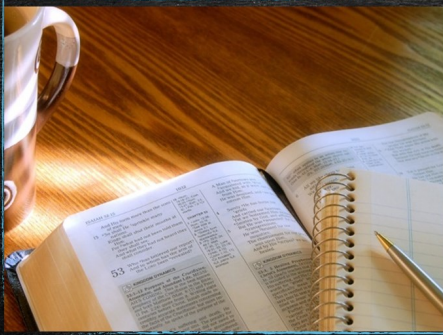


Chapter 10



The Leaders of the Ekklesia

Application & Activation



Before We Begin

Be prepared to highlight or take note of the many Scripture passages that we discuss in this chapter.

This chapter deals with the critical subject of the leaders of the Ekklesia. We will be listing quite a few scripture verses, and you will need to highlight or take note of them because you will need them to complete your application and activation at the end of the chapter.

Before we can talk about the leadership of Ekklesia, we need to talk about the leaders of the church because that is what we

have inherited, the leaders of the church. When King Henry the 8th of England wanted to divorce his wife, he asked the Pope for permission, but the Pope would not allow Henry to divorce his wife and marry another woman. King Henry was determined. The solution he came up with was to leave the Catholic church and remove the Pope from the leadership of the church and appoint himself as the leader of his new church that he called the Church of England. He instituted a law that was called the Divine Right of Kings. This idea stated that churches are accountable to the King, and the King is accountable to God. Essentially, he removed the Pope and put himself in the place of the Pope. This took place many centuries after the New Testament Ekklesia was functioning.

The church system was born in 325 A.D. The hieratical system began to form and develop. During the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries, this whole extensive system of bureaucracy grew into what we know of as the Roman Catholic Church.

When Henry the 8th removed the Pope and put himself in the leadership position of the church, he didn't change the system; it stayed the same. Later, when King James came along and translated the Bible, that system was still in place. King James did not change any of the ecclesiastical structure. The only thing he changed was the issue of who was in charge. The King, not the Pope, was the leader of the Church of England. Until her death, Elizabeth, the Queen of England, was the head of the Church of England. Now her son King Charles III is the leader of the Church of England. I believe both Charles and his mother, Elizabeth, to be wicked people. Elizabeth was, and Charles, is the ruler of the Church of England today.

The leadership we see in today's church system can be traced back to the Roman Catholic Church, not to the Bible. You will not find it in the Bible. It is the same with the Church in America today; if you trace the lineage of any denomination, like you trace a family tree, starting with grandparents all the back, you will discover that they all trace back to the Roman Catholic Church and not to the Bible. This is because this church system was not mentioned in the Bible. The church that we see today is not found in the Bible at all. What King James did when he had the Bible translated into English, he took the system that he was the head of and wrote it into the Bible. Instead of doing what the Bible told him to do, he told the Bible what he wanted it to do.

The structure of the Church is similar to that of a corporation. This is true not just in the Catholic system. This structure also exists in the Lutheran, Episcopalian, or Anglican Churches.

The Leaders of Church



Bishops = CEO or Business Administrator of the Corporation

Priests = Clergy Leaders of the local Church

Elders = Board of Administration for the spiritual needs of the Church

Deacons = Board of Administration for the physical needs of the Church, buildings, etc.

One of the hallmarks of this corporate system is the bishop. There are bishops in most of the Evangelical Churches. I grew up in a bible-believing Evangelical Church, and there were

four Bishops when I was first ordained in ministry. Bishops are like the corporate CEO leaders in the church system.

The Catholic Church has several tiers and layers above the bishop. There are Archbishops and Cardinals. Above them, there is the pope. These layers are above the bishop, and below the bishop are the priests who function as the clergy leaders of the local parish. Under the priests are the elders that serve as a Board of Administration. The elders take care of the spiritual needs of the church. Then the deacons are under the elders. The deacons more or less take care of the building and administration of the physical needs of the church buildings and the people.

