirements to hold the office of overseer (episokopos). Please keep in mind that Judas Iscariot was known as an apostle, but held the office of overseer (episkopos). During the earthly deacony of Jesus in the flesh, none of His disciples were known or called an elder. John the apostle called himself an elder later in life. The replacement for Judas Iscariot had to meet the qualifications of the office of overseer were: (1) present with the other apostles from the baptism of John to the ascension of Jesus; and (2) ready to serve as a witness of all those events from the Baptism of John to the Ascension of Jesus.

10.4 Summary of Judas Iscariot and the Office of Apostle.

- ◆ Judas Iscariot held the Office of Old Testament Apostle.
- ◆ Judas Iscariot never became a Christian, but remained the son of destruction.
- ◆ Judas lost his office and his deacony.
- ◆ God selected the replacement of Judas, but that man had to meet strict criteria about being with Jesus and the other disciples from the baptism of Jesus to His ascension—no one (except Jesus) today can meet those criteria to hold the Office of Apostle.

11

The Elders of the Old Testament



11.1 Old Testament Elders as Leaders. In the Old Testament, the elders of various groups performed different leadership tasks. The list of items below only represents a few examples of the duties of elders and the elders relationships to others.

11.2 Elders of Egypt. When Joseph went to bury his father Jacob, all the servants of Pharaoh, the elders of his household, and the elders (זִקְנֵי) of the land of Egypt went with him (Genesis 50:7). The elders of Egypt were not the same as the servants of Pharaoh, but they went to honor Joseph and his family during their time of mourning.

11.3 Elders of Midian, Moab, Gilead. The people of Midian (Numbers 22:4), Moab (Numbers 22:7), and Gilead (Judges 11:17) had their own elders.

11.4 Elders of Israel. From the time Moses forward, a group of men were known as the elders of Israel, performing various duties ("זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל") (Exodus 3:16).

11.5 Elders of the Cities of Israel. Israel had elders in each city of Israel (Deuteronomy 21:3).

11.6 Elders and Deliverance. God commanded Moses to gather the elders of Israel so that they could learn about the deliverance from Egypt God planned for them by using Moses (Exodus 3:16; Deuteronomy 32:7). God sent the elders of Israel with Moses to Pharaoh to seek release from Egypt (Exodus 3:18).

11.7 70 Elders Saw the God of Israel. Seventy elders of Israel saw God with Moses and Aaron (Exodus 14:14), but they did not go up the mountain with Moses and Aaron (Exodus 24:14).

11.8 70 Elders Bear Burden of Israel. Yahweh directed Moses to gather seventy men from the elders of Israel (אִישׁ מִזִּקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל), so that Yahweh may put the Holy Spirit upon them to bear the burden of the people of Israel, so that Moses will not have to bear it alone (Numbers 11:16-18).

11.9 Elders and Law Courts Elders at Gates of the City. Elders of a city formed a law court presiding at the gates of a city and handling all kinds of legal disputes (Deuteronomy 1:12; 21:20; 22:15-16; 25:7-8; Joshua 20:4; Ruth 4:9, 11; Ezra 10:14; Proverbs 31:23; Lamentations 5:14).

11.10 Elders and Princes. Moses chose seventy elders out of many other elders of the people of Israel and their princes (זִקְנֵי הָעָם וְשֹׁטְרָיו) (Numbers 11:16; Deuteronomy 29:10; 31:28).

11.11 Heads, Tribes, Elders, and Princes. Within the people of Israel, God recognized your heads (רְאִשֵּׁיכֶם), your tribes (שְׁבִטֵיכֶם), your elders (זִקְנֵיכֶם), and your princes (וְשֹׁטְרֵיכֶם) (Deuteronomy 29:10 see also 5:23).

11.12 Elders and Judges. The people had both elders and judges. The elders investigated religious matters and rendered decisions, including stoning (Deuteronomy 19:12; 21:20; 22:16-18; 25:7-9). Likewise, judges

resolved legal disputes between people (Deuteronomy 21:12; family law 21:20; 22:16, 17; 25:8, 9 Ezra 10:14).

11.13 Elders and Laying Hands on Bulls. The elders of the people of Israel will lay their hands upon a bull, offered for the guilt of the people of Israel (Leviticus 4:15).

11.14 David and the Elders. David, with the elders of Israel and the captains of thousands (וְשָׂרֵי הָאֲלָפִים) brought up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh from the house of Obed-edom with joy (1 Chronicles 15:25).

11.14 Elders as Advisors. When Rehoboam became king, he consulted the elders who stood before Solomon the king, but Rehoboam rejected their advice (1 Kings 12:5-9).

11.15 Josiah's Covenant. Josiah gathered all the elders of Judah and of Jerusalem, along with the priests and the prophets, with all the people of Jerusalem, and they made a covenant with Yahweh (2 Kings 23:1-3).

11.16 Yahweh Judged the Elders. Yahweh entered into judgment with the elders and princes of His people who devoured the vineyard and crushed God's people (Isaiah 3:14-15).

11.17 Elders and the Jar. Yahweh directed that Jeremiah go with the elders of the people and some senior priests to buy the potter's earthenware jar (Jeremiah 19:1).

11.18 Elders of the Exile. Jeremiah wrote the elders of the exile, the prophets and the people whom Nebuchadnezzar took in exile to Babylon (Jeremiah 29:1).

11.19 Elders and Idolatry. Yahweh Elohim showed Ezekiel the idolatry of the seventy elders (Ezekiel 8:11).

11.20 New Testament Elders before the Church. The New Testament provides information about a group of Old Testament elders (not church elders) interacting with Jesus and others before and after the formation of the church.

11.20.1 Elders and Traditions. Jesus condemned the elders and their traditions (Matthew 15:2; Mark 7:3). The disciples of Jesus did not follow the traditions of the elders (Mark 7:5).

11.20.2 Elders Made Jesus Suffer Many Things. The elders made Jesus suffer many things (Matthew 16:21).

11.20.3 Elders and the Authority of Jesus. The elders confronted Jesus about authority (Matthew 21:23).

11.20.4 Elders Planned the Arrest of Jesus. The elders were present in the court of the high priest to plan the arrest of Jesus (Matthew 26:3).

11.20.5 Elders Sent People To Arrest Jesus. Crowds with weapons came from the elders of the people against Jesus to arrest Him (Matthew 26:47).

11.20.6 Elders Had Jesus Arrested and Brought to Them. Jesus was brought before the chief priests, scribes and elders (Matthew 26:57; Mark 14:43).

11.20.7 Elders Conferred with Chief Priests about Jesus. After arrest, the elders conferred with the chief priests about Jesus (Matthew 27:1; Mark 14:53; Scribes also Luke 22:66).

11.20.8 Elders Received Silver Returned by Judas. Judas, with remorse, returned the silver paid to him to betray Jesus to the chief priests and elders (Matthew 27:3).

11.20.9 Elders Accused Jesus. After arrest, the elders accused Jesus, but He did not answer (Matthew 27:12).

11.20.10 Elders and Barabbas. The elders persuaded the crowds to call for the release of Barabbas, instead of Jesus (Matthew 27:20).

11.20.11 Elders Mocked Jesus. The elders mocked Jesus (Matthew 27:41).

11.20.12 Elders Paid Soldiers To Lie about Resurrection. The elders paid the soldiers guarding the empty tomb to lie about the resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 28:12).

11.20.13 Elders Rejected Jesus. The elders rejected Jesus (Mark 11:27; Luke 9:22).

11.20.14 Elders Part of Sanhedrin. The elders were part of the Sanhedrin (Mark 15:1).

11.20.15 Elders Sent by Centurion. Centurion sent elders of the Jews (πρεσβυτέρους τῶν Ἰουδαίων) to Jesus asking for help for his slave (Luke 7:3).

11.20.16 Elders Confronted Jesus in Temple. Elders confronted Jesus in the temple regarding His authority (Luke 20:1).

11.20.17 Elders Confronted by Jesus Regarding Their Swords and Clubs. At His arrest, Jesus confronted the elders regarding their swords and clubs (Luke 22:52).

11.20.18 Elders Gathered Regarding Apostles. After the arrest of Peter and John, the elders gathered together with the rulers, chief priests, priests and scribes to discuss the apostles (Acts 4:5).

11.20.19 Elders Heard Peter. After his arrest, filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter addressed the rulers of the people and the elders (Acts 4:8).

11.20.20 Elders Decided. Peter reported the decisions reached by the elders (Acts 4:23).

11.20.21 Elders Stirred Up. Some evil Jews stirred up the people, elders and scribes against Stephen (Acts 6:12).

11.20.22 Elders Can Testify. Paul said elders in Jerusalem provided letters to him, authorizing him to punish Christians (Acts 22:5).

11.20.23 Elders Aid Jews Plotting To Kill Paul. Elders in Jerusalem received and aided Jewish men under oath to kill Paul (Acts 23:14).

11.20.24 Elders and Ananias Prosecute Paul. Some elders and chief priest went to Caesarea to prosecute Paul (Acts 24:1).

11.20.25 Elders and Chief Priests Brought Charges against Paul.
Some elders and chief priests brought charges against Paul in Caesarea (Acts 25:15).

11.20 Summary of Old Testament Elders.

♦ In the Old Testament elders played many roles in secular societies and in the congregation of Israel.

♦ Elders often made important civil and religious decisions.

♦ Elders provided spiritual guidance to kings.

♦ Elders participated in ceremonies related to offerings.

♦ Elders opposed the work of Jesus in many ways and at many times.

♦ Elders urged the congregation of Israel and the Roman government to crucify Jesus.

♦ Elders continued to persecute the church after the ascension of Jesus.

12

The Elders of the Church



12.1 Overseers and Elders. Some Church Elders become Church Overseers (Titus 1:5-9). The qualifications described in Titus 1:5-9 pertain to Church Overseers, not elders. The elders may be set down (καταστήσης--aorist active subjunctive, second singular) as Church Overseers. Not all Church Elders become Church Overseers, but only those set down into the office of Church Overseer.

12.2 The Elders at Jerusalem. The elders at Jerusalem played an important role in the Jerusalem church, along with the Apostles.

12.2.1 Elders of the Jerusalem Church Received Gifts. The church in Antioch sent a gift to the brethren in Jerusalem, directing Saul and Barnabas to deliver the gift to the elders (πρεσβυτέρους) in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30).

12.2.2 Jerusalem Council and the Elders of the Jerusalem Church and Apostles. When some men came to Antioch requiring circumcision to be saved, the church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas with them to Jerusalem so that the matter could be set before the Jerusalem Elders (πρεσβυτέρους) and the Apostles (ἀποστόλους) (Acts 15:2). Likewise, the messengers from Antioch were received by the church (ἐκκλησία), apostles (ἀποστόλων), and the elders (πρεσβυτέρων) (Acts 15:4). Having considered the matter, the apostles (ἀποστόλοις), elders (πρεσβυτέροις) and the whole Jerusalem church (ἐκκλησία) thought to send a letter to the brethren in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia who were from the Gentiles, providing direction to avoid further conflicts between Jews and Gentiles. Please take notice that the Jerusalem church was the likely the most mature church at that time, because they twelve apostles were present to guide them. The Church Overseers were not mentioned, but the elders were mentioned. It seems to me that the Apostles provided the guidance required by Church Overseers.

12.3 Elders Appointed to Every Church. Paul and Barnabas having stretched out the hand (χειροτονήσαντες) set elders (πρεσβυτέρους) in every church, having prayed with fasting, and then commended them to the Lord in Whom they had believed, meaning, in my mind, they appointed some Church Elders to become Church Overseers (Acts 14:23).

12.4 Elders of the Ephesian Church. As Paul traveled to Jerusalem, knowing he would be arrested there, Paul met the Ephesian the elders of the church (τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας) at Miletus and described their duties to them (Acts 20:17).

12.5 Elders of the Churches of Crete. Titus was to make straight the remaining things in Crete and to set down (καταστήσης) elders (πρεσβυτέρους) in each city of Crete, according to the instructions (διεταξάμην) Paul had provided (Titus 1:5).

12.6 Elders of the Church and the Weak. If any one is weak (ἀσθενεῖ), let him call the elders of the church (τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας) and they will pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord (James 5:14).

12.7 Peter as a Fellow Elder. Peter exhorted the elders (Πρεσβυτέρους) as a fellow elder (συμπρεσβύτερος) and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed (1 Peter 5:1).

12.8 Younger Men Obey Elders. Peter commanded the younger men (νεώτεροι) to submit to elders (ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέροις) (1 Peter 1:5).

12.9 Exhorting Elderly Men and Elderly Women. Paul commanded Timothy not to rebuke (ἐπιπλήξῃς) elderly men (Πρεσβυτέρῳ), but to exhort (παρακάλε) as father (πατέρα), younger men (νεωτέρους) as brothers (ἀδελφούς) and elderly women (πρεσβυτέρας) as mothers (μητέρας) and younger women (νεωτέρας) as sisters (ἀδελφὰς), in all purity (1 Timothy 5:2). Therefore, we must be careful to remember that God recognized discernable groups in the church, each of which should be exhorted differently (see Acts 2:17). Also, the term elder was applied to both women and men when it came to physical age.

12.10 John the Elder. John the elder wrote to the chosen lady, whom he loved in truth (2 John 1:1). As an elder, he also wrote to Gaius, whom he also loved in truth (3 John 1:1).

12.9 Twenty-Four Elders. Twenty-four thrones surrounded the throne of God in heaven, and twenty-four elders sitting on those thrones, having been clothed in white garments and golden crowns upon their heads (Revelation 4:4).

Summary of the Elders of the Church.

- ◆ Every local assembly should have both elders and Church Overseers.
- ◆ Not every elder is a Church Overseer.
- ◆ Church Overseers hold a variety of spiritual gifts, but not every Church Overseer necessarily possesses The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.
- ◆ The term elder may describe older people and may also describe a special group in the church that exercises spiritual authority.
- ◆ God provided qualifications for Church Officers, but never provided qualifications for being a church elder.

♦ The apostles Peter and John considered themselves fellow elders with many local congregations.

♦ Elders must be treated with special care in the local assembly.

♦ Elders, apostles and the local congregation in Jerusalem all provided a letter detailing how the church should interact with Jews to avoid offending them needlessly.

13

Do Elders Rule or Lead?



13.1 Do Elders Rule or Lead? Many denominations claim that they have ruling elders. Do the Scriptures teach that elders rule? We can examine several popular passages and see if elders actually rule or lead. Please keep in mind that the terms elder, overseer, and pastor have distinct meanings and deaconies in the New Testament, which provides for two church offices: overseers and deacons. To understand the differences between the terms elder, overseer and pastor, keep in mind that elders exist independently from overseers and pastors. Both overseers and elders were known in the Old Testament and continued into the New Testament. At Pentecost following the Ascension of Jesus, God created Church Offices, which are not identical

to their Old Testament counterparts. So, in the New Testament, not all elders are overseers, but only the elders chosen by God hold the Church Office of Overseer. Likewise, God described [The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds](#), but never indicated that the pastors are a church office. Instead, Paul wrote that Church Overseers do the work of pastors. In fact, many saints do the work of pastors, but not all people doing the work of a pastor have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds, just like every saint should do the work of an evangelist, but not all saints have the Spiritual Gift of Evangelist. People tend to confuse Church Offices with spiritual gifts (see [New Testament Offices](#)). Before we examine a few New Testament passages concerning elders and leading, I will examine the general concept of leading in the New Testament and then explore examples of leading in the New Testament. Once we understand leading in the New Testament, then we can look particularly at the question of elders and leading or ruling.

13.2 Elders, Pastors, Overseers and Deacons. In the New Testament, God provides directions for leading the Church through offices (overseer and deacon), and also through the spiritual gifts, whether the spiritually-gifted man holds an office or not. Good leading in the New Testament means that people follow the will of God and The Spiritual Gift of Leading helps believers follow the will of God. Every member of the body of Christ has a special spiritual gift, and God seriously expects each of us to use those spiritual gifts in the service and edification of all believers. The New Testament provides many examples of leading which apply to elders, overseers, pastors, and others leading the church. Please keep in mind that the New Testament terms elder, overseer and pastor all refer to distinct groups in the New Testament, despite the claims of many people today that the terms elder, overseer and pastor all mean the same thing (see [New Testament Offices](#)).

13.3 The Term "Lead" Defined. The word "leads" ("προϊστάμενος") in Romans 12:8 provides a starting point for understanding the concept of leading in the New Testament. In Romans 12, Paul was describing spiritual gifts, including the [The Spiritual Gift of Leading](#). I submit it may be best to limit the gift of leading described there to the use of the term "leads" ("προϊστάμενος") and its related uses in the New Testament. You may certainly look to other passages to understand the work that leaders do in the local assembly, such as Hebrews 13:7, 17 and 24, and 1 Peter 5:1-4 (elders there). Saints with The Spiritual Gift of Leading may or may not hold the office of Church Overseer, and perhaps the pastor may not have The Spiritual Gift of Leading. The other word "diligence" ("σπουδή") related to The

Spiritual Gift of Leading in Romans 12:8 helps us understand how The Spiritual Gift of Leading should be exercised and provides insight into the general concept of leading in the New Testament.

13.4 New Testament Terms Related to Leading. Several terms in the New Testament relate to leading. The terms below describe people in a relationship with other people. The terms tend to define the relationship to some extent, including communications in the relationship. Because people live in relationships with other people, the terms of the relationship can be described by certain titles or words. They are all relationship words, describing the interactions and relative positions of the people in the relationship.

13.4.1 Kathegetai. The Greek term "kathegetai" ("καθηγηταί--nominative masculine plural and καθηγητής--nominative masculine singular") only appears in Matthew 23:10. Jesus said: "Do be called kathegetai (καθηγηταί); for One is your kathegetes (καθηγητής), Christ." Some people think the term comes from the preposition "kata" and the verb "ago." Therefore, the best translation of "kathegetai" would be one who leads down, in place of, or against, so I chose the translation as "Superior" to capture the spatial relationship of leading people below. Based upon usage of the term outside the Bible, and the immediate context of Matthew 23 decrying the use of terms to describe people which supplant God as the Supreme Person in the relationship, Jesus likely meant that any term for "leader" would be forbidden. Therefore, no one in the church should use the title "leader," "Superior," "Father," "Rabbi," or other term tending to exalt a person. We only have one Leader, Rabbi, Teacher, etc., and His Name is Jesus. Please recall the disciples quarreled among themselves as who was considered the greatest among them (Luke 9:46-48; 22:24--see also the discussion of the greatest problem in [The Pastoral Heresy](#)).

13.4.2 Archon. The Greek term "archon" ("ἄρχων") means ruler. I did not find a single instance where it described any position of leadership in the church. The term archon described secular and religious positions outside the church. When the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest Jesus, the officers returned without Jesus. They said they had never heard anyone speak like Jesus. The Pharisees then said that not any of the archons (ἀρχόντων) or Pharisees has believed in Jesus, has he? The Pharisees then argued that the crowd did not know the Law and was accursed (John 7:45-49). They did not know that Nicodemus, an archon (ἄρχων) of the Jews, had

believed in Jesus and was standing right there, urging them to follow the Law before condemning anyone (John 7:50-52; see John 3:1-21). Therefore, we know that the archons were supposed to know the Law, and that many rulers rejected Jesus. Later in the deacony of Jesus many archons believed in Him (John 12:42).

13.4.2.1 The Archons of the Pharisees. The Pharisees had archons (ἀρχόντων τῶν Φαρισαίων) (Luke 14:1). (Luke provided: Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ ἐλθεῖν αὐτὸν εἰς οἶκόν τινος τῶν ἀρχόντων [τῶν] Φαρισαίων σαββάτῳ φαγεῖν ἄρτον καὶ αὐτοὶ ἦσαν παρατηρούμενοι αὐτόν (Luke 14.1).) Jesus asked the Pharisees and the lawyers (νομικοὺς) whether it was lawful to heal on the Sabbath, but they were silent. He then healed a man with a withered hand at the home of the ruler of the Pharisees. Yet, not all archons were Pharisees. Therefore, we know that the archons came in different ranks and some held religious offices.

13.4.2.2 The Archons of This Age. Paul described the archons of this age (τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) (1 Corinthians 2:6, 8). Paul described them as people having their own earthly wisdom of this age. In contrast, Paul taught the timeless wisdom of God. The archons (ἀρχόντων) of this age are passing away (1 Corinthians 2:6). The archons (ἀρχόντων) of this age do not understand the wisdom of God, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Corinthians 2:8). Therefore, we know the archons of this age did not know the wisdom of God and they crucified Jesus.

13.4.3 Kurios. Translators often confuse the term "lord" with "master" by equating them. I prefer the consistent translation of kurios (κύριος) as lord because God consistently used the term κύριος to describe slave relationships, saint relations, and titles of respect. For example, Jesus likened the relationship of (1) a disciple to a teacher to (2) the relationship of a slave with his lord (Matthew 10:24). Likewise, Jesus acknowledged that His learners properly called Him the Teacher (ὁ διδάσκαλος) and the Lord (ὁ κύριος) and He said they spoke well (καλῶς) (John 13:13). Therefore, we know that the disciples of Jesus distinguished the title and functions of Teacher from Lord, and those terms should not be confused.

