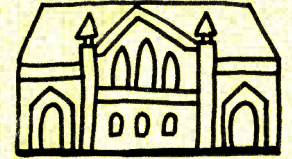


# Calvary Church, Brighton, UK



*An independent Bible-teaching baptist church  
congregation of 40-50 people based on the south coast of England  
This service is being held “in person” and live-streamed  
YouTube Channel: search for “Calvary Brighton”*

Today 17 October 2021 the service is led by Jerome Peirson  
Speaker – Philip Wells pastor/elder  
Subject – Christ and his mature church –  
6. Elders – part 1

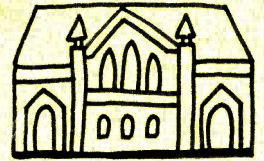
*The local virus infection rate has been reducing, but is now climbing again, so  
we ask you to kindly retain face-coverings while moving within the building  
and while singing. Self-select seating – no advance booking*

***N.B. members please return “Deacon suggestions”***

This evening – 18:30 at church – further discussion on the morning’s  
teaching + zoom “overspill”

*Oct 20<sup>th</sup> 19:30 for 19:45 whole church prayer meeting*

*Next Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> – “inside church picnic”*



Welcome

*Psalm 100, Revelation 4:6-11*

*Song: 1155 There is a higher throne*

Prayer – with Lord's prayer

For the children

Reading – Acts 20:13-37

*Song: 1189 The Lord's my Shepherd*

*Talk – Elders: Jesus and his under-shepherds*

*Song: 299 How sweet the name of Jesus sounds.*

Closing prayer



## **Praise! 1155**

**1. There is a higher throne  
than all this world has known,  
where faithful ones from every tongue  
will one day come.**

**Before the Son we'll stand,  
made faultless through the Lamb;  
believing hearts find promised grace:  
salvation comes.**

***Hear heaven's voices sing,  
their thunderous anthem rings  
through emerald courts and sapphire skies,  
their praises rise.***

***All glory, wisdom, power,  
strength, thanks and honour are  
to God, our King who reigns on high,  
for evermore.***

**2. And there we'll find our home,  
our life before the throne;  
we'll honour him in perfect song  
where we belong.  
He'll wipe each tear-stained eye,  
as thirst and hunger die;  
the Lamb becomes our Shepherd-King:  
we'll reign with him.**

***Hear heaven's voices sing,  
their thunderous anthem rings  
through emerald courts and sapphire skies,  
their praises rise.***

***All glory, wisdom, power,  
strength, thanks and honour are  
to God, our King who reigns on high,  
for evermore.***

## The Lord's prayer



Our Father in heaven

- hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come,

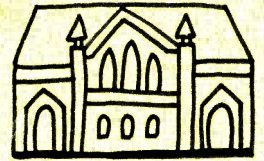
your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Give us today our daily bread,

and forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin  
against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil  
for yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for  
ever and ever. Amen.





