THE QUESTION

What qualifications does the Bible give church leaders, and what was their work?

Asked by a THF member on July 31, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 12 numbered quotations · the 40 early Christian passages and 181 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/what-qualifications-does-the-bible-give-church-leaders-and-what-was-their

The short answer *From the text: says what the passages say*

The Bible asks that bishops and elders be blameless, the husband of one wife, sober, gentle, hospitable, not greedy, and able to teach. Early Christian writers add that leaders must feed, teach, guard and heal the flock, lead worship and baptism, and carry everyone's burdens. Deacons serve the bishop and elders and must be honest and not lovers of money.

LIBRARY ONLY	This study was written only from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible, never from the web. Every passage we kept from what the library gave is listed at the back, with a link to read it.
HOW IT WAS MADE	Compiled by machine learning from The Historic Faith's library of early-Christian writings and the Bible only. Every quotation was matched word for word against our stored text. Not yet reviewed by The Historic Faith.
SHARING WITH AN AI?	Every quotation here comes from The Historic Faith's library. If you paste this study into an AI, anything it adds beyond these pages comes from that AI, not from us.

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POINT 1 OF 7

A bishop must be blameless and self-controlled

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

John Chrysostom repeats Paul's list for a bishop. He must have a clean life, one wife, a sober mind and good manners. He must welcome guests, avoid drink, violence and greed, and run his own home well. Origen notes the same list and says Paul wants the best man chosen.

1 "A Bishop, then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife, watchful, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, and able to teach. He must not be given to wine, violent, or greedy for dishonest gain, but patient; not quarrelsome and not covetous."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Homilies on First Timothy* (c. 386–407 AD) **Source 31, page 8** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

2 "It is clear, further, that among the characteristic qualifications of those who are called bishops, Paul, in describing what kind of man the bishop ought to be, lays down as a qualification that he should also be a teacher."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 48 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 15, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 7

Leaders must be gentle, truthful and not greedy

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Didache tells churches to choose bishops and deacons who are gentle, honest, tested, and free from the love of money. Polycarp gives a similar list for deacons. They serve God and Christ, not men, and follow the Lord who was the servant of all.

3 "Therefore, appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons who are worthy of the Lord: men who are gentle, not lovers of money, truthful, and proven."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Didache,** *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 15 (c. 50–120 AD) **Source 1, page 6** Read it in the library ›
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4 “They must not be slanderers, double-tongued, or lovers of money, but must be temperate in all things, compassionate, industrious, and live according to the truth of the Lord, who was the servant of all.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Polycarp,** *Epistle to the Philippians* (c. 100–155 AD) **Source 9, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 3 OF 7

Teaching the word is central work

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Chrysostom says Paul wants those who labor in teaching honored most, because the work is heavy. He warns that if church leaders cannot teach, much in the Church is ruined. A good life matters, but it does not replace teaching.

5 “It is an important matter, and it contributes greatly to the building up of the Church, that its rulers should be able to teach. If this is lacking, many things in the Church are ruined.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Homilies on First Timothy* (c. 386–407 AD) **Source 30, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 7

Shepherds feed, strengthen and heal the flock

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Apostolic Constitutions describe the bishop's daily care. He keeps the strong firm, feeds the people in peace, and strengthens those being tempted. Cyprian says no duty of overseers is greater than nourishing and keeping the sheep, with the healing care of a father.

6 “He must watch over the strong, that is, keep firm in the faith the one who is already strong. He must feed the people peaceably. He must strengthen the weak, that is, confirm by exhortation the one who is being tempted.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Apostolic Constitutions** (c. 250–380 AD) **Source 20, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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7 “What greater or more fitting duty do overseers have than to care, with careful concern and healing medicine, for the nourishing and keeping of the sheep?”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Epistles* (c. 248–258 AD) **Source 16, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 7

Each office has its own tasks

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

The Apostolic Constitutions sort out the work. Presbyters teach, offer the Eucharist, baptize and bless. Deacons serve the bishop and presbyters but do not take over the other offices. Tertullian adds that the bishop has the first right to baptize, and presbyters and deacons act under his authority.

8 “The presbyter is only to teach, to offer, to baptize, and to bless the people. And the deacon is to minister to the bishop and to the presbyters, that is, to carry out the service of a ministering deacon, but not to take part in the other offices.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Apostolic Constitutions** (c. 250–380 AD) **Source 23, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

9 “As for giving it, the chief priest, that is, the bishop, has the right. Next come the presbyters and deacons, but not without the bishop's authority.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *On Baptism* 17 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 11, page 7** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 7

Leaders were tested and appointed in order

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Clement of Rome says the apostles tested men by the Spirit and appointed them bishops and deacons. Later, approved men took their place. He praises leaders who served Christ's flock in a humble, peaceful and selfless way, and says they should not be pushed out.

