



Introduction

Prologue

The organization of the church was very simple in the first centuries after CHRISTOS’ First Coming. It largely followed the biblical example with precisely two offices.

Then we read sometime after 140 AD the letters bearing the name of Ignatius, which for the first time proposed the unbiblical 'bishop' office in the place of CHRISTOS, explicitly in addition to the **Presbyters and the Deacons**. But it would take another ~200 years before the Gothic Bible translated the one word 'APXIEPEYC' (High / Chief priest) in 7 different variants, thus facilitating the creation of a whole plethora of new offices. Not coincidentally its translator Wulfila, was a Roman Catholic 'Confessor of the Faith' and 'Pontifex and Primas', and also not coincidentally we saw in the exact time around 366 AD the first Pope of the See of Rome conveniently appropriating the new title of a 'Bishop', while further creating a whole new plethora of church offices and blurring the distinctions between the biblical offices.

Since then, little has changed. What were originally 2 offices with only CHRISTOS above them, has since then changed to at least **nine offices in the Roman Catholic church**, to more than **14 offices in the Mormon church**, and has culminated in more than **22 offices in the early Pentecostal church with their 'Apostles'**, namely the Catholic Apostolic church (see the special discernment at www.fitforfaith.ca/pentecostalism).

And even those churches that continue to adhere to only the two biblical offices are affected by enormous confusion. In many, if not most countries, the concept of a single-pastorate has taken over the churches, especially after churches adapted to the world and began **sending their future pastors to fee-based universities instead of discipling them according to the biblical pattern**. This, in turn, required salaries to offset the unbiblical debt. While the Bible showed us the example of the weight of the pastorate being laid on several shoulders, this has led to a situation in many churches today where the very same pastor preaches week after week and year after year, where there are elders who never preach at all, and where the senior pastor quickly suffers from stress and exhaustion. If we would only follow the biblical example as briefly laid out in the following study, we could avoid many problems.

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Church Offices

There are 3 functional levels in a church:

- Presbyters
- Deacons (Assistants to 1.)
- Congregation (Saints)

There are tasks related to Spiritual Gifts (separate study; some gifts may have changed):

- Apostleship (not anymore the office of eye-witnesses)
 - Evangelists
 - Prophets
 - Teachers
- et al.

Paul and Timothy, servants of CHRISTOS IESOUS,

To all the **saints** in CHRISTOS IESOUS who are at Philippi, with the **overseers** [G1985, ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΙΟC, episkopos, a superintendent, overseer] and **deacons**:

Grace to you and peace from THEOS our FATHER and KYRIOS IESOUS CHRISTOS.

Php
1:1-2

And He Himself gave some as **apostles** [G652 ΑΠΟCΤΟΛΟC, apostolos] and some as **prophets** [ΠΡΟΦΗΤΗC, prophetes] and some as **evangelists** [G2099, ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙCΤΑC, euaggelistas] and some as **pastors** [G4165 ΠΟΙΜΑΙΝΩ poimaino, to tend as a shepherd, rule, pastor] and **teachers** [G1320, ΔΙΔΑCΚΑΛΟC, didaskalos, instructor, teacher] for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of CHRISTOS, until we all reach the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the SON of THEOS, to a mature man, to a measure of the maturity of the fullness of CHRISTOS, so that we may no longer be infants, tossed about by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching, by the trickery of people, by craftiness with reference to the scheming of deceit. But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow into him with reference to all things, who is the head, CHRISTOS, from whom the whole body, joined together and held together by every supporting ligament, according to the working by measure of each single part, the growth of the body makes for the building up of itself in love.