13.4.5 Despotas. Paul applied the term to "despotas" ("δεσπότης") to earthly masters in relation to their slaves (δοῦλοι) (1 Timothy 6:1). Some earthly masters (δεσπότης) may be fathers (πιστοὺς) (1 Timothy 6:2). Simeon used the term "despota" ("Δέσποτα") to describe God who was

releasing him as slave (δοῦλόν) because he had seen the Messiah in the flesh (Luke 2:29). Likewise, Despotata (Δέσποτα) made heaven and earth (Acts 4:24). Slaves must be submissive to their own "despotais" ("δεσπόταις"), referring to earthly masters (Titus 2:9; 1 Peter 2:18). Saints must cleanse themselves, so that they will be useful to the Despot (δεσπότη) for every good work (2 Timothy 2:21). False teachers introduce destructive heresies into the church, even denying the Despoten (δεσπότην) who bought them (2 Peter 2:1). Likewise, Jude warned about the creepers who deny our only Despoten (Δεσπότην) and Lord (Κύριον), Jesus Christ (Jude 1:4). The souls under the altar in heaven also cry out to their Despotes (Δεσπότης) to judge and avenge their blood (Revelation 6:10). Because Jude distinguished Δεσπότην from Κύριον, I prefer the translation as Master for all occurrences of δεσπότης in various forms, emphasizing the Master and slave relationship.

13.4.6 Epistata. The term "epistata" (ἐπιστάτα) literally means set over, describing a position of authority. Only Luke used the term "ἐπιστάτα." Simon called Jesus "ἐπιστάτα" after they were fishing all night and caught nothing. Jesus then gave them orders about fishing and Peter replied, Ἐπιστάτα, we will do as you spoke (Luke 5:5). Another time when the boat was filling with water, the disciples said to Jesus, "Ἐπιστάτα, ἐπιστάτα," we are perishing (Luke 8:24). When a woman touched the garment of Jesus and was healed, Jesus asked who touched Him. Peter said, "Ἐπιστάτα" the people surround you (Luke 8:45). On the mount of transfiguration, Peter said, "Ἐπιστάτα" it is good for us to be here (Luke 9:33). When the disciples saw someone casting out demons, but not following with the disciples of Jesus, John said, "Ἐπιστάτα," we told him to stop (Luke 9:49). Ten lepers called to Jesus, saying, " Ἐπιστάτα," have mercy on us (Luke 17:13). Therefore, the term Commander fits well with Jesus having command authority over the disciples and everyone else.

13.4.7 Kubernates. The term "kubernete" ("κυβερνήτη" described the maritime pilot of a ship (Acts 27:11; Rev 18:17). I described The Spiritual Gift of Navigations in the free ebook, [Spiritual Gift Manual](#). Therefore, because God described a specially-gifted person to provide "navigation" for the church, we should understand the term navigations. I use the term "navigations" ("κυβερνήσεις"—plural noun), translated by the New American Standard Bible as "administrations," to describe the special ability to carry out the work of God similar to the work of a pilot of a ship ([1 Corinthians 12:28](#)). The pilot was not the same person as the captain of the ship. In [Acts 27:11](#), God recorded the distinction between "the navigator" (τῷ

κυβερνήτη”—translated as “pilot” by the New American Standard) and “the captain” (“τῷ ναυκλήρῳ”) of the ship. In the future, God will bring judgment upon Babylon the Great City ([Revelation 18:1-8](#)). Babylon had made the merchants of the earth very rich, but she will be destroyed. Babylon and its inhabitants will be filled with torment, weeping and mourning. In one hour, Babylon and its wealth will be laid waste. Every marine pilot (“κυβερνήτης”) will keep a safe distance from Babylon, as they watch the smoke of her burning. Those shipmasters will know that they must steer clear of the smoking ruin of Babylon the Great City. Therefore, the "navigator" in the church will have duties to become familiar with the local environment and also plan how to reach safe harbor. They provide guidance about weather, courses, sailing conditions, time to sail, safe harbors, and similar matters for the church as it moves to do God's will and reach the destinations selected by God for that local assembly.

13.4.8 Hegoumenois. The church also had "Esteemed Ones" ("ἡγουμένοις") and they should be obeyed, and we should be submissive to them (Hebrews 13:17). Their duties include watching over the souls of the congregation and they will give a word about the souls of the congregation. They should perform their duties with joy and not groaning. Because God breathed out every word of the Scriptures, we should pay careful attention to the difference between words God used in the New Testament. God also taught us to greet all the "Esteemed Ones" ("ἡγουμένους") in the congregation (Hebrews 13:24). Luke referred to Judas Barsabbas and Silas as "Esteemed Ones" in the Jerusalem congregation ([Acts 15:22](#)). Luke also described Joseph as an “Esteemed One of Egypt” (“ἡγούμενον ἐπ’ Αἴγυπτον”) ([Acts 7:10](#)). See the chart concerning "esteemed ones" and the discussion at [New Testament Church Offices](#).

13.5 Spiritual Gift of Leading. Paul described a spiritual gift of leading (ὁ προϊστάμενος--present middle participle, nominative masculine singular) (Romans 12:8). The saints must exercise that spiritual gift with diligence (σπουδῇ) (see [The Spiritual Gift of Leading](#)).

13.6 Elders Leading Well. Paul wrote about "the elders who lead well" (NASB). (Paul provided: Οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν, μάλιστα οἱ κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ (1 Timothy 5:17).) Paul used the phrase lead well (καλῶς προεστῶτες). The term "προεστῶτες," a perfect active participle, nominative masculine singular, comes from the root "προΐστημι," meaning to set before. The other uses of

this term help us understand its meaning. The New Testament indicates that elders do not rule, but they do lead. The Spiritual Gift of Leading provides great insight into the term "lead" ("προεστῶτες") in the New Testament. As we understand the use of The Spiritual Gift of Leading, we will also understand what it means for elders to lead well (1 Timothy 5:17).

13.7 Leading at Home and Taking Care. We know from 1 Corinthians 12:5-6, that one spiritual gift may produce a variety of deaconies (διακονιῶν) and a variety of effects (ἐνεργημάτων). In this case, The Spiritual Gift of Leading may produce a variety of deaconies with a variety of spiritual effects. So, we will examine The Spiritual Gift of Leading and look at its deaconies and effects.

13.7.1 The Deacony of Leading at Home. The root word for "lead" in Romans 12:8, provides guidance for understanding The Spiritual Gift of Leading. The deacony of Church Overseers (an office of the church--not a spiritual gift) and Deacons (an office of the church--not a spiritual gift) begins at home and we will examine the qualifications for those offices briefly.

13.7.2 The Qualification of Church Overseers. Church Overseers must lead their own families to the glory of God. Church Overseers in the New Testament have specialized duties, such as shepherding the flock from: (a) savage wolves attacking from without; and (b) evil men within the flock drawing away saints from the flock (Acts 20:28-30). This deacony of leading the home rests upon the same root word as "leads" in Romans 12:8. The qualifications for Church Overseers include the ability to lead (προϊστάμενον) their own children and their own households and keep them under control (ὑποταγῇ) (1 Timothy 3:4). Therefore, we may understand that one aspect of The Spiritual Gift of Leading will involve influencing the mind and behavior of people, so that they will mature in Christ, while staying under control, and maintaining dignity (σεμνότητος). The saints need this type of leading from leaders, including Church Overseers, who have first demonstrated this leading ability at home.

13.7.3 The Qualification of Deacons. Likewise, deacons must have the same ability to be leaders (προϊστάμενοι) at home first (1 Timothy 3:12). Deacons labor at home and keep their own families under control by promoting Godliness in the family before they become Deacons.

13.7.4 The Deaconies of Leading and Taking Care. The overseer (elder) must also be able to lead (προστῆναι) his own household well; if he cannot lead his own household, then how will he take care (ἐπιμελήσεται) of the church of God? (1 Timothy 3:5). Please take notice here that the ability to lead his own household directly relates to taking care of the church of God. The deaconies of leading and taking care have a direct relationship.

13.7.5 The Deaony of Providing Necessary Care. The Roman centurion Julius had to guard Paul and take Paul to Rome. During the journey, at Sidon, Julius allowed Paul to go to his friends and receive needed care (ἐπιμελείας) (Acts 27:3). Apparently, this deaony of providing necessary care involved both spiritual and physical help.

13.7.6 The Deaony of Providing Physical Care to the Injured. Likewise, the good Samaritan paid the innkeeper and directed him to take care (ἐπιμελήθητι) of his neighbor (Luke 10:35). This deaony involved the payment for physical services rendered, and provided time for the physically injured to recover.

13.7.7 The Deaony of Searching Carefully. Finally, consider the woman who searches her house carefully (ἐπιμελῶς) to find the lost coin (Luke 15:8). The careful searching by the woman means that the deaony of leading involves concerted efforts to find missing things. It speaks to the need to be diligent and thorough in the deaony of leading carefully. So, we learn that The Spiritual Gift of Leading starts at home. Men holding the offices of Church Overseer and Deacon in the local church may possess The Spiritual Gift of Leading, but they must display an exemplary ability to lead. Other men may possess The Spiritual Gift of Leading, but they will perform their deaconies without holding the office of Church Overseer or Deacon. We often see the gift in action by noticing the effects of the proper use of the spiritual gift.

13.8 The Spiritual Effects of Leading. The Spiritual Gift of Leading produces spiritual effects in the lives of believers. We know that one spiritual gift may result in a variety of different deaconies and effects. The leading gift means that the leaders will lead the assembly of saints, helping believers grow up in Christ, staying under control, and maintaining a dignified reputation for the assembly. Furthermore, the leaders have charge (προϊσταμένους) over the saints, who should appreciate their Godly leading (1 Thessalonians 5:12). Indeed, these leaders who lead well (καλῶς

προεστῶτες) should receive double honor (1 Timothy 5:17). As a side note, elders should also be careful, as leaders, to recognize the spiritual gifts of the saints under their charge and encourage them (1 Timothy 4:14). All leaders must labor diligently. When The Spiritual Gift of Leading operates properly, you will see the following effects in the lives of believers. The Spiritual Gift of Leading produces the spiritual effect of control and the spiritual effect of dignity. We will look at each of them next.

13.9 The Spiritual Effect of Control. The Spiritual Gift of Leading produces control (ὑποταγή) (1 Timothy 3:4). This term "control" ("ὑποταγή") describes both voluntary submission and compulsory subordination. This spiritual ability to bring people under the control of God reflects a special spiritual gift.

13.9.1 Subjection. The term "subjection" ("ὑποταγή") shows the fruit of The Spiritual Gift of Leading. When used properly, The Spiritual Gift of Leading results in believers following the will of God. This term subjection has several different aspects.

13.9.2 Control by Jesus. Today, if you say someone is controlling, you are often criticizing them. Unbelievers long to live without the control of other people. In contrast, Jesus loves to control His children and His mature children love that control. Jesus ascended to heaven after angels, authorities and powers were subjected (1 Peter 3:22--"ὑποταγέντων"--notice the aorist participle indicating complete and total control) to Him. Therefore, we see this special power of God acting forcefully to bring supernatural beings (angels, authorities, and powers) into subjection to Christ. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of Leading have a special spiritual gift to bring other people under the will of Christ. Do not misunderstand: while Christ ascended and exercised His will over angels, authorities and powers, we still wrestle against them, but we triumph in Christ as we stand in His might (Ephesians 6:10-17). In contrast, Paul also taught us that the mind set on the flesh is not able to subject itself to the law of God (Romans 8:7). In the future, after all things have been subjected (ὑποταγή) to Jesus, then Jesus will be subjected (ὑποταγήσεται) to the Father who subjected to Him ("τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ") all things. We learn from this verse that a believer does nothing more than Jesus does when He is subjected to the control and authority of the Father (1 Corinthians 15:28). Being under the control of Jesus or the Father in no way diminishes the spiritual stature of the person being subjected, but rather acknowledges a perfect joining of wills. Although we do not yet see all things

placed in subjection to Christ, yet the Scripture proclaims that, in fact, all things have been placed in subjection to Christ (Hebrews 2:8). Furthermore, Christ Himself has the inherent, divine power as God to subject all things to Himself (Philippians 3:21). Therefore, one effect of The Spiritual Gift of Leading means that the local assembly lives under the control of Jesus.

13.9.3 Obedience to Your Confession of the Gospel of Christ. The term "control" also includes obedience to your confession of Christ. When exercised properly, The Spiritual Gift of Leading will result in believers acting in obedience to their confession of Christ. In 2 Corinthians 9:13, Paul discusses the deacony of hard work to earn a living to supply the needs of the saints and make donations to other believers. As the Corinthians worked for a living, they glorified God by their obedience (ὕποταγῇ) to the confession of Christ. The Spiritual Gift of Leading produces obedience in working and giving money for the support of the saints. In a more general sense, The Spiritual Gift of Leading helps believers live obediently to their confession of the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you claim to be born again by confessing Christ as Lord because of your faith in Him, then The Spiritual Gift of Leading will help you live accordingly. For example, The Spiritual Gift of Leading will help believers understand and apply the duty in Christ to work hard and use the proceeds of hard work to bless other believers in need of support. Therefore, one spiritual effect of control means that the local assembly lives in obedience to their confession of Christ.

13.9.4 Not Yielding to Hypocrisy and False Teachers. In the Book of Galatians, Paul described hypocrisy. He confronted the apostle Peter for falling into the hypocrisy of acting like a Judaizer (these people taught you must keep the Law to go to heaven). When the Judaizers came to visit in Antioch, then Peter acted just like they did. Paul proclaimed that "we did not yield in subjection (ὕποταγῇ) to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you" (Galatians 2:5). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means that the local assembly does not yield in subjection to hypocrisy and false doctrine.

13.9.5 Accepting Discipline Well. Receiving discipline does not always seem joyful, but discipline trains us in Godliness and results in the peaceful fruit of righteousness. For discipline to yield good results in our lives, we must be subject (ὕποταγησόμεθα) to the Father of spirits, and live (Hebrews 12:9). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means that the

local assembly lives in subjection to the discipline of the Lord and bears the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

13.4.9.6 Submit to God and Resist the Devil. James teaches us that we must submit (ὑποτάγητε) to God, and resist the devil. Another effect of The Spiritual Gift of Leading will be to help people to submit to God and, while submitting to God, to resist the devil. Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means the local assembly submits to God and resists the devil.

13.4.9.7 Submit to Every Human Institution. Peter commands us: "Submit (ὑποτάγητε) yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution (1 Peter 2:13; compare Titus 3:1). Notice that we submit for the sake of the Lord Jesus. Jesus paid taxes (Matthew 17:24-27), and recognized that even Pilate had no authority over Him except that authority given by God to Pilate (John 19:11). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes the local assembly to submit to every human institution, within the will of God.

13.4.9.8 Younger Men Be Subject to Elders. Peter also directs young men to be subject to elders (1 Peter 5:5). Younger men would do well to let older, Godly men lead the assembly. All leaders in the local assembly must possess The Spiritual Gift of Leading. Within the group of men possessing The Spiritual Gift of Leading, the younger men should follow the general pattern of younger men submitting to the older men. Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes younger men in the assembly to submit to the older men.

13.5 The Spiritual Effect of Being Careful To Engage in Good Deeds. Paul commanded Titus to be careful to speak confidently, so that believers will be careful to engage in (προϊστασθαι) good deeds (Titus 3:8). This spiritual effect of being careful to engage in good deeds flows from The Spiritual Gift of Leading. As believers exercise their Spiritual Gift of Leading, people hear them speak confidently about the doctrine in the New Testament, and the believers become careful to engage in good deeds. Not only must the saints spiritually gifted with leading be careful to engage in good deeds personally, but they must also lead others to engage in good works. By implication, the entire assembly may unify its efforts to produce good works, and unite individual efforts. Often, the leaders identify the pressing needs of the saints that require others to do good deeds to meet

those needs (Titus 3:14). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes the local assembly to engage in good deeds. So, we learn that The Spiritual Gift of Leading produces the spiritual effects of control within the local assembly and the local assembly being careful to engage in a variety of good deeds, all to the glory of God. The Spiritual Gift of Leading must be exercised evenly, consistently, and with diligence.

13.6 Diligence and the Spiritual Gift of Leading. We have reviewed some of the New Testament material concerning the general concept of leading in the New Testament. From that general understanding of leading, we can see that in Romans 12:8, it must be done with diligence. Therefore, we will now begin a review of the New Testament concept of diligence, with a special view of how diligence would apply to the use of The Spiritual Gift of Leading.

13.6.1 Word Study of Diligence. We can study the word "diligence" ("σπουδῇ") in the New Testament to gain further insight into the proper exercise of The Spiritual Gift of Leading. The study of the term "diligence" reveals several related categories of meaning for this word, and many of them tell us how to use The Spiritual Gift of Leading.

13.6.1.1 Diligence and Eagerness. In Romans 12:8, Paul used the word for "diligence" ("σπουδῇ") to describe how The Spiritual Gift of Leading must be exercised. Sometimes that same word for "diligence" is translated "with eagerness." We may gain further insight into the use of The Spiritual Gift of Leading by reviewing some of the uses of the root term diligence.

13.6.1.2 Onesiphorus. Onesiphorus stands out as a great example of eagerness. During Paul's imprisonment in Rome, Onesiphorus diligently (σπουδαίως) searched for Paul, to refresh him, even though others may have stayed away because they were ashamed of his chains (2 Timothy 1:16-17). Men with The Spiritual Gift of Leading display this same quality. This diligence identifies every man displaying The Spiritual Gift of Leading. You may identify The Spiritual Gift of Leading by observing men in the local assembly who search out the believers in the flock who need deacony in any form, such as refreshment, encouragement, and the list goes on. The Spiritual Gift of Leading prompts the believer to eagerly search out ways to meet the needs of saints and they are not ashamed to go where others are too ashamed or too scared or too important to go.

13.6.2 Diligent Effort. In some New Testament passages, the root word translated "diligence" found in Romans 12:8 has been translated as "make every effort."

13.6.2.1 Come Quickly. For example, in 2 Timothy 4:21, Paul urged Timothy to be diligent ("Σπουδάσον") to come before winter to visit him. Previously, in 2 Timothy 4:9, Paul urged Timothy to be diligent (Σπουδάσον) to come quickly to him. This diligence that means "make diligent effort" should also characterize the use of The Spiritual Gift of Leading.

13.6.2.2 Encourage Others. People with The Spiritual Gift of Leading must be known as people who "diligent effort" to encourage others. Likewise, in Titus 3:12, Paul urged Titus to make diligent effort to come to him in Nicopolis.

13.6.2.3 Writing Others. Jude said he "was making diligent effort" ("σπουδῇ") to write concerning their common salvation (Jude 3) .

13.6.2.4 Summary of Making Every Effort. The same "make diligent effort" attitude describes one aspect of diligence that must be an important part of how saints gifted with The Spiritual Gift of Leading undertake their leading. They should put all of their efforts into leading, and not be absent or part-time leaders. Of course, leaders can have a variety of full-time jobs, but when it comes to exercising their Spiritual Gift of Leading, they should remember to make diligent effort.

13.7 Diligence and Helping Others. Another aspect of diligence includes being careful to help others. Leaders need to help others with diligence. For example, Paul instructed Titus to be diligent (σπουδαίως) to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that they would lack nothing (Titus 3:13). This "lack nothing" ("μηδὲν λείπει") attitude must guide leaders to be diligent to help other workers lack nothing as they equip them for deacony.

13.8 Diligence and Self-Examination. Another meaning of "diligence" includes diligent (σπουδάσατε) self-examination to be certain about the calling of Christ and His choosing of believers (2 Peter 1:10). Saints with The Spiritual Gift of Leading should be certain to encourage other saints to examine themselves diligently to be sure they are pursuing personal spiritual development in the areas of faith, moral excellence, knowledge, self-control,

perseverance, Godliness, brotherly kindness, and love (2 Peter 1:5-8). In 2 Peter 1:5, Peter directed the saints to apply all diligence (σπουδῇν) to perfect their lives through adding Godly qualities within themselves by the power of God. With those spiritual qualities, saints will be useful for the service of God. This quality of diligent self-examination, in conjunction with a spiritual desire to mature in the qualities Christ produces in us, means that every person desiring to lead must encourage everyone to perform regular spiritual self-examination, starting with the leader himself.

13.9 Diligence and Spiritual Development. Another use, related directly to the passage in 2 Peter 1:5-8, of this word "diligence" concerns the duty of leaders to be totally diligent (σπουδάσατε) to present saints to Christ in peace, spotless and blameless (2 Peter 3:14). The spiritual welfare of the flock requires constant diligence to preserve peace within the assembly, and to promote a spotless and blameless testimony in every saint.

13.10 Diligence and Handling the Word of God. So often I meet people who have been saved from the penalty of their sins for many years, and yet cannot locate in their Bibles any two verses that describe salvation. I am not talking about arcane spiritual matters in obscure passages, but rather, basic truths about essential matters of the faith. Ignorance of God's Word stains the lives of so many believers. Furthermore, many saints have no intention of reading the Bible, and becoming acquainted with the principles of reading and interpreting the Bible. In 2 Timothy 2:15, Paul commanded each saint to be continuously diligent (σπουδάσον) to present themselves approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. The Spiritual Gift of Leading must address this need in every Christian to learn how to handle and interpret the Word of God, and it is not just the duty of the leading believers to interpret the Bible and handle it accurately. Every saint must know how to read, interpret and apply Scripture daily. Leaders use diligence in leading the saints in this area. The spiritual effect of The Spiritual Gift of Leading means that saints handle the Word of God properly, as a workman that does not need to be ashamed.

