

# The Elders and Their Authority

(What Biblical Authority Do Elders  
Have and What Are Its Limits?)

BY CHRIS DAWSON

# 3 Points

- ❖ Who Can Be An Elder?
- ❖ What is an Elder's Job?
- ❖ What is the Extent of Their Authority?

# Who Can Be An Elder?

- ❖ Someone who meets the qualifications
- ❖ Qualifications are found in:
  - ❖ **1 Timothy 3**
  - ❖ **Titus 1**

# Titus 1

5. For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you--
6. if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.
7. For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,
8. but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,
9. holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

# I Timothy 3

1. This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.
2. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;
3. not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;
4. one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence
5. (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);
6. not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.
7. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

# What is an elder's job?

## ❖ **Acts 20**

- ❖ **v.17** - Paul calls for the **elders** (presbuteros)
- ❖ **v.28** - They were **overseers** (episkopos)
- ❖ **v.28** - They were to **shepherd** (poimane)

# What is an elder's job?

- ❖ The names given to the position help describe the duties of the position:
- ❖ **Elder** - to provide wise guidance
- ❖ **Bishop** - to oversee and rule
- ❖ **Pastor** - to tend to and care for

# What is the extent of their authority?

## ❖ **Authority**

- ❖ What is it?

- ❖ Where does it come from?

- ❖ Who has it?



# What is the extent of their authority?

## ❖ **Qualified authority**

- ❖ In the home

- ❖ In the government

- ❖ In the church

# What is the extent of their authority?

- ❖ Limited to the local church
- ❖ Limited to matters of expediency
- ❖ Limited to the realm of spiritual things

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