Eph
4:11-16



	Comment	Scripture	
1. Elders / Overseers / Shepherds (Pastors)	Each church has to consist of a plurality of elders / overseers who shepherd the flock. Nowhere in Scripture do we find a single pastor for one local assembly. The words ‘PRESBUTEROS’ (Elder), ‘EPISKOPOS’ (Overseer), ‘POIMAINO’ (Shepherd / Pastor) all refer to the same office (see the passages marked in green , which show the overlapping and interchangeable use of those terms).		
	Plurality of Elders / Overseers / Shepherds (Pastors)!		
	Now in the church at Antioch there were [5, five] prophets and teachers : [1] Barnabas, [2] Simeon called Niger, [3] Lucius of Cyrene, [4] Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch), and [5] Saul. While they were worshiping KYRIOS and fasting, the HOLY SPIRIT said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” And after they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.	Act 13:1-3	
	And we ask you, brothers, to know those laboring among you and leading you in KYRIOS and admonishing you, and to esteem them very abundantly in love, because of their work.	1The 5:12	
	Be mindful of those leading you , who spoke to you the Word of THEOS, who, considering the outcome of [their] behavior, imitate [their] faith: IESOUS CHRISTOS – the same yesterday and today and for all ages. [...] Be obedient to those leading you , and be subject, for these watch for your souls, as about to give account, that they may do this with joy, and not sighing, for this [is] unprofitable to you. [...] Greet all those leading you , and all the holy ones [congregation].	Heb 13:7-24	
	[General & vague reference, but a good reminder how a pastor can avoid burn-out:] And I have turned, and I see a vain thing under the sun: There is one, and there is not a second ; even son or brother he hath not, and there is no end to all his labour! His eye also is not satisfied with riches, and [he saith not], ‘For whom am I labouring and bereaving my soul of good?’ This also is vanity, it is a sad travail. The two [are] better than the one , in that they have a good reward by their labour. For if they fall, the one raiseth up his companion, but woe to the one who falleth and there is not a second to raise him up! Also, if two lie down, then they have heat, but how hath one heat? And if the one strengthen himself, the two stand against him; and the three-fold cord is not hastily broken .	Ecc 4:12	
	EPISKOPOS: a superintendent, an overseer G1980(a) ΕΠΙΣΚΕΠΤΟΜΑΙ, episkeptomai: to look upon, inspect, visit, look out, select . G1984, ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ, episkope, From episkeptomai: inspection, superintendence ; specially, the Christian ‘episcopate’, visitation. G1985, ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ, episkopos, From epi (on, upon) and skopos (watchman): a superintendent , i.e. Christian officer in genitive case charge of a (or the) church (literally or figuratively), overseer . ΕΠΙ + ΣΚΟΠΟΣ epi + skopos over + seer / guard / scout / patrol / vigil	Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock among which the HOLY SPIRIT has appointed you as overseers , to shepherd [G4165 ΠΟΙΜΑΙΝΩ, poimaino, to tend as a shepherd , to feed (cattle), rule, pastoring] the church of THEOS which he obtained through the blood of his own Son. The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires overseership , he desires a noble task. 2Therefore the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, 5for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for THEOS' church? 6He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. 7Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. For an overseer , as THEOS' steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trust-worthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.	Act 20:28 1Tim 3:1-7 Tit 1:7-9
	PRESBUTEROS: an elder G4245 ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΟС, presbuteros: an elder , aged person G4850 CYMIPECBYTEPOC, sumpresbuteros: a fellow elder (sum / sun = fellow; compare also sundoulos = fellow slave)	Paul and Barnabas appointed elders [plural] for them in each church , praying and fasting as they entrusted them to KYRIOS, in whom they had believed. And after engaging these men in sharp debate, Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. [...] 4On their arrival in Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and apostles and elders , to whom they reported all that THEOS had done through them. 5But some believers from the party of the Pharisees stood up and declared, “The Gentiles must be circumcised and required to obey the law of Moses.” 6So the apostles and elders met to look into this matter. [...] 22Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church , decided to select men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas called Barsabbas and Silas, two leaders among the brothers, 23and sent them with this letter: The apostles and the elders , your brothers, To the brothers among the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings. As they went from town to town, they delivered the decisions [Jerusalem Assembly] handed down by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. When we arrived in Jerusalem, the brothers welcomed us joyfully. The next day Paul went in with us to see James, and all the elders were present. 19Paul greeted them and recounted one by one the things that THEOS had done among the Gentiles through his ministry. Elders who lead effectively are worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching . 18For the Scripture says, “Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,” and, “The worker is worthy of his wages.” 19Do not entertain an accusation against an elder , except on the testimony of two or three witnesses. ... appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. 6An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, having children who are believers and who are not open to accusation of indiscretion or insubordination. 7As THEOS' steward, an overseer [G1984, ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ, episkope, superintendence] must be above reproach ... Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders [plural] of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of KYRIOS. So I exhort the elders [G4245] among you, as a fellow elder [G4850] and a witness of the sufferings of CHRISTOS, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of THEOS that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly ...	Act 14:23 Act 15:2-23 Act 20:17 Act 21:18 1Tim 5:17-19 Tit 1:5-7 Jam 5:14 1Pet 5:1-5
	POIMAINO: a shepherd G4165 ΠΟΙΜΑΙΝΩ, poimaino: to shepherd, rule, pastor G4166, ΠΟΙΜΗΝ, poimen, a shepherd , feeder, protector, and ruler of a flock of men.	IESOUS asked a second time, “Simon son of John, do you love Me?” “Yes, KYRIOS,” he answered, “You know I love You.” IESOUS told him, “ Shepherd My sheep.” 17IESOUS asked a third time, “Simon son of John, do you love Me?” Peter was deeply hurt that IESOUS had asked him a third time, “Do you love Me?” “KYRIOS, You know all things,” he replied. “You know I love You.” IESOUS said to him, “Feed My sheep. Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock among which the HOLY SPIRIT has appointed you as overseers, to shepherd the church of THEOS which he obtained through the blood of his own SON. And it was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12to equip the saints for works of ministry and to build up the body of CHRISTOS, 13until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the SON of THEOS, as we mature to the full measure of the stature of CHRISTOS. So I exhort the elders [G4245 ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΟС, presbuteros: an elder] among you, as a fellow elder [G4850 CYMIPECBYTEPOC, sumpresbuteros: a fellow elder] and a witness of the sufferings of CHRISTOS, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of THEOS that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as THEOS would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory. 5 Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “THEOS opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”	Act 20:28 Eph 4:11 1Pet 5:1-5