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Closing prayer

# How are these 3 connected in the Bible



Clue: Older person

1. E\*D\*R

But can also mean an official

ELDER

# How are these 3 connected in the Bible

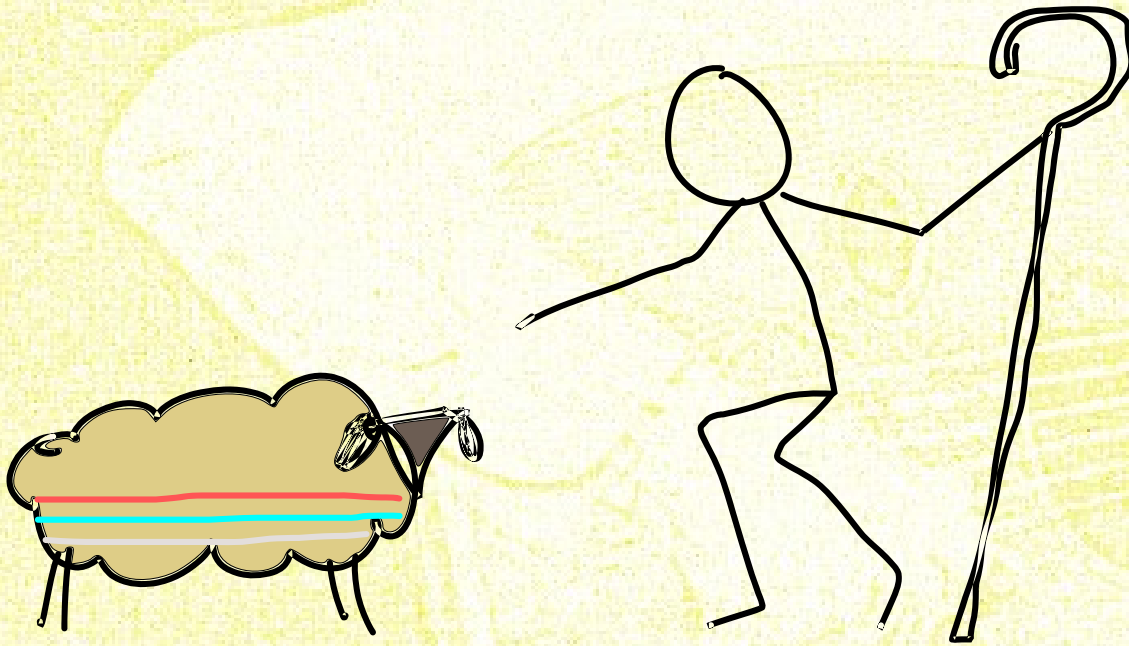


Clue: Looks after animals

2. Sh \_ \_ h \_ \_ d

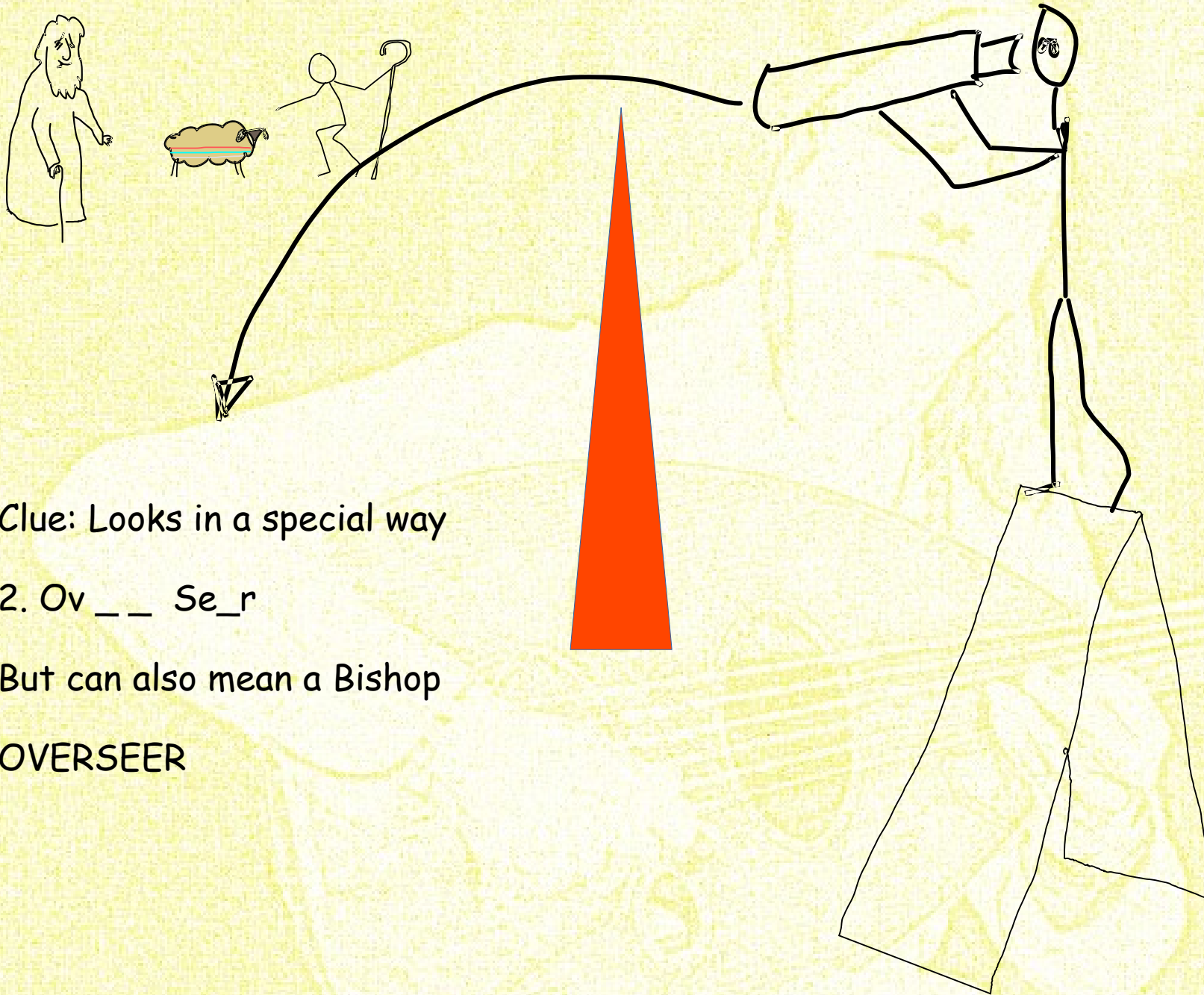
But can also mean a K \_ \_ \_

SHEPHERD





# How are these 3 connected in the Bible



Clue: Looks in a special way

2. Ov \_\_ Se\_r

But can also mean a Bishop

OVERSEER

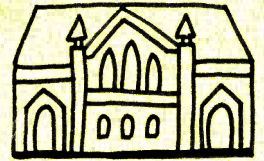
# How are these 3 connected in the Bible



Connection : in the church

The Elders are Overseers and  
pastor/shepherd the people

BISHOP = EBI + SKOPOS



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Closing prayer



# **Praise! 1189**

**The Lord's my Shepherd, I'll not want.  
He makes me lie in pastures green.  
He leads me by the still, still waters,  
his goodness restores my soul.**

***And I will trust in you alone.***

***(I will trust, I will trust in you.)***

***And I will trust in you alone,***

***(I will trust, I will trust in you.)***

***for your endless mercy follows me,***

***(endless mercy follows me,)***

***your goodness will lead me home.***

***(goodness will lead me home.)***

**2. He guides my ways in righteousness,  
and he anoints my head with oil,  
and my cup, it overflows with joy,  
I feast on his pure delights.**