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10 “Thus, preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits of their labors, having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who would later believe.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 40, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

11 “We believe, therefore, that those appointed by them, or later by other distinguished men with the consent of the whole Church, who have served the flock of Christ blamelessly in a humble, peaceful, and selfless spirit, and have long enjoyed a good reputation with everyone, cannot be justly removed from the ministry.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 39, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 7 OF 7

The office is a burden, not an honor

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Chrysostom warns that people seek the bishop's office as a place of honor and rest. In truth it is a work of watching over others. The bishop must belong to all and carry the burden of all, and his faults are not excused.

12 “It is because we come to the bishop's office, not as to a work of governing and watching over the brothers, but as to a post of honor and rest.”

later in the same passage

“If you only knew that a bishop is bound to belong to all, and to bear the burden of all; that if others are angry, they are pardoned, but he is not; that if others sin, excuses are made for them, but for him there are none; then you would not be eager for the honor, and you would not run after it.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **John Chrysostom,** *Homilies on Acts* (c. 386–407 AD) **Source 29, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- These passages say more about bishops than about elders and deacons, and they do not give a full list of every duty.
- They describe church order in the early centuries; they do not settle how every church today should arrange its offices.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 40 early Christian passages and 181 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–40, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 41–148, in Bible order), then 73 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *40 passages from 13 writers*

Didache, *c. 50–120 AD · source 1*

1 *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 15 (1885 English) **Quote 3, page 2** “appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, men meek, and not lovers of money, 1 Timothy 3:4 and truthful and proven… [continues online] **read ›**

Hermas, *c. 90–150 AD · sources 2–3*

2 *Shepherd* (on point 4) “and if none of you has perished. But if He finds any of these sheep wandering away, woe to the shepherds! And if the shepherds themselves have wandered away, what… [continues online] **read ›**

3 *Shepherd* (1885 English; on point 1) “will tell, therefore, those who preside over the Church, to direct their ways in righteousness, that they may receive in full the promises with great glory… [continues online] **read ›**

Ignatius of Antioch, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 4–8*

4 *Epistle to the Trallians* (1885 English) “like manner, let all reverence the deacons as an appointment of Jesus Christ, and the bishop as Jesus Christ, who is the Son of the Father, and the presbyters as… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *Epistles of Ignatius* (1885 English; on point 4) “presbyters, “feed the flock which is among you,” till God shall show who is to hold the rule over you… [continues online] **read ›**

6 *Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians* (on point 2) exhorts as follows: “The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle towards all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those who oppose themselves.” Do not… [continues online] **read ›**

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7 *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* (on point 5) that you all follow the bishop, just as Christ Jesus does the Father, and the presbytery as you would the apostles. Also, show reverence to the deacons, as those who… [continues online] **read ›**

8 *Epistle to the Magnesians* is important for you not to treat your bishop too casually because of his youth, but to show him full respect, honoring the authority of God the Father, as I… [continues online] **read ›**

Polycarp, *c. 100–155 AD · source 9*

9 *Epistle to the Philippians* **Quote 4, page 3** mocked," we ought to live worthy of His commandment and glory. Similarly, the deacons should be blameless before His righteousness, as they are the servants of God and Christ, not… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · source 10*

10 *Against Heresies: Book III* (1885 English; on point 4) “heed, therefore, both to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has placed you as bishops, to rule the Church of the Lord, which He has… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 11–13*

11 *On Baptism* 17 (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 4** “giving it, the chief priest (who is the bishop) has the right: in the next place, the presbyters and deacons, yet not without the bishop's authority, on account of… [continues online] **read ›**

12 *De Fuga in Persecutione* 11 (on point 4) the common people will hope to persuade others to stand firm in the battle? Certainly, a good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep, according to the word of… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *On Monogamy* 12 (1885 English; on point 1) “question in hand (when the apostle was writing), was with reference to Ecclesiastical Orders — what son of men ought to be ordained… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 14–15*

14 *Commentary on Matthew* 14 (1885 English; on point 1) “laying down the law in regard to bishops in the first Epistle to Timothy, he says, If a man seeks the office of a bishop, he desires a good work… [continues online] **read ›**

15 *Against Celsus* 48 **Quote 2, page 2** “It is clear, further, that among the characteristic qualifications of those who are called bishops, Paul, in describing what kind of man the bishop ought to be, lays down as… [continues online] **read ›**