Minimum Age For A Presbyter?	The Bible does not specify a minimum age for a Presbyter. But we will now look at some principles which provide us with a good orientation.		
	1. The biblical Age of Accountability is 20 years (see also the separate study which elaborates in great detail on this). We can safely assume that this is the bare minimum for any public teaching.	... and they summoned the entire community on the first day of the second month. And they registered themselves among their clans according to their families, according to the number of names from those twenty years old and above individually ...	Num 1:18
		... in this desert your corpses will fall, and all your counted ones, according to all your number, from twenty years old and above who grumbled against me.	Num 14:29
		... the Levites, from twenty years old and upward , according to their posts by their working groups. And they were enrolled with all their little ones, their wives, their sons, and their daughters ...	2Chr 31:17-18
	2. It is probably also safe to state that 30 years should be the minimum age for a Presbyter. If CHRISTOS, who set the example for the church, waited intentionally until the age of 30, although He could have preached at any age, then it is hard to picture a younger preacher.	... Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh , the king of Egypt.	Gen 41:46
		David was thirty years old when he began to reign ; he reigned forty years.	2Sam 5:4
		And IESOUS, when He began His ministry, was Himself about thirty years old ...	Luk 3:23
	3. The word 'Presbyter' is used in the Greek OT (152x vs. only 66 uses in the NT) synonymously with 'older man'. While the term implies a man who is older or a senior member of the community, there was no specific minimum age defined in the OT for a person to be considered an elder. Instead, the position was associated with general experience, dignity, maturity, and the ability to govern and judge disputes effectively.	And Abraam and Sarraha were old [Strong's 4245 ΠΙΕСВΥТЕР; meaning in this verse the age of 99 / 89 years], advanced in days, and the custom of women ceased with Sarraha.	Gen 18:11
		And Jethro the father-in-law of Moses took whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices for THEOS, for Aaron and all the elders [ΠΙЕСВΥТЕР; here in the sense of authority combined with age] of Israel came to eat bread with the father-in-law of Moses before THEOS.	Exo 18:11
		You shall rise up before the gray head, and honour the face of the old man , and shall fear your THEOS: I am KYRIOS your THEOS.	Lev 19:32
Remember the days of old, consider the years for past ages: ask your father, and he shall relate to you, your elders , and they shall tell you.		Deu 32:7	
And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out of my SPIRIT upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions.		Joe 3:1	
This same experience, dignity and maturity is also implied in the NT qualifications seen above.		The word [is] steadfast: If anyone longs for overseership, he desires a right work; it is required, therefore, the overseer to be blameless, a husband of one wife , vigilant, sober, respectable , a friend of strangers, apt to teach , not given to wine, not a striker, but gentle, not contentious, not a lover of money, leading his own house well, having children in subjection with all dignity , (and if anyone has not known [how] to lead his own house, how will he take care of an assembly of THEOS?) not a new convert , lest having been puffed up he may fall to a judgment of the Devil; and it is required of him also to have a good testimony from those outside ...	1Tim 3:1-7
Those qualifications include:			
· Husband of a wife.			
· Having faithful and obedient children.	... set elders down in every city, as I appointed to you, if anyone is blameless, a husband of one wife , having believing children [which rather refers to children above the age of 20, as children under this age do not 'know good or bad' according to Deu 1:39 which is the parallel passage to Num 14:29 where this age is specified], ... for it is required of the overseer to be blameless, as THEOS' steward, not self-pleased, nor prone to anger, ... sober-minded, righteous, holy [holiness rather implies an advanced stage of sanctification], self-controlled , holding - according to the teaching - to the steadfast word, that he may also be able to exhort in the sound teaching , and to convict the deniers ...	Tit 1:5-9	
· Having raised those children past the youthful age of rebellion (probably age 20), and whose character and faith are proven. If this requirement would not be given, this elder would have a hard time to deal with similar cases in his church, be it immature teenagers, or adults with spiritual and practical immaturities of all kinds. While the Bible and the church community are the spiritual training ground for an upcoming elder, both the family and the church community are the training ground for all practical approaches as life happens.			

