

THE BISHOP



MINISTRY

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A Study guide for Leaders in the Body of Christ

BY TIMOTHY II

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INTRODUCTION:

“The Bishop Ministry” is widely varied throughout the Body of Christ. Churches also vary in their interpretation of the ‘Office of a Bishop’. For example, in the Catholic Church a Bishop is an Elder Priest that is in charge of a Diocese or District.

Many Protestant churches have Bishops that are also Elder Pastors who have oversight of several churches.

Some church groups have retired Pastors who step down from the pulpit, but remain at the church as a Bishop. They then act as an advisor or counselor to the church.

These are all fine, and it is not the intent of this Study Guide to say that any of these groups are right or wrong. It is simply written to explain what the Bible teaches about “The Bishop Ministry”.

“The Bishop Ministry” is not fully understood, mostly because it is not fully described in the Bible. However, after much study, it is more fully described than I had previously thought.

In this Study Guide, the Role and/or Duties of a Bishop and the General Requirements of a Bishop are outlined in detail, as well as the explanation of what is a Bishop.

It is hoped that this will be helpful to the Pastors/Priests and the churches to confirm what they are doing with the Office of the Bishop, or to improve their insight into how they might improve that Role.

It is also hoped that it will help to promote an interest in the Office of the Bishop by those churches that have not incorporated it yet.

I. WHAT IS A BISHOP?

A BISHOP:

The Dictionary says:

A Church Officer having charge of a Diocese or other Church District.

The Bible says:

(In Strong’s Concordance in the Greek):

1985 **episkopos** (ep-is'-kop-os);

from 1909 and 4649 (in the sense of 1983); a superintendent, i.e. Christian officer in genitive case charge of a (or the) church (literally or figuratively):

KJV-- bishop, overseer.

A BISHOP'RIC:

The Dictionary says:

The Office of a Bishop; The Diocese or District over which he presides.

The Bible says:

(In Strong's Concordance in the Greek):

1984 **episkope** (ep-is-kop-ay');
 from 1980; inspection (for relief); by implication, superintendence; specially, the
 Christian "episcopate":
 KJV-- the office of a "bishop", bishoprick, visitation.

II. WHO IS THE CHIEF BISHOP?

Jesus is the Chief Bishop over our souls. He is our example of what a Bishop is
 accountable for and to whom.

1 Pet 2:25

25 For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and
Bishop of your souls.

III. WHO CHOOSES BISHOPS?

The Holy Ghost chooses those who are to be Bishops!

Acts 20:28

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which **the Holy
 Ghost hath made you overseers (Bishops)**, to feed the church of God, which he hath
 purchased with his own blood.

IV. WHO ORDAINS (APPOINTS) BISHOPS?

The Apostle/Messenger appoints Bishops (through the Holy Ghost) over each city.
 Paul Ordained (appointed) Titus a Bishop over the Cretians.

Titus 1:5

5 For this cause **left I thee in Crete**, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, **as I had appointed thee:**

Postscript - Titus 3 - KJV

Titus - **Ordained the First Bishop of the Church of the Cretians.**

Paul also Ordained (appointed) Timothy as Bishop over the Ephesians.

Postscript - 2 Timothy 4 - KJV

Timotheus - **Ordained the First Bishop of the Church of the Ephesians.**

V. HOW MANY ORDAINED BISHOPS ARE THERE?

There may be many Bishops Ordained (appointed) over an area, such as are shown here, at Philippi.

Phil 1:1

1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus **which are at Philippi, with the bishops** and deacons:

VI. WHAT IS THE OFFICE OF A BISHOP?

The Office of a Bishop is a good work worth being desired of.

1 Tim 3:1

1 This is a true saying, **If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.**

Even Judas' position, as one of the 12 Apostle's of the Lamb who betrayed Jesus, was called an Office of a Bishop.

Acts 1:16

16 Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before **concerning Judas**, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

Acts 1:20

20 For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: **and his bishoprick let another take.**

VII. WHAT IS THE ROLE AND/OR DUTIES OF A BISHOP?

A. To Ordain (appoint) Elders in every city, as Paul told Titus to do, if they meet the requirements.

Titus 1:5-6

5 **For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou** shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and **ordain elders in every city**, as I had appointed thee:

6 **If** any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.

B. To Oversee the Flock (Church).

Acts 20:28

28 **Take heed** therefore unto yourselves, and **to all the flock**, over the **which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers (Bishops)**, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

1 Pet 5:2

2 Feed **the flock of God** which is among you, **taking the oversight thereof**, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

1 Tim 3:5

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, **how shall he take care of the church of God?**)

C. To Feed and Teach the Flock (Church).

Acts 20:28

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made **you overseers (Bishops)**, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

1 Pet 5:2

2 **Feed the flock of God which is among you**, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

1 Tim 3:2

2 **A bishop then must be** blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, **apt to teach**;

D. To be 'Given to Hospitality', by opening up his house to people.

1 Tim 3:2

2 **A bishop then must be** blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, **given to hospitality**, apt to teach;

Titus 1:8

8 But **a lover of hospitality**, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

E. To Reach out to the Community.

1 Tim 3:7

7 **Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without (Outside);** lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:8

8 But a lover of hospitality, **a lover of good men**, sober, just, holy, temperate;

F. To Speak Sound Doctrine.

Titus 1:9

9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able **by sound doctrine** both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers (Those that contradict, dispute, oppose, or deny).

Titus 2:1

1 **But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:**

G. To Rebuke and Exhort.

Titus 1:13

13 This witness is true. **Wherefore rebuke them sharply**, that they may be sound in the faith;

1 Pet 5:1

1 **The elders which are among you I exhort**, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

H. To Be an Example to the Flock.

1 Pet 5:3

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but **being ensamples to the flock.**

VIII. WHAT ARE THE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF A BISHOP?

1 Tim 3:2-7

2 **A bishop then must be** blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

IX. WHAT ARE THE GENERAL REQUIREMENTS OF A BISHOP - CONTINUED?

Titus 1:7-9

7 **For a bishop must be** blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

8 But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

9 Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Titus 1:13-14

13 This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith;

14 Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.

Titus 2:1

1 But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:

CONCLUSION:

The Office of the Bishop is a desirable work. It is not to be held by novices because of the responsibility in this Office. Taking the oversight of God's flock is a great responsibility and should only be held by Elders who are chosen by the Holy Spirit. God holds Bishops highly accountable, but the rewards of the Office are great.

1 Pet 5:1-4

1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, **taking the oversight (Bishoping) thereof**, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 **And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.**

AMEN !

TIMOTHY II

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

Text :

The Holy Bible

Authorized (King James) Version

Produced By:

The National Bible Press - Philadelphia

Copyright 1944, National Publishing Company

Comments:

This text has been used as the source for all scriptures.

Some verses of scripture have been shortened or used in partial form.

This is to strengthen their importance to the subject matter; not to change their meaning nor meant to be taken out of the context in which they are written.

Text:

Webster's New American Dictionary

Produced By:

Books, Inc., Publishers - New York & Washington, D.C.

Copyright 1965, By Books, Inc.

Comments:

The Dictionary is used to help clarify our understanding of what certain words mean in today's English language.

Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words

By:

W.E. Vine, M.A.

MacDonald Publishing Company

McLean, Virginia 22101

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible

By:

James Strong, S.T.D., LL.D.

Riverside Book and Bible House

Iowa Falls, Iowa 50126