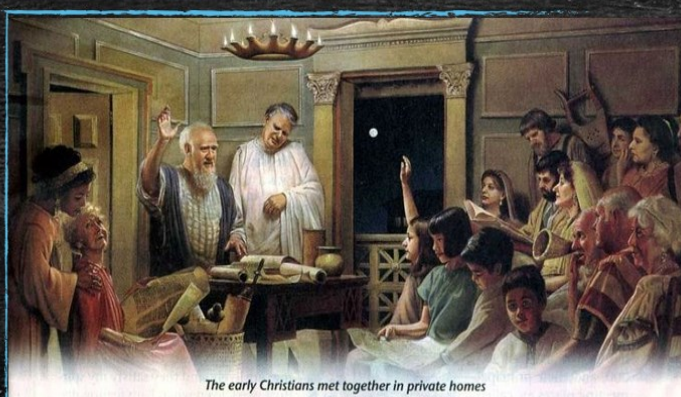
Now, if you took a corporate flow chart of the average church and laid it out, you would see it looks like a triangle. There is a CEO-like person at the top, maybe a Senior Pastor, or if it's a denomination, it would be a Bishop. Then there are elders under that, and then there are committees functioning. Beneath them, there are other boards and committees, and then we finally come to the church's people. This pyramid structure looks like a corporation like Ford Motor Company or General Motors. If you laid the corporate structure chart of General Motors beside the organizational structure page of the average church in America, you would see very close similarities. The church system was built and modeled after the Roman military system in the Roman Empire. This is why it is called the Roman Catholic Church. This structure started in Rome. It was modeled after the Roman military structure. This struc-

People responded to all of this hierarchy and bureaucracy by forming house churches. Unfortunately, some of these house churches went too far in the other direction. They said, "Well, Jesus is our leader, and we don't need any human leadership other than Jesus."

I was in the house church movement for several years, and my experience has taught me that the house church model doesn't work very well because there is no proper leadership. There is never a leadership vacuum in an organization. Someone will rise to leadership to fill that vacuum. If you put ten people together in a living room, someone will surface as the leader of that group. It may not be the person God ordained or appointed, but someone will be the leader.

Leadership is necessary. God has always used humans to accomplish His purposes. The New Testament is filled with words, verses, and paragraphs

The Leaders of Ekklesia



The early Christians met together in private homes

Believers met primarily in their homes
They all participated
All the "One Others" were practiced
They all prophesied
They all ministered

about the subject of leadership in the Ekklesia. We need to look at leadership in the Ekklesia. What did they do? Who were they? How did they function?

First, you must remember that all of the Ekklesia's in the New Testament met primarily in homes. You must get that mental picture of meeting in a home, not in the building, not in the big auditorium, but in a living room, and as such, they all participated. They functioned in all the One Another's. We already had a chapter about the One Others. They all prophesied, and they all ministered. When you get that picture, you realize there is very little need for this prominent bureaucratic corporate structure. I sometimes wonder, what would a Bishop do in a living room? What would a Cardinal do in the living room?

The whole thing becomes kind of silly when you put the church structure today into the model of the New Testament; it just becomes useless. We do not need any of the stuff of

the church system. We do not need bureaucracy. What we do need is leadership. So who are the leaders? Three words are used in the New Testament that describe Ekklesia leadership.

The three words are all right here in Acts 20:17 and verse 28. They are

“*presbeteros*,” usually translated as elders, and primarily talks about their character or maturity. This is talking about spiritual maturity. The second word is “*episcopos*.” That word is best translated as overseers. And the third word is “*poimaino*,” which talks about shepherds and their responsibility. We have maturity, function, and responsibility described here, but these three words describe one person. It’s not like there are layers of bureaucracy that the church system would have us believe. We have three words describing the same person. Three aspects of that person are their maturity, their function, and their responsibility. These all refer to an individual, not a bureaucratic structure.

We are going to look at these words individually. The first passage of scripture to highlight or take note of is 1 Timothy 3:1-7. This is the New Living Translation, “This is a trustworthy saying if someone aspires to be an Ekklesia leader (the word *episcopos*) he desires an honorable position.” So, an Ekklesia leader, (*episcopos*), “must be a man whose life is above reproach. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exercise self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home.”

