

Ephesus: The story of a church.

Introduction

Four miles from the Aegean Sea and situated on the Cayster River, the City of Ephesus was a major centre of trade. In Paul's day, the city was the fourth largest city of the empire and the seat of power for the Roman governor of Asia. Within Ephesus, there was a large colony of Jews. The city of Ephesus was dominated by the temple of Artemis. (Diana KJV) This temple which was four times the size of the Parthenon was a centre of pilgrimage for the Mediterranean world.



The history of the church at Ephesus in the book of Acts.

1. Acts 18:18-21 Paul visits Ephesus for the first time during his second missionary journey (c50-53AD)
 - a. He goes into the synagogue (v19) and reasons with them but is unwilling to stay for a protracted visit.
 - b. There is no mention at this stage of converts.
2. Acts 18:24-28 Apollos arrives in Ephesus and begins a ministry in the synagogue.

- a. He needs correction from Aquilla and Priscilla who have been left in Ephesus by Paul (v26)
- b. Having been corrected, Apollos moves on to Achaia (v27)
- 3. Acts 19:1-20:1 Paul's two year ministry in Ephesus at the beginning of his third missionary journey. (c53-57AD)
 - a. Paul arrives in Ephesus and finds a small group of disciples (v1) but needs to correct a defective baptism (v 3)
 - b. The church in Ephesus is now properly established. There are a small group of 12 men (v7)
 - c. Paul's three month ministry in the synagogue comes to an end (v9) in the face of opposition and Paul hires premises for the growing church. (v9)
 - d. Paul exercises a two year ministry with remarkable impact. (v10)
 - e. The ministry described (vs11-20) has the characteristics of revival with considerable power evident, and considerable growth.
 - f. The economic impact of the growth of the church, brings to an end the population's tolerance of the work. (v23-29)
 - g. The controversy eventually leads to Paul's departure (20:1) but he had already been intending to leave (v21).
 - h. Did Paul leave the church without effective leadership? (v22)

Summary so far:

In a period a little longer than two years, the church at Ephesus has exploded numerically and in influence. It has not only had a measurable impact in the city of Ephesus, but has affected the spiritual climate in the region. Here is a church that has experienced significant numerical growth and spiritual power.

- 4. Acts 20:17-38 Paul addresses the elders from Ephesus towards the conclusion of his third missionary journey.
 - a. The implication being that Paul has either previously appointed elders in the church at Ephesus, or that they have been appointed in the intervening period.
 - b. Vs 18-21 Paul defends his ministry.
 - c. Vs 22-27 Paul tells the elders what will happen to him.
 - d. Vs 28-35 Paul gives a charge to the elders:
 - i. Pay careful attention to yourselves.
 - ii. Pay careful attention to the flock of which you are "overseers" (GK episkopos)
 - iii. Their role is to "care for" the flock (GK poimainō) the word having the sense of tend or feed.
 - iv. The importance of the charge is reinforced by the emphasis on the value of the church which Christ "*obtained with his own blood.*"
 - v. Paul warns that "*fierce wolves*" will come in and will not spare the flock. The implication being that damage will be done.
 - vi. Paul anticipates that some of those in the church, possibly even some of those who are being addressed will be "*speaking twisted*"

things” which will be attractive and will “*draw away disciples after them.*”

With these words we are able to better understand the nature of the “*fierce wolves*” against which Paul warns. He anticipates that their ravages are principally doctrinal in nature.

- vii. In the light of this likelihood, the elders are commanded to be alert..
- viii. Paul commends them to God and to his word which is able to build them up. These leaders must be people of the word or they will not be able to resist the ravages of the wolves.
- ix. In verses 33-35 Paul commends the elders to a generous lifestyle in which industry is a means of helping the weak and discovering the blessing of generosity.

For Reflection

What lessons for leaders are there to be found in Paul’s charge to the Elders?

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.

