God’s Design For The Church
“... [Ambrose] complains in the following terms: the old synagogue and afterward the church, had elders, without whose counsel nothing was done. It has fallen out of use, by what negligence I do not know...”

John Calvin  – 1600 A.D.
Who Are God’s Leaders?

Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to those in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons... all the saints.

Philippians 1:1

All of us

God’s Leaders
Overview - How Are They Unique?

Elders

Their Ministry:
- Shepherding
- Skilled Teaching
- Overseeing

Key Qualifications:
- Skilled Teacher
- Hospitable to strangers
- Not a new believer
- Children are believers

Deacons

Their Ministry:
- Helping Elders

Key Qualifications:
- Clean conscience
- Not double tongued
### Where They Appear In The N.T.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elder</th>
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Appear Together

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## Elders = Shepherds = Overseers

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Same Group of Men
## All Aspects of Leadership Covered

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
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<th>Deacons</th>
<th>Together</th>
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</table>
| Ministry Established       | Acts 11:30  
Acts 14:23  
Titus 1:5 | Acts 6:1-6                          | Phil. 1:1             |
| Qualifications Given       | 1 Tim. 3:1-7  
Titus 1:6-9 | 1 Tim. 3:8-12                        |            |
| Responsibilities Implied & Stated | Acts 15:2-23  
Acts 20:17-28  
1 Tim. 5:17-19  
James 5:14  
1 Peter 5:1-5 | Acts 6:1-6  
1 Tim. 3:12 |            |
| Call To Honor              | 1 Thess. 5:12-14  
1 Tim. 5:17-19  
Heb. 13:7, 17 | 1 Thess. 5:12-14  
Heb. 13:7 |            |
| Guidelines For Discipline  | 1 Tim. 5:17-19 |                       |            |
Selection Criteria
## According To God’s Perspective

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<td>&quot;not an arguer&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;does not love money&quot;</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>&quot;one who manages his household well&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;children obey him with respect&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;not a new believer&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;good testimony to the outside world&quot;</td>
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<td>&quot;one who is a believer &amp; consistently fair&quot;</td>
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NOT: wealth, position, power, friendship, charisma or skills . . .

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Deacons – Fewer Qualifications

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<td>“free from love of money”</td>
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<td>“his conscience does not condemn him about his relationship with Christ”</td>
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“Able To Teach” – Elders Only

Apt to Teach - διδακτιχος:

“skillful in teaching”¹ - Leading Greek Lexicons, J. Calvin

“highly skilled teacher”² - J. MacArthur

“one qualified to teach”³ - A. T. Robertson

“not merely given to teaching, but . . . skilled in it”⁴ - K. Wuest

“Apt to teach’ includes both the willingness and the skill and ability to teach.”⁵ - D. Heibert

Elders must be skilled in teaching the Word and they must know the book.

This is not casual, lifestyle, or academic teaching.

Elders’ Ministry?
Jesus called Peter – Teach & Shepherd

Jesus said to Simon Peter, “... do you truly love me?” (John 21:16-17)

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The Priority
Acts 6:1-2, 4

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said,

"It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables . . . But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

The Priority
The Elders’ Priority – Word & Teaching

Let the elders who . . .

lead\(^1\) well
be considered worthy of double honor,
especially those who

work hard at the word and teaching.

1 Timothy 5:17

\(^1\)Greek Word = “stand before, protective leadership care for, help, give aid”
Peter Called Himself – Your Fellow Elder

Shepherd the flock of God . . . “

The Priority

- serve as overseers
- serve willingly
- not for gain
- not as lords
- but as examples . . .

1 Peter 5:2
Summary – Elders’ Ministry

Shepherding

Word & Teaching

. . . Oversight is 2nd priority . . .
Usually Forgotten...
God’s Ministries Involve Everyone

GOD

Glorify & Love God
Eph. 3:21
Matt. 22:37

Individual Christians

Elders = Teach, Lead, and Shepherd
Deacons = Help Elders

Evangelism
Acts 1:8

Make Disciples
Matt. 28:19-20

Teaching Fellowship Communion Prayer
Acts 2:42

Unbelievers

Christians

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“to Apphia our sister, and to Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house”

Philemon 2

God wants a committed, supportive team ministry

Church Was Local

Multiple Elders In Every Church

Acts 11:30
Acts 14:23
Acts 15:2-23
Acts 16:4
Acts 20:17
Acts 21:18
1 Tim. 5:17-19
Titus 1:5

“sending their gift to the elders . . .”
“elders in every church”
“received by . . . the elders”
“determined by the . . . elders”
“called for the elders”
“went with us into . . . the elders”
“Let the elders”
“appoint elders in every city”

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Team Decisions - Spirit Led Unanimity

Principle From Acts 15

- Issue Presented and Discussed
- Unanimous Decision Reached

“It seemed good to . . .”

- Unanimity comes by the Spirit.
- Requires Spirit-filled elders.
- Disagreement means that either an elder is in sin or the Spirit is not in the decision
- Principle is found in Rom. 12:16; 15:5; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 13:11

. . . the apostles and the elders, with the whole church . . . v. 22
. . . us, having become of one mind,. . . v. 25
. . . the Holy Spirit . . . v. 28
Elders Are To Be Spiritual Models

An elder is one who is FOLLOWABLE . . .

Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.

Hebrews 13:7

MIMIC = mimeomai
Elders To Be Examples & Mentors

. . . In Life & Ministry

. . . set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

1 Timothy 4:11-12

. . . Mentoring

Train faithful men . . .

2 Timothy 2:2

Peoples’ Response – Respect & Trust

. . . respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work.

1 Thess. 5:12-13
Elders Affect The Church’s Health . . .

Tone of the church is a barometer of the leaders’ spiritual lives

- Pursuing An Intimate Friendship With God
  - Seeking Him
  - Prayer
  - Word of God
  - Repentance
  Phil. 3:8

- Spiritual Maturity
  Jer. 9:23-24; 29:12-14

- Personal holiness
  Eph. 6:18

- Mutual accountability among the elders
  Ex. 33:13

- Faithful in ministry
  1 John 1:9

  1 Tim. 3:1-8
  1 Tim. 5:19-20
  Gal. 2:11-13
  Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 5:17
Elders Serve The Great Shepherd

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His Priority
Moses Was God’s Servant . . . .

- But He sinned in HOW he hit the rock
- So Moses could not enter the promised land
- He pleaded with God to let him enter
- His ministry abruptly ended

Num. 20:7-13
Num. 20:12
Deut. 3:23-26
Deut. 34:5-7

God wants “Moseses” who are “Yes Men” . . .