Kerux = Pastor?	Some people want to imply that the Greek word 'Kerux' is a synonym for a 'preacher', but the core meaning is only a 'proclaimer', and only in the correct setting and context the word can be applied to mean a 'preacher'.		
	KERUX: a herald, proclaimer, by extension preacher	41 And Pharao said to Joseph, Behold, I set you this day over all the land of Egypt. 42 And Pharao took his ring off his hand, and put it on the hand of Joseph, and put on him a robe of fine linen, and put a necklace of gold about his neck. 43And he mounted him on the second of his chariots, and a herald [G2783 kerux] made proclamation before him; and he set him over all the land of Egypt.	Gen 41:43
	G2783, ΚΗΡΥΞ, kerux, From G2784; a herald , that is, of divine truth (especially of the Evangelium): - preacher [by extension only].		
	In modern times, the term is used as in ancient times (herald). The 'National Herald' (ΕΘΝΙΚΟΥ ΚΗΡΥΚΑ, ethnikou keruka) is e.g. a weekly English-language newspaper founded in 1997, focusing on the Greek diaspora and Greek Americans.	Then a herald [G2783 kerux] cried aloud: To you it is commanded, you peoples, tribes, and languages, at what hour you shall hear the sound of the trumpet, and pipe, and harp, and sackbut, and psaltery, and every kind of music, you shall fall down and worship the golden image which king Nabuchodonosor has set up .	Dan 3:4-5
		... for [there is] one THEOS, also one mediator of THEOS and of men - the man CHRISTOS IESOUS, who gave Himself [as] a ransom for all - the testimony in its own times - in regard to which I was set a preacher [G2783 kerux] and apostle - train I was in CHRISTOS , I do not lie - a teacher of nations, in faith and truth.	1Tim 2:5-7
	... our Savior IESOUS CHRISTOS, who indeed abolished death, and enlightened life and immortality through the Good News , to which I was placed a preacher [G2783 kerux] and an Apostle, and a teacher of nations, for which cause these things I also suffer, but I am not ashamed, for I have known in whom I have believed, and have been persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed to Him - to that day.	2Tim 1:10-12	
	For if THEOS did not spare messengers having sinned, but having cast [them] down to Tartarus with chains of deepest gloom, delivered [them], having been reserved to judgment, and did not spare the old world, but kept the eighth person, Noah, a preacher [G2783 kerux] of righteousness , having brought a flood on the world of the impious ...	2Pet 2:5	