The Leaders of Ekklesia

Acts 20:17, 28, Elders, Shepherds

- Acts 20:17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders (*presbuteros*) of the church.
- Acts 20:28 Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopos*, bishop). **Be shepherds** (*poimaino*) of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.
- NKJ Acts 20:28 ...**to shepherd** the church...
- verb infinitive present active (it’s a verb not a noun)
- 4165 ποιμαίνω poimaino {poy-mah'-ee-no}
- Meaning: 1) to feed, to tend a flock, keep sheep 1a) to rule, govern 1a1) of rulers 1a2)....
- Usage: AV - feed 6, rule 4, feed cattle 1; 11

“*presbuteros*” : Elders, Character, Maturity

“*episkopos*” = Overseers, Function

“*poimaino*” = Shepherd, Responsibility

I Timothy 3:1-7 NLT

- This is a trustworthy saying: “If someone aspires to be a **church Ekklesia leader** (*episkopos*), he desires an honorable position.” ² So a **church Ekklesia leader** (*episkopos*) must be a man whose life is above reproach. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exercise self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must be able to teach.³ He must not be a heavy drinker or be violent. He must be gentle, not quarrelsome, and not love money. He must manage his own family well, having children who respect and obey him. ⁵ For if a man cannot manage his own household, how can he take care of God’s **church Ekklesia**? A **church Ekklesia leader** must not be a new believer, because he might become proud, and the devil would cause him to fall. ⁷ Also, people outside the **church Ekklesia** must speak well of him so that he will not be disgraced and fall into the devil’s trap.

Why do you think he must enjoy having guests in his home? Well, it is because the Ekklesia met in his home. He must be able to teach. He must not be a heavy drinker or violent. He must be gentle, not quarrelsome, and not love money. He must manage his family well, having children who respect and obey him. For if a man cannot manage his own household, how can he take care of God's Ekklesia? An Ekklesia leader must not be a new convert or new believer because he might become proud, and the devil would cause him to fall. Also, people outside the Ekklesia must speak well of him so that he'll not be disgraced and slip and fall into the devil's trap.

So, let's look a little bit deeper into I Timothy 3. Notice that the NLT (New Living Translation) doesn't say anything about a bishop. It just says a church leader, an Ekklesia leader. We will compare verse 1 in the King James Version of the Bible with the NLT. In the King James, it says, "this is a true saying. Suppose a man desires the office of a bishop. He desires a good thing." The NLT says, "this is a trustworthy saying if someone aspires

I Timothy 3:1

<u>KJV</u>	<u>NLT</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ This is a true saying, if a man desire the <u>office of a bishop (episkopas)</u>, he desireth a good work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ This is a trustworthy saying: "If someone aspires to be a <u>church Ekklesia leader (episkopas)</u>, he desires an honorable position."
	<u>TPT</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ If any of you aspires to be an <u>overseer (episkopas)</u> in the church; Ekklesia you have set your heart toward a noble ambition, for the word is true!

to be an Ekklesia leader...". The same word, episkopas, is used, but it is translated here as a leader.

What I want you to see about the King James Version is this, there is no corresponding Greek word to be translated to the word "office." In other words, the translators of the King James Version of the Bible wrote the word "office" into the Bible. They did this to validate and perpetuate their bureaucratic structure. They wanted their hierarchy, which became an office, wrote it into the Bible. In the New Testament's original language of Greek, there is no word to translate into office. We use the word office in our day and our culture—for example, the Office of the President. I will illustrate this idea.

Imagine my hand holding a remote control. Let's say that my hand is the office of the President, and my little remote controller is the President. We vote for the president and put the president in office. After four years, he will no longer be the president, and he will be out of the office. But the office will still be there. It will be vacant until someone else is inaugurated and put into the office. The office is like a placeholder for a person.

