

HISTORY OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

1 Timothy 3:7

Acts 6:1-6

Seven men were appointed to help the church by “waiting on tables,” thereby relieving the disciples of this duty so they could concentrate on preaching the gospel. Many believe this was the beginning of the office of deacon.

Acts 14:23

As Paul and Barnabas prepared to return home to Antioch at the close of their first missionary journey, they appointed elders in each church to care for and continue to teach the newly formed congregations.

Acts 20:17

At the end of Paul’s third missionary journey, as he headed toward Jerusalem, he sent for the elders of the church at Ephesus. Clearly this was a recognized group, and to this group Paul gave special instruction (Acts 20:18-35).

Acts 20:28

Paul instructed the overseers to remember their commission by the Holy Spirit and their primary duties—to keep watch over themselves and over their congregations.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

Paul gave instructions to the believers in Thessalonica to respect those who labored among them and who had God-given responsibility for them.

Philippians 1:1

Paul greeted the leaders in the church—overseers and deacons.

1 Timothy 5:17

Paul instructed the congregations to recognize the honor due to their leaders.