Comment	Scripture	
DIAKONEO: a minister G1247, ΔΙΑΚΟΝΕΩ, diakoneo: to serve , minister (unto), attendant, patron . G1248, ΔΙΑΚΟΝΙΑ, diakonia: attendance, office, service, ministry, ministering. G1249, ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟC, diakonos: a servant , minister , administrator .	And He touched her hand and the fever left her. And she was animated and was serving Him .	Mat 8:15
	Thus it will not be among you, but whoever might desire among you to be great, will be your servant . And whoever might desire among you to be first, will be your slave, even as the SON of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give His soul as ransom for many."	Mat 20:26-28
	Then they will also answer, saying: 'KYRIOS, when did we see you hungering, or thirsting, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in a prison, and did not serve you?'	Mat 25:44
	... and He was there for forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and the angels ministered to Him.	Mar 1:13
	In those days when the disciples were increasing in number, the Grecian Jews among them began to grumble against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food .	Act 6:1
	So the disciples, each according to his ability, decided to send relief to the brothers living in Judea.	Act 11:29
	He sent two of his helpers , Timothy and Erastus, to Macedonia, while he stayed for a time in the province of Asia.	Act 19:22
	For [secular] rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you want to be un-afraid of the one in authority? Then do what is right, and you will have his approval. For he is THEOS' servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not carry the sword in vain. He is THEOS' servant , an agent of retribution to the wrongdoer.	Rom 13:3-4
	What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as KYRIOS assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but THEOS gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only THEOS who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are THEOS' fellow workers. You are THEOS' field, THEOS' building.	1Cor 3:5-9
	We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4but as servants of THEOS we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, the HOLY SPIRIT, genuine love; 7by truthful speech, and the power of THEOS; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8through honor and dishonor, through slander and praise. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; 10as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.	2Cor 6:3-10
	More than that, this brother was chosen by the churches to accompany us with the offering – the gracious gift we administer to honor KYRIOS Himself and to show our eagerness to help. We hope to avoid any criticism of the way we administer this generous gift.	2Cor 8:19-20
	As good stewards of the manifold grace of THEOS, each of you should use whatever gift he has received to serve one another. 11If anyone speaks, he should speak as one conveying the words of THEOS. If anyone serves, he should serve with the strength THEOS provides, so that in all things THEOS may be glorified through IESOUS CHRISTOS, to whom be the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.	1Pet 4:10-11
Women are not allowed to serve as elders / pastors / overseers, but are absolutely essential to serve as deacons / patrons / assistants, who naturally don't teach or exercise authority, but are highly regarded in their specific roles as patrons.		
A woman ought not to teach.	"Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. 12I do not permit a woman to teach [G1321, ΔΙΔΑΚΚΩ, didasko, to teach] or to exercise authority over a man [G435 ANHP aner; a man, fellow, husband, sir]; rather, she is to remain quiet. 13For Adam was formed first, then Eve; 14and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor . 15Yet she will be saved through childbearing – if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control."	1Tim 2:11-15
But 1Timothy 3 adds verse 11, where the requirements for women in this role are addressed. When we look at the first verses of 1Timothy 3, we notice the absence of such a verse in the description of an elder. This is the often overlooked key for differentiating between male / female deacons, and male only elders.	Elders "The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer [G1984 ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΗ, epi-skope, superintendence, elder, inspection, oversight], he desires a noble task. 2Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one woman, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, 5for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for THEOS' church? [...]	1Tim 3:1-15
The wording 'the husband of one woman' does occur in both descriptions, but does not exclude women from being deacons because of the specific mention in verse 11.	Deacons 8Deacons [G1249 ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟC, an attendant, a waiter, deacon, minister, servant] likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. 9They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. 11Women [not 'wives' in this case, G1135 ΓΥΝΗ, gune] likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. [very often overlooked: this verse is not included in the description of an overseer between verses 1 and 2, but in the description of a deacon only!] 12Let deacons each be the husband of one woman [or wife, G1135 ΓΥΝΗ, gune], managing their children and their own households well. 13For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in CHRISTOS IESOUS. 14I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, 15if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of THEOS, which is the church of the living THEOS ..."	
The following verses clearly affirm female deacons:	And many women were there, watching from a distance. They had followed IESOUS from Galilee to minister [G1247, ΔΙΑΚΟΝΕΩ, diakoneo] to Him.	Mat 27:55
	Joanna the wife of Herod's household manager Chuza, Susanna, and many others. These women were ministering [G1247, ΔΙΑΚΟΝΕΩ, diakoneo] to them out of their own means.	Luk 8:3
	"I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant [G1249 ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟC, an attendant, a waiter, deacon, minister, servant] of the church at Cenchreae, 2that you may welcome her in KYRIOS in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron [G4368, ΠΡΟCΤΑΤΗC, prostates, patroness, assistant, succorer, supporter] of many and of myself as well. 3Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in CHRISTOS IESOUS, 4who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. 5Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Ep ae netus, who was the first convert to CHRISTOS in Asia. 6Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. 7Greet Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen and my fellow prisoners. They are well known to the apostles, and they were in CHRISTOS before me. 8Greet Ampl i atus, my beloved in KYRIOS. 9Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in CHRISTOS, and my beloved Stachys. 10Greet Apelles, who is approved in CHRISTOS. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. 11Greet my kinsman Herodion. Greet those in KYRIOS who belong to the family of Narcissus. 12Greet those workers in KYRIOS, Tryphaena and Tryphosa . Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in KYRIOS. 13Greet Rufus, chosen in KYRIOS; also his mother, who has been a mother to me as well. 14Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them. 15Greet Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. 16Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of CHRISTOS greet you.	Rom 16:1-16
There are servants of satan , and there are servants of CHRISTOS .	So it is no surprise if his servants [G1249 ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟC, an attendant, a waiter, deacon, minister, servant], also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.	2Cor 11:15
The following verses further affirm female prophetesses:	Then Miriam the prophetess , Aaron's sister, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her with tambourines and dancing.	Exo 15:20
	Now Deborah, a prophetess , the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time.	Jdg 4:4
	So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went and spoke to Huldah the prophetess , the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, the keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem, in the Second District.	2Kin 22:14
	So Hilkiah and those the king had designated went and spoke to Huldah the prophetess , the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath, the son of Hasrah, the keeper of the wardrobe. She lived in Jerusalem, in the Second District.	2Chr 34:22
	... And I had relations with the prophetess , and she conceived and gave birth to a son. KYRIOS said to me, "Name him Maher-shalal-hash-baz.	Isa 8:1-4
	There was also a prophetess named Anna , the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher, who was well along in years. She had been married for seven years, and then was a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.	Luk 2:36-37
	He had four unmarried daughters who prophesied .	Act 21:9