General comments

Paul’s letter to the Ephesians was written from Rome in about AD60. It was written as a circular letter to a number of churches, which may well be those which were founded in and around Ephesus during his extended ministry there. This letter no doubt especially addresses concerns in the church in Ephesus. The church would seem in many ways to be flourishing, and they are described as “*faithful in Christ Jesus.*” v1.

Even a brief reading of the letter indicates that there is trouble brewing in the church. Paul is exercising his own oversight of the church that he has founded. As he writes to the church, he addresses three broad issues which are as follows:

1. 1:3-3:20 Is broadly theological in nature, and may indicate a continuation of Paul’s concern for doctrinal rectitude in the young church.
2. 4:1-16 Addresses the issue of unity, and emphasizes the role of leadership gifting in allowing the growth of unity.
3. 4:17-6:9 Address issues of morality and provide a code of conduct for the church.

Issues arising from 4:7-13

1. The emphasis on leadership in the Ephesian letter is not executive, but functional. These verses describe the role of leadership gifting without ever identifying whether the holders of these gifts were elders. While it seems likely that they were the elders to whom Paul spoke at Miletus, or their successors, we have no way of knowing.

2. Those holding the gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers are God's gift to the church. (V11)
3. Their role is to:
 - a. Prepare God's people for works of service.
 - b. For the building up of the body of Christ
 - c. Facilitate growth in unity
 - d. Facilitate growth in spiritual maturity, so that doctrinal confusion will be less of a concern v14
4. 4:14 would seem to be one of the shadows in the Ephesian letter. If the leadership do their job properly people will no longer be "*carried about by every wind of doctrine.*" The clear implication is that as Paul writes this is exactly what is happening.

For Reflection

What do these verses tell us about the role of leadership in the local church?

Other leadership issues from the Ephesian letter.

1. In both 4:15 and 5:23 Paul describes the headship of Christ in his church. In the light of these comments, elders only ever serve as under overseers, recognizing the headship of Christ in his church.

For Reflection

What are the implications of the headship of Christ for church leaders?

1 Timothy

Paul probably wrote his first letter to Timothy between 63 AD and 65AD from imprisonment in Rome. Paul left Timothy in Ephesus. This seems to have been a response to the brewing of an urgent crisis in the church. The main issues that the letter addresses are the teaching of false doctrine and strange practices. (See 1:3-7, 1:19, 4:1-5, 6:2-5) In the light of these pressures Timothy is to appoint leaders of character and to set an example to the flock (4:11-16):

Overseers and Elders.

Much has been made of the two words used to describe leaders in the NT church. Here Paul uses the word *episkopos* translated overseer or bishop and elsewhere the word *presbuteros* translated elder. It seems acceptable to understand them to effectively the same meaning. In The letter to Titus which shares common features with the letter to

Timothy and was probably written about the same time, Paul seems to use the two words in interchangeable ways. (See Tit 1:5 and 7)

Because of the similarity of the description of the character qualities of elders in Titus and overseers in 1 Timothy, we will look at the two passages together in order to better understand them both.

The character of ‘overseers’

1 Timothy 3:1-7

“ The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.” E.S.V.

Titus 1:6-9

“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. 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, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 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.” E.S.V.

An elder might aspire to the task

1 Ti 3:1 *The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task*

An Elder must be *above reproach*

1Ti 3:2 *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach...*

Blameless (ALT, KJV), of good reputation (CEV), without fault (GNB), well thought of (MSG).

Greek: *anepilēptos*

See also Titus

Tit 1:6 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. Tit 1:7 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...

Greek: *anegklētos*

Similarly

1Ti 3:7 Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

An elder must be someone of good reputation.

An Elder must be the husband of one wife

1Ti 3:2 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

Faithful in marriage (CEV), Have only one wife (GNB)

Greek: *mias gunaikas andras*

See also Titus

Tit 1:6 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.

There is some debate as to the correct interpretation of this phrase. It is unlikely that Paul intends that elders must be married.

Is this phrase an outlawing of polygamy, or is it referring to divorce?

