

Study On The Eldership By The Shepherds: **The Heart Of An Elder**
January 30, 2011 by Bill Stuart

Previous sessions: (including *some* of the scriptures cited)

- John discussed “the qualifications” or **qualities** of an elder.
 - I Timothy 3: 1-7
 - Titus 1: 5-9
 - I Peter 5:1-4
 - Acts 20:28
 - Lancelot discussed the **role** of the elder
 - Numbers 27:17
 - Ecclesiastes 12:11
 - Jeremiah 10:21
 - Ezekiel 34:2-8; Acts 20:25-35
 - Ezekiel 34:16
 - I Peter 5:1-4
 - Revelation 7:17
 - Jerry discussed a **practical life of an elder**
 - Ephesians 4:11-13
 - 1 Timothy 3:1-7
 - Titus 1:6-9
1. These scriptures focus on men that have the **qualities of a spiritual leader**, the **experience of raising a family**, and the **heart of a servant of the Lord**.
 2. The **role** of the elder in the scriptures is to
 - a. **Strengthen** the church, **encourage** by sound doctrine, and **refute** false teachers (Titus 1:5ff)
 - b. Charged to **keep watch** over the flock, to **shepherd** them, and **guard them** from deviating from the truth (Acts 20:13ff)
 3. The life of the shepherd is one of **prayer, faith in practice, holy** and **open** to God’s leading. **Deep in the Word** seeking truth. **Teaching** and **loving others** with the gifts God has provided.

The Heart of an Elder

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| <input type="checkbox"/> This service requires the heart of a servant – seasoned in the fire of service | <input type="checkbox"/> Wise and a successful family man – others look to him for help and advice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serving because of a love for God | <input type="checkbox"/> A “one-woman kind of man” |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working through the power of the Holy Spirit | <input type="checkbox"/> Participates in God’s healing process for sick and injured Christians |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Humble yet Bold! | <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies and supports weak disciples |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knows and practices Bible teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> Patient and kind building others up with sincere praise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Devoted to worship and prayer | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministers with kindness and gentleness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Constantly seeking the Lord’s will | <input type="checkbox"/> Leads by example – is out front |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Generous with his time and possessions | <input type="checkbox"/> Quick to listen – slow to speak |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hard-working - 1 Thess. 5:12,13 | |

Shepherds Working Together

1. Serving under their head elder – the Lord Jesus
2. Called, blessed and appointed by God's Holy Spirit
"Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers." Acts 20:28)
3. Bound by a common purpose
"So Christ himself gave... the pastors... to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up... and become mature..." (Ephesians 4:11ff)
4. Little room for selfish worldly patterns – instead the unity of the Spirit
5. Working as a team. The "authority" is in the eldership – not each elder.
6. Before decisions – they seek God's leading through prayer and fasting.
7. Constantly tested by their service – sometimes failing
8. Seeing God work through people to advance His Church
9. Focus: more love for people than for "running the church."
10. Gathering around the sick and dying "anointing them with oil"
"Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord." (James 5:14)
11. Counseling those in sin, with marital problems, with crisis of faith, with illness, with families that have members who don't know the Lord.
12. Seeking and receiving back those who have lost their way.
"...If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish." (Matt.18:12ff)

Nominees: do you feel inadequate for this task? So do all elders!

We cannot afford to lean on our own wisdom and strength but have to **put our trust in God.**

Members evaluating those candidates that go forward: look for maturity in the faith – not perfection. **Give them grace** just as the Father in heaven has shown to you.

Younger men & women – **prepare now so that God can use you** when He is ready!

Questions about serving as an elder?

Resources: The current shepherds, men who have served this congregation as elders in the past and men who have served as elders in other congregations of the Lord's people.

<http://www.brooks.org/Brooks/Classes/elders/index.html>