

A Plurality of Elders

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Key Truth: God expects the Church to be led by faithful men who shepherd the flock of God with the mind of Christ under the guidance of his Spirit-breathed Word.

What does normal spiritual leadership in the Church look like – the kind of leadership that’s expected? More than simply a pattern laid out by the early church, normal spiritual leadership in the church is described quite often in the Scriptures. The Bible is clear that there should be official, loving, Christ-like leadership in the church, but there’s no prescription about *how many* leaders there should be. Yet, the Bible describes a plurality (more than one) of leaders in the Church – those whom we call Elders.

DISCUSS

Read **Acts 20:17-28** and discuss with the group a statement or concept that stood out to you or impacted you in the sermon entitled “**A Plurality of Elders.**”

DIG IN

1. Official Leadership

Read 1 Timothy 3:1. In what ways is the role of overseer an office (an official position)?

Considering the three words used for elder (overseer, elder, shepherd), which one do you think best reflects the position? In what ways do elders in the church carry out the tasks associated with these words?

Read Acts 14:23. Why is it important that the selection or appointment of elders to their office be accompanied by prayer and fasting?

2. Shared Leadership

Do you agree that the Bible prescribes multiple elders/leaders in the church? Why or why not?

What are the benefits of shared leadership in the church?

3. Accountable Leadership

Two whom are leaders accountable in the church? Why?

In what ways are elders ultimately accountable to God (see v. 28; Hebrews 13:17; James 3:1)?

In what ways does shared leadership contribute to this accountability?

4. Exemplary Leadership

In what specific ways can elders be examples to the flock (see v. 28; 1 Peter 5:1-3; 1 Timothy 4:12)?

DO

What lessons do you learn from these verses that you will take with you throughout the coming week?