It is unlikely to be referring to polygamy since the equivalent phrase is used in 1 Tim 5:9 where a widow must be 'one man's wife' Polyandry was unknown, so it probably means there that a widow must not have divorced and remarried. In that case, we should probably accept the equivalent meaning in this case.

An Elder must be sober minded

1Ti 3:2 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

temperate (ALT), self controlled (CEV), sober (GNB), vigilant (KJV), cool and collected

(MSG)

Greek: *nēphaleos*

An Elder must be *self controlled*

1Ti 3:2 *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,*

Sober (KJV),

Greek: *sōphrōn*

See also Titus

Tit 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

An Elder should not be mastered by addictions, and should be free from any enslavements.

An Elder must be *respectable*

1Ti 3:2 *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,*

Sensible (CEV) Orderly (GNB) of good behaviour (KJV)

Greek: *kosmios*

An Elder must be *hospitable*

1Ti 3:2 *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,*

A friend of strangers (ALT), friendly to strangers (CEV), he must welcome strangers into his home (GNB)

Greek: *philoxenos*

See also Titus

Tit 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

An Elder must be *able to teach*

1Ti 3:2 *Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,*

Skillful at teaching (ALT) Apt to teach (KJV) know what he's talking about (MSG)

Greek: *didaktikon*

Since it is clear that not all elders devote their time to formal teaching or preaching (see 1 Tim 5:17) this does not necessarily mean teaching in front of a group. In Titus the sense of one who is able to provide a standard in sound doctrine, and identify and rebuke that which deviates from such a standard.

Tit 1:9 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.

As a prerequisite for this ability, it is seen as necessary that those who aspire to eldership hold firm to Biblical orthodoxy. If they do not do this, how can they either give instruction or rebuke those who contradict?

An Elder must not be a drunkard

1Ti 3:3 not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

Not addicted to wine (ALT), must not be heavy drinkers (CEV), not given to wine (KJV), not overfond of wine (MSG),

Greek: *me paroinon*

See also Titus:

Tit 1:7 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,

An Elder must be not violent but gentle

1Ti 3:3 not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

Quarrelsome (ALT), Troublemakers (CEV), not pushy (MSG)

Greek: *me plekten*

The sense here is on not being pugnacious or belligerent. The temper should be under control, and an elder must not be given to quarrelling or fighting, rather an elder should prefer conciliation.

See also:

Tit 1:7 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,

An Elder must not be quarrelsome

1Ti 3:3 not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

Peaceable (ALT), gentle (CEV), not a brawler (KJV)

Greek: *amachon*

This is very similar to the previous idea, and therefore serves to stress the importance of peacemaking.

An Elder must not be lover of money

1Ti 3:3 not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.

Not money hungry (MSG)

Greek: *aphilarguron*

An Elder should by their own lifestyle demonstrate that they are seeking first the kingdom of God. Consequently they will not have a lifestyle of ostentatious luxury, and will be generous givers. An elder will consistently set obedience to God in decisions above financial considerations.

See also Titus

Tit 1:7 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.

greedy for dishonest gain (ALT), dishonest in business (CEV) not given to filthy lucre (KJV) not money hungry (MSG)

Greek: *aischrokerdēs*

An Elder must have exemplary integrity in all financial dealings.

An Elder must manage his household well.

1Ti 3:4 He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive.

1Ti 3:5 for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

Leading his own house well (ALT) in control of their own families (CEV) One that ruleth well his own house (KJV) He must handle his affairs well (MSG)

Greek: *kalos prostamenon*

A well ordered home is demonstration of a capacity for governance in the church. Children should be submissive, not necessarily perfect, but well disciplined, and not ‘out of control.’ Family relationships should be worthy of emulation.

See also Titus

Tit 1:6 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.

Faithful children (ALT) The children must be followers of the Lord (CEV) having faithful children (KJV)

There is some debate as to the correct translation of the word *pistos* meaning faith, used to describe the children of an elder. This word could mean either that the children have saving faith, and are Christians, or that they are ‘faithful’ in which case this injunction would have similar meaning to 1 Ti 3:4 and refer more to a standard of behavior.