***And I will trust in you alone.***

***(I will trust, I will trust in you.)***

***And I will trust in you alone,***

***(I will trust, I will trust in you.)***

***for your endless mercy follows me,***

***(endless mercy follows me,)***

***your goodness will lead me home.***

***(goodness will lead me home.)***

**3. And though I walk the darkest path,  
I will not fear the evil one,  
for you are with me, and your rod and staff  
are the comfort I need to know.**

***And I will trust in you alone.***

***(I will trust, I will trust in you.)***

***And I will trust in you alone,***

***(I will trust, I will trust in you.)***

***for your endless mercy follows me,***

***(endless mercy follows me,)***

***your goodness will lead me home.***

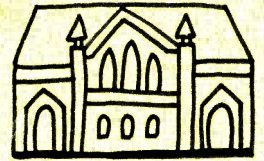
***(goodness will lead me home.)***

**Words and Music by Stuart Townend**

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Closing prayer

# Back to basics ... about the church of Jesus Christ

What is the church?

- Huge old building, needing repair
- Collection of irrelevant ageing people
- Bunch of weird loonies - happy clappy completely in a world of their own, making misleading claims to gullible people and no use to anyone
- Branch of social services

OR ...

–

# Back to basics ... about the church of Jesus Christ

OR

- The people who know and experience the risen Jesus Christ
- the people of God's favour, the forgiven ones, the only people who see the world as it really is
- the people of the future - with their eyes set on something beautiful and better
- God's project - the new humanity being made ready for the glory of the world to come ...
- The place where God is, where he is at work on earth ...



