

# THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

[www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org](http://www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org)

Floral Heights  
Church of Christ  
1814 Buchanan  
Wichita Falls, Texas  
76309  
(940) 322 - 1650

**07 June 2009**  
VOLUME 9; ISSUE 23

## In This Issue:

Elders, Bishops, and Pastors  
.....1-2  
Local News ..... 2  
Sermon Outline ..... 3  
Clips from Psalms ..... 4

## Our Elders:

*Mike Chancellor*  
(322 – 6374)

*Tom Witherspoon*  
(923-6479)

## Deacons:

*Joe Cronin*

*Jim Hall*

*David Witherspoon*

## Preacher:

*John C. Robertson*

## Elders, Bishops, and Pastors

Many in today's religious world view elders, bishops, and pastors as young men riding bikes around town or a single man who regularly stands in the pulpit delivering sermons. Others see this position as one who wears priestly robes being in charge of a diocese and in some churches regarded as having received the highest ordination in unbroken succession from the apostles (see American Heritage Dictionary pp. 182). The Bible clearly explains who the elders, bishops, and pastors are and what their work involves.

### Who are Elders, Bishops, and Pastors?

The first and foremost task is to help the reader understand that all three of these terms refer to one office within the church. Paul made this abundantly clear at Acts 20:17, 28. Each of the three terms found at Acts 20:17, 28 that identifies the office under consideration reveals who these elders were. The word “**elder**” (Greek – *presbuteros*) is defined by Liddell and Scott as, “elders, always implying dignity, chiefs, princes... the wise council of age... a chief... an elder of the church, presbyter” (LS 668). The word “**bishop**” (*episkopos*) is “an inspector, overseer; a watcher, guardian” (Moulton 160). “One who watches over, an overseer, guardian... one set to watch... a bishop” (LS 301). The name bishop thereby signifies the responsibility of watching, guarding, and inspecting the flock (i.e., the church). The word “**Pastor / shepherd**” (*poimaino*) is “to feed, pasture, tend a flock” (Moulton 333). “To be shepherd... to tend a flock” (LS 652). Summarily then the office under consideration is one of age, wisdom, oversight, and care.

The elder is mentioned at Acts 14:23 by Luke as he traces Paul and Barnabas' steps through Galatia too. Luke tells us that there were to be plurality of elders in every church (Acts 14:23) and the Apostle Peter said that these elders were responsible only for the flock that was among them (i.e., their local church – see I Pet. 5:1-4).

### Are there any specific Qualifications for these men to Meet?

Yes! Paul outlines these qualifications at I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5ff. Paul said that those who “*seek*” and “*desire*” the office of a bishop “*desires a good work*” (I Tim. 3:1).

## Local News:

### Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please do come back at your every opportunity!

### Please keep the following members in your prayers:

Cassidy Summers has been diagnosed with pneumonia once again and is scheduled to see a pulmonary doctor in Fort Worth soon.

**Tom Witherspoon** received a “semi-favorable” report but will not know the full extent of his condition until he has more tests run in Houston.

**Jim Summers** will be home from Saudi Arabia this coming Wednesday. It has been a long year for the Summers family. Let us pray for his safe return.

### Website Update:

We now have the class notes for Job and Judges on the church web site.

### Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

**Stella Davidson**  
696-1030 (Home)

**Calvin York**  
692-0489 (Home).

## What do the Elders, Bishops, and Pastors do?

Examining the definitions above identifies not only who the elders are but what their work involves. The elders are men who supply wise council in matters of judgment. They oversee and guard the flock of God’s people. The elder also **shepherds** the flock. Consider Paul’s statement to the Ephesian elders at Acts 20:28, “*Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the **flock**, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood*” (20:28). The elders were to take care and provide not only for their own selves but also the “**flock** in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops.” The elders were to guard against false teachers who would not spare the “flock” as a wolf that kills. They are responsible for feeding the flock (church) truth.