13.11 Diligence and Reminding. In 2 Peter 1:15, Peter declared that he would be diligent (σπουδάσω) that after his departure, his audience would be able to call his teaching to their minds. Leaders exercising The Spiritual Gift of Leading should always have this desire to remind believers, and be diligent about reminding believers, to abide in the doctrine of Jesus Christ

and His teaching, as recorded in the Old and New Testaments. The spiritual effect of The Spiritual Gift of Leading means that saints remember the teachings of Christ.

13.13 Diligence and Entering the Rest of God. In Hebrews 4:11, God commanded saints that we must be diligent (σπουδάζωμεν) to enter His rest. In exercising The Spiritual Gift of Leading, everyone who has received the Word of God with saving faith must be diligent to enter the rest of God. The leader works with saints to keep them from falling, and being sure that each saint remains strong in the faith. The spiritual effect of The Spiritual Gift of Leading produces diligence in entering the rest of God.

13.14 Diligence and Godly Sorrow. Another example of the use of the term for "diligence" occurs in 2 Corinthians 7:11. There we see that Godly sorrow produced great diligence (σπουδῇν) in the Corinthians as they dealt with the sinful brother described in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5. Their great diligence led them to vindication, fear, longing, zeal and avenging of wrong. Leaders operating under the influence of The Spiritual Gift of Leading will help all the saints develop a sense of great diligence as the result of Godly sorrow over sin. This great diligence will itself result in the saints taking appropriate action to restore the sinner, and restore the local assembly. The spiritual effect of The Spiritual Gift of Leading produces an diligent sorrow over sin leading to repentance and Godly living.

13.15 Elders Do Not Rule. At this point, nothing in the New Testament indicates that Elders rule. In fact, Elders must submit to the Church Overseers. Everyone in authority in the church should be servant leaders, following the lead of Christ. Some men will be "Esteemed Ones" in the church, but not necessarily elders or Church Overseers (remember Judas Barsabbas and Silas). The term archon (ruler) never applied to the any position in the church. Therefore, when anyone describes themselves as a ruler of the church, you should ask them to show you any passage in the Scriptures describing any man except Jesus (the God-Man) as a ruler of the church. Many terms describe church leadership, but they do not describe church rulers. Please remember why Jesus commanded His learners never to accept titles like "rabbi," "father," or "superior," because One is your Superior (Matthew 23:10).

13.16 Hallmarks of the Spiritual Gift of Leading. So, we may summarize The Spiritual Gift of Leading. Jesus emphasized that the greatest

among the saints would be the least of them and servant of all (Mark 9:33-37). We see then, as servants, saints gifted with The Spiritual Gift of Leading must exercise leading with diligence, and be an example to the flock. As saints, we must appreciate their work and honor them.

13.17 Summary of The Spiritual Gift of Leading.

- ♦ Leading-gifted believers lead first at home with diligence.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers provide spiritual care for everyone.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers provide physical care.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers search carefully for missing people.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers promote voluntary submission and compulsory control by causing people to keep the commandments of Christ found in the Bible.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers avoid hypocrisy and confront others who fall into it.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers accept discipline well.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers submit to God and resist the devil.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers pay their taxes and submit to every institution.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers act with eagerness and bring spiritual refreshment.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers come quickly to visit those people in spiritual need.
- ♦ Leading-gifted believers write others concerning their common salvation.

14

Permanent Disqualification from Church Office?



14. 1 Disqualification from Church Office. My views below represent my current best understandings of complex issues in Scripture. Be sure to examine everything carefully and hold on to the good (1 Thessalonians 5:21). This basic study concerns the teaching of God concerning the continuing state of immorality related to (1) marriage (γάμος), (2) divorce (ἀποστάσιον), (3) adultery (μοιχεία), and (4) homosexuals (ἀρσενικοῖται). Can a male be permanently disqualified from holding a Church Office? (God described only males holding Church Offices. Females never held the Church Office of Overseer or Church Office of Deacon.) How does church leadership relate to sexual and marital problems? This study will only touch upon a few

basic issues without full discussion. Paul described the qualifications for holding the Church Office of Overseer and the Church Office of Deacon. When those qualifications concerned sexual morality and divorce, was Paul describing a continuing state or something else? We need an answer from the Scriptures about permanent disqualification from Church Offices. The answer to that question guides choices related to church leadership. In this study below, I will focus only upon males holding Church Offices, because females were not allowed to teach or exercise authority over males; they were to remain silent during Breaking of Bread services (1 Timothy 2:9-15; 1 Corinthians 14:34-35). (In passing, the term "marriage" in this study means a lawful marriage between one male and one female, both of age to consent to such marriage. The Scriptural principles discussed below apply to lawful marriages between a biological male and a biological female.) Therefore, females were never described as holding any Church Office.

13.2 Church Leadership. Jesus, as God in the flesh, spoke Holy Words, just as every writer in the Bible wrote Holy Words, breathed out by God. As we examine the Scriptures regarding permanent disqualification from church office, the grammar and syntax may help clarify the issues. Jesus used a present indicative verb to describe the sin of adultery (Matthew 5:32; 19:9). (Jesus in Matthew 5:32 used the term μοιχᾷται--present middle/passive indicative, third singular and in Matthew 19:9 Jesus used the term μοιχᾷται--present middle indicative. Notice the use of the middle voice (reflexive action).) Did Jesus mean that the sin of adultery continues after divorce and into the new marriage? If so, how long does it continue? Jesus set precise qualifications for holding the Church Office of Overseer (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) and the Church Office of Deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13). Some of those qualifications relate to immorality. This study focuses upon whether a male may be permanently disqualified from holding a Church Office because of a continuing state of immorality, divorce, remarriage, or homosexuality. We all need to understand the Scriptures about the issue: Permanent Disqualification from Church Office? Do the Scriptures support permanent disqualification? If so, for what? The Scriptures teach that God forgives sin and no longer remembers the sinful acts (Jeremiah 31:34; Hebrews 8:12), cleansing us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). The Scriptures would have to provide clear teaching to overcome the presumption that all sins have been forgiven. Of course, some sins like alcoholism may be forgiven entirely, but the bodily effects of those sins remain after forgiveness. The qualifications for holding a Church Office focus upon spiritual, not bodily, qualifications.

14.3 Qualifications for Church Leadership. Paul provided some overlapping qualifications for holding the Church Office of Overseer and the Church Office of Deacon. This study focuses upon only two of those qualifications: (1) one woman man; and (2) leading his own household well. (In some ways, all qualifications for Church Offices relate directly to ongoing problems that may have lasting effects. For example, the qualification of children who believe may have lasting effects upon qualifications for holding a Church Office. See [New Testament Leadership](#).)

14.4 Must. Paul linked all the qualifications of the Church Overseer to the simple verb "must" (δεῖ) as a present active indicative. God focused more upon the present qualities of the Church Overseer rather than his past actions. Some people, however, may argue that reputation matters and indeed it does. Again, however, the Church Overseer must be above reproach (ἀνεπίλημπτον), but Paul used a present infinitive to describe the current reputation. While some grammarians argue against putting much time value on tense and focus instead upon the action described by the verb, the focus in 1 Timothy 3 rests upon present qualities and not historical acts in the distant past.

14.5 One Woman Man. The Church Overseer must be a "one woman man." (Paul used the phrase "μῑς γυναικὸς ἄνδρα.") The term "μῑς" means a certain one out of more than one. (See Luke 14:18--beginning from one (μῑς) all excused themselves; Luke 17:34--two (δύο) on one (μῑς) bed, the one (ὁ εἷς) taken; Luke 22:59--one (μῑς) hour; Acts 24:21 one voice (μῑς) among many; Hebrews 12:16--sold birthright for one (μῑς) meal.) Paul used this expression "one woman man" in 1 Timothy 3:2; 3:12; Titus 1:6. By choosing the term one (μῑς), Paul emphasized that the Church Overseer must have one woman in his life. Likewise, he must have no sexual connections to any other person. Although beyond the scope of this study, some people argue the qualification "above reproach" effectively disqualifies virtually all divorced males from holding a Church Office because the ex-spouse and her children may say bad, but true, things about the Church Office candidate, thus rendering him disqualified because of their reproaches. This argument misses the point that such attacks may be sinful in themselves, coming from a heart of non-forgiveness (Matthew 6:15; 18:35; Ephesians 4:31; Hebrews 12:15). Under that standard, Paul himself would be permanently disqualified for all the bad things he had done (Philippians 3:6; Acts 24:5). Likewise, Peter and Barnabas were guilty of public hypocrisy and would not be above reproach (Galatians 2:11-13). Furthermore, if God does

not condemn the candidate for Church Office (Romans 8:1), why should the sinful opinions and the bitter root of some people hold back a candidate for Church Office who otherwise meets all the qualifications?

14.5.1 Single. Because Paul was single and urged others to be single (1 Corinthians 7:1), he was not excluding single men from being a Church Overseer. Because Paul himself warned that some false teachers were forbidding marriage, it seems unlikely that Paul was saying all Church Officers must be married only once in their lifetime (1 Timothy 4:3). Clearly, if the wife of a Church Overseer died, then the Church Overseer would be free to remarry in the Lord (Romans 7:2; 1 Corinthians 7:39. See also 1 Timothy 5:14). By emphasizing that a man must be a one woman man, Paul was also building upon the teaching about the effects of sexual sin with a woman, resulting in becoming one body with that woman (1 Corinthians 6:16--not one flesh). (To describe becoming "one body" with a prostitute, Paul wrote "ἐν σῶμα" (1 Corinthians 6:16), which stands in contrast to "σὰρξ μία" Matthew used to describe joining in marriage, so that they are no longer two "δύο" (Matthew 19:6).) Regarding a one woman man, Paul also excluded sexual contact with any men or women who were not his woman. Therefore, Paul emphasized a man must be a one woman man and he must not be joined sexually to other people (male or female). (Regarding the term γυναικός, Matthew used the definite article τῆς γυναικός in the context of the disciples saying that it is better not to marry than to be stuck for life with a wife who commits immorality without any chance of divorce (Matthew 19:10). Luke used also used the definite article τῆς γυναικός to describe Herod having the wife of his brother Philip (Luke 3:19). Jesus used the definite article τῆς γυναικός to describe the wife of Lot (Luke 17:32). John described a Samaritan woman as γυναικός, but she had five husbands, and the one with her then was not her husband (John 4:17). John also used the definite article τῆς γυναικός to describe the Samaritan woman who testified to the City of Sychar (John 4:39). Luke used the definite article τῆς γυναικός to describe the wife of Ananias conspiring with him (Acts 5:2). Luke also described Timothy's mother as a γυναικός Jewish believer (Acts 16:1). Paul said it is good for man not to touch a γυναικός (1 Corinthians 7:1). Those examples show the varied uses of the term γυναικός with and without the definite article. In 1 Timothy 3:11 Paul used the term γυναῖκας (noun--accusative feminine plural). Paul used the term γυναῖκας in 1 Corinthians 7:29; Ephesians 5:25; 5:28; Colossians 3:19; 1 Timothy 2:9, 3:11), describing both women and wives.) We may now press on with Scriptures regarding permanent disqualification from Church Office.

14.5.2 Julian Laws. The Julian laws on marriage prohibited polygamy and imposed taxes on unmarried people in the Roman Empire. (Roman law ("Leges Juliae and Lex Papia Poppaea, see Annals of Tacitus, 3:25) prohibited polygamy and adultery and encouraged children.) Therefore, because of existing secular law against polygamy, the translation "husband of one wife" seems disfavored.

14.5.3 Divorce. Some people argue that a divorced man cannot be a Church Overseer. Jesus described all people who file for divorce as sinful, no exceptions (Matthew 19:1-12; see [Divorce and Remarriage](#)). When people file for divorce and no sexual immorality has occurred during the marriage, then the person filing for divorce adds the sin of adultery. Paul, however, did not use any of the words related to marriage (γάμος) or adultery (μοιχεία) or immorality (πορνεία) or divorce (ἀποστάσιον) to describe the qualifications for Church Office. (See the terms used in Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-4, 11-12; Luke 16:18 and 1 Corinthians 7:11-12.) Jesus directed His discussion of marriage, divorce and remarriage to isolated acts of sin, not necessarily continuing sinful states, such as a continuing condition of immorality. Paul focused upon present actions and present character. Certainly, at the moment of salvation, every person becomes a new creation in Christ, and all the old things have passed away (2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). Therefore, actions and character before salvation should have no bearing on the qualifications for being a Church Overseer, unless the male is a recent convert (1 Timothy 5:22-24). Divorce after salvation becomes an issue where one party filed for divorce, and should be placed under church discipline until they repent of their sin, but they need not divorce, because God hates divorce (see Section Three below).

14.5.4 Adultery. Some people seem to think that adultery at any time disqualifies a male from holding a Church Office. Jesus taught that merely looking at a woman to lust after her amounts to adultery (Matthew 5:28). Therefore, anyone claiming that adultery alone disqualifies a male from holding a Church Office should carefully consider the true number of born-again males committing adultery according to the Scriptures. Please remember that none of the sexual words, like adultery, were used in the list of qualifications for Church Office. Of course, no one supports adultery in mind or body because Jesus condemned it repeatedly.

14.5.5 Analysis of One Woman Man. Candidates for Church Office must be a one woman man. In other words, candidates for Church Office must not

have sexual connections to anyone other than his wife. He must be faithful to her in all things. Sexual conduct before salvation does not disqualify a candidate, unless he is a relatively new convert. Likewise, divorce does not disqualify a candidate, provided that if the candidate filed for divorce after salvation, he must repent of his sin. One woman man does not require a candidate to be married, nor does it require a man to be married to a believer. The sinful reproaches of ex-spouses and their children should not disqualify a candidate, if the behavior at issue has not occurred recently. Jesus focused upon present activity, not past sinful acts and habits. Please keep in mind that the phrase "permanently disqualified from holding a church office" means in most cases "so long as the sin persists in the heart or the actions," the disqualification from holding a Church Office remains permanent.

14.5.6 Summary of One Woman Man.

♦ The Phrase One Woman Man means the male remains faithful to one woman.

♦ The Phrase One Woman Man means a man has no sexual connections to any other person.

♦ The Phrase One Woman Man does not exclude single men from holding a Church Office.

♦ The Phrase One Woman Man does not mean divorced men are disqualified from holding a Church Office.

♦ Single saints living together and having sex outside of marriage remain permanently disqualified from holding a Church Office.

14.6 Leading His Own Household. Grammar and syntax matter in the Scriptures. The difference between "Jesus may return" and "Jesus will return" makes a big difference. God breathed out individual, holy words, when writers moved by the Holy Spirit spoke for God and recorded their revelations from God in the autographs of Scripture. Paul, writing under the influence of the Holy Spirit, used a present, middle/passive participle, to describe "leading his own house well" as a qualification for Church Overseer (1 Timothy 3:4). (The best translation of the term προϊστάμενον (present middle/passive participle, accusative masculine singular) is "leading",

literally from the root "stand before" ("προϊστημι"). See the discussion of leading in [The Spiritual Gift of Leading](#).) Elders do not rule, but they do lead (See Matthew 23:1-12 about [forbidden titles](#)), but they should not be called leaders. The root word for lead in Romans 12:8 provides guidance for understanding the concept of leading in the New Testament. We can learn about leading by studying the use of that word in the New Testament. The deacony of Church Overseer (an office of the church--not a spiritual gift) and Church Deacon (an office of the church--not a spiritual gift) begins at home (see the discussion of The Spiritual Gift of Leading above in chapter 13 above).

14.6.1 Leading at Home. Church Overseers must lead their own families to the glory of God. Church Overseers in the New Testament have specialized duties, such as shepherding the flock from: (a) savage wolves attacking from without; and (b) evil men within the flock drawing away saints from the flock (Acts 20:28-30). This deacony of leading in the home rests upon the same root word as "leads" in Romans 12:8. Furthermore, the Church Overseers and elders lead (προϊσταμένους) the saints, who should appreciate their Godly leading (1 Thessalonians 5:12). Indeed, these elders who lead well (καλῶς προεστῶτες) should receive double honor (1 Timothy 5:17). Leading includes several different aspects.

14.6.2 Taking Care. The Church Overseer must also be able to lead (προστῆναι) his own household well; if he cannot lead his own household, then how will he take care (ἐπιμελήσεται) of the church of God? (1 Timothy 3:5). (Three examples show what it means to take care. The Roman centurion Julian had to guard Paul and take Paul to Rome. During the journey, at Sidon, Julian allowed Paul to go to his friends and receive needed care (ἐπιμελείας) (Acts 27:3). The good Samaritan paid the innkeeper and directed him to take care (ἐπιμελήθητι) of his neighbor (Luke 10:35). The widow searched her house carefully (ἐπιμελῶς) to find the lost coin (Luke 15:8).) Please take notice here that the ability to lead his own household directly relates to taking care of the church of God. The deaconies of leading and taking care have a direct relationship.

14.6.3 Under Control. The Church Overseer must keep his family and household under God's spiritual control (ὑποταγῇ) (1 Timothy 3:4). Jesus ascended to heaven after angels, authorities and powers were subjected to him (1 Peter 3:22). (Peter used an aorist participle "ὑποταγέντων," emphasizing the scope and substance of the total control of the family and household.) Therefore, we see this special power of God acting forcefully to

bring supernatural beings (angels, authorities, and powers) into subjection to Christ. In the following passages, the candidate for Church Office must lead his own household and family well, and so spiritual control over his household and family remains essential because that same quality of spiritual control will help the entire assembly. Therefore, the following passage defining spiritual control for the local assembly also applies to a candidate for Church Office and his household and family.

14.6.4 Voluntary Submission and Compulsory Subordination. The concept of spiritual control includes both voluntary submission and compulsory subordination. This term “subjection” has several different aspects. Today, if you say someone is controlling, you are often criticizing them. Unbelievers long to live without the control of other people. In contrast, Jesus loves to control His children and His mature children love that control by His might (Ephesians 6:10-17). In contrast, Paul also taught us that the mind set on the flesh is not able to subject itself (ὑποτάσσεται) to the law of God (Romans 8:7).

14.6.5 Jesus Subjects Himself. In the future, after all things have been subjected (ὑποταγῇ) to Jesus, then Jesus will be subjected (ὑποταγήσεται) to the Father who subjected to Him (τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ) all things. We learn from this verse that a believer does nothing more than Jesus does when He is subjected to the control and authority of the Father (1 Corinthians 15:28). Being under the control of Jesus or the Father in no way diminishes the spiritual stature of the person being subjected, but rather acknowledges a perfect joining of wills. Although we do not yet see all things placed in subjection to Christ, yet the Scripture proclaims that, in fact, all things have been placed in subjection to Christ (Hebrews 2:8).

14.6.7 Power of Jesus. Furthermore, Christ Himself has the inherent, divine power as God to subject all things to Himself (Philippians 3:21). Therefore, one effect of spiritual control means the family lives under the control of Jesus. The term "control" also includes obedience to your confession of Christ. In 2 Corinthians 9:13, Paul discussed the diaconate of hard work to earn a living to supply the needs of the saints and make donations to other believers. As the Corinthians worked for a living, they glorified God by their obedience (ὑποταγῇ) to their confession of Christ. The Spiritual Gift of The Leader produces obedience in working and giving money for the support of the saints. In a more general sense, spiritual control means believers live obediently to their confession of Jesus Christ. If you

claim to be born again by confessing Christ as Lord because of your faith in Him, you must subject yourself to Him.

14.6.8 Not Yielding to Hypocrisy and False Teachers. In the Book of Galatians, Paul described hypocrisy. He confronted the apostle Peter for falling into the hypocrisy of acting like a Judaizer (these people taught you must keep the Law of Moses to go to heaven). When the Judaizers came to visit in Antioch, then Peter acted just like they did. Paul proclaimed that "we did not yield in subjection (ὑποταγῇ) to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you" (Galatians 2:5). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means that the local assembly does not yield in subjection to hypocrisy and false doctrine.

14.6.9 Accepting Discipline Well. Receiving discipline does not always seem joyful, but discipline trains us in Godliness and results in the peaceful fruit of righteousness. For discipline to yield good results in our lives, we must be subject (ὑποταγησόμεθα) to the Father of spirits, and live (Hebrews 12:9). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means that the local assembly lives in subjection to the discipline of the Lord and bears the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

14.6.10 Submit to God and Resist the Devil. James teaches us that we must submit (ὑποτάγητε) to God, and resist the devil (James 4:7). Another effect of spiritual control will be to help people to submit to God and, while submitting to God, to resist the devil. Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means the local assembly submits to God and resists the devil.

14.6.11 Submit to Every Human Institution. Peter commands us: "Submit (ὑποτάγητε) yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution" (1 Peter 2:13; compare Titus 3:1). Notice that we submit for the sake of the Lord Jesus. Jesus paid taxes (Matthew 17:24-27), and recognized that even Pilate had no authority over Him except that authority given by God to Pilate (John 19:11). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes the local assembly to submit to every human institution, within the will of God.

