



## Pastor-Teacher, Functions

The proper functions of the pastor-teacher are important to the spiritual growth of the believers in a local church. In Philippians 1:1, “saints” is ἅγιος (hagios) and refers to the believers in a local church. “Overseers” is ἐπίσκοπος (episkopos) and refers to pastor-teachers. There are never two heads in a local church. There is no such thing as an assistant pastor. “Deacons” is διάκονος (diakonos) and refers to the group of senior members of a local church who conduct administration of the local church under the authority of the pastor-teacher.

*“Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:” (Philippians 1:1, NASB)*

### The Warning to the Elders (Pastors)

In 1 Peter 5:1, there were many (a plurality of) elders or pastor-teachers. Why? All of the New Testament epistles were written to more than one church such as Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia. These were huge provinces and had many pastors in each province. 1 Peter 1:1.

*“Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,” (1 Peter 5:1, NASB)*

*“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen” (1 Peter 1:1, NASB)*

An elder or pastor was not a church officer like we have today in the Presbyterian church. The Presbyterian form of government has a plurality of elders and is a wrong system of church government. In 1 Peter 5:1, “elders” is πρεσβύτερος (presbuteros) and means an old man of senior rank. The *eteros* is a comparative suffix which means “the most senior.” The stem *presbu* means “old man” and denotes high rank. With the comparative suffix it means the old man, the most senior.

There was one right elder for each assembly of believers. It was a time of extreme persecution and it was important that the authority of the pastor be recognized by all. The congregation must recognize the authority of the pastor-teacher or elder. There should be no other elders or pastors around.

In 1 Peter 5:1, “exhort” is the present active indicative of παρακαλέω (parakaleō) and can mean a chewing out or an encouragement. It has two almost antithetical meanings. The meaning here is not a chewing out, but an encouragement. He wants to encourage the pastors of the persecuted areas to intensify their efforts to get out Bible doctrine on a daily basis.

“Fellow elder” is συμπρεσβύτερος (sumpresbuteros) and means along with or fellow elder. Peter is speaking to them as their fellow elder. Notice that Peter does not claim primacy or to be a Pope. He speaks as one pastor to another. There are men today who have ministries among many pastors, but they are not apostles. Such ministries only exist to the extent that other pastors recognize the authority of that pastor as a means of encouragement and help to them. But he does not superimpose his authority to their congregations. Peter was not hitting their congregations, he was ministering to them. In times of apostasy there are pastor’s pastors.

In 1 Peter 5:1, “witness” is μάρτυς (martus) and is a judicial term. This has nothing to do with witnessing to someone about Christ. Peter was a witness, a judicial witness. He saw Jesus Christ suffer personally. That is the issue. Peter evangelized in Acts 2, but not here. He was an observer and as such



he was like a legitimate witness in a courtroom.

“Partaker also of the glory” is κοινωνός (koinōnos) and means a partner, associate, comrade, companion, a sharer. Peter was a partner with reference to eternity. Peter will share his eternal future with Christ. This includes Christ’s glory. The extent that we share this is determined at the Judgment Seat of Christ. We are all going to share in this glory from the standpoint of having eternal life. The reason Peter brought this up is that the glories of eternity cannot be compared with the sufferings of the present life. Suffering in time is God’s opportunity to show His grace. 2 Cor. 4:16-18.

*“Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18, NASB)*

In 1 Peter 5:1, “that is to be” is the present active participle of μέλλω (mellō) and means about to be. Many of the believers to whom Peter was writing were going to suffer death in one way or another shortly. Intensification of study is needed because we may be dead in a year or so. If you had a month to live, what would you change, what would you do?

Peter was pushing for a principle. We cannot get enough Bible doctrine is what he was saying. “Revealed” is the present passive infinitive following a present active participle of ἀποκαλύπτω (apokaluptō). This is a dramatic present. Many are very close to dying. It means to reveal from the ultimate source of self. The passive voice means they will receive glory. The infinitive mood refers to the reality of their dying shortly.

### **The Intensifying Responsibility of the Pastor-teacher**

In 1 Peter 5:2, “shepherd the flock of God” is the aorist active imperative of ποιμαίνω (poimainō) and means to feed, to tend a flock, keep sheep, to shepherd. The whole principle of the function of the pastorate is bound up in this one word. The cognate form ποιμήν (poimēn) covers the whole concept of pastor. Feeding the sheep is only one of the shepherd’s responsibilities.

*“shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;” (1 Peter 5:2, NASB)*

The pastor-teacher provides food, spiritual food – Bible doctrine by daily communication. He provides green pastures – his leadership authority. The constative aorist tense stresses the primary function of the pastor - daily teaching. The active voice means the pastor must initiate the action of the verb. This requires constant study and constant communication of the Word. The imperative mood is a command to pastors only, to provide leadership authority over his flock. The two primary concepts are authority and communication.

“The flock” is ποίμνιον (poimnion) and is a contracted noun that includes all sheep. It is a contraction of *poimen* and *apnion*. Lest the pastor forget and abuse his authority, it is called the “flock of God.” The genitive of source refers to relationship. The pastor is the shepherd of the flock, but the flock belongs to God. He does not own the sheep. “Among you” refers to the local church, one pastor. Bible doctrine can only be taught by the one having authority.

In 1 Peter 5:2, “exercising oversight” is the present active participle from ἐπισκοπέω (episkopeō) and refers to an inspector general or overseer of a plantation. “Bishop” is usually the translation. This is doing the job. No one can teach without authority. 1 Thess. 5:12; Heb. 13:7; Heb. 13:17.



*“But we request of you, brethren, that you appreciate those who diligently labor among you, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction,” (1 Thessalonians 5:12, NASB)*

*“Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.” (Hebrews 13:7, NASB)*

*“Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.” (Hebrews 13:17, NASB)*

There are four attitudes expressed by four adverbs in 1 Peter 5:2. “Not under compulsion” is the negative plus ἀναγκαστῶς (anagkastōs) and means not by compulsion. If a pastor cannot take the authority, he has no right to take the leadership of a local church. If he has the pastor-teacher gift, he will willingly take the responsibility. Many a local church has failed because the pastor would not assume authority or take the responsibility. The pastor cannot simply come in and bumble along, stumble along, preach when he can, get outside speakers in (mostly his friends from Bible school days), is nice to everyone, and is generally gutless and wants to be loved by everyone.

“But voluntarily” is ἐκουσίως (hekousiōs) and means voluntarily, eagerly, taking the authority, being responsible. “Not for sordid gain” is a strong negative plus αἰσχροκερδῶς (aischrokerdōs) and means fondness for dishonest gain. The pastor has a right to remuneration as taught in 1 Corinthians 9:11-14, but he must not commercialize or sell spiritual benefits of grace.

*“If we sowed spiritual things in you, is it too much if we reap material things from you? If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ. Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat the food of the temple, and those who attend regularly to the altar have their share from the altar? So also the Lord directed those who proclaim the gospel to get their living from the gospel.” (1 Corinthians 9:11-14, NASB)*

Grace was never meant to be sold. Grace does not have a price. Grace is not for sale. This is what this adverb is saying. Nobody can buy blessing from God. Tithing has nothing to do with grace giving. “But with eagerness” is προθύμως (prothumōs) and means to be prepared before. A prepared mind means constant, consistent, diligent, and daily study of the Word. These four adverbs qualify the verb *poimainō*.