CHURCH STRUCTURE			
4 · Disciples / Saints			
			
	Comment	Scripture	
3. Disciples / Saints	When formulating plans or making a decision, the elders, along with other spiritual men, ought to come before KYRIOS in prayer until the HOLY SPIRIT speaks and brings them to a consensus.	Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers : Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch), and Saul. While they were worshipping KYRIOS and fasting , the HOLY SPIRIT said, “Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” And after they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them and sent them off.	<i>Act 13:1-3</i>
		And after engaging these men in sharp debate , Paul and Barnabas were appointed, along with some other believers, to go up to Jerusalem to see the apostles and elders about this question. [...] 6So the apostles and elders met to look into this matter. [...] 22Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church , decided to select men from among them to send to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas.	<i>Act 15:2-23</i>
	EKKLESIA: the church G1577, ΕΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ, ekklesia: an assembly, a (religious) congregation, the church , the whole body of Christian believers. ► see also the study ‘Church History’	... and when he found him, he brought him back to Antioch. So for a full year they met together with the church and taught large numbers of people. The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.	<i>Act 11:26</i>
		When they arrived, they gathered the church together and reported all that THEOS had done through them, and how He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.	<i>Act 14:27</i>
		And in the church THEOS has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, and those with gifts of healing, helping, administration, and various tongues .	<i>1Cor 12:28</i>
	PISTOS: believers G3101, ΠΙΣΤΟC, mathetes: trustworthy, faithful, believing.	Let no one despise your youth, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.	<i>1Tim 4:12</i>
	ADELPHOS: brethren G80, ΑΔΕΛΦΟC, adelphos: a brother , member of the same religious community, especially a fellow-Christian.	So the Twelve summoned all the disciples and said, “It is unacceptable for us to neglect the word of THEOS in order to wait on tables. 3Therefore, brothers , select from among you seven men confirmed to be full of the SPIRIT and Wisdom. We will appoint this responsibility to them 4and will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the HOLY SPIRIT, as well as Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6They presented these seven to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.	<i>Act 6:2-6</i>
		The next day he came upon two Israelites who were fighting, and he tried to reconcile them, saying, ‘Men, you are brothers . Why are you mistreating each other?’	<i>Act 7:26</i>
		The apostles and brothers throughout Judea soon heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of THEOS.	<i>Act 11:1</i>
		Sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, recounting the conversion of the Gentiles and bringing great joy to all the brothers .	<i>Act 15:3</i>
		But now I am writing you not to associate with anyone who claims to be a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a verbal abuser, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.	<i>1Cor 5:11</i>
		I charge you before KYRIOS to have this letter read to all the brothers .	<i>1The 5:27</i>
		Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother .	<i>2The 3:15</i>
		For both the One who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are of the same family . So IESOUS is not ashamed to call them brothers .	<i>Heb 2:11</i>
		Therefore, holy brothers , who share in the heavenly calling, set your focus on IESOUS, the APOSTLE and HIGH PRIEST whom we confess.	<i>Heb 3:1</i>
		Consider it pure joy, my brothers , when you encounter trials of many kinds ...	<i>Jam 1:2</i>
	NEOPHOTOS: recent converts G3504, ΝΕΟΦΥΤΟC, neophotos: (lit: newly-planted), newly converted to Christianity, recent convert .	This is a trustworthy saying: If anyone aspires to be an overseer [...] 6He must not be a recent convert , or he may become conceited and fall under the same condemnation as the devil.	<i>1Tim 3:6</i>
	PROSELYTON: converts G4339, ΠΡΟCΗΥΤΟC, proselutos: (lit: that has come to), a proselyte, that is a non-Jew, who has been circumcised and has adopted the Jews’ religion.	rather refers to converts to Judaism only (Mat 23:15, Act 2:10, Act 6:5, Act 13:43)	
	MATHETES: disciples G3101, ΜΑΘΗΤΗC, mathetes: a learner, disciple , pupil.	A disciple is not above the teacher, nor a slave above his master.	<i>Mat 10:24</i>