14.6.12 Younger Men Be Subject to Elders. Peter also directed young men to be subject to elders (1 Peter 5:5). Younger men would do well to let older, Godly men lead the assembly. All leaders in the local assembly must

possess The Spiritual Gift of Leaders. Yet, not all Church Overseers will have The Spiritual Gift of Leaders. Within the group of men possessing The Spiritual Gift of Leaders, the younger men should follow the general pattern of younger men submitting to the older men. Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes younger men in the assembly to submit to the older men.

14.6.13 Being Careful To Engage in Good Deeds. Paul commanded Titus to be careful to speak confidently, so that believers will be careful to lead (προϊστασθαι) in good deeds (Titus 3:8). This spiritual effect of being careful to engage in good deeds flows from the Church Office. As Church Officers exercise spiritual leadership, people hear them speak confidently about the doctrine in the New Testament, and the believers become careful to engage in good deeds. Not only must the saints holding a Church Office be careful to engage in good deeds personally, but they must also lead others to engage in good works. By implication, the entire assembly may unify its efforts to produce good works, and unite individual efforts. Often, the leaders identify the pressing needs of the saints that require others to do good deeds to meet those needs (Titus 3:14). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes the local assembly to engage in good deeds.

14.6.14 Dignity. The Church Overseer must maintain dignity (σεμνότητος) at home and lead with diligence (σπουδῇ). For example, Onesiphorus stands out as a great example of diligence. During Paul's imprisonment in Rome, Onesiphorus diligently (σπουδαίως) searched for Paul, to refresh him (2 Timothy 1:17), even though others may have stayed away because they were ashamed of his chains. This diligence identifies every man displaying spiritual leadership.

14.6.15 Murder. As a side note, if the evil acts in the distant past were at issue in the qualifications for church leadership, then Paul himself would be condemned as a murderer (compare Proverbs 28:17 for the lack of support of such murderers) and unfit to be an apostle for Jesus Christ. Consider also David, who was not fit to build the temple because of his bloody hands, but could assist Solomon (1 Chronicles 22:8-11). (The Hebrew text of 1 Chronicles 22:8-11 describes David as a man of war (אִישׁ מִלְחָמָה), and he shed bloods (דָּמִים שָׁפָךְ). Notice the plural of bloods. David not only shed the blood of his enemies, but he also shed the innocent blood of Uriah the Hittite and made others join the conspiracy to commit murder (2 Samuel 11:14-18). Murderers may be permanently disqualified from some service to the Lord

Jesus, but we must balance both David and Paul in such equations concerning qualifications for leadership in the local assembly.) Even so, David was not forced to relinquish his position as king because of his bad acts. Instead, God sent a sword to stay in the family of David (2 Samuel 12:10).

14.6.16 Analysis of Leading His Own Household. As with a one woman man, God focused upon present activity about leading at home. If the candidate's household currently remains out of spiritual control, and he does not gain control over his own household, then he cannot exercise effective spiritual control as a Church Officer. The emphasis should be upon members of his household, not adult children and others who do not live under his roof. If he has unbelieving children or an unbelieving spouse, then they must be under spiritual control. In many ways, this qualification may disqualify more candidates than one woman men. The elements of spiritual control described above control disqualification. Those qualities in the household grow over time, and not at once. Every family will have serious conflicts and problems, with huge sins occurring in the household, but spiritual control remains paramount. The sin itself is not the main disqualifier for the candidate. No family will have an absence of sin in the household. The question remains about whether the candidate deals with the sin and still maintains spiritual control in the household. Again, what happens in the household will likely happen on a larger scale in the assembly.

14.6.17 Summary of the Qualifications for Church Leadership.

- ◆ Candidates for a Church Office must lead their own households well.
- ◆ Candidates for a Church Office must take care at home.
- ◆ A divorced male is not necessarily excluded from holding a Church Office, provided he meets the other qualifications.
- ◆ A male who sinfully divorced his wife and then remarried is not necessarily excluded from holding a Church Office, provided he meets the other qualifications.
- ◆ God described present qualifications for Church Offices, not historical details.

14.7 Immorality and Divorce. Questions frequently arise about immorality and divorce in the context of permanent disqualification from Church Office.

14.7.1 Basic Questions about Divorce. Some Pharisees asked Jesus if a man could lawfully divorce his wife for any reason. Jesus answered that what God has joined together, no man should separate. (Jesus said these words: "ὁ οὖν ὁ θεὸς συνέζευξεν ἄνθρωπος μὴ χωριζέτω.") Then the Pharisees asked Jesus about divorce under the Law of Moses. Jesus answered that only people with a hard heart file for divorce (Matthew 19:8). (Jesus said these words: "λέγει αὐτοῖς ὅτι Μωϋσῆς πρὸς τὴν σκληροκαρδίαν ὑμῶν ἐπέτρεπεν ὑμῖν ἀπολῦσαι τὰς γυναῖκας ὑμῶν, ἀπ' ἀρχῆς δὲ οὐ γέγονεν οὕτως.")

14.7.2 Except for Immorality. Jesus also said that if anyone looses his wife, except for the cause of immorality (porneia), and marries another, he commits adultery. (Jesus said these words: "λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι ὃς ἂν ἀπολύσῃ τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ μὴ ἐπὶ πορνείᾳ καὶ γαμήσῃ ἄλλην μοιχᾶται.") Therefore, everyone who divorces his spouse has a sin problem consisting of a hard heart. If the hard-hearted man divorces his wife for any reason other than immorality, then he commits a second sin of adultery when he marries another woman. Regarding immorality, Jesus taught that a man looking at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matthew 5:28). Therefore, the sin of repeated adultery characterizes many marriages.

14.7.3 Continuing Sin. Jesus used a present active indicative verb to describe that second sin of adultery (Matthew 5:28; see also Matthew 19:9). (Jesus used the word "μοιχᾶται.") We may consider the general case of divorce and then specific cases of divorce and immorality (porneia).

14.7.3.1 General Case of Divorce. Jesus described the general case of divorce. In the New Testament, all questions regarding divorce focus upon a person filing for divorce and the effect of that person's sinful behavior by filing for divorce. Many people overlook the detailed focus in Scripture upon the person filing for divorce and confuse the person filing for divorce with the person being divorced.

14.7.3.2 Specific Case One: Divorce without Immorality. Jesus described two cases of divorce in Matthew 19:1-9. First, he described a divorce where no immorality (porneia) occurred in the marriage giving rise

to divorce. Jesus said that if a man divorced his wife, and she never committed adultery, then he committed hard-hearted sin plus adultery sin by divorcing her. In that case, the man filing for divorce committed two sins (hard heart sin and adultery sin). Jesus also described immorality during the marriage in Matthew 19:9.

14.7.3.3 Specific Case Two: Divorce with Immorality. Jesus also described the effect of immorality (porneia) when a man files for divorce. Jesus used the present tense to describe adultery related to filing for divorce. By using the present tense in the indicative mood to describe committing adultery by filing for divorce and marrying another, (Matthew 5:28; 19:9), was Jesus indicating that the sin of adultery has a continuing nature to it? Jesus may have meant that so long as the man continues in that adulterous new marriage, he continues in adultery. The Proverbs provide that the man who commits adultery will experience lasting consequences after the physical act has ended, including: (1) being reduced to a loaf of bread; (2) punishment; (3) self-destruction; (4) wounds; (5) disgrace; (6) reproach upon him which will not be blotted out; and (7) an angry cuckold husband who will not be satisfied with many gifts (Proverbs 6:26-35). While those consequences may continue after the physical act, God has still forgiven the sin for believers. In the alternative, did Jesus mean that the remarriage after divorce not based upon spousal immorality was a single act of immorality and not continuing in nature? We must recall that God hates divorce (Malachi 2:14-16). (Malachi 2:14 provided: **אָמַרְתֶּם עַל-מָה עָל כִּי-יְהוָה הֵעִיד בֵּינִי וּבֵין אִשְׁתִּי וְעוֹרִיד אֲשֶׁר אֶתָּה בְּגִדְתָּהּ כִּי וְהָיָה חֲבֻרְתָּהּ וְאִשְׁתִּי בְרִיתָהּ: וְלֹא-אֶתָּה עָשִׂיתָ וְשֹׁאֵר רוּחַ לֹא וְמִה הָאֶתָּה מְבַקֵּשׁ גִּרְעָה אֱלֹהִים וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם בְּרוּיְחְכֶּם וּבְאִשְׁתִּי וְעוֹרִיד אֶל-יִבְגָּד: כִּי-שָׁנָא שְׂלֹחַ אָמַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכִפְסָה חֲמָס עַל-יְהוָה לְבוֹשׁוֹ אָמַר יְהוָה צָבָאוֹת וְנִשְׁמַרְתֶּם בְּרוּיְחְכֶּם וְלֹא תִבְגְּדוּ:)** So, regarding divorce and church leadership, does a man continue to live in adultery after divorcing his wife without immorality during the marriage and then remarries another woman? In other words, if my wife has always been faithful to me and I divorce her and marry another woman, can I ever be a Church Overseer or a Church Deacon? Does my sin of adultery continue so that I am permanently disqualified from holding a Church Office? If I confess my sin of adultery, can I then hold a Church Office? Must I divorce my present spouse to become eligible to hold a Church Office? Those questions turn, in part, upon other Scriptures. So, we can compare Scripture with Scripture to see if a male may be permanently disqualified from church leadership.

14.7.4 Analysis of Immorality and Divorce. Jesus focused upon present activity of the candidate, far more than the past of the candidate. In dealing with immorality, Jesus explained that people file for divorce because they always have a hard heart, no exceptions. If they file for divorce, without immorality in the marriage, then they add the second sin of adultery. If a candidate has a history of divorce, he must repent of his sin in the divorce and remarriage, if applicable. Divorce, by itself, does not disqualify a candidate from a Church Office.

14.7.5 Summary of Immorality and Divorce.

♦ A candidate for Church Office who divorced his wife after his salvation must repent of his sin of filing for divorce before being considered for Church Office.

♦ A candidate for Church Office who divorced his wife after his salvation and without immorality in the marriage and then married another woman must confess his sin of filing for divorce and his sin of adultery.

♦ Divorce before the salvation of the candidate plays no role in his eligibility for Church Office, provided he is not a recent convert.

♦ God focused upon present conduct more than historical details when reviewing qualifications for Church Office.

14.8.1 Basic Questions about Remarriage. Jesus answered the question about whether a man may divorce his present wife and then marry another woman (Matthew 5:31-32). (Roman law ("leges juliae and Lex Papia Poppaea, see Annals of Tacitus, 3:25) prohibited polygamy and adultery and encouraged children. Jesus apparently took this prohibition against polygamy act into consideration because He focused upon a man divorcing one wife so that he could marry another woman. Under Roman law, the man could not have two wives and so had to divorce his first wife if he wanted to marry another woman.) Jesus made it plain that immorality did not occur in the marriage, yet the husband divorced the wife. Jesus declared that the man commits adultery by divorcing his first wife and then marrying another. Furthermore, the man also causes the first wife to commit adultery. Therefore, if the new marriage starts with adultery, should that man divorce his new wife to stop the adultery? In these Matthew verses, Jesus answered the question about whether the man should divorce his new wife because of

the adultery involved in marrying her. So often the answer to our questions stands in the passage we are studying. Jesus said that no one should divorce. Therefore, we know that in the first marriage, the man should not have divorced his wife for any reason.

14.8.2 No Divorce, No Exceptions. Jesus taught no divorce, no exceptions in Matthew 19. Jesus also addressed the implications of no divorce and no exceptions. In Matthew 5:31-32, Jesus succinctly provided further teaching regarding adultery in a marriage and after a marriage. The key lies in the phrase "you cause her to commit adultery." (Jesus may have meant the marriage endures because God never wants men to separate what He joined together. Therefore, both husband and wife commit adultery if they have sex with anyone not part of the original marriage. I disfavor this view because of Matthew 19 and 1 Corinthians 7 where Jesus provided much more information about the dynamics of divorce and remarriage. Man does not separate the marriage by sex outside marriage, but by filing for divorce. Therefore, the marriage terminates by legal dissolution of marriage, not sex. Remember the context, questions and answers in Matthew 19.) When a man divorces his wife for any reason other than immorality, that man then causes that innocent spouse to commit adultery. She has done nothing wrong and still gets divorced because the husband wants to marry another woman. When the innocent woman later has sex outside of marriage because she burns, she commits adultery. The man commits adultery at the moment he has sex with another woman not his first wife. Therefore, even if the first sex occurs after he marries the new woman, he still commits adultery. Now the loop has closed regarding the teaching of Jesus. Jesus never taught that adultery during the marriage may be a grounds for divorce. He taught no divorce, no exceptions. Divorce always flows from a hard heart, no exceptions (Matthew 19:8).

14.8.3 Adultery after Divorce. If a man divorces his wife, he always does so because of a hard, sinful heart. If his wife committed immorality during the marriage, then he only commits one sin (hard heart) when he divorces her. If his wife did not commit immorality and he divorces her and marries another, then he has two sins: (1) the sin of a hard heart; and (2) the sin of adultery by marrying the new woman. If the man had sex with the new wife for the first time during their new marriage, then they committed adultery at that moment. If they had sex before marriage, he committed adultery at that moment. We can learn from these principles that the same laws for marriage that Jesus already established apply to the new marriage, just like the old

marriage (closing the loop). All divorce rests upon a hard heart. Therefore, any divorce in the new marriage would be based upon a sinful, hard heart. God intends for them to stay together.

14.8.4 Staying in the Second Marriage. If a man divorces his wife and marries another, then he commits adultery when he remarries (the new marriage). All the divorce laws Jesus gave in the New Testament still apply to the new marriage following a divorce. Furthermore, the new husband cannot divorce the new wife and claim adultery, because he also has committed adultery, and so has unclean hands related to that first sexual act with his new wife. Therefore, they should not get divorced and only the first sexual act constituted adultery. (Jesus used the term "to commit adultery" (μοιχευθῆναι--aorist infinitive) to describe the act of adultery for the innocent spouse).)

14.8.5 Adultery and the Innocent Spouse. If a man divorces his wife and marries another, that man makes the first wife he sinfully divorced commit adultery. (Jesus used the term "do" (ποιεῖ--present active indicative, third person singular) to describe the ex-wife committing adultery. The present tense, active voice makes an argument that the adultery continues. The question becomes, continues in what sense?) Has the innocent spouse just been condemned to a life without sex for doing nothing wrong? The better answer to me lies in the application of 1 Corinthians 7:1-9, indicating that because of immoralities, women should have husbands if they lack the gift of self-control. If the innocent spouse has sex outside of marriage, she commits adultery. If she has sex after remarriage, she does not commit adultery. Because many people burn with passion, they commit immorality. They may marry to avoid such immorality, as explained in 1 Corinthians 7:8-9.

14.8.6 Adultery and the Guilty Spouse. Jesus also addressed the man who marries the woman who divorced herself. (Paul wrote ἀπολελυμένην--perfect passive/middle participle, accusative feminine singular--I take it as middle voice, meaning she divorced herself.) She has the hard heart seeking divorce. In the alternative, you may interpret the verb as passive voice (she was divorced), and so whoever marries her commits adultery. I disfavor this view because she remains the innocent spouse, without sin. Under the passive voice view, she will face all the pressures of burning described in 1 Corinthians 7, and cannot avail herself of marriage without sinning. (I recognize the strength of both passive and middle voice explanations,

especially with change from ὁ ἀπολύων (article + perfect active participle, nominative masculine singular) contrasted with ἀπολελυμένην (present middle/passive participle, accusative feminine singular (many arguments about that contrast abound)). In the last phrase, regarding the man marrying that woman, Jesus used the word commits adultery (μοιχᾶται--present middle passive indicative).) Furthermore, Jesus opposed a saint filing for divorce against a nonbelieving spouse, using the same commands from Matthew 19 (see also 1 Corinthians 7:12-16).

14.8.7 Immorality and Marriage. As always, God hates divorce (Malachi 2:16). People in a marriage, no matter how badly it started, may confess their sins and enjoy God's blessings, provided they were saved at some point. God does not want anyone to divorce because of infidelity, unbelief, or any other reason during a marriage. Therefore, the second marriage may include adultery, but God forgives that sin just like He forgives adultery and immorality in the first marriage.

14.8.7.1 Immorality Outside of Marriage. Generally, immorality continues outside of marriage, but Paul urged the unmarried to marry to avoid burning. In other words, generally marriage terminates immorality by providing a holy sex because God has joined together a male and female in marriage. Consider 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and 6:12-20, which together provide the foundation for 1 Corinthians 7.

14.8.7.2 Salvation and Categories of Sinners. Before salvation, people were described as immoral (πόρνοι), adulterers (μοιχοί), and effeminate (μαλακοί) and homosexuals (ἀρσενικοῖται), all simple, plural nouns. Some of those people may have been married. Those terms described their lives before they were washed and sanctified by saving faith in Jesus Christ. In fact, people before salvation may have fallen into more than one category and some of those categories overlap. Their sinful acts make them fall into categories of sexual sin that characterize their spiritual lives. Yet, Christ removes those categories from their lives and they join the new category of saints and that category removes all other categories (but not necessarily the sinful practices). Therefore, while unsaved people may be categorized by the sins they commit, they no longer may be categorized that way after salvation.

14.8.7.3 Sanctified and Justified. At the moment of salvation, all sinners were washed and sanctified and justified (1 Corinthians 6:11). (God said "such were some of you" (καὶ ταῦτά τινες ἦτε--imperfect active indicative

meaning continuing activity; contrasted with the washed (ἀπελούσασθε--aorist middle indicative) signaling a new state of being and sanctified (ἡγιάσθητε--aorist passive indicative--notice the switch to passive voice here signaling God's activity) and justified (ἐδικαιώθητε--aorist passive indicative--again signaling God's activity), so that the old categories do not apply because you became a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).) Therefore, the right to marry in 1 Corinthians 7 closes the loop once again and the adultery does not continue once confessed or never applied in the first place for the innocent spouse. Immorality continues until marriage, but marriage may solve all immorality. The next question addresses the issue of whether God ever commanded divorce. We can start with looking at incest at Corinth.

14.8.8 Analysis of Divorce and Remarriage. Remarriage after divorce does not disqualify a candidate from holding a Church Office. If a candidate divorced and remarried before salvation, no further inquiry is required and no disqualification occurs. If the divorce and remarriage occurred after salvation, then the candidate must repent of all sins related to the divorce and remarriage. He should not have to divorce his current wife, no matter if the marriage started with adultery. During the Church Age, Jesus never commanded any believer to divorce anyone (believer or unbeliever). Adultery never provided grounds for divorce. Everyone filing for divorce has a hard, sinful heart, no exceptions. Everyone filing for divorce sins against God, no exceptions.

14.8.9 Summary of Divorce and Remarriage.

- ♦ Divorce and remarriage, by themselves, do not disqualify a male from holding a Church Office.

- ♦ Jesus taught no divorce, no exceptions.

- ♦ Jesus taught that filing for divorce arises from a sinful, hard heart.

- ♦ Repentance for sexual sins, such as filing for divorce and remarrying another person, must precede holding a Church Office.

14.9.1 His Father's Wife. In 1 Corinthians 5:1, Paul rebuked the Corinthians because a type of "immorality" ("πορνεία") existed in the Corinthians' assembly, of such a type as not even named among the Gentiles,

and they did not mourn or take action to stop it. Paul referred to a man in the Corinthian church who had his father's wife. (Therefore, 1 Corinthians 5:1 shows that: (a) "πορνεία" occurs in different forms ("τοιαύτη"); and (b) the man had (ἔχειν) the wife of his father. When Paul used the term "had" in the phrase "had his father's wife," does that mean they were married? We may start to answer that question by examining the Old Testament Law of Incest. One starting point is Deuteronomy 22:30, which provides: "A man shall not take (קָחַ) his father's wife so that he will not uncover his father's skirt." Therefore, in the Old Testament, what does the term "take" mean when applied to wives and others?

14.9.2 Old Testament Law of Incest. The Old Testament Law undergirds much of the moral teachings among Jews at the time of Jesus. When the church began at Pentecost following the ascension of Jesus, how much did things change regarding the teachings of the church about morality? Paul did not cite the Old Testament Law of Incest, but he did complain that even pagans did not do what a Corinthian did without objection by the church at Corinth. Therefore, we can look at the incest at Corinth, but first it may be helpful to understand the Old Testament teachings and vocabulary about incest. If a man takes his brother's wife, it was abhorrent. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they will bear their sin. They will die childless (Leviticus 20:21). Although not explicit, it appears they both live and remain childless, apparently indicating that the marriage continued (compare John the Baptist confronting Herod for taking Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip and marrying her. The daughter of Herodias was Salome). The same commands applied to an uncle's wife. Therefore, the Law of Incest in the Old Testament does not settle the question of mandatory divorce for incestuous marriages.

14.9.2.1 Uncovering. As a preliminary matter, in Deuteronomy 22:30, the phrase "uncovering his father's skirt" refers to sexual activity, not necessarily marriage (see Deuteronomy 20:7). Therefore, Deuteronomy 22:30 does not settle the issue about whether 1 Corinthians 5:1 concerns marriage or only immorality. Further study of the Hebrew term "take" (קָחַ) may help.

14.9.2.2 Female Slave. In Exodus 21:10, the term "take" (קָחַ) described a man who has a female slave and then he takes (קָחַ) another woman (Exodus 21:10). Because the female slave may leave, it does not appear that the female slave was married. Likewise, taking another woman implies that both the

second woman and the female slave were taken sexually, but not necessarily married.

