

Understanding Truth

- *I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. 13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, **He will guide you into all truth**; Jn 16:12-13*
- *"If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jn. 8:31-32*
- Much of the truth in the NT Scriptures has to be carefully discerned. Much of it requires:
- *all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 2Th. 2:10-11*

Truth is Scattered in Many Scriptures

- Worship must be in Spirit and truth: Jn 4:23-24
- Praying 1Tim 2:8-15
- Giving 1Cor 16:1-2
- Lord's Supper 1Cor 11:23ff
- Singing Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16
- Preaching Acts 20:7
- It takes careful study and consideration to see the truth on worship.
- God scattered it through many books and verses.
- If one doesn't have a love for truth they have a hard time seeing and understanding it.
- Especially the Lord's Supper and acapella singing.

Truth must be Mined from Scriptures

- It is not always found easily on the surface.
- Most controversial subjects are found here:
- Worship
- Steps of Salvation – Baptism
- Organization of the church
- Work/Mission of the church
- Because the truth of these things are often found very deep within the Scriptures, those who don't love the truth to dig for them will never find them.

Foolish / Weak / Base / Despised

- The **method** God chose to reveal truth (NT letters)
- **Manner** in which those truths are revealed (scattered)
- **Truth** that each controversial doctrine reveals:
- *For you see your calling, brethren, that **not many wise** according to the flesh, **not many mighty**, **not many noble**, are called. 27 But **God has chosen** the **foolish things of the world** to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the **weak things of the world** to put to shame the things which are mighty; 28 and the **base things of the world** and the **things which are despised** God has chosen, 1Cor. 1:26-28*
- The more controversy a doctrine generates the more imperative our love for truth leads us to carefully dig and sift to find it.

All Divisions & Apostasies

- Jesus prayed for unity and oneness among the disciples. (Jn 17)
- Paul Pleaded for it:
- *Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 1Cor 1:10-11*
- The reason we never see this is given by Paul above. The controversies result from God's desire that we love the truth more than our own wisdom.

Church Organization & Mission

- It is exceedingly difficult to put together God's design in these two areas.
- First, like other things they are scattered through the letters.
- Second, they seem to be foolish and weak so when the truth is uncovered it is often despised and rejected.

Church Organization

- *These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; 15 but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 1 Tim 3:14-15*
- *What are “these things” that Paul wrote that make us know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God which is the church of the living God?*
- *This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless ... Likewise deacons must be. 1Tim 3:1-13*
- *The bishop is also an overseer for that is the meaning of the word.*

A Bishop is Also an Elder

- What is a bishop? A deacon? What does he do? We have the qualifications for them, but nothing more.
- They are scattered through the NT letters. If we want to know about this we will have to dig for it.
- *For **this reason I left you in Crete**, that you should **set in order the things that are lacking**, and **appoint elders in every city** as I commanded you - 6 if a man is blameless, ... 7 **For a bishop** must be blameless, Titus 1:5-7*
- *So when they had **appointed elders in every church**, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. Acts 14:23-24*
- Elders who are also Bishops appointed in every church / city (where there is a church).

A Bishop is also a Shepherd

- *From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. 18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, ...*
- Paul called for the elders, only elders came, he told them:
- *Therefore take **heed to yourselves** and to **all the flock**, among which **the Holy Spirit has made you bishops**, to **shepherd the church of God** which He purchased with His own blood. Acts 20:17-18 28-29*
- Elders, with the qualifications of 1Tim. / Titus were made bishops by the Holy Spirit. They are to shepherd the church of God.
- With all this digging, we now know these truths.

Peter Helps Clarify our Understanding

- *The **elders who are among you I exhort**, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 **Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as bishops (overseers)**, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and **when the Chief Shepherd appears**, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. 1Pet 5:1-4*
- Jesus is the chief shepherd of all local churches on earth.
- Elders in every church are to tend the flock as shepherds, but only in the midst of the flock that is among them.
- This is the only charge allotted to them.

Church Autonomy

- A fancy way to say that each church is self-ruling.
- Each church has its own elders/bishops/shepherds
- Each eldership has been given the charge to only be bishops over the flock among them.
- The flock that chose, selected and appointed them.
- Their authority begins and ends there.
- The Holy Spirit made them bishops only over the flock among them.
- Jesus is the chief shepherd and there is no organization or leadership position between Jesus and His churches.

The Autonomy of Local churches

- *The elders among you I exhort, who am a fellow-elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, who am also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 **Tend the flock of God which is among you**, exercising the oversight, not of constraint, but willingly, according to (the will of) God; nor yet for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 neither as lording it over **the charge allotted to you**, but making yourselves ensamples to the flock.4 And when the chief Shepherd shall be manifested, ye shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away. 1 Peter 5:1-4*

The Autonomy of Local churches

- *Tend the flock of God which is among you,*
- The elders among you (in the midst of every church and among the brethren who chose them).
- Who received this letter?
- *Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To the pilgrims of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 1 Pet. 1:1-2*



Bithynia

Pontus

Galatia

Cappadocia

Asia

Troas

Phrygia

Antioch

Ephesus

Pisidia

Iconium

Lystra

Tarsus

Perga

Derbe

Attalia

Cilicia

Lycia

Pamphylia

Antioch

Seleucia

Syria

Cyprus

The Autonomy of Local churches

- *The Elders among you (en – in your midst) you*
- *All the elders in all the congregations in all the provinces are now being addressed.*
- **They are all told... Tend the flock of God among you.**