It is somewhat interesting that the members of the body of Christ (i.e., the church) are termed a “**flock**.” The scene is further clarified when Jesus refers to himself as the “**good shepherd**” who laid down his life for the sheep (Jn. 10:11ff). The elders are identified as shepherds who tend the flock of sheep that is among them (see I Pet. 5:1-4). When one sheep goes astray they care for it and go after it (see Matt. 18:12-14). When other sheep are persuaded by erring doctrines they convict the gainsayers (Titus 1:9).

Notice that Paul signifies the grand significance and importance of their responsibility to shepherd the flock of God’s people by stating, “*Which he purchased with his own blood.*” The very church that the elders shepherd belongs to the Lord. Those who do not take proper care of that which belongs to the Lord shall give answer to the same Lord of lords. Christ shed his blood upon the cross that man would be freed from the consequence of sin. Those who take advantage of that blood sacrifice now belong to Christ. The elders are fearfully caring for that which belongs to Jesus Christ. Christ has entrusted his faithful sheep to their care. Those who choose to be elders must understand this grand responsibility! If one sheep of the flock goes astray God expect their swift action. If the flock is being fed poisonous doctrines by a preacher or other members the elder is to act swiftly and decidedly. The flock is God’s and the elder shall give account for that which God entrust them with (see Heb. 13:17).

## Concluding Thoughts

The office of elder is not a young man riding a bike, not a single young man who regularly preaches, and is not a Catholic bishop over a diocese. The office of the elder is met by elderly men who desire to serve as a shepherd of God’s blood bought people. These men understand their grave responsibility. Said men must meet revelation’s revealed qualifications and are to be respected by all.

*John C. Robertson*

# Preachers and Preaching

## Introduction:

This month marks eight years that I have been working as the local preacher for this church. I would like to take this opportunity to discuss with you the identity, work, and qualifications of a local preacher.

### I. The Identity of the Preacher:

- A. We read of men who proclaim the gospel (laboring in the Word of God) in the Bible (see I Cor. 9:6-16; I Tim. 5:17-18).
- B. Preacher (*Kerux*) = “A herald (one who proclaims important news)... one who made proclamation in public assemblies... one who gives notice, announces... to command publicly” (LS 432).
  - 1. Jesus (Matt. 4:23; Mk. 1:14; Lk. 4:44).
  - 2. The Apostles (Lk. 9:1-6) and Paul (I tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11).
- C. Evangelist (*euaggelistes*) = “the bringer of good tidings, an evangelist, a preacher of the gospel... one who brings good news” (LS 322).
  - 1. Jesus (Lk. 4:43; 8:1)
  - 2. Timothy (II Tim. 4:5)
  - 3. Philip (Acts 21:8)

### II. The Work of the Preacher:

- A. Studying and teaching God’s Word (I Tim. 2:7; 4:13)
- B. Challenging self and others to study and know God’s laws (Ezek. 22:26; II Tim. 2:15) and to never go beyond those laws (I Cor. 4:6).
- C. Planting the seeds of the gospel to the lost (I Cor. 1:21; 3:6-7)
- D. Edifying the saints (Eph. 4:11-12)
- E. A guardian of truth (II Cor. 2:16-17; I Tim. 6:20)
- F. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all longsuffering (II Tim. 4:2).
- G. Compensated? (I Cor. 9:6-16)

### III. Are there qualifications to preach the Gospel?

- A. Yes!
- B. Must be found pursuing a faithful life (I Cor. 4:1-2).
- C. Must preach truth in love (Eph. 4:15).
- D. Must preach with urgency to save souls rather than for the glory of men (II Cor. 2:17; 11:9; II Thess. 3:8).
- E. Must have the utmost respect for the authority of God’s word.
- F. Must work with elders (Acts 20:17; I Tim. 5:17-22; II Tim. 4:5).
- G. Must have the grit to do the work as listed above (i.e., exposing error / rebuking brethren / never wearing their feelings upon their sleeves).

## Conclusion:

I am grateful to God for the opportunity to be with you all these eight years. My prayer is that not only I but that all preachers would meet their authorized responsibilities with a grave spirit. The church needs sound men who have a correct approach to the word of God. Men who have the utmost respect for the authority of God and are not afraid to speak out at the appropriate time. I hope and pray that out of our local group of saints that one would desire the work of an evangelist.