14.9.2.3 Sister. Likewise, if a man takes (יָקַח) his sister, his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, so that he sees her nakedness and she sees his nakedness, it is a disgrace and both of them shall be cut off from the sight of their people (Leviticus 20:17).

14.9.2.4 Wife. In Deuteronomy 22:13, a man takes his wife (יָקַח) and then goes in to her (וַיֵּבֶא אֵלֶיהָ). The "takes" there described marriage and the "go in" described intercourse. Therefore, the term take (יָקַח) does not always imply marriage, but always implies sexual activity when used in a sexual context.

14.9.2.5 Homosexuality. In the context of forbidden sexual activity, if a male lies (יִשְׁכַּב) with a male, then both of them must be put to death (Leviticus 20:13). In a related passage, Leviticus 21 deals with various forms of unlawful sexual activity, including adultery (Leviticus 20:10, incest (Leviticus 20:11-12), homosexuality (Leviticus 20:13), and bestiality (Leviticus 20:15-16). In that passage, God switched from "a man takes (יָקַח) his sister" (Leviticus 20:17) to a male who lies (יִשְׁכַּב) with a male slave. In that context, if a man takes his brother's wife, it is abhorrent; he has uncovered his brother's nakedness. They will be childless (Leviticus 20:21). If a man lies with male as those who lie with a woman, they both shall be put to death (Leviticus 20:13). As a side note, priests must only marry a virgin, and not a widow, or a divorced woman, or a harlot (Leviticus 21:14).) With that background in place, the focus can now shift back to incest at Corinth.

14.9.2.6 Penalty. The penalty for sexual abominations was to cut off the offender. God gave commands regarding incest involving the: father's wife (Leviticus 18:8); daughter-in-law (Leviticus 18:15), brother's wife (Leviticus 18:16), woman and her daughter (Leviticus 18:17); all were to be dealt with by cutting the offender off from Israel (Leviticus 18:29). (The Hebrew phrase "and cut off" (וַיִּכְרְתוּ--niphel perfect, third plural) describes the action of removing the abomination from Israel by removing the people committing the abomination so that it does infect others.) God said that the nations did such things and the land spewed them out (Leviticus 18:25). Compare 1 Corinthians 5:1 where the incest there was not known among the nations. The question becomes does the phrase "cut off" mean to kill them or merely put them outside the camp and outside the people of Israel without killing them? When a man lies with his father's wife, the explicit command was to

put them to death, because their bloodguiltiness was upon them (Leviticus 20:11). Therefore, because they were to be killed, the Law of Moses on that point never reached the question of mandatory divorce for incestuous marriage concerning a man taking his father's wife. They would both be killed and that punishment would end the matter. (Consider Absalom letting everyone know he was having sex with his father's concubines (2 Samuel 16:22).) In the Church Age, no person was to be put to death for sexual sins. So, the question remains about whether an incestuous marriage in the Church requires divorce. We may find some help in the Old Testament Law. If a man uncovers the nakedness of his father's wife (Leviticus 18:8), then anyone practicing such abomination shall be cut off from the people (Leviticus 18:29). (The phrase "uncovers the nakedness" ("תִּקְרֶב לְגִלּוֹת עֲרֻתָּהּ") does not always mean sexual activity, because Noah was in his tent with his nakedness uncovered. His son Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his brothers. The other brothers, Shem and Japheth, covered Noah without seeing his nakedness. Noah awoke and cursed Canaan and blessed Shem and Japheth (Genesis 9:20-28).) The phrase "uncover the nakedness" was used frequently in Leviticus 18, describing relationships where nakedness should not be uncovered. Sexual activity may be in view, but the phrase perhaps means only the shame of nakedness may be in view (Genesis 3:6-7). In Deuteronomy 22:30 God forbade "taking" his father's wife, so that he will not expose his father's skirt. See also Jerusalem once honored was now despised because her lovers and others have seen her nakedness (Lamentations 1:8). God spread His skirt over Israel to cover her nakedness (Ezekiel 16:8). Yet, the prophets also spoke about the lewdness and harlotries and nakedness uncovered through harlotries (Ezekiel 16:36). God promised to gather all the lovers of Jerusalem to expose all her nakedness and then face God judging her as a harlot (Ezekiel 16:37-38). Because many of the uses of the phrase regarding exposing nakedness seem associated with sexual activity, it cannot be ruled out. Therefore, even uncovering the nakedness of the father's wife with sexual activity brought the death penalty, but without sexual activity, merely being cut off from Israel may be a sufficient penalty. So, the penalty of death would have applied to incestuous sexual relations outside of marriage, but sex inside an incestuous marriage may bring the childless penalty.

14.9.2.6.1 Incest and Marriage at Corinth. The term "immorality" ("πορνεία") includes incestuous activity, but 1 Corinthians 5:1 does not necessarily describe a marriage. The sin of Deuteronomy 22:30 relates to the son uncovering the nakedness of his father, by taking his father's wife

sexually. In 1 Corinthians 5:1, the text does not explicitly say that the man had married his father's wife, but "had" her. (Paul used the phrase ὥστε γυναικὰ τινὰ τοῦ πατρὸς ἔχειν. The infinitive here means he had her sexually.) Some type of sexual relationship existed between the man and his father's wife. Whether they were married turns upon the use of the term "to have" ("ἔχειν").

14.9.2.6.2 John the Baptist. The same term "to have" (ἔχειν) occurs in Matthew 14:4, where John the Baptist had been saying that Herod had the wife of his brother Philip. John the Baptist used the phrase "it is not lawful for you to have her" and Herod had married Philip's wife (Mark 6:17). (John the Baptist used these words: "οὐκ ἔξεστί σοι ἔχειν αὐτήν." See the similar construction in Mark 6:18.

14.9.2.6.3 The Samaritan Woman at the Well. Compare also the discussion Jesus had with the Samaritan Woman at Jacob's well near Sychar. Jesus used the term "I have" (ἔχω) as it related to the woman having a husband. Jesus said she had multiple husbands and right now she was having a man who was not her husband (John 4:16-18).)

14.9.2.6.4 Marriage and Lust. Paul used a similar imperative regarding marriage: each man let have (ἐχέτω) his own wife and each wife let have (ἐχέτω) her own husband (1 Corinthians 7:2). Therefore, Paul ordered people to have their own spouses because of immoralities.

14.9.3 Analysis of Incest at Corinth. Marriage may be in view in 1 Corinthians 5:1 because: (1) Paul was familiar with the Old Testament Law on incestuous marriage prohibiting a man from marrying his father's wife or his brother's wife (Leviticus 18:7; 20:21); (2) the term "to have" ("ἔχειν") described Herod having the wife of his brother Philip and Herod had married her (Mark 6:17-18); (3) the use of "let have" ("ἐχέτω") described a man having a wife or a woman having a husband (1 Corinthians 7:2). Whether God directed the man "having" his wife in an incestuous marriage to divorce her remains unclear because Paul later mentioned the congregation had rebuked him, but Paul did not detail that rebuke, but did urge the congregation to comfort that man so that his sorrow would not be too great (2 Corinthians 2:5-7). (Interestingly, Paul later wrote about the rebuke given to the man having his father's wife (2 Corinthians 2:6). Paul used the singular phrase "to such a one" ("τῷ τοιοῦτῳ"--demonstrative pronoun, dative masculine singular) the rebuke (ἐπιτιμία--noun, nominative feminine singular).)

Clearly the sin was forgiven (2 Corinthians 2:10). In light of the general prohibition against divorce in Matthew 19 and 1 Corinthians 7, the man may not have divorced his wife, but repented of the evil. Please consider the people returning to Jerusalem from the exile and divorcing their wives and leaving their children from those foreign wives. (Please keep in mind the limited case here of an adult male taking the adult wife of his father. We are not dealing with underage marriages in this passage of 1 Corinthians 5:1 and following.)

14.9.4 Summary of Incest at Corinth.

- ◆ Incest at Corinth required action by the church to stop it.
- ◆ Incest at Corinth started with a man having his father's wife.
- ◆ God condemned many forms of incest, and applied the death penalty to incestual acts in the Old Testament.
- ◆ God commanded the church at Corinth to mourn over incest, but then to forgive and comfort the sinner once the incest has been resolved by repentance.
- ◆ The church at Corinth rebuked the man having his father's wife, and then forgave the man and Paul praised the church for its obedience.
- ◆ Once a man has repented of his immorality in having his father's wife, then he will no longer be permanently disqualified for holding a Church Office. Depending upon the total circumstances (such as age and consent), the man does not always have to divorce his father's wife.

14.10.1 The Guilt of the Exiles. In the days of Ezra, the exiles returned from their Babylonian captivity. When they had returned to the land of Israel, the people confessed their guilt before God. They said that no one could stand before God because of their guilt, including guilt over marrying foreign wives (Ezra 9:15). The exiles assembled and declared their unfaithfulness to God by marrying foreign women from the peoples of the land (Ezra 10:2). (People disagree about the dates of return to Israel from exile, but Sheshbazzar brought up many articles removed from Jerusalem after the decree of Cyrus to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem and exiles returned to Israel and lived in the land (Ezra 1:11). While some people may

claim a period of about eight months from the first return to Jerusalem and the new covenant requiring divorce, the evidence does not seem air tight for limiting the time for the exiles to remarry to just eight months. Even so, the short time period does not materially alter the impact of divorce upon both wives and children.)

14.10.2 Repentance of the Exiles. The exiles repented of their sin (Ezra 10:1-4). Having repented of their sin, they made a new covenant with God to put away all their foreign wives and children of those marriages, according to the Law (Ezra 10:3). (The Hebrew text refers to divorce here as a putting away (לְהוֹצִיא) all wives and the ones born from them (וְהַנּוֹלָד מֵהֶם). They did this upon the advice of Adoni (אֲדֹנִי) and those who tremble (וְהַתַּרְדֵּי) at the commandment of our God.) Under the new covenant established that day, they would put them away according to the Law. That provision that they be put away according the Law triggered certain rights in the wives. Basically, Moses permitted divorce for people with hard hearts. Jesus said that God never commanded divorce, but permitted divorce because of hard hearts. (See Matthew 19:7-8.) God always and uniformly hated divorce, no exceptions. Sinful people brought divorce into the world, and God provided regulations for sinful divorce in Deuteronomy 24. In order to understand the problem of divorce facing the exiles, the Old Testament Law of divorce in Deuteronomy 24 must be kept in mind.

14.10.3 The Old Testament Law of Divorce. Moses regulated divorce because God wanted to protect wives from the sinful actions of their husbands filing for divorce because of their hard hearts. Moses reviewed the case of a man taking a wife, and marrying her, and she finds no grace (Moses used the word חֵן conveying the idea of grace; see Jeremiah 31:2; Zechariah 4:7; 12:10; some prefer the translation favor, but grace serves the context better because he has a hard heart which repudiates grace.) in his eyes, because he has found some uncleanness in her. He then proceeds to divorce her and must follow the regulations concerning his hard-hearted divorce (Deuteronomy 24:2-4). Moses provided a short procedure for divorcing a wife and providing her legal protection.

14.10.3.1 Legal Protection for Divorced Women. Moses provided legal protection for the women divorced by their husbands. Those legal protections included: (1) a written letter of divorce; (The Hebrew text provides that a husband must write (וְכָתַב--and writes-- (Qal perfect with waw) her a letter (שְׁכֵר--see also Genesis 5:1 and Deuteronomy 17:18).) and

(2) the husband puts the letter in her hand; and (3) sends her out of the house; (Compare Hagar taking Ishmael and fleeing from the face of Sarai (Genesis 16:6).) and (4) the first husband cannot remarry the woman if she remarries and then the second husband divorces her or the second husband dies (Deuteronomy 24:1-4). (Notice that the second husband can divorce the wife because he turns against her (הִשָּׁחֵץ--Qal perfect with waw consecutive). This term "turns against her" has a specific meaning in Deuteronomy 24:13 where a man takes a wife, but does not find her a virgin. The parents of the woman charged with not being a virgin may produce a garment of proof showing her virginity before the elders. Then that man who wrongly defamed the virgin shall pay a hundred of silver to the girl's father for publicly defaming a virgin of Israel. That man shall never be allowed to divorce that woman he defamed (Deuteronomy 22:13-19).) God intended for divorce to be permanent and so discouraged divorce and remarriage at a whim. The first husband cannot take the wife back because she has been defiled. (The Hebrew term for defiled (הִשָּׁחֵץ) indicates a permanent condition here.) The first husband taking that wife back would constitute an abomination before Yahweh and bring sin on the land which Yahweh your God is giving to you as an inheritance. (The Hebrew term for abomination (תועבה) conveys the idea of permanent evil.)

14.10.3.2 The Case of Uncleanness. The basis for such divorce rests upon the husband finding some uncleanness in her and so she finds no grace in his eyes (Deuteronomy 24:1). (The Hebrew term for "uncleanness" ("עֲרֻת") literally means a repulsive thing, referring normally to nakedness (consider the story of Ham looking upon the nakedness of his father in Genesis 9:22; see also Leviticus 18:1-17 and Leviticus 20:11-21 for the general prohibitions about uncovering the nakedness of certain individuals, speaking of indecent sexual activity). We may glean from the other uses of the term that the "uncleanness" includes improper sexual relations outside the marriage.) Rather than forgiving such "uncleanness" and extending grace to her, the sinful, hard-hearted husband divorced the wife. According to Jesus, all divorce starts with a sinful, hard heart, no exceptions. (See Matthew 19:7-8. God never commanded divorce. In fact, God commanded people not to separate what He joined together (Matthew 19:6).) So, when people talk about God allowing divorce, God only permitted divorce to offer some legal protection to wives from sinful husbands who refused to heed His command not to divorce. (In Matthew 19:8, Jesus used the term "permitted" ("ἐπέτρεπεν"--aorist active indicative, third person singular--Jesus corrected the Pharisees who thought that Moses commanded (ἐνετείλατο) to

give a letter of divorce (βιβλίον ἀποστασίου; compare the סֵפֶר כְּרִיתוֹת of Deuteronomy 24:1.) From the beginning, God never intended anyone to divorce (Matthew 19:8). (Moses described the case of a man divorcing his wife with a conditional clause (וְיָ--see Deuteronomy 24:5, 7, 10, etc. for this form of legal review by case), but the passage provides binding regulations for divorce.)

14.10.4 The Specific Choice of Israel. God chose Israel and gave the people of Israel specific commands not to intermarry with the people of the land. God specifically commanded the people of Israel not to take foreign wives (Exodus 34:15-16). All divorce in the Bible was always founded upon sin of one type or another. Those marriages to foreign women were sinful from the beginning. God commanded them not to take wives from the inhabitants of the land for the sons of Israel, because the sons of Israel would then play the harlot with their foreign gods (Exodus 34:15-16). In fact, God prohibited the people of Israel from taking wives from the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites--seven nations stronger than Israel. Yahweh Your Elohim gave specific reasons for not taking wives from those peoples. He said that they will turn your sons away from following Yahweh to serve other gods; then the nose anger of Yahweh will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you (Deuteronomy 7:1-4). Yahweh specifically said that He had chosen Israel for His own possession out of all the people on the face of the earth; they were a holy people to Yahweh (Deuteronomy 7:6).

14.10.5 Analysis of Divorcing Foreign Wives. God chose Israel for His special possession. They were to live holy to Yahweh Your Elohim. Yahweh specifically enjoined them from giving their sons to the people of the land. If they did so, then God's nose anger would be kindled against them (see [The Angers of God](#)) and Yahweh would quickly destroy them. Therefore, the exiles were bound by the Law of Moses and the covenant with God to divorce those women, but they must do so according the regulations Moses provided. The women would receive a letter of divorce, delivered into their hands, sent out of the house, and the husband could not remarry them. This special circumstance rested upon the unique position Israel held in God's program. After Jesus died and was raised from the dead, everything changed regarding Deuteronomy 7:1-4. The church did not replace Israel in God's program, but the Jews became part of the church. During the church age which began at Pentecost, God forbids all divorce in the church. He gave specific guidance on saints remaining married to unbelievers (1 Corinthians 7:12-16). Saints

should never file for divorce, even if married to an unbeliever. If the unbeliever files for divorce, then the saint becomes free to remarry, without bondage. These marriage laws help us understand that being divorced does not automatically make a woman an adulteress if she remarries after her unbelieving husband divorces her (compare Matthew 19:1-8 and Matthew 5:31-32). Remember, Jesus described what happens when one party files for divorce. That filing party has a hard, sinful heart. Therefore, the divorce of foreign wives in Ezra does not provide an exception to the teaching of Jesus, because of the clear command from Yahweh to avoid foreign marriages because Yahweh will destroy Israel for such foreign marriages. The exiles in Ezra had no choice except to divorce the wives to avoid destruction. Therefore, God did require divorce because of His covenant with Israel outlawing foreign marriage and holding Israel as His possession. (Some people may argue that the divorce of foreign wives compels the conclusion that any marriage founded upon incest (prohibited by the Law of Moses) should also be dissolved immediately. Yet, the Law of Moses addressed the issues concerning incestuous marriage and did not explicitly conclude that the man and woman should be killed, but concluded they would be childless, with the marriage apparently continuing. Coupled with the New Testament changes where even foreign wives would not be divorced in the church, that argument does not seem convincing that incestuous marriages must be dissolved. On a different note, some jurisdictions in the United States prohibit many different forms of incest and the incestuous marriage is void *ab initio*, meaning there never was a legally recognized marriage and no court proceeding for dissolution of marriage may be required.) Another popular sin today concerns homosexual unions.

♦ God commanded the Jews to avoid intermarriage with any non-Jews.

♦ In the time of Ezra, the exiles returned to Jerusalem and some Jews took wives from the people of the land.

♦ Because of the prohibition upon marrying foreign wives, and the covenant with God concerning them His chosen people occupying the land He gave them, God commanded the men to divorce their foreign wives and leave the children of the marriages to those wives.

♦ God compelled the men to divorce their foreign wives under threat of destruction because they married foreign wives in violation of His command not to marry foreign wives.

♦ God commanded that the men follow the Law of Moses regarding divorce.

♦ The Law of Moses provided limited protections for the divorced woman.

♦ Because the circumstances surrounding the divorce of the wives from the land during Ezra's time were unique to that time and place, and the church received new revelations and commands from God concerning divorce and remarriage to unbelievers, the divorce of foreign wives does not provide binding commands for today, but rather general guidance concerning God's view of Israel and infidelity to God and His covenants.

14.11.1 Homosexual Unions. Today many governments recognize homosexual "marriages." In contrast, God described all homosexuality and cross-dressing as sinful in both the Old Testament and the New Testament. Therefore, because homosexuality remains sinful in God's eyes, God never joins a male with a male in marriage and never joins a female and female in marriage. God created marriage by joining the female (Eve) He created for the male (Adam) and commanded them to multiply (Genesis 1:27-28). He created both of them in His image. Having first created Adam, God said it was not good for man to be alone and then created Eve from the rib of Adam. God created Eve as a helper suitable for Adam (Genesis 2:18). At that moment of creation, God joined male and female together in marriage. Jesus said that God joined them together and they became one flesh (Matthew 19:1-7). Christ is the head of man and man is the head of woman, and God is the head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3). Man is the image and glory of God and the woman is the glory of man (1 Corinthians 11:7). The wife should be in subjection to her husband, just as Christ submits to His Father (Ephesians 5:22; 1 Peter 3:5; 1 Corinthians 15:28). God only joins males and females in marriage. Anyone who claims that God's opposition to "homosexuality" in the Bible only reflects the outdated, cultural values from thousands of years ago must consider that both the Old and New Testaments reveal that God condemns homosexuality, homosexual acts and homosexuals.

14.11.2 God Condemns Homosexuals. God condemns homosexuals for their sinful sexual acts. The uniform teaching of the Bible opposes all forms of homosexuality, homosexual acts, and homosexuals. God loves to redeem sinners of all kinds, but He opposes all sin and sinners.

14.11.3 Old Testament. In the Old Testament, God declared homosexuals sinners who deserve the death penalty. Moses provided God's view of homosexuality: "If *there is* a man who lies with a male as those who lie with a woman, both of them have committed a detestable act; they shall surely be put to death. Their bloodguiltiness is upon them." (Leviticus 20:13). (Moses provided: וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁכַּב אֶת-זָכָר מִשְׁכַּבִּי אִשָּׁה תוֹעֵבָה עָשׂוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם מוֹת יוּמָתוּ דְּמֵיהֶם בָּם:) Likewise, God also prohibited a man from wearing female clothing and vice versa; God prohibited all forms of cross-dressing and called such acts an abomination (Deuteronomy 22:5). (Moses provided: לֹא-יִהְיֶה כָלִי-גִבּוֹר עַל- אִשָּׁה וְלֹא-יִלְבָּשׁ גִּבּוֹר שְׂמֹלֶת אִשָּׁה כִּי תוֹעֵבָת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כָּל-עֲשֵׂה אֵלֶּה Deuteronomy 22:5).) The New Testament reaffirms God's commands regarding homosexuality, homosexual acts and homosexuals.

