

## Lesson 7

# Two Offices: Bishop and Deacon

Philippians 1:1. There are only two offices in the Church: Bishop and Deacon. The office of Bishop is for the purpose of leading and feeding the church. The office of the Deacon is for the purpose of providing various temporal services to the church to assist the Bishops.

There are three terms used to describe this leadership office in the N. T., these terms are-- *Bishop, Elder, and Pastor.*

Bishop refers to the office (1 Tim. 3:1). Office does not refer to the room, but it is an acknowledgment of his position.

Bishop means “overseer”. In this role he oversees and administrates the ministries of the church. Anything and everything that happens in the church is to be under his oversight (1 Pe. 5:2). We also see the role of pastor in verse 3.

Pastor describes the role of “shepherding”. The shepherd’s role is to lead, feed, find and protect the sheep.

- A Shepherd leads (Ps 23:2). A primary way that a Pastor is to do this is by his example (I Tim. 4:12).
- A shepherd (pastor) feeds (I Pet. 5:5, Jn. 21:16). One of the ways this is accomplished is by his labor in the word (1 Tim. 5:17).
- The shepherd finds sheep (Lk 19:10).
- The shepherd protects the sheep (Ps. 23:4, Rom. 16:17, Phil. 3:17, Acts 20).

The third title is Elder. This term refers to his spiritual maturity. We see this term used interchangeably with bishop and pastor in Acts 20 and in I Peter 5.

The qualifications for the Bishop and Elders are seen in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (where Bishop and Elder are used interchangeably). When the qualifications are examined, it is clear that the pastors are not to be newly saved or immature Christians. They are to be sound and well established in the faith.

Another point of interest we see throughout the New Testament is the Elders are always plural. This is implied in I Timothy, but it is also clearly seen by way of example in Acts 15 and 20 and commanded in Titus 1. The goal of every church should be to ordain as many elders as the Lord gives the church and seek them out as the need is presented.

### **Deacon (1 Tim. 3)**

Deacon means a servant. This office came into being in Acts 6:1-6.

The qualifications are as follows:

1. Men
2. of honest report

3. full of the Holy Ghost
4. full of wisdom
5. willing to be appointed

The deacons had the role of service and the apostles (as the first pastors) had the role of study, prayer, and ministry of the word.

### **The Congregations Relationship to the Pastors**

The pastors are members of the church and therefore the same love and watch-care members are to have with one another is to be extended to the pastors as well.

However, there are unique aspects of the relationship of the congregation to its pastors. The pastors are placed in a position of oversight of the church. This is not just of the “business” of the church. The members are his “business”. Both in Acts 20 and in I Pet. 5, the elders oversee the flock, which are the sheep (another reason membership is important). The members of the church, by joining, submit themselves to the loving correction and oversight of their pastors (Heb. 13:17).

With this unique relationship the scripture lists a few things required of the congregation regarding its pastors:

1. Pray for them (Eph. 6:19-20, II Thess. 3:1-2)
2. Take special care concerning accusations (I Tim. 5:19-20)
3. Heb. 13:7. Remember is to acknowledge and respect them as the “care givers” of the church. To be mindful of their teaching. He says, “whose faith follow”. In essence follow the biblical instruction they give.
4. Obey them (Heb. 13:17)
  - This is not ruling in every area or everything. This deals primarily with the word preached and Biblical counsel (Eph. 4:8-16).
  - Pastors aid in the sanctification process (I Tim. 4:16, II Tim. 2:15, 24-26). Many people are afraid of getting counselling, but really it is just part of discipleship.
5. As the church is able, they are to provide for the care of the pastors and their families (Gal. 6:6, I Tim. 5:17, I Cor. 9:7-14).