Cyprian, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 16–19*

16 *Epistles* **Quote 7, page 4** “greater or more fitting duty do overseers have than to care, with careful concern and healing medicine, for the nourishing and keeping of the sheep? For the Lord speaks and… [continues online] **read ›**

17 *Epistles* (1885 English; on point 4) “moreover, it devolves upon us who appear to be placed on high, in the place of a shepherd, to keep watch over the flock… [continues online] **read ›**

18 *Epistles* (1885 English; on point 5) “apostles appointed for themselves deacons after the ascent of the Lord into heaven, as ministers of their episcopacy and of the Church… [continues online] **read ›**

19 *Epistles* we ought to keep, describes the honor of a bishop and the order of His Church in the Gospel. He says to Peter: “I say to you that you are… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · sources 20–26*

20 *Apostolic Constitutions* **Quote 6, page 3** “for a good shepherd, let the lay person honor him, love him, and respect him as his lord, as his master, as the high priest of God, and as a… [continues online] **read ›**

21 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 5) vestries on both sides at the east end, and then it will be like a ship. In the middle let the bishop's throne be placed, and on each side… [continues online] **read ›**

22 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 5) the canons, I also make this constitution. A bishop gives the blessing, but does not receive the blessing. He lays on hands, ordains, offers, and receives the blessing from bishops… [continues online] **read ›**

23 *Apostolic Constitutions* (1885 English) **Quote 8, page 4** “a presbyter and a deacon are to be ordained by one bishop and the rest of the clergy… [continues online] **read ›**

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24 *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 5) now the deacon is to you what Aaron was, and the bishop what Moses was. If, therefore, Moses was called a god by the Lord, let the bishop be honored… [continues online] **read ›**

25 *Apostolic Constitutions* (1885 English; on point 1) a one a bishop ought to be, who has been the husband of one wife… [continues online] **read ›**

26 *Apostolic Constitutions* (1885 English; on point 1) have already said, that a bishop, a presbyter, and a deacon, when they are constituted, must be but once married, whether their wives be alive or whether they be dead… [continues online] **read ›**

Peter of Alexandria, *c. 300–311 AD · sources 27–28*

27 *Canonical Epistle* (on point 4) pay the heavier penalty of losing, as far as he is concerned, the flock of which he was appointed shepherd by the great and chief Shepherd and High Priest. But… [continues online] **read ›**

28 *Canonical Epistle* (on point 7) "1:23-24 For, considering not his own advantage but the advantage of many, that they might be saved, he judged it more necessary than his own rest to remain… [continues online] **read ›**

John Chrysostom, *c. 386–407 AD · sources 29–35*

29 *Homilies on Acts* **Quote 12, page 5** "out of his natural temper, and he needs a thousand eyes on every side. Do you not see how many qualifications a bishop must have? He must be able to… [continues online] **read ›**

30 *Homilies on First Timothy* **Quote 5, page 3** "in addition to the qualifications of hospitality, moderation, and… [continues online] **read ›**

31 *Homilies on First Timothy* **Quote 1, page 2** "Bishop, then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife… [continues online] **read ›**

32 *Homilies on Romans* (on point 4) On this ground also, God charges the teachers of the Jews above all things with this, saying, "O shepherds of Israel, do shepherds feed themselves? Do they not feed the… [continues online] **read ›**

33 *Homilies on Acts* (on point 4) Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He has purchased with… [continues online] **read ›**

34 *On the Priesthood* 2 (on point 7) make a complete list, but left us to understand the rest from these. Moreover, in the case of the shepherd of irrational creatures, those who want to destroy the flock… [continues online] **read ›**

35 *Homilies on Titus* (1885 English; on point 1) "the qualities which a Bishop is required to possess are different, as to be blameless, sober, orderly, hospitable, apt to teach… [continues online] **read ›**

Anonymous · *sources 36–37*

36 *Treatise Against the Heretic Novatian* 1 (on point 4) intent to destroy the flock of Christ? As we read in Zechariah: "Look, I am raising up a shepherd in the land who will not care for what has gone… [continues online] **read ›**

37 *Treatise on Re-Baptism* 1 (on point 5) this is found to be so, what do you think, my brother? If a man is not baptized by a bishop in such a way as to receive the laying… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Rome · *sources 38–40*

38 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (on point 6) themselves over which of them should be honored with that glorious title, he commanded the twelve leaders of the tribes to bring him their rods, each one inscribed with the… [continues online] **read ›**

