

*ECCLESIOLOGY*  
**THE LOCAL CHURCH**  
Lesson 14

**The Teaching Elder**

**I. THE POSITION OF TEACHING ELDER**

- A. A Gift. According to Eph. 4:11-12, Jesus Christ has sovereignly given gifted men to the church to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry. One of these gifts is pastor-teacher. This is a special spiritual gift given only to certain individual.
- B. A Responsibility. According to I Tim. 5:17, there are ruling elders and teaching elders. The teaching elder seems to be equivalent to the gift of pastor-teacher. NOTE: Ruling elders teach but may not have a special gift of teaching. Teaching elders rule but have a special gift of teaching.
- C. Influence. The teaching elder is equal with the other elders in the church in authority, but because he is a gifted teacher who does most of the preaching, he will have a greater influence on the flock. NOTE: In a rule by elders, it is much more difficult to have a dictatorial pastor.

**II. WHY ONE ELDER BECOMES A TEACHING-ELDER**

- A. Timothy, a teaching elder,(pastor-teacher) at Ephesus, seemed to have a special gift among the elders.. Paul wrote 1 and 2 Timothy directly to Timothy, not the elders of the church. The contents of these two epistles deal essentially with how to run a local church.
- B. By analogy, there is only one shepherd in any flock, but a shepherd can have helpers. NOTE: The teaching-elder is not a separate office in the church. It is one aspect of being an elder. Usually this teaching elder is remunerated for his services.

**III. THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE TEACHING ELDER**

- A. He would have to meet all the qualifications for elder as set down in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.
- B. He would also have to have the gift of pastor-teacher.

**IV. DUTIES OF THE TEACHING ELDER**

- A. The primary task of the pastor-teacher is to equip the saints to do the work of the ministry (Eph. 4:11-16). He does this by instructing in the Word, training men for ministry and tending to the spiritual needs of the flock.
- B. The teaching-elder has other titles such as ambassador (2 Cor. 5:20-21), evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5), preacher (1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:11) and steward (1 Pet. 4:10).

- C. The teaching-elder is a leader's leader in that he train men to be leaders in the local church (2 Tim. 2:2).
- D. The pastors ministry is not to take care of the menial tasks of the ministry, to be an organizer, an administrator, attend constant meetings, do all the visitation, head up VBS (Vacation Bible School), do all the church correspondence, be the janitor, etc. His ministry is to study and preach the Word, plus train the saints—a full-time task. NOTE: The pastor should never do anything in a local church that someone else can do.

**V. THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE TEACHING ELDER**

- A. With the passing of the office of Apostle, the teaching responsibilities fell on the elders as a whole and the pastor-teacher in particular. NOTE: In Acts 6:1-7, when the menial tasks of the ministry took time away from the Apostles' spiritual ministry, they organized deacons to get the job done.
- B. Pastor-teachers are to be men of prayer (Acts 6:4). No man should be in the pastorate unless he is a man of prayer, and no church should call a pastor who is not a man of prayer. More is accomplished by prayer than by "hand holding" in the ministry.
- C. A teaching-elder must be committed to study and teaching the Word of God to people. Also a congregation pays their pastor to pray, study and preach the Word so they can be fed the Word of God.
- D. The teaching elder is to "watch your life and doctrine closely" (1 Tim. 4:16).

**VI. TRUTHS FOR A TEACHING ELDER 1 Cor. 4:1-5**

- A. He has been entrusted with the secret things of God, being stewards of the mysteries of God.
- B. He is required to be faithful even before being fruitful.
- C. He must preach to glorify God and not to please men (Gal. 1:10 cf. 1 Thess. 2:4-6).
- D. He can never completely judge his own ministry but God will judge it fairly.
- E. He may have a clear conscience but God will be the final judge.
- F. He will be judged not only on outward acts but motives.