# Back to basics ...

## How does God get people to heaven?

By Jesus

Who alone died on the cross ...

But how does Jesus make this have long term effect in people's lives?

- By his word ... which we feed on
- By his Spirit ... who indwells us
- By his people ... who show Christ's love to us
- By particular people ... who shepherd us
  - pastor/teacher/elder - whom God uses to get us to heaven!

# Eldership - a practical study #1

Aim - to help us find the will of God regarding future ministry at Calvary Church by going back to **first principles**.

Q: does the bible tell us the name and address of the next (future) paid Elder?

A: unfortunately not

BUT - God does promise to guide and provide for his people in accordance with his word, and by his Spirit.

So ... presumably God has a BETTER way than just giving us the email address ...

- this probably involves us in praying,
  - examining ourselves
  - and our situation,
  - learning to trust God,
  - learning more about his ways by experience.

# Eldership

Will aim to touch on the following thoughts:

- Why Elders?
- What are Elders?
- What do they do?
- What are they like?
- How do you get them?
  - but painting with a broad brush

Plan

1. it's not just N.T. that has elders
2. the N.T church did have elders
3. the elders had various titles
4. Jesus is the ultimate [elder]



## Note - two things

1. In this and all other matters we are to have faith in God, even though we cannot see how he will work it out

- Definite part of faith is "waiting"
- "those who wait upon the LORD will renew their strength" Isaiah 40:31

2. Jesus, the Lord, is our good Shepherd, he leads and protects us

- "your rod and your staff, they comfort me"  
Psalm 23:4

# 1. it's not just new testament churches that have elders

## 1. there are places today that still have elders

May 7<sup>th</sup> 2018 Kabul: *Security officials in Afghanistan are working with local tribal elders to trace the seven Indian engineers kidnapped reportedly by Taliban gunmen in the restive northern Baghlan province, media reports said today.*

## 2. Ancient Egypt had elders:

- Genesis 50:7 "so Joseph went up to bury his father. All Pharaoh's officials accompanied him - the dignitaries [elders] of his court and all the dignitaries [elders] of Egypt ..."
- N.B. Elders = LXX Greek - presbyteroi

## 3. Ancient Israel had elders

- Exodus 24:1 "The [God] said to Moses, "Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and 70 of the Elders of Israel" (zaqen = LXX presbyteroi)

## 4. In the time of Jesus Israel had elders:

- Matthew 27:20 "But the chief priests and the **elders** persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to have Jesus executed"

## 5. There are elders in heaven:

- Rev 5:14 then the 4 living creatures said "Amen" and the **elders** fell down and worshipped



# 1. it's not just new testament churches that have elders

*=> all these societies needed and accepted this leadership*

- This is part of human wisdom, human condition*
- i.e. societies do not function properly without some sort of leadership*
- God uses / endorses / expects this*

*=> elders are originally called elders because they are elder/older*

- The assumption is that long life / experience / wisdom are needed = ~ respect*
- Also: this assumption is not always correct (e.g. those who voted against Jesus). ("No fool like an old fool")*
- But being old certainly doesn't automatically disqualify an elder*



## 2. the new testament churches had elders

### 1. Acts 11:20 the church in Antioch Jews and Greeks

- v.25 Barnabas went to get Saul/Paul as vital part of the team
- v.30 [sending help = diakonia = service = money] sending their gift to the **elders** by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.
- i.e. the elders represented/ "headed up"/channel the brothers in Judea

### 2. Acts 14:22,23

- "[encouraged and warning the disciples]
- ... Paul and Barnabas appointed **elders for them in each church**, and with prayer and fasting (Acts 13:3 only) committed them to the Lord in whom they had put their trust."
- Appointed = cheirotoneo = "hand + stretch"
- ?? vote ?? (x2 in NT) / "ordained" AV
- Prayer (=prayer) and fasting (=culturally sadness, seriousness)
- Presumably there is a way to appoint elders that does not depend on first or second generation apostles being personally present!!