This is not a biblical ideal. In the original language, there is no "office." That's part of the bureaucratic structure that the translators of the King James Version wrote into the Bible to validate and perpetuate their bureaucratic system of control and containment. This hierarchy and a bureaucratic structure of people, a special class of particular people called the clergy. Everyone else is beneath and they are

called the laity. Clergy and laity are not distinctions that are in the Bible. That's the system man built, but it's not in the scriptures. It's not in the word of God.

The Passion Translation calls these same people overseers. We like that word; We call the leadership of the local Ekklesia overseers because that is what they do; that is their function, to oversee the home congregation.

Titus 1:5-9 also uses leadership words, but now we have two of them: *presbuterous* and *episcopas*. We read in Titus 1:5-9, "I left you on the island of Crete so that you could complete our work there and appoint elders (*presbuterous*) in each town. As I instructed you, an elder must live a blameless life. He must be faithful to his wife and his children. And his children must be believers who don't have a reputation for being wild or rebellious. An Ekklesia leader (*episcopas*) is a manager of God's household." (Did you see that word "manager"?)

Titus 1:5-9 NLT

- I left you on the island of Crete so you could complete our work there and appoint *elders (presbuterous)* in each town as I instructed you. ⁶ An elder must live a blameless life. He must be faithful to his wife, and his children must be believers who don't have a reputation for being wild or rebellious. ⁷ A church *Ekklesia leader (episcopas)* is a manager of God's household, so he must live a blameless life. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered; he must not be a heavy drinker, violent, or dishonest with money. Rather, he must enjoy having guests in his home, and he must love what is good. He must live wisely and be just. He must live a devout and disciplined life. ⁹ He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught; then he will be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong.

Titus 1:5 & 7

KJV

- For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders (*presbuterous*) in every city, as I had appointed thee: vs 5
- For a bishop (*episcopas*) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; vs 7

MEV

- For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders (*presbuterous*) in every city, as I commanded you: vs 5
- For an overseer (*episcopas*) must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not easily angered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not greedy for dishonest gain, vs 7

He must lead a blameless life. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered. He must not be a heavy drinker, violent or dishonest with money. Instead, he must enjoy having guests in his home. (Once again, the home congregation is in the Bible.) He must love what is good. He must live wisely. He must live a devout and disciplined life. He must have a strong belief in the trustworthy message he was taught. Then he'll be able to encourage others with wholesome teaching and show those who oppose it where they are wrong."

The two leadership words in this one passage are *presbuteros* and *episcopas*. *Presbuteros* is translated as elders, and *episcopas* is translated as leaders. We are talking about the leadership in the local Ekklesia. In Titus 1:5 let's compare again, King James and another translation called The Modern English Translation or Modern English Version (MEV). Let's see how they deal with it and compare them. The King James says that he wanted them to ordain elders, and also, in verse 7, a bishop must be blameless. So, they used the word elders but put the word "ordain" with it. They used the words "ordained elders" and then the word "bishop."

The MEV (Modern English Version) uses the words elders and overseers, which is a much better word. It does not have that religious connotation to it. The King James Version wrote the word ordained instead of appoint. Again, they did this to validate their bureaucracy. In the church system, they ordain pastors and elders. They go through a process to ordain, educate, interview, and question them, and then an ordination ceremony with lots of pomp and circumstance. Only then are they ordained, elders. Then they set aside a particular class of people called clergy. Some denominations even require them to wear different clothes with a unique collar, robe, frock, or hat. Different clothes separate them from ordinary people because they are ordained. The Ordination is quite a religious ceremony.

I know about this from personal experience. I was ordained five different times by five different denominations. Every time I would go to another denomination to help them plant churches, they would take me through this whole ordination process. It is part of the church system of bureaucracy. Again, this is not what the Bible says. The Bible merely says to appoint. It would be like one of the apostles or prophets saying, "John, I've acknowledged a lot of leadership potential in you. I see you love your kids. You love your wife, and things are going well at home. I see you love the Lord and his Word, and I would like to appoint you as an elder and overseer of a home congregation." And that is how it was done. There was no big pomp and circumstance, and no religious ceremony.