Bithynia

Pontus

Galatia

Cappadocia

Asia

Troas

Phrygia

Antioch

Ephesus

Pisidia

Iconium

Lystra

Tarsus

Perga

Derbe

Attalia

Cilicia

Lycia

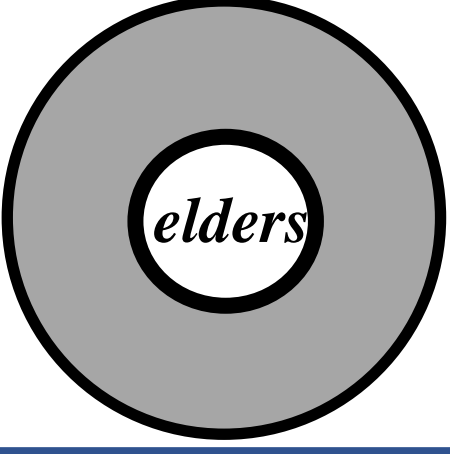
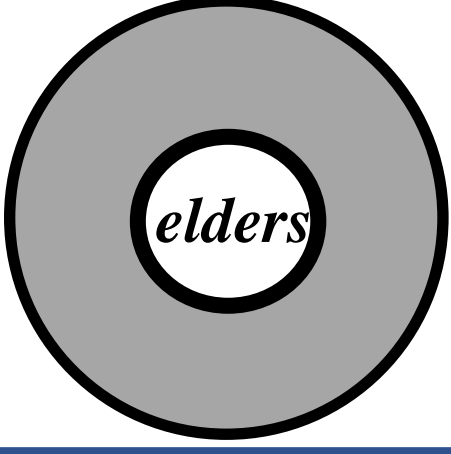
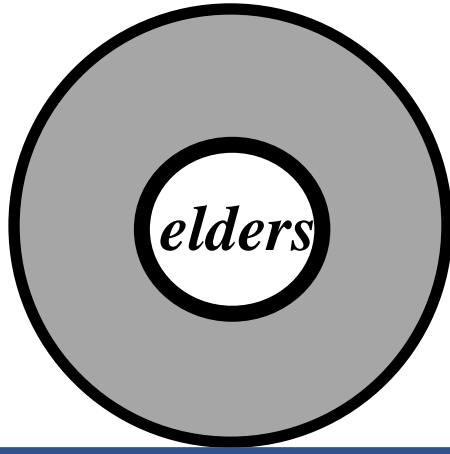
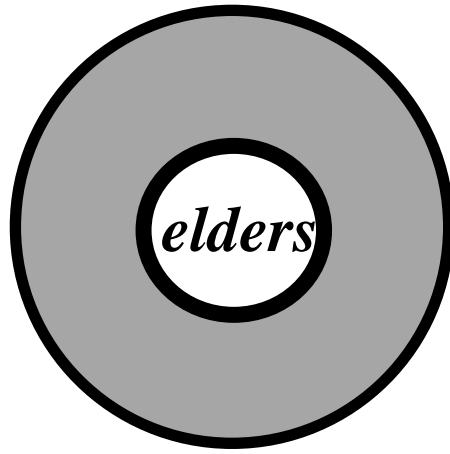
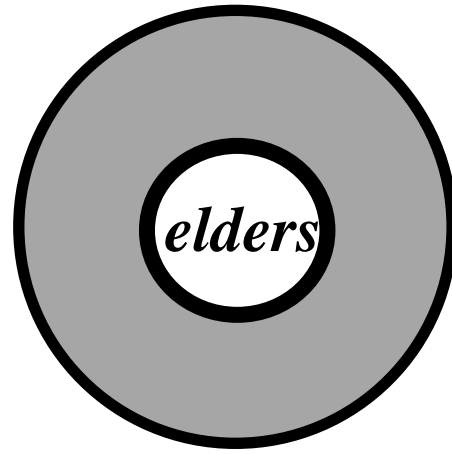
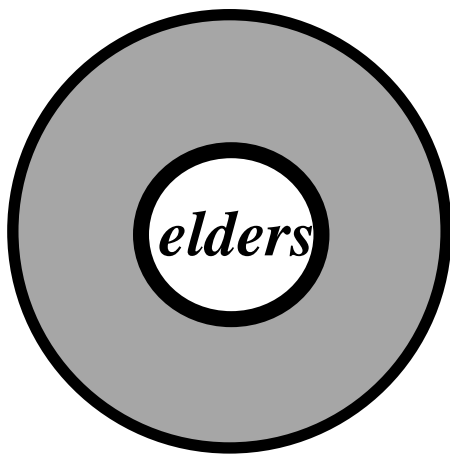
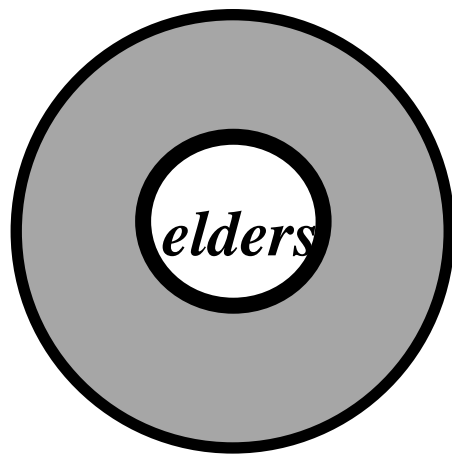
Pamphylia

