

SHEPHERD LEADER

TRAINING



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Module 1: Elders in Christ's Church

Introduction

This Module provides a biblical introduction to the role of elders in God's mission through the church. It focusses on the biblical basis for eldership, the biblical qualifications required of elders, and the primary biblical functions of elders in the life and mission of the church.

Contact Details

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Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this module, participants will:

Know and understand

- The biblical basis for eldership.
- Some biblical arguments for the Presbyterian form of church government.
- The primary biblical qualifications required of elders.
- The main biblical tasks assigned to elders and their role in the church's mission.

Be able to

- Defend the biblical basis for the Presbyterian form of church government.
- Play a part in assessing the suitability of individuals to serve as an elder or in other church leadership roles.
- Distinguish eldership functions from other forms of Christian service.



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Be in a position to

- Affirm, with understanding, the PCA ordination vow that “the Presbyterian form of church government is founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto”.
- Function effectively in a team of elders, co-operating with a minister or ministers in overseeing a congregation of God’s people.

Alignment of Module with Graduate Attributes

Graduate Attribute	Code
Be devoted to reading the Scriptures and prayer	1.B
Be thankful for their talents, personality, gifts and calling	3.B
Develop healthy relationships, beginning with own family	3.C
Develop and communicate a vision derived from God’s mission	5.A
Work as part of a shared leadership based on PCA polity	5.C

Learning Plan

This Module has five components:

1. **Discussion Notes:** these provide an overview of the Bible’s teaching about elders, and include two sets of discussion questions.
2. **Two 5-minute Videos:** these summarize the Discussion Notes and introduce the discussion questions.
3. **One 20-minute podcast:** this answers common questions about biblical eldership.
4. **A short book to read:** this provides an additional resource on biblical eldership
5. **An assessment:** this is designed to help land your reading and discussion in the realities of real gospel mission in and through the church.

You can work through these components in any order. If you are working with a group, the following may work well:



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Before Meeting 1:	Read Part 1 of the Discussion Notes: “The Biblical Vision of Eldership”
Meeting 1 (30 minutes):	Watch Video 1 (5 mins) on Biblical Eldership Discuss the questions at the end of Part 1
Between Meeting 1 and 2:	Read Part 2 and 3 of the Discussion Notes: “Calling and Qualifications” and “The Pastoral Charge”
Meeting 2 (30 minutes):	Watch Video 2 (5 mins) on “The Calling, Qualifications, and Charge to Elders” Discuss the questions at the end of Part 3
After Meeting 2:	Listen to the Podcast (20 mins) answering five common questions about biblical eldership. Complete the Assessment (details below).
Throughout the term:	Read J. Rinne, <i>Church Elders</i> , or any of the other books and articles listed in the Recommended Reading section at the end of these notes.

Assessment: Ministry Artefact

Task: Job description for a church elder

Write a 2-page job description for a future church elder, which could be used in the process of recruiting a new elder to your session. In your job description, include a short section on each of the elements listed below. For each element, include reference to biblical texts which provide the basis for your description (esp. 1 Tim 3:1-8 and Tit 1:5-9), and apply the description to the particular needs and opportunities of your congregation and its mission.

(i). role: a brief statement explaining the role of an elder in the life of the church (1 paragraph).



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(ii). qualifications: a list of the qualities required in the prospective elder, both character qualities and gifts / abilities.

(iii). primary tasks: a statement outlining the major tasks that the elder will need to perform (e.g. contribute to session meetings, lead bible study group, visit members of the congregation etc).

Due Date: The last day of the public school term in which the module is studied

Word Length: 2 x A4 pages

Mark: ??

Alignment to Learning Outcomes:

Marking Criteria:

- A clear role description for an elder
- Appropriate use of the Bible in providing a basis for the job description
- Thoughtful application of biblical qualifications and tasks to the needs and opportunities of a particular concrete congregation

[END OF SAMPLE MODULE]

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