14.11.4 The New Testament. The New Testament presents similar revelation from God: "For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error." (Romans 1:26-27) (Paul provided: Διὰ τοῦτο παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ θεὸς εἰς πάθη ἀτιμίας, αἵ τε γὰρ θήλειαι αὐτῶν μετήλλαξαν τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν εἰς τὴν παρὰ φύσιν, ὁμοίως τε καὶ οἱ ἄρσενες ἀφέντες τὴν φυσικὴν χρῆσιν τῆς θηλείας ἐξεκαύθησαν ἐν τῇ ὀρέξει αὐτῶν εἰς ἀλλήλους, ἄρσενες ἐν ἄρσεσιν τὴν ἀσχημοσύνην κατεργαζόμενοι καὶ τὴν ἀντιμισθίαν ἣν ἔδει τῆς πλάνης αὐτῶν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἀπολαμβάνοντες (Romans 1:26-27).) Today, some church groups have elevated homosexuals to positions of leadership in the church. Some people twist the Bible passages to support homosexuality. In contrast to putting our faith in church leaders, let us look at Paul's letter to the Romans in more detail. God used Paul to write down the truth regarding homosexuals and homosexuality.

14.11.4.1 Romans 1:26-27. God inspired the words of Paul in Romans 1:26-27 and provided crucial information about homosexuality, homosexual behavior and homosexuals.

14.11.4.1.1 Degrading Passions. In Romans 1:26, God revealed that "degrading passions" ("πάθη ἀτιμίας") produce homosexual behavior. (Passions alone are not always evil, but Paul isolated "degrading" ("ἀτιμίας") passions as the problem. This same Greek word "degrading" ("ἀτιμίας") appears in the same form in only one other place in the New Testament, 2 Corinthians 6:8, where it is translated "dishonor." In the Romans text, God gave people over to their "degrading passions," which were already at work in them.) Those "degrading passions" arose in homosexuals. God did not create those "degrading passions," but condemned people for them. God opposed not only the homosexual behavior, but also the "degrading passions," underlying the homosexual behavior.

14.11.4.1.2 Natural Function. In Romans 1:27, Paul described homosexual behavior: men "abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another." First, notice that men "abandoned" the natural function of the woman. (Paul used the term ἀφέντες--an aorist active participle. Man took action to abandon the natural function of the woman. Exegetically, man made a conscious choice to abandon the natural function of the woman, as witnessed by the active voice. As an act of the will, biology does not compel the choice.) God created a natural, sexual function for the woman. God created all the physical aspects of sexuality and sex. He provided the organs, wired the nervous system, and then added biological systems inside the body to interact with many physical parts of our bodies involved in sex and sexuality. God created humans male and female, and joined them together as one male and one female in marriage. (See Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19: 4-5.)

14.11.4.1.3 Shameful. In Romans 1:27 Paul revealed that homosexual acts are "shameful." No matter how you try to slice and dice the words in the Bible about homosexuality, God described homosexuality as sinful and the acts of homosexuals as "shameful" and "deceitful." (Paul used the word "shameful" ("ἄσχημοσύνην") and "deceitful" ("πλάνης") (Romans 1:27).)

14.11.4.1.4 Summary of Romans 1:26-27. Therefore, the evidence from Romans 1:26-27 indicates that God opposes homosexuality, homosexual acts, and homosexuals. In those verses, God revealed that homosexuality results from a sinful, shameful choice to engage in sexual activity with people of the same sex. Anyone who claims that the Bible supports the notion that people are born homosexual ignores the [Biblical evidence](#). Homosexuality arises from people abandoning the natural function to perform shameful

acts. Likewise, God did not create a single homosexual, but each homosexual abandoned the natural function of the opposite sex, and gave themselves to their own degrading passions. (James revealed that God tempts no one, but each on is tempted by their own lusts, which, in turn, produce death (James 1:13-15).) As believers, we must put our trust in the promises of God and not the words of men. So, let us review the great promises of God that provide hope and life for all sinners, including homosexuals.

14.11.4.2 1 Corinthians. Paul confronted many of the spiritual problems at Corinth. Some of their sins concerned sexual matters.

14.11.4.2.1 Unrighteous. In 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Paul wrote: "Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God. Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, not adulterers, nor effeminate nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God." Things changed dramatically at the moment of individual salvation.

14.11.4.2.2 Sinners. God condemned homosexuals in the same way that He condemns drunkards, revilers, swindlers, and the other groups of sinners which Paul listed (1 Corinthians 6:9). Homosexuals are not a special group of sinners, but rather part of the larger groups of sinners who will not inherit the kingdom of God.

14.11.4.2.3 Unrighteous. God described all those sinners as "unrighteous." (Peter revealed that God keeps the unrighteous under punishment as they await the day of judgment (2 Peter 2:9).) In this case, God contrasted the righteous with the unrighteous. Only the righteous will inherit the kingdom of God. Who are the righteous? Paul explained the power of God to create new people, which Jesus described as "born-again" people. (In John 3:3, the Greek phrase for "born-again" ("γεννηθῆναι ἄνωθεν") may be better translated as "born from above".)

14.11.4.2.4 Such Were Some of You. Paul wrote: "such were some of you." (Paul used the Greek term "were" ("ἦτε") in the imperfect tense. As an imperfect, the term suggests continuous, past action. The people continued as homosexuals, indicating the lifestyle involved in homosexuality.) Those

people lived continuously as homosexuals doing homosexual things, before they received the free gift of salvation from the Lord Jesus Christ.

14.11.4.2.5 Salvation. Paul described people who were homosexuals, but they are no longer homosexuals. At the moment of salvation, each believer becomes a new creation in Christ; the old things have passed away, and new things have come (2 Corinthians 5:17.) Furthermore, at that same moment, each believer has been crucified with Christ; (Galatians 2:20) all people who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires (Galatians 5:24). Therefore, God revealed that homosexuals cease being homosexuals at the moment of salvation by faith alone. In the Bible, you are either a homosexual or you are a Christian; you cannot be both. So, when Christians believe homosexuals continue to be homosexuals after being born again, they have embraced error contrary to the Bible (whose words were breathed out by God). Christians may do homosexual acts, but they are no longer homosexuals in God's eyes.

14.11.4.2.6 New Creations. Likewise, some Christians erroneously teach that the best homosexuals can hope for in Christ is that they will still have homosexual urges, but, by the power of Christ, they can deny them. In contrast to that error, God taught that homosexuals become new creations, and their degrading passions have been crucified with Christ. Of course, believers still sin (1 John 1:8-10). The new creation, however, born of the seed of God, cannot sin (1 John 3:9). Every homosexual who received the free gift of eternal life by faith alone in Jesus Christ ceased to be a homosexual at the moment of salvation; without exception, no born-again person is a homosexual now, but some born-again believers used to be homosexuals. God created new people who are no longer homosexuals. Let us return to 1 Corinthians 6 to see in greater detail how God so radically and completely changes homosexuals.

14.11.4.2.7 Washed. God revealed how He transforms swindlers, revilers, homosexuals, and other people who become born-again believers (1 Corinthians 6:11). First, each believer is washed. (Paul used the term "washed" ("ἀπελούσασθε") in the passive voice. He emphasized the action and the result, not the subject of the verb. Even so, God alone (no middle voice here) washes people spiritually and so makes them spiritually clean so that they shine with God's righteousness.) The washing includes regeneration (Titus 3:5) and the removal of a guilty conscience (1 Peter 3:21).

Think of the washing here as made wholly new, including the removal of dirty unrighteousness.

14.11.4.2.8 Sanctified. Paul used the term "sanctified" to describe the spiritual cleansing of homosexuals. (Paul employed the term "sanctified" ("ἡγιασθητε") which comes from the root word to make holy--set apart for God's service.) In this instance, God not only cleansed the homosexual, but He also set apart the new believer for His use, particularly using the spiritual gift(s) bestowed upon the new believer. Homosexuals, like all other people, need to hear the promises of God applied to their lives. They can be washed spiritually, removing all the stains of sin. If their conscience has been hardened, and they accept salvation in Jesus, it can be cleansed and sanctified.

14.11.4.2.9 Justified. Paul wrote that each believer has been justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus and in the Spirit of our God. The term "justified" means to make just or right. (The term "justified" ("ἐδικαιώθητε") occurs in the aorist, passive, indicative form. In this case, the aorist tense stresses that the justification has been completed and remains. The passive voice focused upon the action, not the Actor. Only God can justify the unrighteous. Jesus was raised for our justification, sealing the triumph of love over sin. Jesus completed the work of atonement by dying on the cross for our sins and being raised from the dead.) Paul emphasized that justification takes place in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God. Jesus died on the cross for ours sins, and Jesus offered Himself through the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 9:14).

14.11.5 Transgender. Many sinful societies have the sinful notion that people can choose their gender. God said He created males and females (Genesis 1:27). They have many biological and spiritual differences, with different anatomies by gender. People promote "gender identification" and "gender choice" as part of their sinful desires to change God's biological and spiritual plans for males and females. God has different roles for males and females in the church and gender makes a difference from a functional standpoint (1 Timothy 2; 1 Peter 3; 1 Corinthians 14). From the standpoint of salvation, God draws no gender lines (Galatians 3:28). While people may have surgery and take drugs to change their appearance, they cannot change their DNA or spiritual make up which God created in each person. People seeking to change their gender have rejected the abundant life God has for each member of the family of God. Choosing gender often leads to

homosexual behavior because the person now acts upon sexual interest in people of the same sex. Gender transcends body parts and clothing because God created males and females in the image of God. All transgender activities permanently disqualify a male from holding any Church Office so long as the male persists in transgender activity or identifies as transgender or other descriptions contrary to how they were born male or female. Only saints born male by DNA can hold any Church Office.

14.11.5 Analysis of Homosexual Unions. God never joins a male and male in marriage or a female and female in marriage. In God's eyes, every homosexual union remains one more abomination man has created in sin. God loves to redeem all sinners, and is not willing for anyone to perish, but for all to come to repentance. Does homosexuality permanently disqualify a male from holding any Church Office? So long as the saint continues to practice homosexual behavior or identifies himself as a homosexual or transgender, the disqualification remains. No homosexual can hold any Church Office, just as no immoral male may hold a Church Office. Although the saint will no longer be a homosexual at the moment of salvation, considering himself homosexual or practicing homosexuality disqualifies that male from holding a Church Office. If a person becomes born again by Christ while already in a homosexual union, that person should immediately file for divorce, because God never considered that marriage acceptable in His eyes. It was always based upon immorality, just like taking foreign wives required divorce. Filing for divorce to remove oneself from the state-sponsored sin does not violate the commands against divorce, because God never joined a male and male together in marriage or a female and female in marriage. Such unions have always been an abomination in God's eyes and filing for divorce ends the unholy union to the glory of God.

- ◆ No person has been born homosexual.
- ◆ Marriage only means God joined one DNA male to one DNA female.
- ◆ God condemns all homosexual acts and homosexuality.
- ◆ God condemns all cross-dressing and transgender behaviors and choices.
- ◆ In God's eyes, all homosexual "marriages" are not marriages at all, because all homosexual unions are abominations in God's eyes.

♦ God loves to redeem homosexuals and does not wish for any of them to perish.

♦ At the moment of salvation, God cleanses, washes and sanctifies all homosexuals, so that they are no longer homosexuals, but new creatures in Christ. All the old things have passed away.

♦ Saints should immediately file in court to dissolve all homosexual "marriages" created under state law and which were never marriages in God's eyes. Therefore, such legal action does not constitute a divorce, because no marriage ever occurred in God's eyes.

♦ Until a male repents of the sin and dissolves the homosexual "marriage" in court and leaves that relationship, he remains permanently disqualified from holding a Church Office.

♦ So long as a male persists in any transgender identification or activity, he remains permanently disqualified from holding any Church Office.

14.12 Conclusion: Permanent Disqualification. Nothing permanently disqualifies a male from holding a Church Office, provided that he meets the qualifications described in the New Testament. Divorce always starts with hard-hearted sin and may result in adultery after divorce. A male saint who divorced his wife after his salvation may still hold a Church Office, provided that he has repented of his sin and received God's forgiveness. A male saint married to an unbeliever shall not be disqualified for having an unbelieving wife, provided he meets the other qualifications. No transgender or homosexuals are eligible to hold any Church Office until he leaves his sin and resumes life according to his birth DNA gender. All saints living in a homosexual "marriage" should dissolve the "marriage" in court immediately because it was never a marriage in God's eyes, but a continuing abomination. God promised us that if we leave the sin and the sinful community behind, so that we are no longer bound up with them, He will welcome us to Himself. All sin can be forgiven and we love the cleansing from God. Continuing in sin never makes grace abound. As saints we must all live by the Scriptures and love God with all our heart.

15

The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds



15.1 Shepherd: Basic Meaning. The term shepherd has a broad range of meaning in the New Testament. The term shepherd includes a person who serves as a guardian, leader, and slave. The deaconies in the church often apply to every saint and are performed by every saint. Some saints have special abilities and responsibilities. Therefore, the deaconies associated with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds are rarely exclusive to saints holding The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds. The Church Officers, elders and saints will often perform the same types of deaconies associated with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds. For a full discussion of The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds, see [Spiritual Gifts: Empowering Life Today](#).

15.2 The Church Office of Overseer and The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. Many believers mistakenly assume that the terms "overseer,

"shepherd" and "elder" mean the same thing. In some cases, shepherds promote themselves as the only "Elder" within a local assembly. Many people fail to understand the proper roles of "shepherds" and "elders" and "overseers," but they each have their unique duties in the church.

15.3 The Spiritual Gift of Shepherds. God bestows spiritual gifts as He desires (1 Corinthians 12:11, 18). Therefore, God decides who receives The Spiritual Gift of Shepherds, although the congregation may desire greater gifts (1 Corinthians 12:31; 14:1). In contrast, anyone may aspire to be a Church Overseer.

15.4 Aspiring To Be an Overseer. While God alone distributes The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds as He wills, any male Christian may aspire (ὀρέγεται) to hold the Church Office of Overseer (1 Timothy 3:1). Therefore, no one should confuse The Spiritual Gift of Shepherd with the Church Office of Overseer.

♦ Many people without The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds perform deaconies associated with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

♦ Just because you perform some deaconies does not mean you have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

♦ Only God decides who will receive The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

♦ Any one may aspire to be a Church Overseer, because it is not a spiritual gift, but a Church Office.

♦ People should never confuse The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherd with the Church Office of Overseer. People must distinguish spiritual gifts from Church Offices.

♦ Church Officers may hold a variety of spiritual gifts and the Church Office does not depend upon holding a particular spiritual gift.

16

Distinguishing Overseers, Elders, Deacons, and Shepherds



16.1 Holy Words: Elders, Overseers and Pastors. Many people wrongly equate the terms elder, overseer, and pastor. God revealed specific Holy Words associated with elders (πρεσβύτεροι), overseers (ἐπισκόποι) and shepherds, often referred to as pastors (ποιμένες--accusative). While duties may overlap among those groups, they are not all the same group and may be distinguished in the New Testament.

16.2 Distinguishing Church Offices from Spiritual Gifts. We must study the word of God to distinguish the Church Office of Overseer from The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds and from the elders of the congregation.

16.3 The New Testament Church Offices. In the New Testament, God revealed three church offices: Apostle, Overseer and Deacons (some people add the offices of prophet and high priest) and maybe more. [The Spiritual Gift of the Apostles](#) remains active in some deaconies, but the Office of Apostle has passed away because no one living today can meet the requirements to fill the Office of Apostle (Acts 1:21-22), except Jesus who remains the Apostle and High Priest of our confession (Hebrews 3:1). Shepherd is not an office in the church, and not all people holding the Church Office of Overseer have The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. Some elders possess different spiritual gifts, such as The [Spiritual Gift of the Teachers](#) or The [Spiritual Gift of Exhortation](#). Only males may hold church offices. Not all elders hold the Church Office of Overseer.

16.4 The Church Office of Deacons. Although all believers must deacon other believers and God, God sets some male saints into the Church Office of Deacons. They must meet spiritual qualifications to be set down in a spiritual deacony. Please keep in mind that the seven men in Acts 6:5 were men full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit. They were set down in a spiritual deacony of being in charge of the food deacony to the Hellenistic Jews and Hellenistic widows. Notice that we see no indication that any of those seven men ever served a single table. Instead, we do see that Stephen had a vital preaching deacony, which resulted in his martyrdom (Acts 7:1-60) and Philip (assuming it was the same man as in Acts 6:5) preached in Samaria (Acts 8:4-40; he was later known as Philip the Evangelist, (Acts 21:8-9)). So often today people have no idea what a deacon did in the New Testament. Among other spiritual activities, they were known as preachers and evangelists. For a fuller discussion of deacons, see [The Spiritual Gift of Deacony](#). In Philippians 1:1, Paul clearly distinguished the Church Office of Deacons from the Church Office of Overseers, just as Paul made the same distinction in 1 Timothy 3:1-17 (Church Office of Overseer) and 1 Timothy 3:8-13). Each office had its own qualifications, but they were not the same Church Office. Deacons were not appointed to serve the Pastor, the Apostles, or the elders. They were appointed to be in charge of particular deaconies and exercise their spiritual gifts in those particular deaconies.

16.5 The Church Office of Overseer. In Acts 20:28, Paul addressed a group of men from Ephesus as part of his farewell tour before leaving for Jerusalem. Paul knew that they would no longer see his face (Acts 20:25). Paul called the elders of the church at Ephesus and referred to that particular group of elders as Church Overseers. Those Church Overseers were men

looking over the church. Paul directed Titus to set down elders in every city in Crete, as Paul directed him (Titus 1:5). Some, not all, elders were set down into the Church Office of Overseer. Please take note that the term "elders" in the New Testament may refer to old men, forefathers, members of the Sanhedrin, and other uses. If you compare the term "overseer" in Titus 1:7 with the term "elder" in Titus 1:5, you may understand that some elders were set into the church to occupy the Church Office of Overseer. Not all elders occupy the Church Office of Overseer. Furthermore, the qualifications of the "overseer" in Titus 1:7-9 seem to be virtually identical to qualities of an "overseer" in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, especially when compared to the Church Office of Deacons, with its qualifications, listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. Therefore, we see that God sets some elders into the church as Church Overseers to shepherd the church. Overseers perform the work of shepherding, but they do not necessarily have The Spiritual Gift of Shepherding. As we saw in Acts 20:28, the work of overseers included acting as a shepherd to the church. Notice that shepherd is not an office, but male saints holding the Church Office of Overseer do the work of shepherding, along with others in the church.

16.6 The Duties of Church Overseers. God set down some elders into the Church Office of Overseer, but not all elders hold the Church Office of Overseer. The Church Overseer has specific functions. First, the Church Overseer had to "be on guard" ("προσέχετε") for (a) themselves and (b) for all the church of God (Acts 20:28). They had to be vigilant, watchful, careful. It conveys the sense of spiritual acuity in spiritual perception. Second, they must shepherd the church. Likewise, because all Church Overseers are elders, we should remember that Jesus instructed elders to shepherd the flock with eagerness, providing examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:1-4). The elders of the church perform the work of shepherding the church, but not all elders hold the Church Office of Overseer and not all elders have The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. Likewise, not every saint with The Spiritual Gift of Shepherd serves as an elder or holds the Church Office of Overseer. Timothy, for example, was never called an elder. Notice in Acts 20:28 that "shepherd" is not an office, but the Church Overseers perform the work shepherding the church. Therefore, the terms Church Overseer, elder, shepherd and the like should not be considered interchangeably because the Bible gave different meanings to those terms. See below for a fuller discussion of the duties of Church Overseers.

16.7 The Plurality of Elders. The local church in the New Testament had a group of elders, not just one elder. For example, in 1 Timothy 5:17, we read about the elders who lead (not rule) well. (See Appendix A attached to this study to understand that elders do not serve as rulers in the New Testament.) Those elders who lead well should be given double honor. Notice that the term "elders" ("πρεσβύτεροι") is plural and so indicates that each local assembly of believers should have a number of elders, not just one. Likewise, we see the plural of Church Overseers and Church Deacons in Philippians 1:1. Furthermore, we learn from 1 Timothy 5:17 that not all leading elders work hard at teaching and preaching. Remember not to equate the Church Office of Overseer with elder or The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. The term elder referred to a broad group of males in the church performing many spiritual functions. The New Testament knows nothing of any office of elder. We know that one qualification for holding the Church Office of Overseer is that the man must be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). When we combine 1 Timothy 5:17 with 1 Timothy 3:2, we see that although every Church Overseer must be able to teach, not every Church Overseer will work hard at teaching and preaching. Likewise, some elders lead and teach, but not all elders lead and teach. Consider The Spiritual Gift of the Leaders for a moment. In Romans 12:8, we read that "he who leads, with diligence." We see that "leaders" is a distinct spiritual gift. Hopefully, every group of elders at a local church has someone who has The Spiritual Gift of the Leader to provide guidance and vision for the future of the various deaconies. Notice that "leadership" is a distinct gift in the list of spiritual gifts (see the study of [The Spiritual Gift of The Leader](#)). In contrast to the one-man style of leadership prominent in many churches today, Jesus taught that the local assembly should have a plurality of preachers and teachers. The leadership of the church comes from a plurality of sources, including elders, church offices and men with specific spiritual gifts, all working in harmony. This plurality of leadership in the New Testament will safeguard against The Pastoral Heresy by limiting the desire to be the greatest among the flock. The Pastor will no longer be the sole focus of attention, and he may not be the only preacher in the local assembly. In fact, all the saints ideally will be known for their strong work of serving the local saints, and some of the elders will work hard at preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17).