## 2. the new testament churches had elders

3. Titus 1:5 "[to Titus] straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint [= set in place] elders in every town [where there is a church]"

N.B. see qualifications

- v.6 *blameless* = not glaring outward flaws
- v.6 *Maritally exemplary* (not necessarily married)
- v.6 "traditional" view of family life - obedient children
- v.7 overseer (episkopos) "household-manager" of God
- v.7 Not self-pleasure, angry, alcoholish, striker, dishonourable-gain,
- v.8 Rather: lover-of-strangers, lover-of-good, sound-minded, just, fitting, self-power-control
- v.9 Holding firmly the faithful word/message as taught
- v.9 So he can **exhort/encourage** others by sound doctrine / healthy teaching AND refute/convict/beat the anti-teachers
- v.10-14 able to **contradict** the false and ruinous teachers



### 3. The elders have various descriptive titles

*N.B. elders are always addressed as plural*

Acts 20:17 Paul speaks to the elders (presbyteroi) of the church in Ephesus

v.28a "Take heed to yourselves

v.28b and all the flock

v.28c over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (episkopos = epi+skopos) .

v.28d Shepherding (poimeno - poimen=shepherd) the church of God, which he bought with his own blood"

*=> in the New testament the leaders are the elders (whatever else we might call them ... Reverend/ vicar / rector / pastor / minister )*

*=> elders are overseers (episkopos = bishop)*

*=> the plural indicates a team ... working together*

*=> their role is to shepherd (~ pastor = shepherd)*

*=> they are appointed by the Holy Spirit - not just the church, and not just the apostles*

*=> this is a demanding task (watch out!)*



4. Jesus is the real Shepherd and Bishop

## **Jesus is the great model elder/overseer/ shepherd**

- He is the good shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep (John 10:15)
- 1 Peter 2:24,25 ... we are returned to the Shepherd (poimen) and Overseer (episkopos) of your souls
- 1 Peter 5:4 to elders (presbyteroi)
- ... shepherd (poimaino) the flock of God ... overseeing (episkopeo) willingly
- ... not-as-a-lord but as examples ...
- v.4 When the Chief Shepherd (archipoimen) shall appear ... crown of glory

## Some conclusions so far

1. it is right and necessary to be concerned for the future church to have elders
2. that is not just one man, but a team
3. being old is not disqualification, but neither is being younger
4. quality of life, type of person, character, matters
5. quality of doctrine matters (i.e. not just "a good heart")
6. ability to deploy the message matters
7. via apostolic word, via congregation, **the Holy Spirit appoints elders**
8. this is a serious spiritual matter
9. Jesus is the ultimate Elder / Overseer / Shepherd

## conclusion

"Good shepherds point people to the Good Shepherd"

Jesus said -

"I am the good shepherd ..."

- it is he who shepherds his people using his under-shepherds
- it is his voice that the sheep hear via the undershepherds
- it is his purposes that are fulfilled via the undershepherds
- it is he who will have all the glory!



## **Praise! 299**

**How sweet the name of Jesus sounds  
in a believer's ear!**

**It soothes our sorrows, heals our wounds  
and drives away our fear.**

**2. It makes the wounded spirit whole,  
and calms each heart oppressed;  
it's manna to the hungry soul,  
and to the weary rest.**

**3. Dear name, the rock on which I build,  
my shield and hiding-place;  
my never-failing treasury, filled  
with boundless stores of grace!**

**4. By you my prayers acceptance gain,  
although with sin defiled;  
Satan accuses me in vain  
since I am God's own child.**

**5. Jesus, my shepherd, brother, friend,  
my Prophet, Priest and King,  
my Lord, my life, my way, my end,  
accept the praise I bring.**

**6. Weak is the effort of my heart,  
and cold my warmest thought;  
but when I see you as you are,  
I'll praise you as I ought.**

*(repeat tune of previous verse)*

**7. Till then I would your love proclaim  
with every fleeting breath;  
and may the music of your name  
refresh my soul in death.**

Author: John Newton (1725-1807)

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