An Elder must not be a recent convert

1 Ti 3:6 *He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

An Elder must not be arrogant

Tit 1:7 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,

Not self willed (ALT), not bossy (CEV), not pushy (MSG)

Greek: *me authade*

An elder should be someone of humility, who is willing to hear the call of God to mutual submission within the church of Christ.

An Elder must be a lover of good

Tit 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

loving good (ALT) enjoy doing good things (CEV) a lover of good men (KJV)

Greek: *philagathos*

An Elder should be a lover of all that is good, and one who promotes virtue.

An Elder must be upright

Tit 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

Righteous (ALT), fair (CEV, MSG), just (KJV)

Greek: *dikaios*

An elder must be equitable in character and actions. An elder should be concerned for fairness and justice.

An Elder must be holy

Tit 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

Pure (CEV) reverent (MSG)

Greek: *hosios*

An elder should be devout, and committed in prayer, reading of the word, and other spiritual disciplines.

An Elder must be disciplined

Tit 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

Self controlled (ALT, CEV) temperate (KJV) have a good grip on himself (MSG)

Greek: *egkratēs*

Some see here an emphasis on self control particularly in the area of sexual purity. AN elder should not be overwhelmed by lust, in the grip of pornography, and should be utterly faithful to his wife.

Paul's second letter to Timothy

Paul wrote again to Timothy from his imprisonment in Rome. In many ways his concerns are as they were before. There is a great concern for the doctrinal health of the church, and Paul calls Timothy to preach the word. And to entrust the message to *faithful men 2:2 who will be able to teach others also.*

The Revelation of John: The Letter to the church at Ephesus

The church at Ephesus is commended that it has worked and toiled and resisted the false teachers (Rev 2:2-3) While the church is commended it has allowed its love to grow cold (Rev 2:4)

Appendix 1 – Why have Elders?

All of the churches in the New Testament were led by a Godly plurality of leaders normally called Elders.

Elders were appointed in the churches that Paul founded

Act 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

There were Elders in the church at Jerusalem

Act 15:2 And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question.

The elders in Jerusalem shared in decision making with the Apostles.

Act 15:6 The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.

There were elders in the church at Ephesus

Act 20:17 Now from Miletus he (Paul) sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.

There were to be elders in every church in Crete

Tit 1:5 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—

James assumes that there were elders in all of the churches of the Jewish dispersion.

Jam 1:1 James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes in the Dispersion: Greetings.

Jam 5:14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

Peter addresses the elders of the churches in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia

1Pe 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who are elect exiles of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,

1Pe 5:1 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:

Appendix 2 – What about “deacons”

Perhaps the most helpful passage for thinking about the different roles that need to be undertaken for a church to function healthily is that in Acts 6:1-7. It is not the case that some serve and some lead. Indeed all serve! Those who are chosen “deacon” at table while the apostles deacon in the ministry of the word.

The genius of Acts 6 is that dividing of areas of responsibility allows the ministry to develop. Similarly the difference between elders and deacons is a difference of task and gifting rather than a difference of status.

Deacons are only mentioned five times in the New Testament. We know that there were deacons in the church at Philippi as Paul addressed them (Phi 1:1) The other four mentions are all in the description of deacon’s character in 1 Timothy 3:10-13.

The character of deacons

1Ti 3:8-12 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.

Deacons must be dignified

1Ti 3:8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.

Grave (KJV) Worthy of respect (ALT) Serious (CEV, MSG) Good character (GNB)

Greek: *semnous*

This word is used in Philippians 4:8 where it is translated honorable “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is *honorable*...” Deacons should be earnestly committed to living God honoring lives.

Deacons must not be double tongued

1Ti 3:8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.

They must not be liars (CEV) sincere (GNB) not deceitful (MSG)

Deacons need to be people of authenticity, who love the truth, and are devoted to truth speaking. They need to be full of integrity, and not unduly swayed by the opinions of others.

Deacons must not be addicted to much wine

1Ti 3:8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.