39 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English) **Quote 11, page 5** "are of opinion, therefore, that those appointed by them, or afterwards by other eminent men, with the consent of the whole Church, and who have blamelessly served the flock of… [continues online] **read ›**

40 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Quote 10, page 5** "Thus, preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits of… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *108 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

41 **Exodus 18:20** And you shall solemnly charge them with the statutes of God and his law, and show them the ways in which they must walk and the works they must do. **read ›**

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42 **Exodus 18:21** And you yourself select able men from all the people, God-fearing, righteous men who hate arrogance, and set them over the people as captains of thousands, captains of hundreds, captains of fifties, and captains of tens. **read ›**

43 **Exodus 29:1** This is what you shall do for them: you shall sanctify them, so that they may serve me as priests. You shall take one young calf from the herd and two unblemished rams, **read ›**

44 **Exodus 35:10** Let everyone among you who is wise in heart come and make all that the Lord has commanded: **read ›**

45 **Leviticus 16:32** The priest whom they anoint, and whose hands they consecrate to serve as priest after his father, shall make atonement; he shall put on the linen garment, the holy garment. **read ›**

46 **Leviticus 21:10** And the high priest among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil has been poured, and who has been consecrated to put on the garments, shall not uncover his head, nor tear his garments; **read ›**

47 **Numbers 4:23** From twenty-five years old and upward to fifty years old you shall number them, everyone who goes in to minister, to do his works in the tabernacle of witness. **read ›**

48 **Numbers 16:9** Is it a small thing to you that the God of Israel has separated you from the congregation of Israel and brought you near to himself, to minister in the services of the tabernacle of the Lord and to stand before the tabernacle to serve them? **read ›**

49 **Numbers 27:16** “Let the Lord God of the spirits and of all flesh select a man over this congregation, **read ›**

50 **Numbers 27:17** who shall go out before them and who shall come in before them, who shall lead them out and who shall bring them in, so that the congregation of the Lord may not be like sheep that have no shepherd.” **read ›**

51 **Deuteronomy 18:5** For the Lord has chosen him out of all your tribes, to stand before the Lord God, to minister and to bless in his name, he and his sons among the children of Israel. **read ›**

52 **Judges 18:19** They said to him, “Be quiet; put your hand over your mouth, and come with us, and be a father and a priest to us. Is it better for you to be priest to the house of one man, or to be priest to a tribe and a house, to a clan in Israel?” **read ›**

53 **2 Samuel 22:24** I shall be blameless before him, and I will keep myself from my iniquity. **read ›**

54 **1 Chronicles 9:13** and their brothers, heads of the houses of their families, one thousand seven hundred and sixty, mighty men of valor for the work of the service of the house of God. **read ›**

55 **1 Chronicles 23:28** for he appointed them at the side of Aaron, to minister in the house of the Lord, over the courts, and over the chambers, and over the purification of all the holy things, and over the works of the service of the house of God; **read ›**

56 **1 Chronicles 27:31** And over the sheep was Jaziz the Hagrite. All these were overseers of the possessions of King David. **read ›**

57 **1 Chronicles 28:21** And behold, the daily courses of the priests and the Levites for all the service of the house of the Lord; and with you in every task is every willing man with wisdom in every skill; and the rulers and all the people are at your every word.” **read ›**

58 **2 Chronicles 31:16** besides the offspring of the males from three years old and upward, to every one who entered the house of the Lord, by a daily account, for ministry in the daily courses of their arrangement. **read ›**

59 **2 Chronicles 34:13** And they were over the burden-bearers and over all who did the work in every kind of service; and of the Levites there were scribes, judges, and gatekeepers. **read ›**

60 **Ezra 6:4** with three strong courses of stone and one course of timber; and the expense shall be given from the king’s house. **read ›**

61 **Ezra 6:11** And a decree has been issued by me that if any man alters this word, a beam shall be pulled down from his house, and he shall be lifted up and struck on it; and his house shall be forfeited to me. **read ›**

62 **Ezra 7:2** the son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub, **read ›**

63 **Proverbs 14:19** The evil will fall before the good, and the ungodly will wait at the doors of the righteous. **read ›**

64 **Isaiah 7:6** “We will go up to Judea, and having talked with them we will turn them to our side, and we will make the son of Tabeel king of it,” **read ›**

65 **Isaiah 15:3** Wrap yourselves in sackcloth in her squares, and lament on her rooftops and in her lanes; all of you, wail with weeping. **read ›**

66 **Jeremiah 14:2** Judea has mourned, and her gates have been emptied, and they are darkened on the ground, and the cry of Jerusalem has gone up. **read ›**