The Leaders of Ekklesia

Elders

God's Faithful Shepherds

Acts 20:17 NKJV From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the **elders** (*presbuterous*) of the church Ekklesia .

A Shepherd of the home gathering

Titus appointed them after the instruction of Paul, and they became overseers.

This is Titus 1:5-7. The leaders of the Ekklesia could be summarized by calling them, shepherds and overseers. Shepherds and overseers are the same. Shepherding and Overseeing is watching

over the flock according to the Bible.

Omega Kingdom Ministry handles appointments of bootcamp graduates similarly. After people complete our bootcamp training, we have a graduation gathering, and appoint people as elders and overseers. Then we release them to go out and serve Christ the King, serve the Lord. We offer support through more advanced classes and connecting them with other graduates and leaders.

In Acts chapter 20, Paul wanted to meet with the elders, so he calls them together. That

is the *presbuterous*. He called them together and talked to them about how to be the leader of a home gathering and how to shepherd the flock of a home gathering. This is another passage to take note of: Acts 20:25-31. This is from the New King James version of the Bible. This is Paul talking to the elders and calling them together. Here you see that word *presbuterous*. Look whom he is talking to. He is also talking to the *episcopas* and the *poimaino*. Acts 20:25: "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching

Acts 20:25-31 NKJV

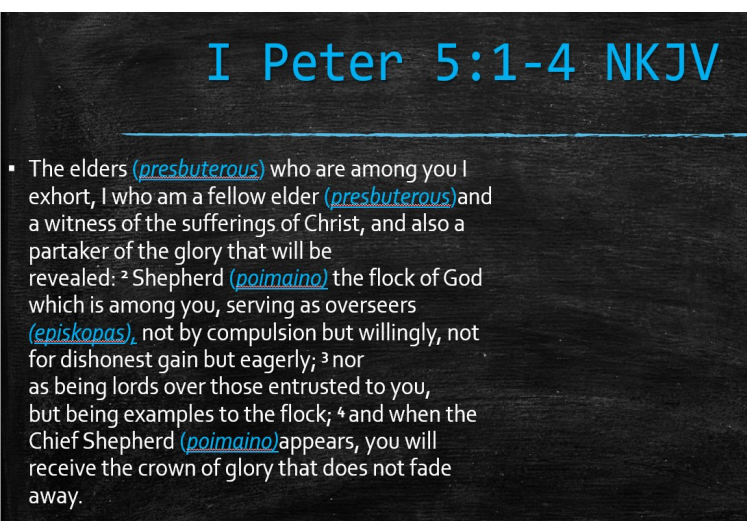
- "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. ²⁶ Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷ For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. ²⁸ Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopas*), to shepherd (*poimaino*) the church Ekklesia of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore, I testify to you that I am innocent of the blood of all men, for I have not shunned to declare to you the counsel of God. Therefore, take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (*episkopas*), and to shepherd, (*poimaino*), the Ekklesia of God which he purchased with his blood, for I know that after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, men will rise up speaking perverse things from among yourselves to draw away disciples after themselves. Therefore, watch and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn night and day with tears, cease to warn every one night and day with tears.”

Okay, let's take these verses apart. First, you see that he is telling them to take heed of themselves. This is the first qualifying mark of someone who will function in leadership in the Ekklesia. They need to watch over their own life and spiritual development, and to take it seriously. They need to be in the word of God, praying, and obedient. They need to be watching over their own life spiritually. They also need to watch over their family, wife, and children. They are making sure that they are following Jesus. They are even watching over their own physical body. They are taking care of their health. “Take heed to yourselves.” That’s the first qualifying mark of someone who will be a leader in the Ekklesia.