Heavy drinkers (CEV) must not drink too much wine (GNB) not too free with the bottle (MSG)

Greek: *Prosechontas*

This word in the greek implies "to concern oneself with" or "to give attention to" or "to turn one's mind toward." A deacon should have all appetites mastered including that for alcohol.

Deacons must not be greedy for dishonest gain

1Ti 3:8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.

Greedy for dishonest gain (ALT) greedy for money(CEV GNB) not in it for what they can get out of it.(MSG)

Greek: *me aischrokerdeis*

A deacon must not be someone who loves money, and will have mastered their appetite for 'stuff.'

Deacons must hold to the mystery of faith with clear conscience

1Ti 3:9 They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

And they must have a clear conscience and hold firmly to what God has shown us about our faith. (CEV) they should hold to the revealed truth of the faith with a clear conscience. (GNB)

Deacons should be people of deep, sincere and authentic faith, who are committed to the scriptures, and are theologically orthodox.

Deacons should be faithful in marriage

1Ti 3:12 Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.

Once again the household is the proving ground for administrative gifting. A deacon will have first demonstrated capacity in their own home, before serving in the local church.

Deacons should be tested and found blameless

1Ti 3:10 And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless.

Deacon's are not required to be perfect, but there is a sense of them being shown to be suitable for the task.

Appendix 3: Every NT reference for elders and overseers.

References to Elders:

References to 'elders' as Jewish leaders: Mat 15:2 Mat 16:21 Mat 21:23 Mat 26:3 Mat 26:47 Mat 26:57 Mat 27:1 Mat 27:3 Mat 27:12 Mat 27:20 Mat 27:41 Mat 28:12 Mar 7:3 Mar 7:5 Mar 8:31 Mar 11:27 Mar 14:43 Mar 14:53 Mar 15:1 Luk 7:3 Luk 9:22 Luk 20:1 Luk 22:52 Luk 22:66 Act 4:5 Act 4:8 Act 4:23 Act 6:12

(Act 11:30 ESV) And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul.

(Act 14:23 ESV) And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

(Act 15:2 ESV) And after Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and debate with them, Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about this question.

(Act 15:4 ESV) 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.

(Act 15:6 ESV) The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.

(Act 15:22 ESV) 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,

(Act 15:23 ESV) with the following letter: "The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers who are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, greetings.

(Act 16:4 ESV) As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem.

(Act 20:17 ESV) Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him.

(Act 21:18 ESV) On the following day Paul went in with us to James, and all the elders were present.

(Act 22:5 ESV) as the high priest and the whole council of elders can bear me witness. From them I received letters to the brothers, and I journeyed toward Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished.

(Act 23:14 ESV) They went to the chief priests and elders and said, "We have strictly bound ourselves by an oath to taste no food till we have killed Paul.

(Act 24:1 ESV) And after five days the high priest Ananias came down with some elders and a spokesman, one Tertullus. They laid before the governor their case against Paul.

(Act 25:15 ESV) and when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders of the Jews laid out their case against him, asking for a sentence of condemnation against him.

(1Ti 4:14 ESV) Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.

(1Ti 5:17 ESV) Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.

(1Ti 5:19 ESV) Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.

(Tit 1:5 ESV) 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--

(Jam 5:14 ESV) Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

(1Pe 5:1 ESV) 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:

(1Pe 5:5 ESV) Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

(2Jo 1:1 ESV) The elder to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all who know the truth,

(3Jo 1:1 ESV) The elder to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth.

References to the 'elders' in Revelation: Rev 4:4 Rev 4:10 Rev 5:5 Rev 5:6 Rev 5:8 Rev 5:11 Rev 5:14 Rev 7:11 Rev 7:13 Rev 11:16 Rev 14:3 Rev 19:4

References to overseers:

(Act 20:28 ESV) 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.

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

(1Ti 3:1 ESV) The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.

(1Ti 3:2 ESV) Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

(Tit 1:7 ESV) 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,

(1Pe 2:25 ESV) For you were straying like sheep, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.