

Ministers, Elders, Deacons, and Ordination

Order in God's Church

Pastor Allen Stump

1 Corinthians 14:33 (AV) — 33 God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

John 4:24 (AV) — 24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

Elders: πρεσβύτερος (*presbuteros*)

53.77 πρεσβύτερος, ου m: a person of responsibility and authority in matters of socio-religious concerns, both in Jewish and Christian societies. . . . In some languages πρεσβύτερος is best rendered as ‘older leaders,’ but in other languages the more appropriate term would be the equivalent of ‘counselor,’ since it would be assumed that counselors would be older than the average person in a group as well as having authority to lead and direct activities. (*Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament based on Semantic Domains*, v. 1, pp 542, 543)

Matthew 15:2 (AV) — 2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

Matthew 26:59 (AV) — 59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;

Acts 11:30 (AV) — 30 Which also they [disciples] did,
and sent it [relief] to the elders by the hands of
Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 14:23 (AV) — 23 And when they [Barnabas and Paul] had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

Acts 20:17 (AV) — 17 And from Miletus he [Paul] sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

1 Peter 5:1 (AV) — 1 The elders which are among you I [the Apostle Peter] 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 John 1 (AV) — 1 The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;

Bishop: ἐπίσκοπος (*episkopos*)

Episkopos: from 1909 (ἐπί ἐπί) and 4649 (σκοπός skopos a watchman, to look carefully, consider); a superintendent, an overseer: — guardian(1), overseer(2), overseers(2).

Philippians 1:1 (AV) — 1 Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops (*episkopos*) and deacons:

1 Timothy 3:1–2 (AV) — 1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a **bishop**, he desireth a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

1 Peter 2:24 (AV) — 24 Who his own self bare our sins
in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins,
should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye
were healed.

Elders are Bishops

Titus 1:5–7 (AV) — 5 For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain **elders** (*presbuteros*) 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. 7 For [Greek: γάρ *gar*] a **bishop** (*episkopos*) must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

1 Timothy 3:1–3 (AV) — 1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. 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;

1 Timothy 3:4–7 (AV) — 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.

Titus 1:5, 6 (AV) — 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.

Titus 1:7–9 (AV) — 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.

Important Characteristics of Elders

- Character Matters
- Self-Control Matters
- Maturity Matters
- Sound Doctrine and the Ability to Teach Matters
- Care for People Matters

1 Timothy 5:22 (AV) — 22 Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins:
keep thyself pure.

Deacons: διάκονος (*diakonos*)

Philippians 1:1 (AV) — 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**:

1 Timothy 3:8–13 (AV) — 8 Likewise must the **deacons** be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a **deacon**, being found blameless. 11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 12 Let the **deacons** be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have used the office of a **deacon** well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Romans 16:1 (AV) — 1 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant [διάκονον *diakonon*] of the church which is at Cenchrea:

Matthew 23:11 (AV) — 11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your *servant*.

Mark 9:35 (AV) — 35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and *servant* of all.

minister,

servant,

διάκονος
servant; minister

deacons

Matthew 20:26 (AV) — 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister (*diakonos*);

Romans 13:4 (AV) — 4 For he [ruler] is the minister (*diakonos*) of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister (*diakonos*) of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

1 Corinthians 3:5 (AV) — 5 Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers (*diakonoi* from *diakonos*) by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?

2 Corinthians 3:6 (AV) — 6 Who also hath made us able ministers (*diakonous*) of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

Acts 6:1–3 (AV) — 1 And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. 2 Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. 3 Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

Acts 6:4–6 (AV) — 4 But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. 5 And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: 6 Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, **they laid their hands on them.**

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.” This advice was followed, and by prayer and the laying on of hands, seven chosen men were solemnly set apart for their duties as deacons. (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 89.1)

The appointment of the seven to take the oversight of special lines of work, proved a great blessing to the church. These officers gave careful consideration to individual needs as well as to the general financial interests of the church, and by their prudent management and their godly example they were an important aid to their fellow officers in binding together the various interests of the church into a united whole.

(Acts of the Apostles, p. 89.2)

That this step was in the order of God, is revealed in the immediate results for good that were seen. “The word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.” This ingathering of souls was due both to the greater freedom secured by the apostles and to the zeal and power shown by the seven deacons.

The fact that these brethren had been ordained for the special work of looking after the needs of the poor, did not exclude them from teaching the faith. On the contrary, they were fully qualified to instruct others in the truth, and they engaged in the work with great earnestness and success. (*Acts of the Apostles*, p. 89.3)

Acts 8:12–14 (AV) — 12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. 14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:

Acts 8:26 (AV) — 26 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.

Acts 8:38 (AV) — 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

**ordained ministers are authorized to administer EW
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I saw that this door at which the enemy comes in to perplex and trouble the flock can be shut. I inquired of the angel how it could be closed. He said, “The church must flee to God's Word and become established upon gospel order, which has been overlooked and neglected.” This is indispensably necessary in order to bring the church into the unity of the faith. I saw that in the apostles’ day the church was in danger of being deceived and imposed upon by false teachers.

Therefore **the brethren chose men** who had given good evidence that they were capable of ruling well their own house and preserving order in their own families, and who could enlighten those who were in darkness. Inquiry was made of God concerning these, and then, according to the mind of the church and the Holy Ghost, **they were set apart by the laying on of hands.**

Having received their commission from God and having the approbation of the church, they went forth baptizing in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and administering the ordinances of the Lord's house, often waiting upon the saints by presenting them the emblems of the broken body and spilt blood of the crucified Saviour, to keep fresh in the memory of God's beloved children His sufferings and death. (*Early Writings*, p. 100.2)

Ministers

Matthew 20:26 (AV) — 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister (*diakonos*);

Colossians 4:7 (AV) — 7 All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister (*diakonos*) and fellowservant in the Lord:

Ordination

Mark 3:14 (AV) — 14 And he ordained [*poieō*] twelve,
that they should be with him, and that he might send
them forth to preach,

4160. ποιέω *poieō*; a prim. word; to make, do:

John 15:16 (AV) — 16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained [*tithēmi*] you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

5087. τίθημι *tithēmi*; from a prim. root θε- the-; to place, lay, set:—appointed(6), assign

Acts 14:23 (AV) — 23 And when they had ordained [*cheirotoneō*] them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed.

5500. χειροτονέω *cheirotoneō*; from 5495 and τείνω *teinō* (to stretch); to vote by stretching out the hand, to appoint:

Titus 1:5 (AV) — 5 For this cause left I thee in Crete,
that thou shouldest set in order the things that are
wanting, and ordain [*kathistēmi*] elders in every city, as I
had appointed thee:

2525. καθίστημι *kathistēmi*; from 2596 and 2476; to set
in order, appoint:—appoint(1), appointed(4), appoints(1),
escorted(1), made(5), makes(1), put ... in charge(4), put
in charge(3), render(1), set(1).

1 Timothy 4:14 (AV) — 14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery

The End