Antioch

Seleucia

Syria

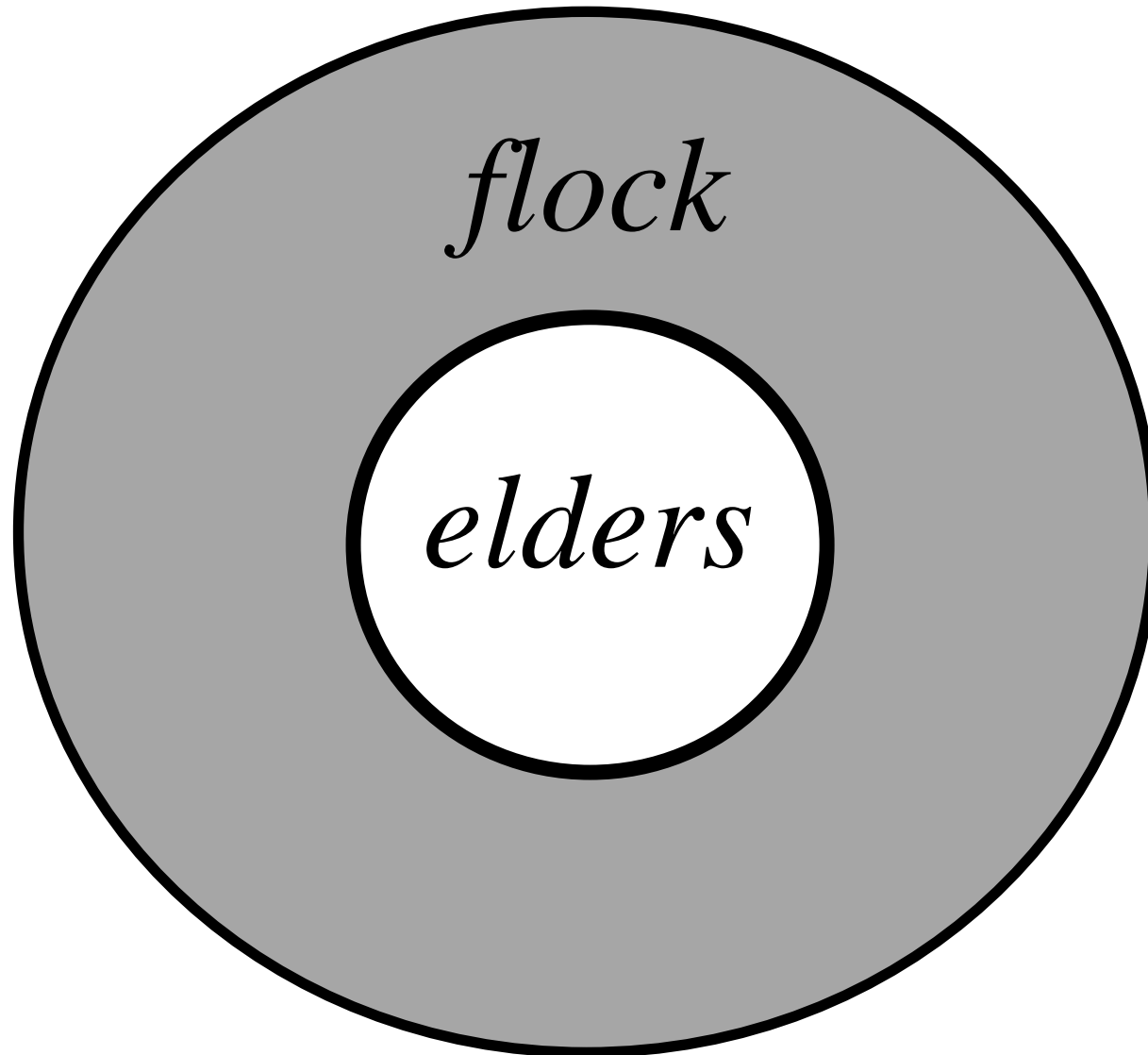
Cyprus



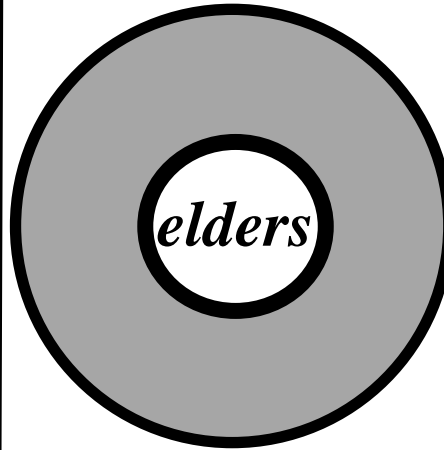
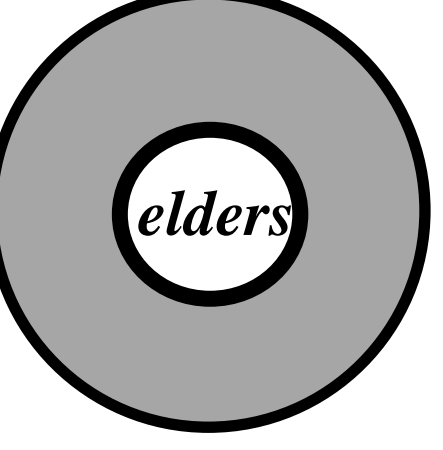
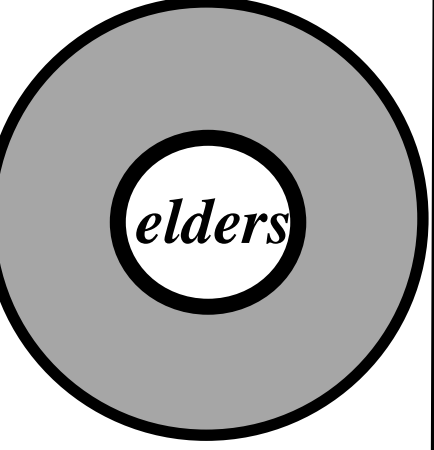
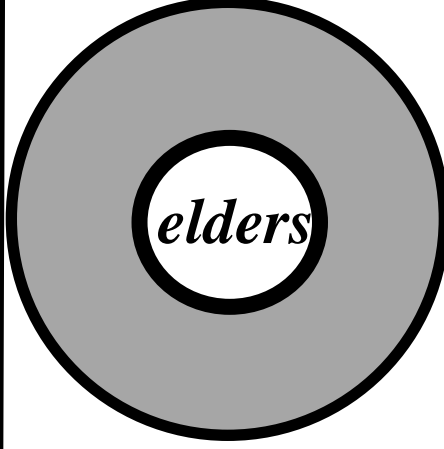
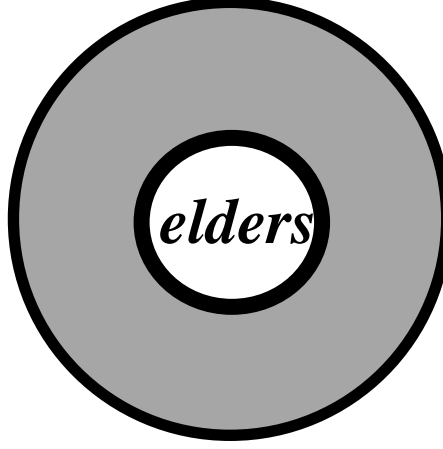
