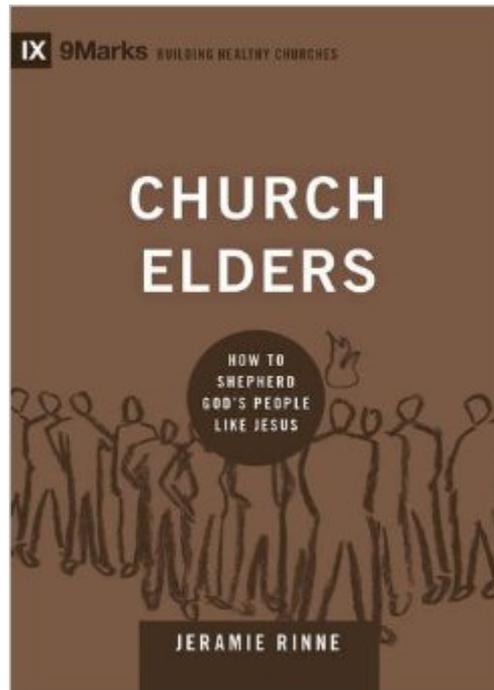


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# Church Elders: How To Shepherd God's People Like Jesus (9marks: Building Healthy Churches)



## Synopsis

What does effective church leadership look like? In this conversational book, pastor Jeramie Rinne sets forth an easy-to-understand "job description" for elders drawn from the Bible's teaching on church leadership. Offering practical guidance for new elders and helping church members better understand and support their spiritual leaders, this succinct volume will encourage elders to embrace their calling with grace, wisdom, and clarity of vision.

## Book Information

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Everything rises or falls with leadership. In the local church, this kind of leadership begins with pastor/elders. As such, I believe that the fruitfulness of our churches is dependent upon men who exert strong, humble, and God-centered leadership. Godly leadership is informed by at least four critical assumptions: It must be anchored to the Bible. It must be guided by unshakeable convictions. It must be based on God's blueprint - for he has an order for his church. It must be intensely spiritual. Church Elders by Jeramie Rinne another fine selection in the 9 Marks Series, edited by Mark Dever. Rinne begins with some basic presuppositions which are designed to guide prospective elders down a path that is both biblical and practical. The author outlines the qualifications for the office of elder as set forth in 1 Timothy 3, Titus 1, and 1 Peter 5. The discussion is elementary but is nonetheless very helpful. In addition, the terms for elder are surveyed (pastor, elder, overseer, and bishop). There can be no misunderstanding that the terms are synonymous, a feature that seems to be misunderstood by many people. Elders are called to shepherd the flock.

Therefore, they are called to: Engage in relationships with the flock. Minister with the intent of growing the flock in Christian maturity. Readers should not be surprised that elders should participate in the teaching ministry of the local church. This fact is the key factor in distinguishing between men who are called to serve as elders as opposed to deacons. The elder must be "able to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2). Rinne makes it clear that this teaching ministry is not limited to the public preaching of God's Word.

"I will argue in chapter 2 that the term pastor (i.e., *shepherd*) refers to the same church position as elder and overseer. Biblically speaking, elders are pastors, who are overseers. The person in a church we typically call a *pastor* is a paid elder, and the person in a church we typically call an *elder* or *overseer* is an unpaid, lay pastor. Elder or shepherd, overseer or pastor, paid or volunteer. It's all the same job." (16) I have never been a member of nor served in a Baptist church that had elders. Therefore, my understanding of the role and responsibilities of elders in Baptist life is limited. It is critical for every minister and church, especially in the Baptist tradition, should turn to Scripture, and not tradition, first in order to shape their local polity. How should churches govern themselves according to Scriptures? In his book *Church Elders: How to Shepherd God's People Like Jesus* (Crossway, 2014) author Jeramie Rinne puts forward the argument that the elder model is the biblical model. He then weaves in some practical and helpful insight on the roles and responsibilities of the office. He describes the book as follows: "This book is intended to provide a concise, biblical job description for elders. I wanted to create an easy-to-read, inspiring summary of the elder task that could be given to a new or potential elder who needs to know what an elder is and does. I hope the book will answer a godly, well-intentioned man who asks: *What's an elder. Now what?* But this book is not just for current or aspiring elders. It's also for church members. The whole congregation needs to understand God's plan for the local church, including his plan for leadership.

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