

# Roman Catholic Apologetics 2025: Early Church Polity & the Origen & Rise of the Papacy





# What we Believe:

The church of Rome has been and remains extremely important and influential throughout church history and today.





# What we Believe:

The bishop of Rome (Pope) has been and remains extremely important and influential in church matters throughout church history and today!





We are going to make two primary arguments against the papacy:

Biblical & Historical





What we are going to see from this study is that neither the biblical nor historical evidence supports the weight Rome puts on her claims regarding the Pope and his authority!





# Sola Scriptura





## Sola Scriptura:

Scripture is the sole and sufficient infallible rule of faith for the Christian Church  
(James White; Roman Catholic Controversy)





## **Infallibility:**

The characteristic of being incapable of failing to accomplish a predetermined purpose. In Protestant theology infallibility is usually associated with Scripture. The Bible will not fail in its ultimate purpose of revealing God and the way of salvation to humans. In Roman Catholic theology infallibility is also extended to the teaching of the church (“magisterium” or “dogma”) under the authority of the pope as the chief teacher and earthly head of the body of Christ.



16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:16–17

ESV



Sola Scriptura is Not a claim that the Bible contains all knowledge but rather that Scripture provides sufficient and clear knowledge for the ordinary believer to understand how they are saved and how to live a Christian life!!





Church is not left without the voice of God, but  
through Scripture the church hears her Lord.





***Sola Scriptura.*** “.....perhaps more fundamentally, pushing back against the universal human tendency to replace God’s authority with human authority. One might say that all of redemptive history is marked by humans swapping God out for mere creaturely authorities. To sum up, sola scriptura fights against idolatry.” (Michael Kruger)





# Apostolic Era Leadership





# OT Prophets (Hebrew Scriptures)





10 The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. 11 Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. 12 Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men.

Acts 17:10–12

ESV



14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

2 Timothy 3:14–15

ESV



# Apostles





11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

Ephesians 4:11–12

ESV



# Prophets





43 To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Acts 10:43

ESV



27 Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. 28 And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius).

Acts 11:27–28

ESV



1 Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy. 2 For one who speaks in a tongue speaks not to men but to God; for no one understands him, but he utters mysteries in the Spirit. 3 On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.

1 Corinthians 14:1–3

ESV



24 But if all prophecy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all, 25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is really among you.

1 Corinthians 14:24–25

ESV



# Teachers





1 Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.

Acts 13:1

ESV



7 For this I was appointed a preacher  
and an apostle (I am telling the truth, I  
am not lying), a teacher of the Gentiles in  
faith and truth.