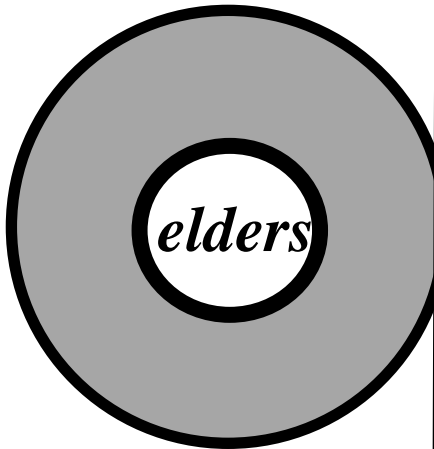
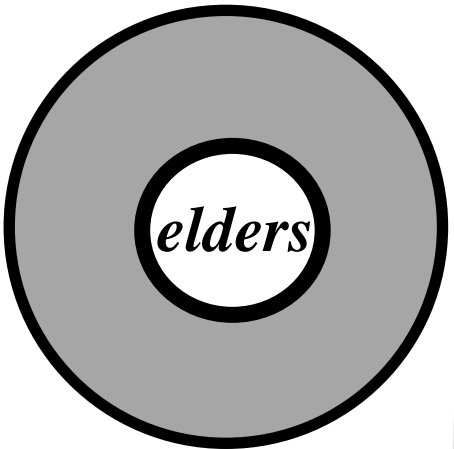
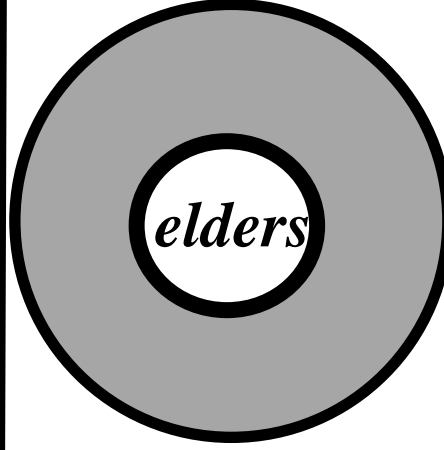
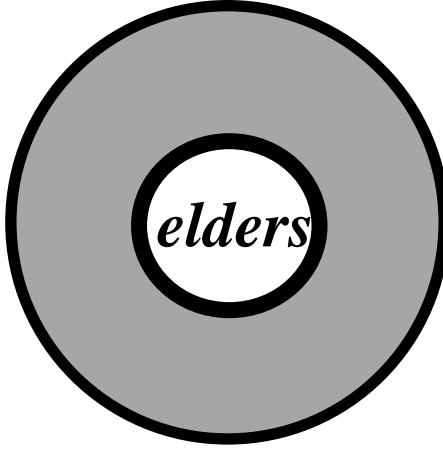
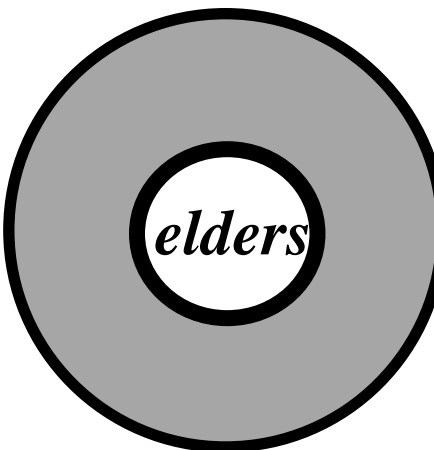
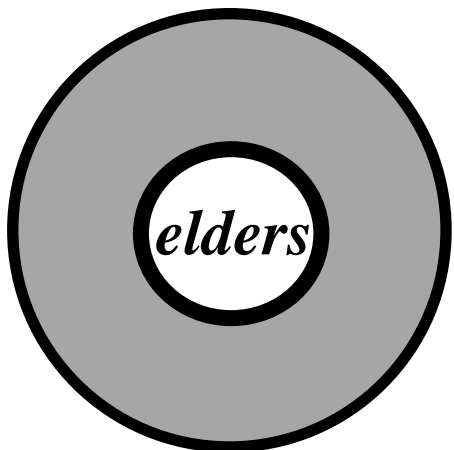
The Autonomy of Local churches