Then Paul refers to “all the flock”; this is the first time the Bible uses a word that describes a group of sheep to describe the Ekklesia. Here the Ekklesia is called a flock. “Take heed not only to yourselves but to all the flock.” He is saying to look over them the same way you look over yourself. You looked over yourself spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally. Look over the flock the same way. Watch the flock. He uses the word overse-

ers. Overseers and shepherds both are used in this passage of scripture. Overseers watch over; shepherds also watch over. You know how a shepherd would stand up on top of a big rock and look out over the sheep, watching them. Just looking over them does not mean you become an overseer. What I am describing is someone who is looking over the flock and shepherding them. The function here is to watch and to warn. Just like a shep-



I Peter 5:1-4 NKJV

- The elders (*presbuterous*) who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder (*presbuterous*) and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ² Shepherd (*poimaino*) the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers (*episkopas*), not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; ⁴ and when the Chief Shepherd (*poimaino*) appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

herd would watch if a wolf is coming and warn the sheep to protect them.

Paul says in verses 29-30, “For I know this that after my departure, savage wolves will come in among you not sparing the flock. Also, from among yourselves, men will rise ...” We have had this happen already many times. The leadership of the local Ekklesia needs to deal with it because they are to care about the local people, the sheep.

In 1 Peter 5, all three words are used in one passage. I Peter 5:1-4. Peter is writing and identifying himself as an elder; he says, “The elders (*presbuteros*), who are among you, I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed shepherd (*poimaino*), the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers (*episkopas*), not by compulsion but willingly. not for dishonest gain but eagerly, nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” Living among the flock being an example to them, Not lording it over them. Verse 4, “And when the Chief Shepherd (*poimaino*) appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.” All three words are used in one passage!

Peter often identifies himself as an apostle. Here he identified himself with the people and called himself an elder, telling them to shepherd the flock and that they were overseers. Notice also in the last verse there, in verse 4; he identifies this chief shepherd. The word shepherd comes from *poimaino*. In some versions of the Bible, it is also translated as pastor. The word pastor also comes from *poimaino*. The shepherd is to the pastor; the pastor is to the shepherd of the sheep. Peter identifies the chief shepherd as Jesus. He says that when Jesus comes, he will reward you. He talks about getting a crown that does not fade away.

The Leaders of Ekklesia

	Elder – <i>presbuteros</i>	Overseer – <i>episkopos</i>
Acts 20	v17 "...he sent to Ephesus and called to him the elders of the church."	v28 "Be on guard for yourselves the Holy Spirit has made you overseers , to shepherd the church..."
Titus 1	v5 "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might...appoint elders in every city as I directed you,"	v7 "For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward..."
1Pet 5	v1 "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you..."	v2 "shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight ..."

"presbuteros" : Elders - Maturity

"episkopas" : Overseers – Function

"poimaino" : Shepherds – Responsibility

Jesus is identified as the senior pastor, the chief shepherd. If Jesus is the senior pastor, there cannot be more senior pastors. I ministered for many years in the church and was often called the Senior Pastor. I had a staff of associates, and I regret all those years of being

The Leaders of Ekklesia



To Oversee (watch over)
To Protect
To Shepherd: Feed & Lead
The Home Gatherings
Communicate
Facilitate
Moderate
The Home Congregation

called the Senior Pastor. It did not feel right. It did not sound right. Nevertheless, that is what they called me. The reason that it did not sound right is that there can only be one senior pastor. Even in the church system today, they would not dare think about having two or three senior pastors. It would not work, and it does not work in the body of Christ, either. There

can only be one head. There is only one Chief Shepherd. His name is Jesus, and if you are going to use the word shepherd, the rest of us are all under-shepherds, not senior pastors. There can only be one Chief Shepherd. This is Jesus.

So, in the Ekklesia, we see these words used most frequently: overseers and elders. And again, I want to review the three words: *presbuterous*, which is translated as elders and usually speaks about their spiritual maturity; the word *episkopas*, talking about Overseers as a function; and the Greek word *poimaino*, best translated as shepherds and its speaking about the responsibility so is usually and best translated as overseer, and that's talking about their function. So these three words describe their maturity, function, and responsibility.

To oversee means watching over, protecting, feeding, and leading the sheep to green pastures. Jesus said he's the Chief Shepherd Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd, and it says that he leads me to green pastures and beside still waters.