1 Timothy 2:7

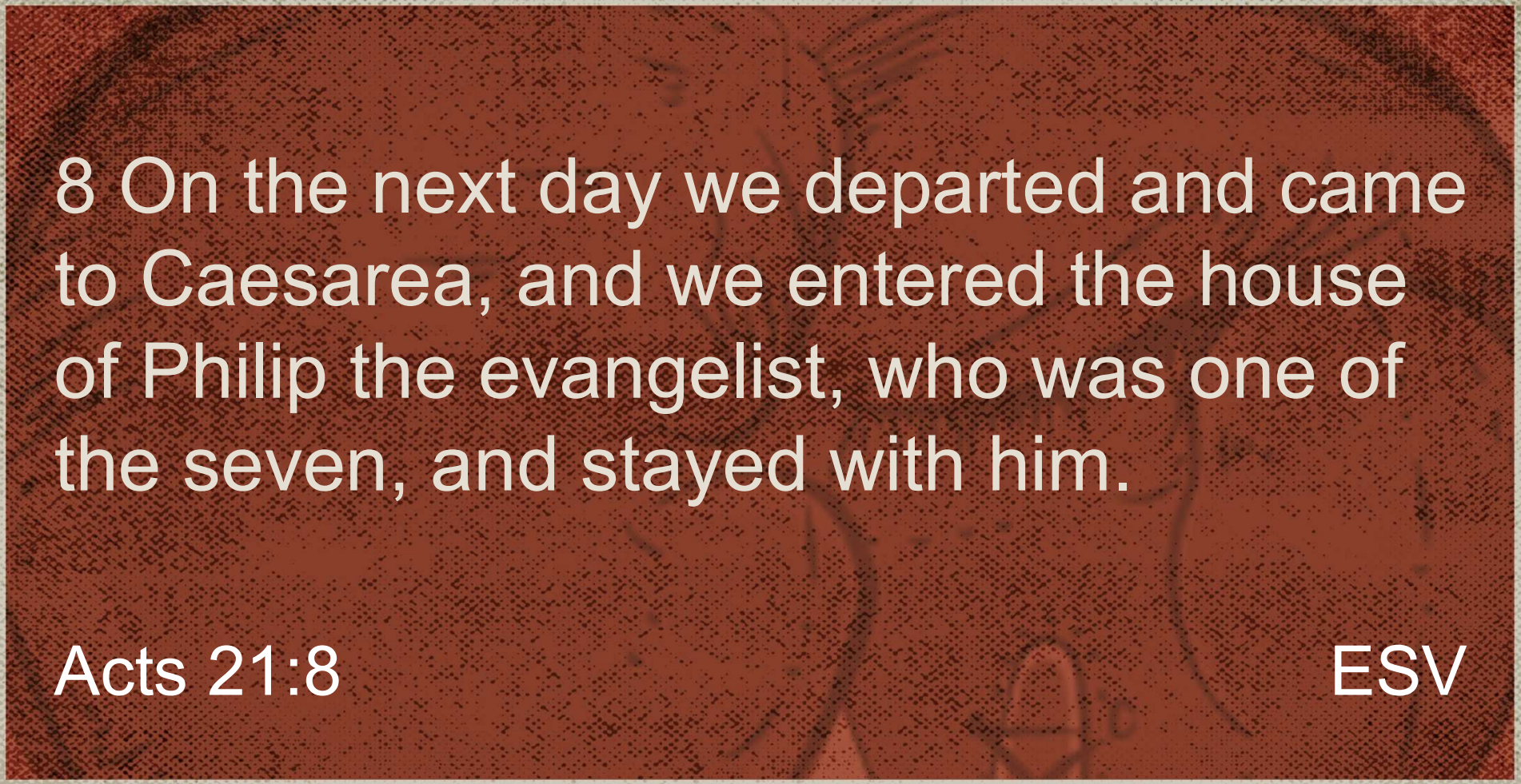
ESV



# Evangelists







8 On the next day we departed and came to Caesarea, and we entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.

Acts 21:8

ESV



3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

2 Timothy 4:3–5

ESV



# Elders/Shepherds





18 On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

Acts 21:18

ESV



# Deacons





1 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

Acts 6:1–3

ESV



# Acts 15: First Council





1 But some men came down from Judea and were teaching the brothers, “Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.”

Acts 15:1

ESV



4 When they came to Jerusalem, they were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they declared all that God had done with them.

Acts 15:4

ESV



7 And after there had been much debate, Peter stood up and said to them, “Brothers, you know that in the early days God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.

Acts 15:7

ESV



12 And all the assembly fell silent, and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders God had done through them among the Gentiles.