- *The Elders among (en) you*
- *Tend the flock of God which is among (en) you,*
- *Each eldership was given the limits of his authority and work.*
- ***THE FLOCK OF GOD AMONG YOU!***
- *Only in that one single church are they elders in the flock which is among them.*
- *If they go to any other church they go as a brother in Christ ... Elders are only elders in the church that appointed them!*

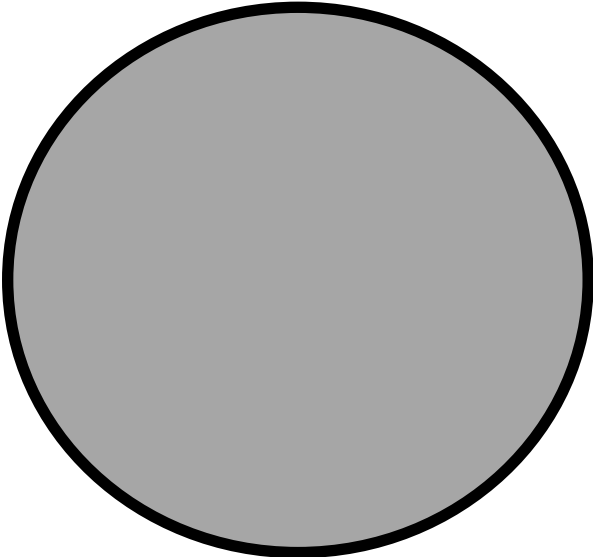
“Tend the flock among (en) you



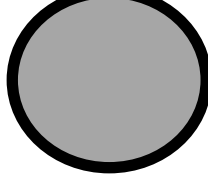
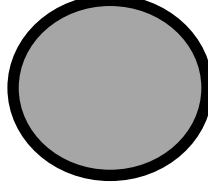
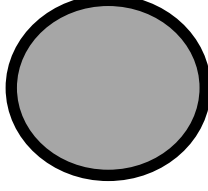
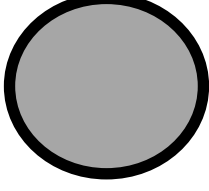
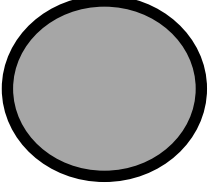
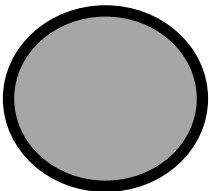
The charge allotted to you



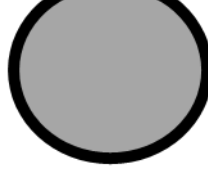
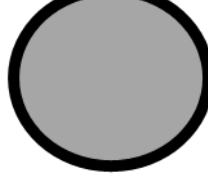
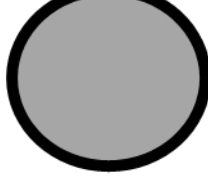
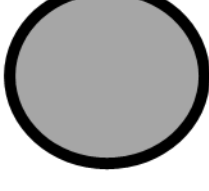
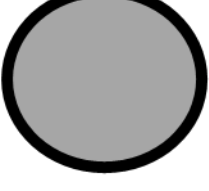
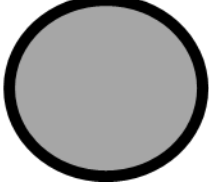
Jesus Christ – Chief Shepherd