I raised sheep earlier in my life. We had 100 ewes, and two buck. We bred ewes and sold the lambs. We had one hundred ewes at one point. I can tell you that sheep only lay down when their bellies are full and healthy. If they are sick, they are uncomfortable and don't lie down. When they are hungry, they don't lie down. The only time sheep lay down in green pastures would be when they are healthy, and their bellies are full. The rest of the time, they are eating. They eat all day long. When they get their belly full, they lie down. Jesus said he wanted to lead us to green pastures so we would lie down in green pastures and beside still waters. We will have our bellies full, and that's what he wants for his sheep. The shepherd's responsibility is to lead the flock and to feed them, so they get their bellies

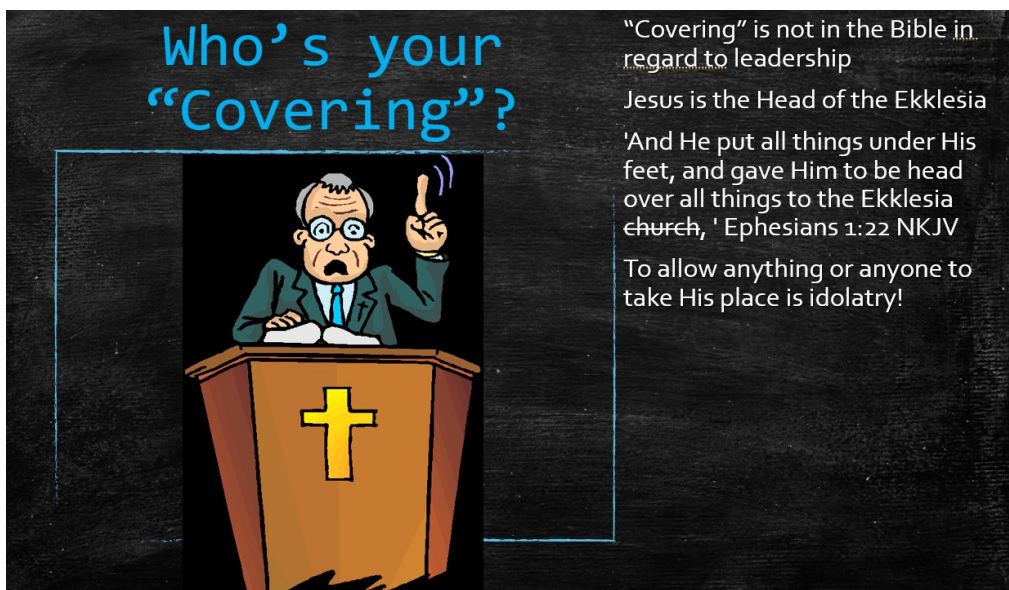
full. He wants the shepherd to ensure that the sheep are contented and happy. To ensure that they are at peace and safe. This is also what we are called to do as leaders of the Ekklesia (the home gathering).

I want to share some other words to help you wrap your mind around what we discuss here. What do you do as a leader in the home gathering? Communicate, facilitate and moderate. You communicate about the meeting. For example, "We will meet at Joe's house on Tuesday night at seven o'clock, bring a dish to share." You facilitate, and you make sure

Joe's house is all set up. If everything is okay; you announce it, making it happen. Make sure that it happens without complications, and then when you meet together, you moderate the meeting. Facilitate the discussion and moderate the meeting so that no one dominates it and tries to control it. Everyone gets to share. Those three words are the leadership of the home congregation.

You're going to hear a question from church leaders. They will ask you, "You are meeting in a home. Who is your covering?" You are going to hear something like that, I heard it, and you will probably hear it also, "Who's your covering?" Let me tell you that the word "covering" is not in the Bible regarding leadership. The word covering is in the Bible, but it is about a woman's hair. Her hair is her covering, which is not leadership in the Ekklesia. The discussion of covering comes from people in leadership in the organized church system and they use that word to control and contain people inside their system. They want you in their system.