		In those days when the disciples were increasing in number , the Grecian Jews among them began to grumble against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. [...] So the word of THEOS continued to spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem grew rapidly , and a great number of priests became obedient to the faith.	<i>Act 6:1-7</i>
		... The disciples were first called Christians at Antioch.	<i>Act 11:26</i>
		While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the interior and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, “Did you receive the HOLY SPIRIT ...	<i>Act 19:1-2</i>
		We sought out the disciples in Tyre and stayed with them seven days. Through the SPIRIT they kept telling Paul not to go up to Jerusalem.	<i>Act 21:4</i>
	SUNERGOS: fellow workers G4904, CΥΝΕΡΓΟC, sunergos: a fellow worker , associate, helper.	Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in CHRISTOS IESOUS ...	<i>Rom 16:3</i>
		Timothy, my fellow worker , sends you greetings, as do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my fellow countrymen.	<i>Rom 16:21</i>
		But I thought it necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker , and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my needs.	<i>Php 2:25</i>
	HAGIOS: saints G40, ΑΓΙΟC, hagios: set apart by (or for) THEOS, holy, sacred.	... tombs broke open, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised.	<i>Mat 27:52</i>
		... Herod feared John and protected him, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man . When he heard John’s words, he was greatly perplexed ...	<i>Mar 6:20</i>
		But Ananias answered, “KYRIOS, many people have told me about this man and all the harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem.	<i>Act 9:13</i>
		... She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter, she sat up. 41Peter took her by the hand and helped her up. Then he called the saints and widows and presented her to them alive.	<i>Act 9:40-41</i>
		... With authority from the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison ...	<i>Act 26:10</i>
		And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the SPIRIT, because the SPIRIT intercedes for the saints according to the will of THEOS.	<i>Rom 8:27</i>
		Share with the saints who are in need. Practice hospitality.	<i>Rom 12:13</i>
		Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem to serve the saints there.	<i>Rom 15:25</i>
		Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas and all the saints with them.	<i>Rom 16:15</i>
		To the church of THEOS in Corinth, to those sanctified in CHRISTOS IESOUS and called to be holy , together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our KYRIOS IESOUS CHRISTOS, their KYRIOS and ours ..	<i>1Cor 1:2</i>
		Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases?	<i>1Cor 6:2</i>
		Here is a call for the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of THEOS and the faith of IESOUS.	<i>Rev 14:12</i>
		Functions Related to Spiritual Gifts	
	G652, ΑΠΟCΤΟΛΟC, apostolos: a messenger, one sent on a mission, an apostle .	► see study 'Spiritual Gifts'	
	G2099, ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙCΤΑC, euaggelistas: an evangelist , a bringer of good news.	► see study 'Spiritual Gifts'	<i>Spiritual Gifts</i>
	G1320, ΔΙΔΑΚΚΑΛΟC, didaskalos: instructor, teacher .	► see study 'Spiritual Gifts'	
Election of Elders	In the Old Testament times, prophets had been divinely ordained through human messengers, yet this can obviously not serve as blueprint for today, although some false teachers of our time claim the ‘mantles’ of other false prophets through different methods. Neither can the 12 Apostles serve as blueprint, because they ‘only’ laid the first stones after the Cornerstone had been laid through CHRISTOS. Today the gift of ‘Apostleship’ continues and can imply that travelling brothers with that specific gift help to create a new church at a location where there is not yet a church, but the office of an ‘Apostle’ itself has probably ceased.		
	The 12 Apostles set the example, that it is the congregation which (after following the biblical basic criteria taught above) voted by hand their elders into office , accompanied by prayer and fastings (plural, thus indicating a process spanning at least several days!). It should also be clear that this vote included long-standing and trusted members of their congregation, and this excludes seminary students who are foreign to a respective church congregation and are simply hired based on credentials earned at a seminary or university. Even members of a congregation should not be expected to become elders based on credentials they would earn. If this would be the case, members would have to vote who is ‘allowed’ to visit a seminary, in order to not suddenly find themselves in the passive situation and under the unbiblical