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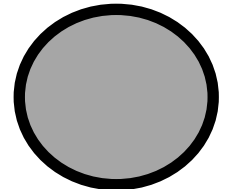
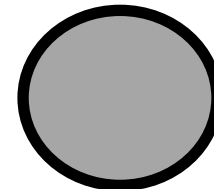
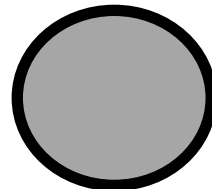
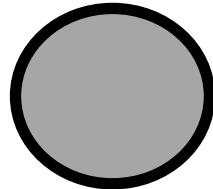
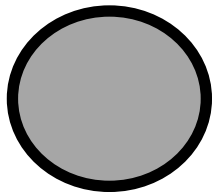
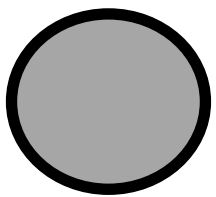
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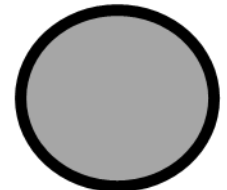
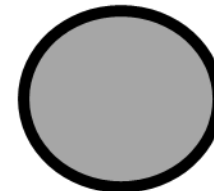
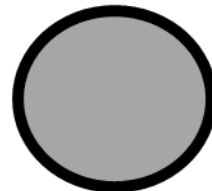
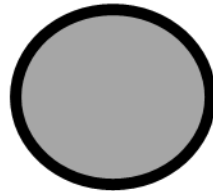
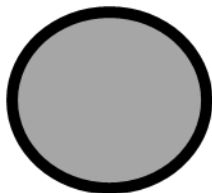
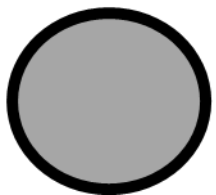
The Charge Allotted to you

The flock among you (in your midst – (en)

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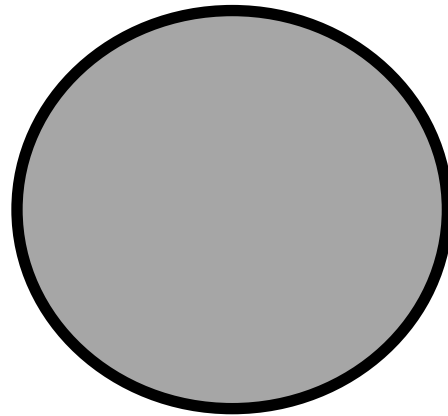
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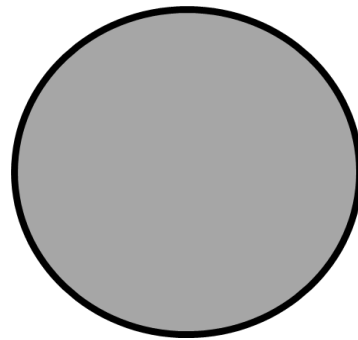
The Autonomy of Local churches

- *I will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them — My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24 And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken. Ezek 34:23-24*

I will establish one shepherd over them

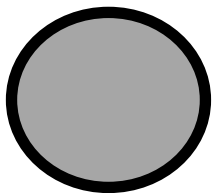


*I, the LORD will
be their God*

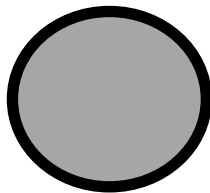


*My Servant
David shall be
their shepherd*

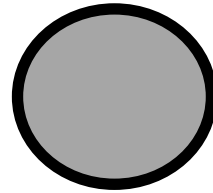
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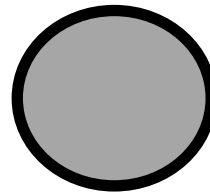
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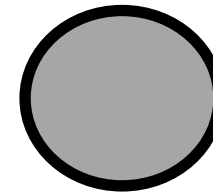
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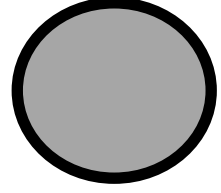
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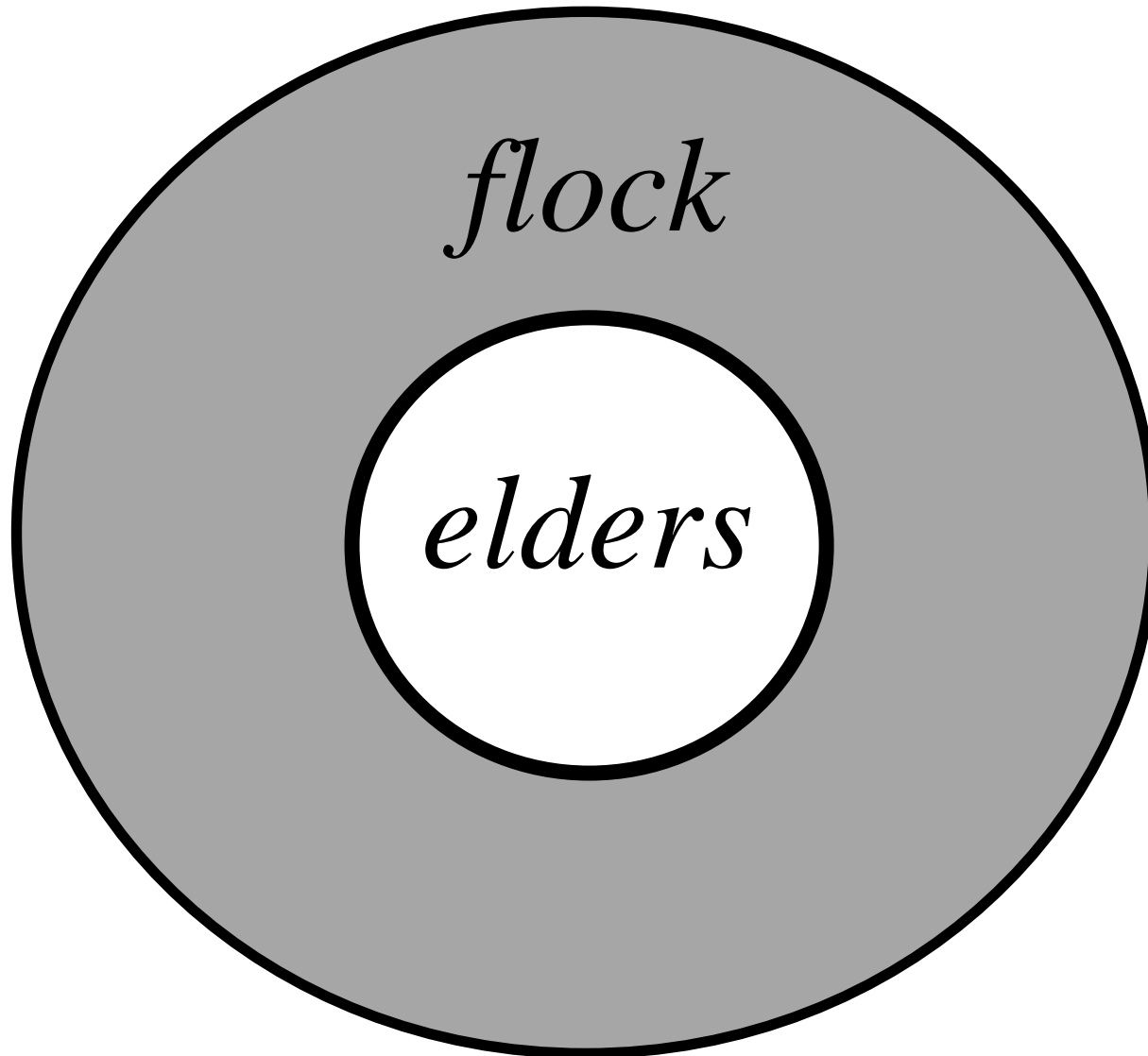
shepherds