Acts 15:12

ESV



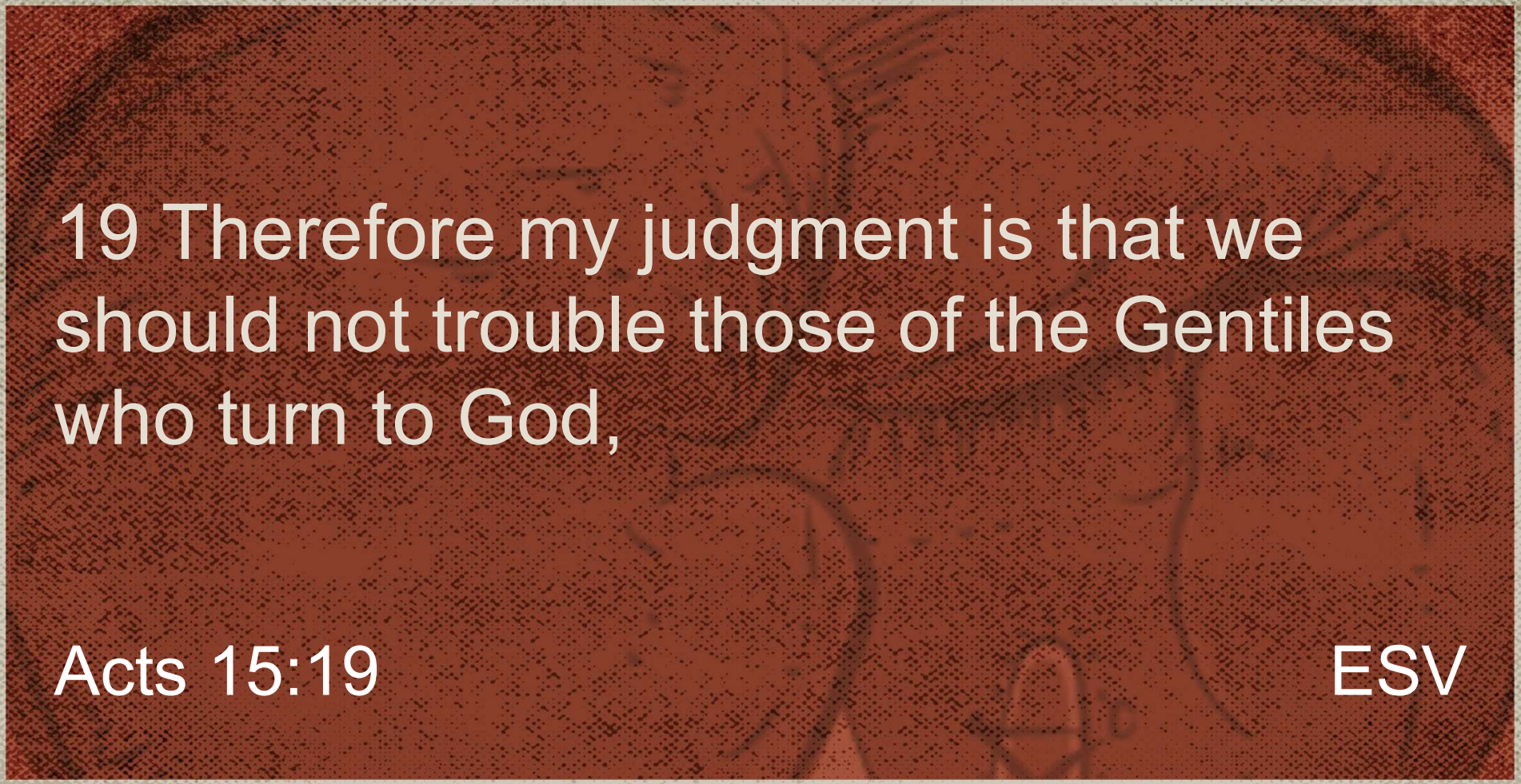


13 After they finished speaking, James  
replied, “Brothers, listen to me.

Acts 15:13

ESV





19 Therefore my judgment is that we  
should not trouble those of the Gentiles  
who turn to God,

Acts 15:19

ESV



22 Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas. They sent Judas called Barsabbas, and Silas, leading men among the brothers,

Acts 15:22

ESV



Will the real Peter please stand up?