pressure, to vote someone into office who decided to study on his own, while not being favored by the congregation or maybe not even having the full biblical credentials. Sadly, we encounter today very often the contrary situation, that the biblically stipulated voting process is overruled by education , and it is sadly a very rare occurrence to witness today a church which corporatively fasts and lifts their hands for the vote of their elders ... Churches who allow seminary students to become their elders, have also the obligation, to discern and either recommend or reject seminaries through the existing elders. Vast amounts of churches have been infiltrated by the enemy by allowing their (future) elders to visit any seminary they prefer and to receive in return after some years a person as their leader, who might have been brought up with sound theology, but has since been influenced by many unbiblical teachings. The certainly more biblical method is the discipleship taught in the Bible, and a high self-motivation to study the WORD under the constant guidance through the HOLY SPIRIT. To the contrary, the HOLY SPIRIT will rarely be found at a seminary.	... on the next day he [Paul] went forth with Barnabas to Derbe. 21Having also proclaimed the Evangelium to that city, and having disciplined many, they turned back to Lystra, and Iconium, and Antioch, 22confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting to remain in the faith, and that it is required of us to enter into the Kingdom of THEOS through many tribulations, 23and having appointed to them elders in every assembly by vote [ΧΕΙΡΟΤΟΝΕΩ, cheirotoneo: a compound of ΧΕΙΡ, cheir (hand) and ΤΕΙΝΩ, teino (to stretch); to be a hand reacher or voter (by raising the hand), that is to appoint, choose, ordain, select or vote on], having prayed with fastings , they commended them to KYRIOS in whom they had believed.	<i>Act 14:20-23</i>
Election of Deacons	The example in Acts 6 shows us how the first ministers (most probably referring to ‘deacons’) had been selected.	1And in these days, the disciples multiplying, there came a murmuring of the Hellenists at the Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily ministry, 2and the Twelve, having called near the multitude of the disciples, said: “It is not pleasing that we, having left the WORD of THEOS [that the Twelve would neglect the teaching of the WORD while filling at the same time the role of a deacon; a situation very similar to Moses who was instructed by Jethro to delegate his tasks to leaders and judges over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens], which, minister [Strong’s G1247 ΔΙΑΚΟΝΕΩ, diakoneo: to be an attendant, technically to act as a Christian deacon : – (ad-) minister (unto), serve, use the office of a deacon] at tables;	<i>Act 6:1-7</i>
	1. The congregation chose(s) deacons through their elders: The Apostles told “the brothers” to “inspect / select / look out” seven qualified members. The elders and / or congregation then selected and nominated the individuals. The text reads as if the congregation alone chose those people, but the word choice of ‘episkeptomai’ could also (rather) point to an ‘episkopos’ (elder) who is quite literally someone whose job description is to ‘episkeptomai’ (visit, inspect, and care for) the people under their watch’. We have rather to question the assumption that an ordinary church member was entitled to ‘episkeptomai’, given the fact that the ‘epi’ in ‘episkeptomai’ always implies a superimposition and usually means ‘over’ or ‘upon’.	3look out [ΕΠΙCΚΕΙΤΟΜΑΙ, episkeptomai: to contemplate over, to inspect, to select, to look out, to look carefully over, to visit; this word shares the exact same root with ‘episkopos’, overseer], therefore, brothers , seven men of you who are testified well of, full of the HOLY SPIRIT and wisdom, whom we may set over this necessity, 4and we to prayer, and to the ministry of the WORD, will give ourselves continually [then the Twelve are free to teach and pray again].”	
	2. The Apostles appointed the very first generation of deacons (future generations of deacons would be appointed by the respective elders): After the elders / congregation made their selection, they brought the men (soon later also women) to the apostles, who formally appointed or ordained them to the task.	5And the thing was pleasing before all the multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the HOLY SPIRIT, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch, 6whom they set before the apostles, and they, having prayed, laid [their] hands on them. 7And the word of THEOS increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; a great multitude of the priests were also obedient to the faith.	
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