The Autonomy of Local churches

- *Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, in which (en – in the midst of) the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the church of the Lord which he purchased with his own blood. Acts 20:28*

“to all the flock among “en” which

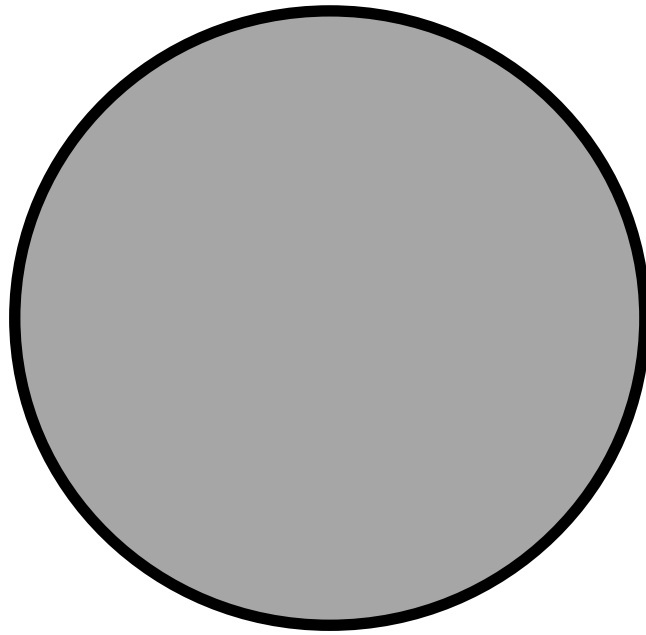


“The Holy Spirit made you overseers”

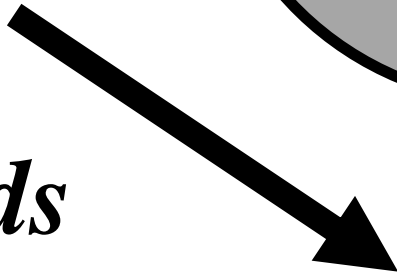
The Autonomy of Local churches

- *The Elders among (en) you*
- *Tend the flock of God which is among (en) you,*
- An illustration from the Old Covent
- *Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. “ ... 7 "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them. 1 Sam 8:5,7*

God – King of Israel



*Judges –
God’s
Shepherds*



shepherd

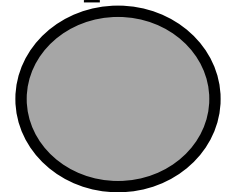
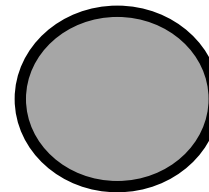
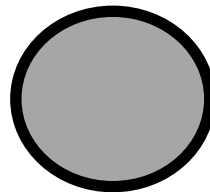
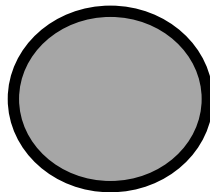
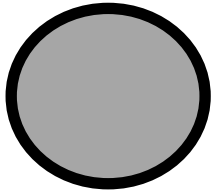
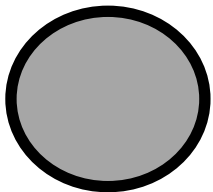
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shepherd