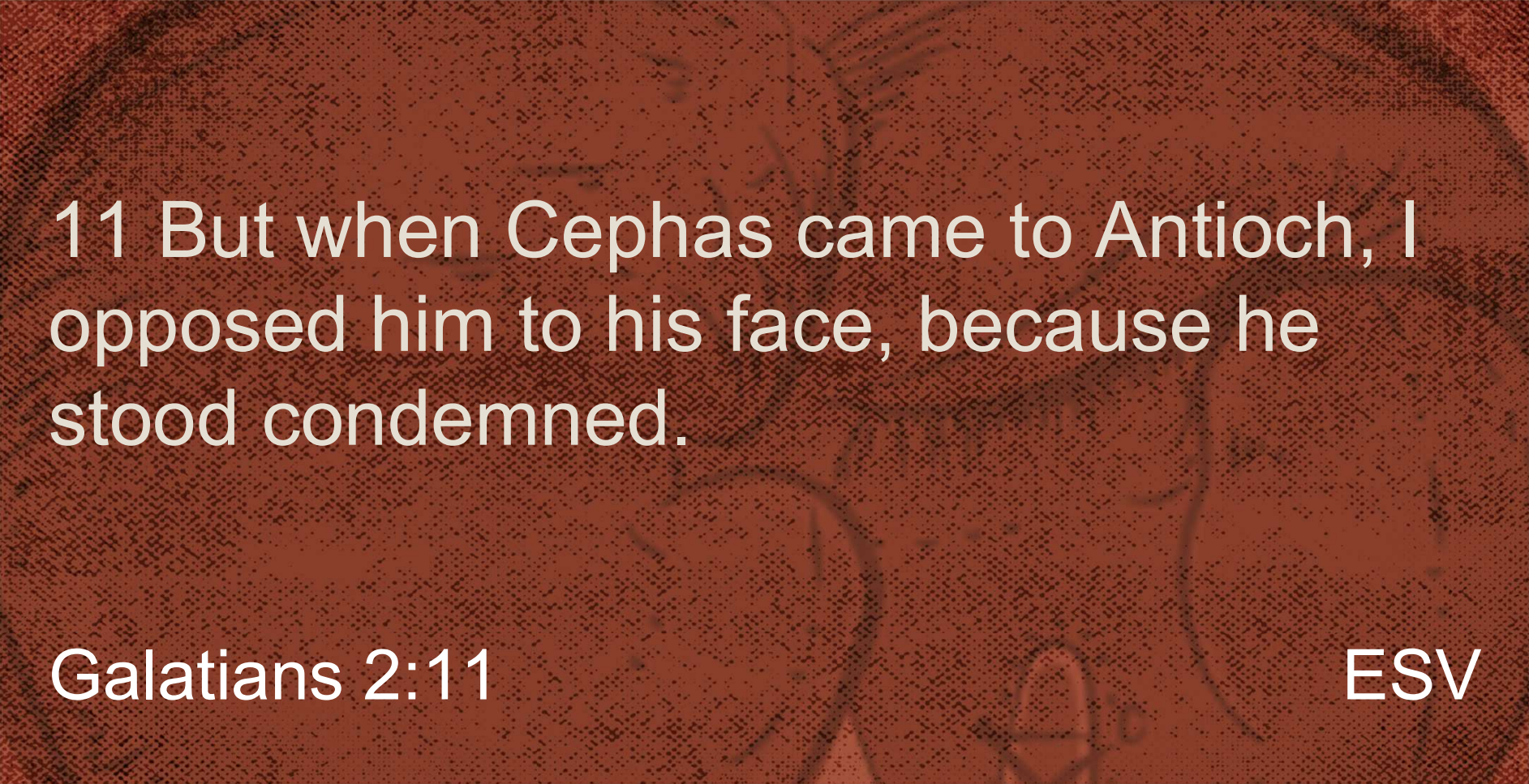


17 But motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he described to them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, "Tell these things to James and to the brothers." Then he departed and went to another place.

Acts 12:17

ESV





11 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I  
opposed him to his face, because he  
stood condemned.