Covering is a control word; once you are out, you are free. Jesus is the head of the Ekklesia. When people ask me who my covering is, I hand them the Bible and say, "Would you please find for me where it says we need to have a covering other than Jesus?" Ephesians 1: 22 says God the Father put all things under the feet of Jesus and gave him the head over all things to the Ekklesia.



What about Accountability?



This question usually comes from someone who still has the pyramid structure of church in their mind.

'And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; **and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.**' Ephesians 5:18-21 NASB

My covering is Jesus Christ. He wants to be the head of the Ekklesia. He does not want the system to be the head of the Ekklesia. He wants you out of the system so that he can be your covering. It is a glorious and powerful experi-

ence to know that Jesus is my covering. He is the only one I need. He is our covering because he is the head, and I am part of the body. Allowing anything or anyone else to take his place is idolatry. It is putting a human or an organization in a place in our life that only Jesus can fill.

Jesus is our covering. Don not say that Omega Kingdom Ministry is your covering. We are not! We are no one's covering. We do not want to be. Russ Wagner is not your covering! He is no one's covering. He do not want to be. He would not dare step into that position because Jesus is your covering. Jesus is the only one you need. When you graduate from Ekklesia Bootcamp, you are released to the King and the Kingdom, and you are not under the covering of Omega Kingdom Ministry. We will support you in any way that we can. This is what we are called to do, not to be a covering.

Another question people may ask is, "What about accountability?" the people that ask that question are still in that pyramid of the bureaucratic church system and structure. Those are the ones who are going to ask you this question. They are sitting in an auditorium or church building, watching someone on the platform to whom they are all accountable. When you sit in a circle in the living room, the whole question of whom you are responsible for is a mute question and becomes obsolete. When we are sitting in a circle, we all are accountable to one another. The Scripture tells us to be responsible to each other. Ephesians 5:18 says that we were to be subject to one another in fear of Christ. "And don't get drunk with wine for that's dissipation be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, making melody with your hearts to the Lord; always giving

thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Christ to God even the Father and be subject to one another in fear of Christ.” Who are we accountable to? We are responsible to one another. Your life becomes an open book as you share. Transparency and trust develop, and you share your life with them.


No longer is the pastor up here on a pedestal all alone. You see pastors burn out when everyone is accountable to them. Many pastors have marital problems because they are isolated, and they expect to hold everyone responsible to them, and that is destined for burnout. It is much easier to be accountable to one another, share your life, and be an open-home congregation. That is your accountability. We are subject to one another.

Now for the application and activation. You were told when you started this chapter that we wanted you to highlight or take notes of the Bible verses we cover. What we are going to have you do is get your favorite translation of the Bible, your favorite study Bible, and then a couple of other translations. You might even use your Bible app or Bible websites on your computer. When you use your Bible app or computer, you can change translations quickly and easily. We want you to compare some translations and look up all the references you highlighted or noted. Once you look up the verses and study them, we are asking you to compare and contrast how the translators use these three words: *presbuteros*, *episkopas*, and *poimaino*. How do they use the words elder, overseer, and shepherd? How do the translators use them? And then, please write a few paragraphs on how you see yourself and the role of leadership in the Ekklesia. How do you see yourself and your role?

We want you to write your own ecclesiology. The study we just finished in seminaries is called ecclesiology, The study of Ekklesia leadership. Please write a few paragraphs about how you see leadership in Ekklesia. What is their role? What is their function? What are they going to do?

We also want you to discuss pastoral leadership with a friend of yours who is still actively involved in the church system. This will be interesting. Compare what you studied in the Bible with what they will share with you and discuss leadership in the church.

Application & Activation



Using your favorite Bible and at least two other Translations, look up all the references in this presentation.

Compare & Contrast how the Translators use the words:

- "presbuteros"*
- "episkopas"*
- "poimaino"*

Write out a couple paragraphs on how you see the role of leadership in the Ekklesia and bring it to share in class.

Enter into a discussion about Pastoral leadership with a friend who is still active in the system of "Church."