16.8 The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds Distinguished. In Ephesians 4:11, we read about the distinct spiritual gifts of "shepherds" ("ποιμένας") and "teachers" ("διδασκάλους"). Some people may argue that the terms "shepherds" and "teachers" refer to the same individual. In

support, they often cite the Granville Sharp rule of New Testament Greek grammar holding that two nouns connected by "and" ("καί") refer to the same thing. The problem with this approach is that Granville Sharp limited his rule to singular nouns, not plural nouns as found here in Ephesians 4:11. Therefore, the Granville Sharp rule does not support equating "shepherds" with "teachers." So, not all shepherds are necessarily teachers. The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds differs from The [Spiritual Gift of The Teachers](#). Therefore, we may understand that not all shepherds are teachers. Yet, all Church Overseers should be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2), but this requirement does not mean that every Church Overseer has to have The Spiritual Gift of the Teachers. These distinct spiritual gifts help us understand the work of "shepherds," and why not all shepherds hold the Church Office of Overseer. We should be careful to remember that every elder must perform the work of a shepherd regarding the care of the flock, but not every elder has The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds, just like every elder does not have The [Spiritual Gift of The Teachers](#). Please recall, however, that the local assembly of all believers must carry out the work of deacony, using their spiritual gifts, and neither a single shepherd nor the elders perform all the work of deacony. Consider for a moment 1 Thessalonians 5:14. In that verse, Paul commanded the entire congregation of believers at Thessalonica to perform three deaconies to the other saints: (1) admonish the unruly; and (2) encourage the fainthearted; and (3) help the weak. In addition, all the saints must be patient with one another, especially when performing their deaconies. Therefore, the saints use their spiritual gifts to perform specialized and diverse deaconies within the church. The shepherds and teachers equip the saints for the work of performing their individual deaconies.

16.9 The Leadership of the Local Church. God described The Spiritual Gift of The Leaders (προϊστάμενος--present middle participle). (The usage of the term "leaders" (προϊστάμενος) helps us understand The Spiritual Gift of The Leaders, as described in this e-book. In 1 Timothy 5:17, we read that the elders who lead (προεστῶτες--perfect active participle, nominative masculine plural) well (καλῶς) are worthy of double honor. In Timothy 3:4 the Church Overseer must lead (προϊστάμενον--present middle participle, accusative masculine singular) well (καλῶς) his own children. In 1 Timothy 3:5 Paul warned that if a man does not how to lead (προστῆναι--aorist active infinitive) his own household then he will not care for the church. In 1 Timothy 3:12, Church Deacons must be good (καλῶς) leaders (προϊστάμενοι--present middle participle, nominative masculine plural) of their children. In

1 Thessalonians 5:12, Paul admonished the Thessalonians to the ones laboring in them and leading (προϊσταμένους--present middle participle, accusative masculine plural) them in the Lord and admonishing them. In Titus 3:8 Paul urged Titus to speak confidently to believers who will be leaders (προϊστασθαι--present middle infinitive) in good works.) The term "esteemed ones" ("ἡγουμένοις") of the flock deserve the obedience of the flock, because those esteemed ones keep watch over the souls of the flock, and the esteemed ones will give an account (Hebrews 13:17) (see Appendix B below to understand the translation (esteemed ones)).

16.10 Male and Female. God commands females to be silent in the churches; they are not permitted to speak (1 Corinthians 14:34). God based that command upon the creation of males and females. God created man first (1 Timothy 2:12), and man is the head of the woman (1 Corinthians 11:3). Furthermore, the woman was deceived about sin by the devil, and so fell into transgression; the man was not deceived by sin (1 Timothy 2:14). Therefore, God does not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet (1 Timothy 2:12). God did not limit these commands in 1 Timothy to husbands and wives, but rather to all women who make a claim to Godliness, who must receive instruction with entire submissiveness (compare 1 Corinthians 14:35-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11). Females may still serve as shepherds to women only, but females should never speak and must remain silent in the local church when adult males are present.

16.11 Seven Reasons To Distinguish Church Elders from Church Overseers. The failure to distinguish the different roles and of overseers, elders, and shepherds causes people to conclude wrongly that God used those terms interchangeably. Furthermore, people also fail to distinguish the Church Office of Overseer, which anyone may aspire to hold, from The Spiritual Gift of Shepherd, which only God bestows upon certain people. Finally, the term elder comes with a rich tradition from the Old Testament and the word covers many different people in the New Testament.

16.11.1 Different Words. God used different words to describe elders (πρεσβύτεροι) and overseers (ἐπισκόποι).

16.11.2 Old Testament Overseers. Overseers in the Old Testament were not all elders. Not all elders in the New Testament were put into the Church Office of Overseer.

16.22.3 Qualifications Given for Church Overseers, No Qualifications for Church Elders. Paul gave qualifications for overseers and never described any qualifications to be an elder.

16.11.4 Jerusalem Elders. The elders at Jerusalem were never called overseers, but every other church apparently had overseers. Apparently, the twelve apostles provided the oversight function in Jerusalem. Paul addressed Church Overseers and Church Deacons in his greeting to the Philippians.

16.11.5 Aspire To Be an Overseer. Paul taught that anyone could aspire to be an overseer, but never said the same thing about elders or shepherds.

16.11.6 Overseers Set Down or Hand Reached. Some elders are hand reached into the Church Office of Overseer. Some of the Ephesian elders were made Church Overseers by the Holy Spirit.

16.11.7 Overseers Hand Reached. The Holy Spirit set some elders into the Church Office of Overseer. Therefore, Titus 1:5-7 should be read in keeping with Acts 20:28ff.

Summary of Distinguishing Elders, Overseers, and Pastors

♦ Any one may aspire to be a Church Overseer, because it is not a spiritual gift, but a Church Office.

♦ People should never confuse The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherd with the Church Office of Overseer. People must distinguish spiritual gifts from Church Offices.

♦ Church Officers may hold a variety of spiritual gifts and the Church Office does not depend upon holding a particular spiritual gift.

♦ Church Overseers may or may not hold The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds nor The Spiritual Gift of Leadership because the Office of Church Overseer concerns specialized and particular spiritual duties.

♦ Church Officers may hold a variety of spiritual gifts and the Church Office does not depend upon holding a particular spiritual gift.

♦ Both Church Elders and Church Officers play important roles in every church.

♦ God provided detailed qualifications for Church Overseers and Church Deacons.

17

Conclusion



Many people confuse (1) Church Offices and spiritual gifts; and (2) ignore the plurality of elders in a local assembly; and (3) suppress the use of spiritual gifts in the church through their sinful understanding of church organization. The Church Officers, elders and the congregation all have vital roles to play in the church. Every spiritual gift needs to be active and the deacony of all spiritual gifts brings health and wellness to the body of Christ (the Church). Confusion and ignorance abound in the church today because people ignore the Scriptures and sinfully promote power structures in the church that supplant the deaconies and spiritual gifts God placed into the church through every member of the kingdom of God, just He willed. May Christians return to the Scriptures to search out the plans and purposes of God and how He structured the church as God the Son builds His church to the glory of God and God the Holy Spirit indwells the church both corporately and individually and the God the Father cleanses the church so that we may bear much fruit and glorify God.

HALLELUJAH !

Appendix A

New Testament Usage of the Term Elder

Verse	Text	Translation	Meaning	Point
Matthew 15:2	διὰ τί οἱ μαθηταί σου παραβαίνουσιν τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων; οὐ γὰρ νίπτονται τὰς χεῖρας [αὐτῶν] ὅταν ἄρτον ἐσθίωσιν.	“Why do Your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread.”	Tradition of the elders opposed Bible	Elders not believers
Matthew 16:21	Ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς δεικνύειν τοῖς μαθηταῖς αὐτοῦ ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀπελθεῖν καὶ πολλὰ παθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι.	From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.	Jesus to suffer from the elders and chief priests	Elders and Chief Priests make Jesus suffer
Matthew 21:23	καὶ ἐάν τις ὑμῖν εἴπῃ τι, ἐρεῖτε ὅτι ὁ κύριος αὐτῶν χρεῖαν ἔχει· εὐθύς δὲ ἀποστελεῖ αὐτούς.	When He entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, and said, “By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?”	Chief Priests and elders in the temple confront Jesus about authority	Chief Priests and elders ask about authority
Matthew 26:3	Τότε συνήχθησαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ εἰς τὴν αὐλὴν τοῦ ἀρχιερέως τοῦ λεγομένου Καϊάφα	Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas;	Chief Priests and elders of the people gathered in court of high priest	Elders of the people and chief priest gather to discuss Jesus
Matthew 26:47	Οἱ δὲ κρατήσαντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπήγαγον πρὸς Καϊάφαν τὸν ἀρχιερέα, ὅπου οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι συνήχθησαν.	While He was still speaking, behold, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a large crowd with swords and clubs, who came from the chief priests and elders of the people.	Crows with weapons came from the elders of the people and chief priests against Jesus	Elders and chief priests send people against Jesus
Matthew 26:57	Οἱ δὲ κρατήσαντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπήγαγον πρὸς Καϊάφαν τὸν ἀρχιερέα, ὅπου οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι συνήχθησαν.	Those who had seized Jesus led Him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together. Matthew 27:1	Seized Jesus and led Him to the high priest, scribes and elders were gathered together	Jesus brought before chief priests, scribes and elders
Matthew 27:1	Πρωΐας δὲ γενομένης συμβούλιον ἔλαβον πάντες οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τοῦ λαοῦ κατὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ὥστε θανατῶσαι αὐτόν·	Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death;	Chief priests and elders of the people conferred together	Chief priests and elders of the people conferred
Matthew 27:3	Τότε ἰδὼν Ἰούδας ὁ παραδιδούς αὐτόν ὅτι κατεκρίθη, μεταμεληθεὶς ἐστρεψεν τὰ τριάκοντα ἀργύρια τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ πρεσβυτέροις	Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,	Judas returned the silver to the chief priests and elders	Chief priests and elders paid Judas

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Verse	Text	Translation	Meaning	Point
Matthew 27:12	καὶ ἐν τῷ κατηγορεῖσθαι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων οὐδὲν ἀπεκρίνατο.	And while He was being accused by the chief priests and elders, He did not answer.	Chief priests and elders accused Jesus	Chief priests and elders accused Jesus
Matthew 27:20	Οἱ δὲ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἐπεισαν τοὺς ὄχλους ἵνα αἰτήσωνται τὸν Βαραββάν, τὸν δὲ Ἰησοῦν ἀπολέσωσιν.	But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to put Jesus to death.	Chief priest sand elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas	Chief priests and elder persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas
Matthew 27:41	ὁμοίως καὶ οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς ἐμπαίζοντες μετὰ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων ἔλεγον·	In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking Him and saying,	Chief priests and scribes and elders mocked Jesus	Chief priests and scribes and elders mocked Jesus
Matthew 28:12	καὶ συναχθέντες μετὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων συμβούλιόν τε λαβόντες ἀργύρια ἱκανὰ ἔδωκαν τοῖς στρατιώταις	And when they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers,	Chief priests and elders consulted together and gave money to the soldiers	Chief priests and elders gave money to soldiers
Mark 7:3	οἱ γὰρ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ πάντες οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐάν μὴ πυνγμῇ νίψωνται τὰς χεῖρας οὐκ ἐσθίουσιν, κρατοῦντες τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων,	(For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders;	Wash hands traditions of the elders	Elders impose traditions on Pharisees and people
Mark 7:5	καὶ ἐπερωτῶσιν αὐτὸν οἱ Φαρισαῖοι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς· διὰ τί οὐ περιπατοῦσιν οἱ μαθηταὶ σου κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, ἀλλὰ κοιναῖς χερσὶν ἐσθίουσιν τὸν ἄρτον;	The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, “Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?”	The disciples of Jesus did not follow the traditions of the elders	Disciples of Jesus did not follow the traditions of the elders
Mark 8:31	Καὶ ἤρξατο διδάσκειν αὐτοὺς ὅτι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ὑπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ μετὰ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ἀναστῆναι·	And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.	Jesus rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes	Jesus rejected by the elders, chief priests and scribes
Mark 11:27	Καὶ ἔρχονται πάλιν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, καὶ ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ περιπατοῦντος αὐτοῦ ἔρχονται πρὸς αὐτὸν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι	They came again to Jerusalem. And as He was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to Him,	In temple chief priests, scribes and elders came to Jesus	In temple chief priests, scribe and elders came to Jesus
Mark 14:43	Καὶ εὐθὺς ἔτι αὐτοῦ λαλοῦντος παραγίνεται Ἰούδας εἰς τῶν δώδεκα καὶ μετ’ αὐτοῦ ὄχλος μετὰ μαχαιρῶν καὶ ξύλων παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων καὶ τῶν γραμματέων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων.	Immediately while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs, who were from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.	Judas and men from the chief priest and scribes and elders came to arrest Jesus	Judas and men from the chief priest and scribes and elders came to arrest Jesus
Mark 14:53	Καὶ ἀπήγαγον τὸν Ἰησοῦν πρὸς τὸν ἀρχιερέα, καὶ συνέρχονται	They led Jesus away to the high priest; and all the chief	Led Jesus to high priest; all of the chief priests and	Chief priests, scribes and

Verse	Text	Translation	Meaning	Point
	πάντες οἱ ἄρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς.	priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together.	elders and scribes gathered together	elders judged Jesus
Mark 15:1	Καὶ εὐθὺς πρωΐ συμβούλιον ποιήσαντες οἱ ἄρχιερεῖς μετὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ὅλον τὸ συνέδριον, δῆσαντες τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἀπήνεγκαν καὶ παρέδωκαν Πιλάτῳ.	Early in the morning the chief priests with the elders and scribes and the whole sanhedrin, immediately held a consultation; and binding Jesus, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pilate.	Chief priests and the elders and scribes and the whole Sanhedrin	Sanhedrin composed of chief priests, scribes, elders and others
Luke 7:3	ἀκούσας δὲ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἀπέστειλεν πρὸς αὐτὸν πρεσβυτέρους τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐρωτῶν αὐτὸν ὅπως ἐλθὼν διασώσῃ τὸν δοῦλον αὐτοῦ.	When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders asking Him to come and save the life of his slave.	Centurion sent elders to ask Jesus for help	Centurion sent elders to ask Jesus for help
Luke 9:22	εἰπὼν ὅτι δεῖ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου πολλὰ παθεῖν καὶ ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἄρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι.	saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed and be raised up on the third day."	Jesus must be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes	
Luke 20:1	Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν μιᾷ τῶν ἡμερῶν διδάσκοντος αὐτοῦ τὸν λαὸν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ εὐαγγελιζομένου ἐπέστησαν οἱ ἄρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ γραμματεῖς σὺν τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις	On one of the days while He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders confronted Him,	Elders, chief priests and scribes all confronted Jesus in the temple as He was teaching	Elders, scribes and chief priests confronted Jesus
Luke 22:52	Εἶπεν δὲ Ἰησοῦς πρὸς τοὺς παραγενομένους ἐπ' αὐτὸν ἄρχιερεῖς καὶ στρατιῶν τοῦ ἱεροῦ καὶ πρεσβυτέρους· ὥς ἐπὶ ληστὴν ἐξήλθατε μετὰ μαχαίρων καὶ ξύλων;	Then Jesus said to the chief priests and officers of the temple and elders who had come against Him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as you would against a robber?"	Jesus asked the chief priests and officers of the temple and the elders why they came with clubs	Jesus confronted the chief priests, officers of the temple and scribes
Luke 22:66	Καὶ ὥς ἐγένετο ἡμέρα, συνήχθη τὸ πρεσβυτέριον τοῦ λαοῦ, ἄρχιερεῖς τε καὶ γραμματεῖς, καὶ ἀπήγαγον αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ συνέδριον αὐτῶν	When it was day, the gathering of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying,	συνήχθη--not council-- gathering only-- see John 18:2; Acts 13:44; noun form?	Elders of the people gathered with chief priests and scribes
Acts 4:5	Ἐγένετο δὲ ἐπὶ τὴν αὔριον συναχθῆναι αὐτῶν τοὺς ἄρχοντας καὶ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους καὶ τοὺς γραμματεῖς ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ,	On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem;	Rulers, elders and scribes gathered together-- συναχθῆναι	Rulers , elders, scribes gathered
Acts 4:8	Τότε Πέτρος πλησθεὶς πνεύματος ἁγίου εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτοὺς· ἄρχοντες τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ πρεσβύτεροι,	Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and of the people and elders,	Peter addressed rulers of the people and elders of the people	Rulers of the people and elders
Acts 4:23	Ἀπολυθέντες δὲ ἦλθον πρὸς τοὺς ἰδίους καὶ ἀπήγγειλαν ὅσα πρὸς αὐτοὺς οἱ ἄρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι εἶπαν.	When they had been released, they went to their own companions and reported all that the chief	Chief priests and elders had said	Peter reported what elders and chief priests had said

Verse	Text	Translation	Meaning	Point
		priests and the elders had said to them.		
Acts 6:12	συνεκίνησάν τε τὸν λαὸν καὶ τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους καὶ τοὺς γραμματεῖς καὶ ἐπιστάντες συνήρπασαν αὐτὸν καὶ ἤγαγον εἰς τὸ συνέδριον,	And they stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes, and they came up to him and dragged him away and brought him before the Council.	Stirred up the people, elders and the scribes	Stirred up people, elders and scribes
Acts 11:30	ὁ καὶ ἐποίησαν ἀποστείλαντες πρὸς τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους διὰ χειρὸς Βαρναβᾶ καὶ Σαύλου.	And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders.	Sent gift with Barnabas and Saul to the elders.	Gift sent to elders, not the apostles
Acts 14:23	χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς κατ' ἐκκλησίαν πρεσβυτέρους, προσευξάμενοι μετὰ νηστειῶν παρέθεντο αὐτοὺς τῷ κυρίῳ εἰς ὃν πεπιστεύκεισαν.	When they reached hands to them according to the church, elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.	Reached hands to them according to the church, elders	Reached hands according to the church for elders
Acts 15:2	γενομένης δὲ στάσεως καὶ ζητήσεως οὐκ ὀλίγης τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ τῷ Βαρναβᾷ πρὸς αὐτούς, ἔταξαν ἀναβαίνειν Παῦλον καὶ Βαρναβᾶν καὶ τινὰς ἄλλους ἐξ αὐτῶν πρὸς τοὺς ἀποστόλους καὶ πρεσβυτέρους εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ περὶ τοῦ ζητήματος τούτου.	And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and some others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue.	Paul and Barnabas sent to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders to decide doctrinal issue	Jerusalem apostles and elders resource for doctrinal disputes
Acts 15:4	παραγενόμενοι δὲ εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ παρεδέχθησαν ἀπὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, ἀνήγγειλάν τε ὅσα ὁ θεὸς ἐποίησεν μετ' αὐτῶν.	When they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them.	Elders at Jerusalem received Paul and Barnabas they reported to elders.	Paul and Barnabas reported to the elders in Jerusalem about God's activity
Acts 15:6	Συνήχθησάν τε οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἰδεῖν περὶ τοῦ λόγου τούτου.	The apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter.	Apostles and elders in Jerusalem gathered to look into doctrinal issues	Apostles and elders in Jerusalem gathered together to look into doctrinal issues
Acts 15:22	Τότε ἔδοξεν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐκλεξαμένους ἄνδρας ἐξ αὐτῶν πέμψαι εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν σὺν τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ Βαρναβᾷ, Ἰούδαν τὸν καλούμενον Βαρσαββᾶν καὶ Σιλᾶν, ἄνδρας ἡγουμένους ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς,	Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brethren,	Seemed good to the apostles and elders, with whole church to choose men	Seemed good to the apostles and elders, with whole church to choose men