Galatians 2:11

ESV



1 So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed:

1 Peter 5:1

ESV



15 And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, 16 as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

2 Peter 3:15–16

ESV



# Post Apostolic Leadership





# OT Prophets (Hebrew Scriptures)





# The Apostles: NT Scriptures





# Church Offices





# Elders/Overseers





1 So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God 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.

1 Peter 5:1–4

ESV



5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— 6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Titus 1:5–9

ESV



# Elders/Overseers

## Same Office, Two Names!

### Qualifications for Elders

- 5 <sup>o</sup>This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and <sup>p</sup>appoint **elders** in every town as I directed you—
- ▲ ▲ † ☹ ☹ 6 <sup>q</sup>if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife,<sup>4</sup> and his children are believers<sup>5</sup> and not open to the charge of <sup>r</sup>debauchery or insubordination.
- 🏠 ▲ 7 For an **overseer**,<sup>6</sup> <sup>s</sup>as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not <sup>t</sup>be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent <sup>u</sup>or greedy for gain,
- 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, <sup>v</sup>and disciplined.
- ★ 9 He must <sup>w</sup>hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in <sup>x</sup>sound<sup>7</sup> doctrine and also to **rebuke** those who contradict it.

Surface to	order, and	appoint	elders	in	every town	as
MSS 10	←	καὶ 11	καταστήσης 12	πρεσβυτέρους, 15	κατὰ 13	← πόλιν 14 ὡς 16
MSS Trl	kai	katastēsēs	presbyterous	kata	polin	hōs
Lemma Trl	kai	kathistēmi	presbyteros	kata	polis	hōs
Root Trl	kai	istēmi	presbytēs	kata	polis	ōs
Strong's	G2532	G2525	G4245	G2596	G4172	G5613
Sense	to appoint (duty)		Christian elder	urban area		

### Qualifications for Elders

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- 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, <sup>v</sup>and disciplined.
- ★ 9 He must <sup>w</sup>hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in <sup>x</sup>sound<sup>7</sup> doctrine and also to **rebuke** those who contradict it.

Surface	insubordination.	7 For	an	overseer,	as	God's	steward,
MSS	ἀνυπότακτα. 16	γὰρ 2	τὸν 3	ἐπίσκοπον 4	ὡς 7	θεοῦ 8	οἰκονόμον, 9
MSS Trl	anypotakta	gar	ton	episkopon	hōs	theou	oikonomon
Lemma Trl	anypotaktos	gar	ho	episkopos	hōs	theos	oikonomos
Root Trl	tassō	gar	o	episkopos	ōs	theos	nomos oikos
Strong's	G506	G1063	G3588	G1985	G5613	G2316	G3623
Sense	insubordinate	overseer (church)			administrator (superintendent)		



# Elders/Overseers





28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood. 29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; 30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. 31 Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears.

Acts 20:28–31

ESV



# Deacons





8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. 9 They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. 11 Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. 12 Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. 13 For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 3:8–13

ESV



# Two Offices





1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

Philippians 1:1

ESV



# Elders/Overseers Same Office, Two Names!

## ▲† Greeting

Php 1:1 Paul and Timothy, servants<sup>1</sup> of Christ Jesus,

To all the <sup>a</sup>saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with **the <sup>b</sup>overseers<sup>2</sup>** and **<sup>c</sup>deacons:<sup>3</sup>**

2 <sup>d</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Thanksgiving and Prayer

Surface	at	Philippi,	with	the	overseers	and	deacons:	2	Grace
MSS	ἐν <sup>15</sup>	Φιλίπποις <sup>16</sup>	σὺν <sup>17</sup>	→	ἐπισκόποις <sup>18</sup>	καὶ <sup>19</sup>	διακόνους <sup>20</sup>		χάρις
MSS Trl	en	Philippoīs	syn		episkopois	kai	diakonois		charis
Lemma Trl	en	Philippoi	syn		episkopos	kai	diakonos		charis
Root Trl	en	Philippoi	syn		episkopos	kai	diakonos		chairō
Strong's	G1722	G5375	G4862		G1985	G2532	G1249		G5485
Sense <a href="#">here</a> )					overseer (church)		deacon		grace

