

# Elders and Deacons

in the **New Testament**

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Does the presence of Elders threaten or reduce my **potential to participate** in the life of the church?  
(Does it mean I have less input?)

(who have some biblically grounded authority to guide, direct, govern the church)

Does it have to potential to change **how** I participate?

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**Last Week:**  
Background and function of Elders in scripture

## **Background**

Jewish roots, although not exclusive to Israel  
Associated with priests and teachers of the law  
NT elder NOT a continuation of OT priest

## **Function in the early church**

General oversight of the church, direction (Acts 20)  
Teaching scripture, boundaries of doctrine (1 Tim, Heb 13)  
Encourage, protect, be example (1 Pet, Titus)

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## Week 2 - Deacons in the New Testament

Variations on the name / word

When and why was the role created?

What were the various responsibilities?

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### Week 2 Deacons in Scripture:

#### Phrases and Versions of the Term

Diakonos - (the person) servant, minister

Diakoneo - (the action) to serve or to minister to (to provide care for)

Diakonia - (the thing) act of service, ministry

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Week 2  
Deacons in Scripture:

**“Deacon” phrases used to describe a variety of kinds of service:**

Mark 10:45	Christ, came to serve
Rom 16:1-2	Phoebe, a deacon to many
1 Cor 3:5	Paul self identifying as “servant”
2 Cor 3:6	“Ministers” of a new gospel
Eph 4:12	God people prepared for “deaconing”
1 Tim 4:6	a good minister of Christ Jesus

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Week 2  
Deacons in Scripture:

**DIAKONOS identified as particular group:**

Phil 1:1	addressed to oversees <i>and</i> deacons
1 Tim 3:8-10	qualifications for appointment to a specific role in the early church

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**Week 2**  
**Deacons in Scripture:**

Word variations  
depend on the context,  
person, action, thing

**“Origin” of the office?**

Acts 6: 1-4

The issue: a ministry function of the church  
was suffering due to lack of  
organization and delegation  
(perhaps preferential treatment)

The solution: choose a team of people (with  
certain qualifications) to resolve  
the matter - serve the church

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**Week 2**  
**Deacons in Scripture:**

Word variations  
depend on the context,  
person, action, thing

Originated from a need  
to manage ministry  
works of the church

**Deacons as observed from Acts 6**

1. Manage benevolent ministries, ensure needs met
2. Free Apostles to focus on ministry of the word
3. Selected on basis of commitment, not ability

The governance structures for many Baptist churches today have a history and evolution to them that need to be considered and understood before change can be proposed. Each church's unique history matters.

Although the concept of our governance structure is not explicitly wrong, it is suffering the **lack of a biblical foundation.**