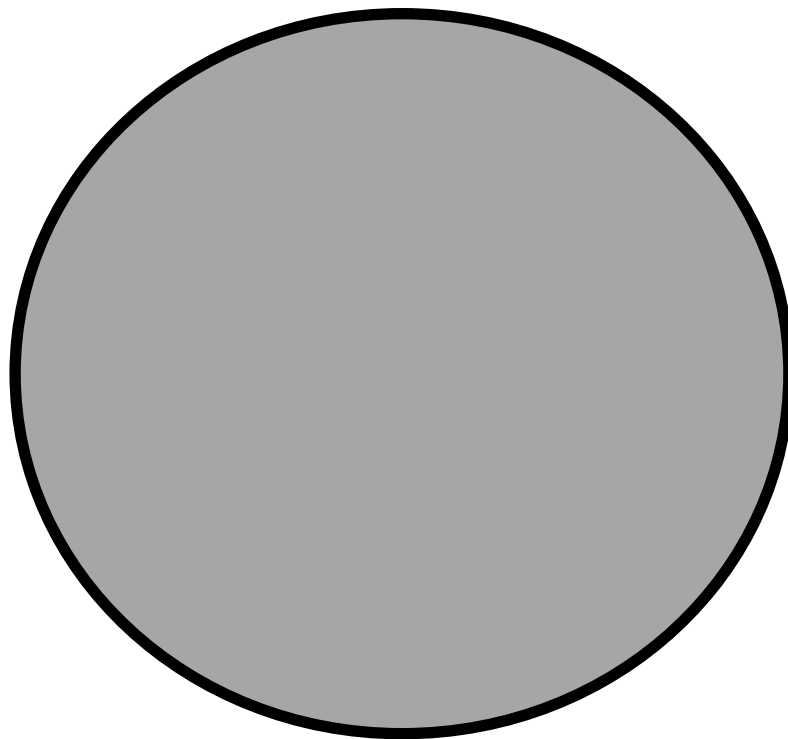
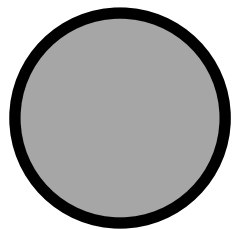
shepherd

shepherd



*God – King
of Israel*

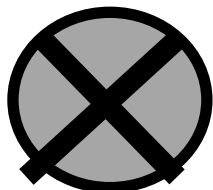
King like rest of Nations



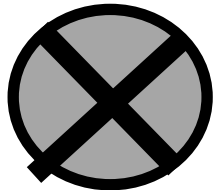
*Human
Substitution*



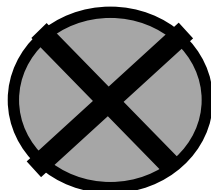
Judges



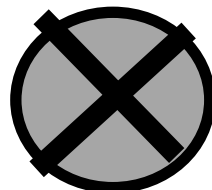
Judges



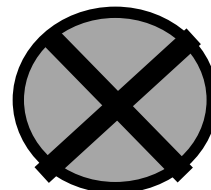
Judges



Judges



Judges



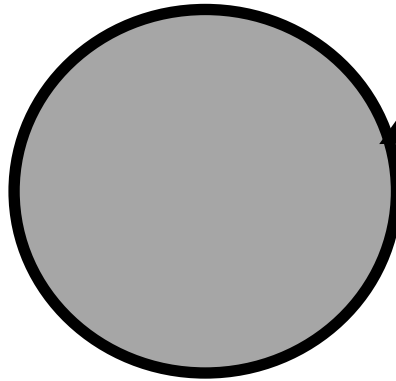
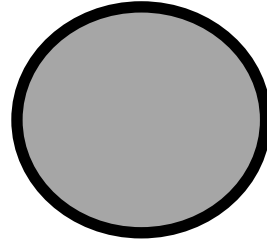
Judges



Jesus Christ

—

Chief Shepherd



*Human
Substitution*

elders

elders

elders

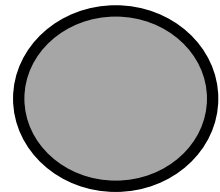
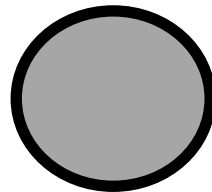
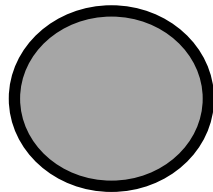
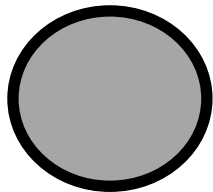
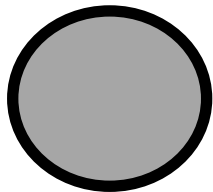
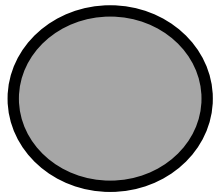
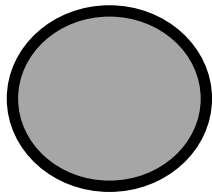
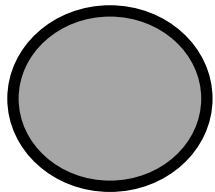
elders

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