Verse	Text	Translation	Meaning	Point
Acts 15:23	γράψαντες διὰ χειρὸς αὐτῶν· Οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἀδελφοὶ τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Ἀντιόχειαν καὶ Συρίαν καὶ Κιλικίαν ἀδελφοῖς τοῖς ἐξ ἐθνῶν χαίρειν.	and they sent this letter by them, "The apostles and the elders, brothers, to the brethren in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the Gentiles, greetings.	Apostles and elders, brothers	Apostles and elders, brethren
Acts 16:4	Ὡς δὲ διεπορεύοντο τὰς πόλεις, παρεδίδοσαν αὐτοῖς φυλάσσειν τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων τῶν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις.	Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe.	Apostles and elders who in Jerusalem	Apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem
Acts 20:17	Ἀπὸ δὲ τῆς Μιλήτου πέμψας εἰς Ἔφεσον μετεκαλέσατο τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας.	From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church.	Paul sent to Ephesian elders of the church	Elders of the church
Acts 21:18	Τῇ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ εἰσήει ὁ Παῦλος σὺν ἡμῖν πρὸς Ἰάκωβον, πάντες τε παρεγένοντο οἱ πρεσβύτεροι.	And the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.	James and all the elders were present	James and all the elders present
Acts 22:5	ὥς καὶ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς μαρτυρεῖ μοι καὶ πᾶν τὸ πρεσβυτέριον, παρ' ὧν καὶ ἐπιστολὰς δεξάμενος πρὸς τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς εἰς Δαμασκὸν ἐπορευόμην, ἄξων καὶ τοὺς ἐκεῖσε ὄντας δεδεμένους εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἵνα τιμωρηθῶσιν.	as also the high priest and all the elders can testify. From them I also received letters to the brethren, and started off for Damascus in order to bring even those who were there to Jerusalem as prisoners to be punished.	The high priest and all the elders (noun) see Luke 22:66 only two times	The high priest and elders assembled
Acts 23:14	οἵτινες προσελθόντες τοῖς ἀρχιερεῦσιν καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις εἶπαν· ἀναθέματι ἀνεθεματίσαμεν ἑαυτοὺς μηδενὸς γεύσασθαι ἕως οὗ ἀποκτείνωμεν τὸν Παῦλον.	They came to the chief priests and the elders and said, "We have bound ourselves under a solemn oath to taste nothing until we have killed Paul.	Chief priests and elders meet men under oath to kill Paul	Chief priests and elders
Acts 24:1	Μετὰ δὲ πέντε ἡμέρας κατέβη ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς Ἀνανίας μετὰ πρεσβυτέρων τινῶν καὶ ῥήτορος Τερτύλλου τινός, οἵτινες ἐνεφάνισαν τῷ ἡγεμόνι κατὰ τοῦ Παύλου.	After five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders, with an attorney named Tertullus, and they brought charges to the governor against Paul.	Ananias and some elders to Caesarea	Ananias and some elders came to prosecute Paul
Acts 25:15	περὶ οὗ γενομένου μου εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἐνεφάνισαν οἱ ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι τῶν Ἰουδαίων αἰτοῦμενοι κατ' αὐτοῦ καταδίκεν.	and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews brought charges against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.	Chief priests and elders of the Jews brought charges against Paul	Chief priests and elders brought charges
1 Timothy 5:17	Οἱ καλῶς προεστῶτες πρεσβύτεροι διπλῆς τιμῆς ἀξιούσθωσαν, μάλιστα οἱ	The elders who lead well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially	Elders lead, not rule	Elders lead, not rule

Verse	Text	Translation	Meaning	Point
	κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ καὶ διδασκαλίᾳ.	those who work hard at preaching and teaching.		
1 Timothy 5:19	κατὰ πρεσβυτέρου κατηγορίαν μὴ παραδέχου, ἐκτὸς εἰ μὴ ἐπὶ δύο ἢ τριῶν μαρτύρων.	Do not receive an accusation against an elder except on the basis of two or three witnesses.	Accusations against elder	Accusations against elder
Titus 1:5	Τοῦτου χάριν ἀπέλιπόν σε ἐν Κρήτῃ, ἵνα τὰ λείποντα ἐπιδιωρῶσῃ καὶ καταστήσῃς κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτέρους, ὡς ἐγὼ σοι διεταξάμην,	For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and set down elders in every city as I directed you,	Set down elders in every city	Set down elders in every city as Paul directed him see Old Testament practice
James 5:14	ἀσθενεῖ τις ἐν ὑμῖν, προσκαλεσάσθω τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ προσευξάσθωσαν ἐπ' αὐτόν ἀλείψαντες αὐτόν ἐλαίῳ ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου.	Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;	Call for elders of the church	Every church had elders
1 Peter 5:1	Πρεσβυτέρους τοὺς ἐν ὑμῖν παρακαλῶ ὁ συμπρεσβύτερος καὶ μάρτυς τῶν τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθημάτων, ὁ καὶ τῆς μελλούσης ἀποκαλύπτεσθαι δόξης κοινωνός.	Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,	Fellow elder to elders , compare younger men	Fellow elders, compare younger men
1 Peter 5:5	ὁμοίως, νεώτεροι, ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέροις· πάντες δὲ ἀλλήλοις τὴν ταπεινοφροσύνην ἐγκομβώσασθε, ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὑπερηφάνους ἀντιτάσσεται, ταπεινοῖς δὲ δίδωσιν χάριν.	You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.	Younger men submit to elders	Younger men submit to elders
2 John 1:1	Ὁ πρεσβύτερος ἐκλεκτῇ κυρίᾳ καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις αὐτῆς, οὓς ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ, καὶ οὐκ ἐγὼ μόνος ἀλλὰ καὶ πάντες οἱ ἐγνωκότες τὴν ἀλήθειαν,	The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth,	Elder to chosen lady	Elder to chosen lady
3 John 1:1	Ὁ πρεσβύτερος Γαίῳ τῷ ἀγαπητῷ, ὃν ἐγὼ ἀγαπῶ ἐν ἀληθείᾳ.	The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.	Elder to chose lady	Elder to chosen lady
Revelation 4:4	Καὶ κυκλόθεν τοῦ θρόνου θρόνους εἴκοσι τέσσαρες, καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς θρόνους εἴκοσι τέσσαρας πρεσβυτέρους καθημένους περιβεβλημένους ἐν ἱματίοις λευκοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν στεφάνους χρυσοῦς.	Around the throne were twenty-four thrones; and upon the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white garments, and golden crowns on their heads.	Twenty-four elders upon twenty four thrones	Twenty-four elders
Revelation 4:10	Πεσοῦνται οἱ εἴκοσι τέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι ἐνώπιον τοῦ καθημένου ἐπὶ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ	the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will	Twenty-four elders fall down	Twenty-four elders

Verse	Text	Translation	Meaning	Point
	προσκυνήσουσιν τῷ ζῶντι εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων καὶ βαλοῦσιν τοὺς στεφάνους αὐτῶν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου λέγοντες·	worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying,		
Revelation 5:5	καὶ εἷς ἐκ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων λέγει μοι· μὴ κλαῖε, ἰδοὺ ἐνίκησεν ὁ λέων ὁ ἐκ τῆς φυλῆς Ἰούδα, ἡ ρίζα Δαβὶδ, ἀνοῖξαι τὸ βιβλίον καὶ τὰς ἐπτὰ σφραγίδας αὐτοῦ.	and one of the elders said to me, “Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals.”	One of twenty-four elders?	One of twenty-four elders?
Revelation 5:6	Καὶ εἶδον ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων καὶ ἐν μέσῳ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ἄρνιον ἑστηκός ὡς ἐσφαγμένον ἔχων κέρατα ἐπτὰ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐπτὰ οἳ εἰσιν τὰ [ἐπτὰ] πνεύματα τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεσταλμένοι εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν.	And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth.	Throne, living creatures, the elders	Throne, living creatures, elders
Revelation 5:8	Καὶ ὅτε ἔλαβεν τὸ βιβλίον, τὰ τέσσαρα ζῶα καὶ οἱ εἴκοσι τέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι ἔπεσαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ ἁρνίου ἔχοντες ἑκάστος κιθάραν καὶ φιάλας χρυσᾶς γεμούσας θυμιμάτων, αἱ εἰσιν αἱ προσευχαὶ τῶν ἁγίων,	When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.	Living creatures and 24 elders fell down	Living creatures and 24 elders fell down
Revelation 5:11	Καὶ εἶδον, καὶ ἤκουσα φωνὴν ἁγγέλων πολλῶν κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν ζώων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, καὶ ἦν ὁ ἀριθμὸς αὐτῶν μυριάδες μυριάδων καὶ χιλιάδες χιλιάδων	Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands,	Many angels around throne and living creatures and the elders	Many angels around throne and living creatures and the elders
Revelation 5:14	καὶ τὰ τέσσαρα ζῶα ἔλεγον· ἁμήν. καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἔπεσαν καὶ προσεκύνησαν.	And the four living creatures kept saying, “Amen.” And the elders fell down and worshipped.	Elders fell down and worshipped	Elders fell down and worshipped
Revelation 7:11	Καὶ πάντες οἱ ἄγγελοι εἰστήκεισαν κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων καὶ ἔπεσαν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου ἐπὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θεῷ	And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,	Angels, the elders, and the four living creatures	Angels, the elders, and the four living creatures
Revelation 7:13	Καὶ ἀπεκρίθη εἷς ἐκ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων λέγων μοι· οὗτοι οἱ περιβεβλημένοι τὰς στολὰς τὰς λευκάς τίνες εἰσιν καὶ πόθεν ἦλθον;	Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are	One elder answered	One elder answered

Verse	Text	Translation	Meaning	Point
		they, and where have they come from?"		
Revelation 11:16	Καὶ οἱ εἴκοσι τέσσαρες πρεσβύτεροι [οἱ] ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ καθήμενοι ἐπὶ τοῖς θρόνοις αὐτῶν ἔπεσαν ἐπὶ τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θεῷ	And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God,	24 elders sat on thrones before God fell and worshipped	24 elders sat on thrones before God fell and worshipped
Revelation 14:3	καὶ ᾄδουσιν [ὡς] ᾠδὴν καινὴν ἐνώπιον τοῦ θρόνου καὶ ἐνώπιον τῶν τεσσάρων ζώων καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων, καὶ οὐδεὶς ἐδύνατο μαθεῖν τὴν ᾠδὴν εἰ μὴ αἱ ἑκατὸν τεσσαράκοντα τέσσαρες χιλιάδες, οἱ ἡγορασμένοι ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς.	And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the one hundred and forty-four thousand who had been purchased from the earth.	Sang new song before the throne and the four living creatures and the elders	Sang new song before the throne and the four living creatures and the elders
Revelation 19:4	καὶ ἔπεσαν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι οἱ εἴκοσι τέσσαρες καὶ τὰ τέσσαρα ζῶα καὶ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θεῷ τῷ καθημένῳ ἐπὶ τῷ θρόνῳ λέγοντες· ἀμήν ἁλληλουϊά.	And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!"	24 elders and four living creatures fell	24 elders and four living creatures fell
James 5:14	καὶ τὰ τέσσαρα ζῶα ἔλεγον· ἀμήν. καὶ οἱ πρεσβύτεροι ἔπεσαν καὶ προσεκύνησαν.	Is anyone among you sick? Then he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;	Sick to call for the elders	Sick to call for the elders

Appendix B

The Use of ἡγέομαι in the New Testament

Verse	Text	Translation	Description	Meaning
Acts 26:2	Περὶ πάντων ὧν ἐγκαλοῦμαι ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων, βασιλεῦ Ἀγρίππα, ἡγῆμαι ἐμαυτὸν μακάριον ἐπὶ σοῦ μέλλον σήμερον ἀπολογεῖσθαι	“In regard to all the things of which I am accused by the Jews, I esteem myself blessed, King Agrippa, that I am about to make my defense before you today;	Perfect Middle/Passive Indicative, First Singular	I esteem myself blessed
Philippians 3:7	[Ἀλλ’] ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἡγῆμαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν.	But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have esteemed as loss for the sake of Christ.	Perfect Middle/Passive Indicative, First Singular	I have esteemed
2 Corinthians 9:5	ἀναγκαῖον οὖν ἡγησάμην παρακαλέσαι τοὺς ἀδελφούς, ἵνα προέλθωσιν εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ προεπηγγελμένην εὐλογίαν ὑμῶν, ταύτην ἐτοιμὴν εἶναι οὕτως ὡς εὐλογίαν καὶ μὴ ὡς πλεονεξίαν.	Therefore, I esteemed necessary to urge the brethren that they would go on ahead to you and arrange beforehand your previously promised bountiful gift, so that the same would be ready as a bountiful gift and not affected by covetousness.	Aorist Middle Indicative, First Singular	I esteemed
Philippians 2:25	Ἀναγκαῖον δὲ ἡγησάμην Ἐπαφρόδιτον τὸν ἀδελφὸν καὶ συνεργὸν καὶ συστρατιώτην μου, ὑμῶν δὲ ἀπόστολον καὶ λειτουργὸν τῆς χρείας μου, πέμψαι πρὸς ὑμᾶς.	Then I esteemed necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need;	Aorist Middle Indicative, First Singular	I esteemed necessary
Hebrews 10:29	πόσῳ δοκεῖτε χεῖρονος ἀξιωθήσεται τιμωρίας ὁ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ θεοῦ καταπατήσας καὶ τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης κοινὸν ἡγησάμενος, ἐν ᾧ ἡγιασθῇ, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς χάριτος ἐνυβρίσας;	How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and having esteemed common the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?	Aorist Middle Participle, Nominative Masculine Singular	Having esteemed
Hebrews 11:26	μεῖζονα πλοῦτον ἡγησάμενος τῶν Αἰγύπτου θησαυρῶν τὸν ὀνειδισμόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ· ἀπέβλεπεν γὰρ εἰς τὴν μισθαποδοσίαν.	esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.	Aorist Middle Participle, Nominative Masculine Singular	Esteeming the reproach
James 1:2	Πᾶσαν χαρὰν ἡγήσασθε, ἀδελφοί μου, ὅταν πειρασμοῖς περιτέσητε ποικίλοις,	Esteem it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.	Aorist Middle Indicative, Second Plural	Esteem it all joy
Philippians 2:6	ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ,	who, although He existed in the form of God, did not esteem equality with God a thing to be grasped,	Aorist Middle Indicative, Third Singular	Esteem equality
1 Timothy 1:12	Χάριν ἔχω τῷ ἐνδυναμώσαντί με Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ	I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me,	Aorist Middle Indicative, Third Singular	Esteemed me faithful

Verse	Text	Translation	Description	Meaning
	ἡμῶν, ὅτι πιστὸν με ἡγήσατο θέμενος εἰς διακονίαν	because He esteemed me faithful, putting me into service,	Singular	
Hebrews 11:11	Πίστει καὶ αὐτὴ Σάρρα στεῖρα δύναμιν εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος ἔλαβεν καὶ παρὰ καιρὸν ἡλικίας, ἐπεὶ πιστὸν ἡγήσατο τὸν ἐπαγγειλάμενον	By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she esteemed Him faithful who had promised.	Aorist Middle Indicative, Third Singular	She esteemed Him
1 Thessalonians 5:13	καὶ ἡγεῖσθαι αὐτοὺς ὑπερεκπερισσοῦ ἐν ἀγάπῃ διὰ τὸ ἔργον αὐτῶν. εἰρηνεύετε ἐν ἑαυτοῖς.	and that you esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another.	Present Middle/Passive Infinitive	Estimate them highly
2 Thessalonians 3:15	καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐχθρὸν ἡγεῖσθε, ἀλλὰ νουθετεῖτε ὡς ἀδελφόν	Yet do not esteem him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.	Present Middle/Passive Imperative, Second Plural	Do not esteem him
2 Peter 3:15	καὶ τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν μακροθυμίαν σωτηρίαν ἡγεῖσθε, καθὼς καὶ ὁ ἀγαπητὸς ἡμῶν ἀδελφὸς Παῦλος κατὰ τὴν δοθείσαν αὐτῷ σοφίαν ἐγραψε ὑμῖν,	and esteem the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,	Present Middle/Passive Imperative, Second Plural	Estimate the patience
1 Timothy 6:1	Ὅσοι εἰσὶν ὑπὸ ζυγὸν δοῦλοι, τοὺς ἰδίους δεσπότας πάσης τιμῆς ἀξίους ἡγεῖσθωσαν, ἵνα μὴ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ ἡ διδασκαλία βλασφημηται	All who are under the yoke as slaves esteem their own masters as worthy of all honor so that the name of God and our doctrine will not be spoken against.	Present Middle/Passive Imperative, Third Singular	Estimate their own
Philippians 3:8	ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω	And therefore indeed and I esteem all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and esteem them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ	Present Middle/Passive Indicative, First Singular	I estimate all things
Philippians 3:8	ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω	And therefore indeed and I esteem all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and esteem them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ	Present Middle/Passive Indicative, First Singular	Estimate them but rubbish
2 Peter 1:13	δίκαιον δὲ ἡγοῦμαι, ἐφ' ὅσον εἰμὶ ἐν τούτῳ τῷ σκηνώματι, διεγείρειν ὑμᾶς ἐν ὑπομνήσει	I esteem it right, as long as I am in this earthly dwelling, to stir you up by way of reminder,	Present Middle/Passive Indicative, First Singular	I estimate it right
Hebrews 13:7	Μνημονεύετε τῶν ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν, οἵτινες ἐλάλησαν ὑμῖν	Remember the esteemed ones of you, who spoke to you the	Present Middle/Passive	Remember the

Verse	Text	Translation	Description	Meaning
	τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ, ὧν ἀναθεωροῦντες τὴν ἐκβασιν τῆς ἀναστροφῆς μιμεῖσθε τὴν πίστιν.	word of the God, of whom,	Participle, Genitive Masculine Plural	esteemed ones
Philippians 2:3	μηδὲν κατ' ἐριθείαν μηδὲ κατὰ κενοδοξίαν ἀλλὰ τῇ ταπεινοφροσύνῃ ἀλλήλους ἡγούμενοι ὑπερέχοντας ἑαυτῶν,	Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of esteem one another as more important than yourselves;	Present Middle/Passive Participle, Nominative Masculine Plural	Esteem one another
2 Peter 2:13	ἀδικοῦμενοι μισθὸν ἀδικίας ἡδονὴν ἡγοῦμενοι τὴν ἐν ἡμέρᾳ τρυφήν, σπῖλοι καὶ μῶμοι ἐντροφῶντες ἐν ταῖς ἀπάταις αὐτῶν συνεωχούμενοι ὑμῖν,	suffering wrong as the wages of doing wrong. They esteem it a pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are stains and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, as they carouse with you,	Present Middle/Passive Participle, Nominative Masculine Plural	They esteem it
Hebrews 13:17	Πείθεσθε τοῖς ἡγουμένοις ὑμῶν καὶ ὑπέκτετε, αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀγρυπνοῦσιν ὑπὲρ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν ὡς λόγον ἀποδώσοντες, ἵνα μετὰ χαρᾶς τοῦτο ποιῶσιν καὶ μὴ στενάζοντες· ἀλυστελεῖς γὰρ ὑμῖν τοῦτο	Obey your esteemed ones and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.	Present Middle/Passive Participle, Dative Masculine Plural	Obey your esteemed ones
Acts 7:10	καὶ ἐξέλιτο αὐτὸν ἐκ πασῶν τῶν θλίψεων αὐτοῦ καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ χάριν καὶ σοφίαν ἐναντίον Φαραὼ βασιλέως Αἰγύπτου καὶ κατέστησεν αὐτὸν ἡγούμενον ἐπ' Αἴγυπτον καὶ [ἐφ'] ὅλον τὸν οἶκον αὐτοῦ.	and rescued him from all his afflictions, and granted him favor and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he set down him esteemed one over Egypt and all his household.	Present Middle/Passive Participle, Accusative Masculine Plural	He set down him esteemed one
Matthew 2:6	καὶ σὺ Βηθλέεμ, γῆ Ἰούδα, οὐδαμῶς ἐλαχίστη εἰ ἐν τοῖς ἡγεμόσιν Ἰούδα· ἐκ σοῦ γὰρ ἐξελεύσεται ἡγούμενος, ὅστις ποιμανεῖ τὸν λαόν μου τὸν Ἰσραήλ.	‘AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH; FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH AN ESTEEMED ONE WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.’”	Present Middle/Passive Participle, Nominative Masculine Singular	Come forth Esteemed One
Luke 22:26	ὁμεῖς δὲ οὐχ οὕτως, ἀλλ' ὁ μείζων ἐν ὑμῖν γινέσθω ὡς ὁ νεώτερος καὶ ὁ ἡγούμενος ὡς ὁ διακονῶν	But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the esteemed one like the servant.	Present Middle/Passive Participle, Nominative Masculine Singular	Esteemed one like a deacon
Acts 14:12	ἐκάλουν τε τὸν Βαρναβᾶν Δία, τὸν δὲ Παῦλον Ἑρμῆν, ἐπειδὴ αὐτὸς ᾤν ὁ ἡγούμενος τοῦ λόγου	And they began calling Barnabas, Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the esteemed speaker.	Present Middle/Passive Participle, Nominative Masculine Singular	Esteemed speaker

Verse	Text	Translation	Description	Meaning
Acts 15:22	Τότε ἔδοξεν τοῖς ἀποστόλοις καὶ τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις σὺν ὅλῃ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ ἐκλεξαμένους ἄνδρας ἐξ αὐτῶν πέμψαι εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν σὺν τῷ Παύλῳ καὶ Βαρναβᾶ, Ἰούδαν τὸν καλούμενον Βαρσαββᾶν καὶ Σιλᾶν, ἄνδρας ἡγουμένους ἐν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς,	Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas--Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, esteemed men among the brethren,	Present Middle/Passive Participle Accusative Masculine Plural	Esteemed men
Hebrews 13:24	Ἀσπάσασθε πάντας τοὺς ἡγουμένους ὑμῶν καὶ πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους. Ἀσπάζονται ὑμᾶς οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας	Greet all of your esteemed ones and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.	Present Middle/Passive Participle Accusative Masculine Plural	Esteemed ones
2 Peter 3:9	οὐ βραδύνει κύριος τῆς ἐπαγγελίας, ὥς τινες βραδύτητα ἡγοῦνται, ἀλλὰ μακροθυμεῖ εἰς ὑμᾶς μὴ βουλόμενός τινας ἀπολέσθαι ἀλλὰ πάντας εἰς μετάνοιαν χωρῆσαι.	The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some esteem slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance	Present Middle/Passive Indicative, Third Plural	Some esteem slowness