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67 **Jeremiah 17:24** And it shall be, if you listen to me, says the Lord, by not bringing in burdens through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day, and by sanctifying the Sabbath day so as to do no work, **read ›**

68 **Jeremiah 23:2** Therefore thus says the Lord against those who shepherd my people: You have scattered my sheep and driven them out, and you have not cared for them; behold, I will take vengeance on you according to your evil practices. **read ›**

69 **Jeremiah 23:4** And I will raise up shepherds for them, who will shepherd them; and they will no longer fear or be dismayed, says the Lord. **read ›**

70 **Jeremiah 24:8** And like the bad figs, which cannot be eaten because they are so bad—thus says the Lord—so I will give up Zedekiah king of Judah, and his nobles, and the remnant of Jerusalem, those who are left in this land, and those who dwell in Egypt. **read ›**

71 **Jeremiah 31:2** Thus said the Lord: I found him warm in the wilderness with those who had perished by the sword. Go, and do not destroy Israel. (Septuagint Jeremiah 38:2 (Jeremiah 31:2 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

72 **Ezekiel 4:17** so that they may lack bread and water; and a man and his brother shall be ruined, and they shall waste away in their unrighteous deeds. **read ›**

73 **Ezekiel 11:4** Therefore prophesy against them; prophesy, Son of man.” **read ›**

74 **Ezekiel 24:2** Son of man, write down for yourself a day, from this day on which the king of Babylon leaned against Jerusalem, from this very day. **read ›**

75 **Ezekiel 33:9** But if you warn the ungodly of his way, to turn from it, and he does not turn from his way, he shall die in his ungodliness, and you have delivered your own soul. **read ›**

76 **Ezekiel 34:2** Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: O shepherds of Israel, do shepherds feed themselves? Do not the shepherds feed the sheep? **read ›**

77 **Ezekiel 34:9** therefore, O shepherds, **read ›**

78 **Daniel 11:5** And the king of the south shall grow strong; and one of their rulers shall grow strong against him and shall rule with great dominion. **read ›**

79 **Daniel 11:20** And from his root a shoot of the kingdom shall arise in his place, one who causes to pass over and exacts the glory of the kingdom; and in those days he shall still be broken, but not openly, nor in war. **read ›**

80 **Amos 3:14** For in the day when I avenge the ungodly deeds of Israel upon him, I will also take vengeance on the altars of Bethel; and the horns of the altar shall be broken off, and they shall fall to the ground. **read ›**

81 **Amos 6:10** and the rest shall be left behind; and their relatives shall take them, and shall press hard to carry their bones out of the house; and one shall say to those in charge of the house, “Is there still anyone with you?” And he shall say, “No one else.” And he shall say, “Be silent, so as not to name the name of the Lord.” **read ›**

82 **1 Esdras 5:39** When the record of the descent of these men was sought in the register and was not found, they were excluded from serving as priests. **read ›**

83 **1 Esdras 5:40** And Nehemiah and Attharias told them not to share in the holy things until a high priest should arise clothed with the Manifestation and the Truth. **read ›**

84 **1 Esdras 6:4** and said to them, “By whose command are you building this house and finishing this roof and all the other things? And who are the builders who are finishing these things?” **read ›**

85 **1 Esdras 6:11** Then we asked these elders, saying, ‘By whose command are you building this house and laying the foundations of these works?’ **read ›**

86 **1 Esdras 7:2** supervised the holy works very carefully, working together with the elders of the Jews and the temple officials. **read ›**

87 **1 Esdras 8:46** commanding them to speak to Loddaeus and his brothers and the treasurers at that place, to send us men to serve as priests in the house of our Lord. **read ›**

88 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:14** And blessed is the eunuch who has done no lawless deed with his hand, nor devised evil things against the Lord; for to him will be given the choice grace of faith, and a more delightful lot in the temple of the Lord. **read ›**

89 **Wisdom of Solomon 6:10** For those who keep holy things in holiness will be made holy, and those who have been taught them will find a defense. **read ›**

90 **Wisdom of Sirach 10:20** Among brothers their leader is honored, and those who fear the Lord in his eyes. **read ›**

91 **Wisdom of Sirach 11:7** Do not find fault before you examine; understand first, and then rebuke. **read ›**

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92 **Wisdom of Sirach 14:2** Blessed is he whose soul has not condemned him, and who has not fallen from his hope. **read ›**

93 **Wisdom of Sirach 34:10** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

94 **Wisdom of Sirach 42:1** Do not be ashamed of these things, and do not show partiality so as to sin: **read ›**

95 **Wisdom of Sirach 42:8** Of the instruction of the senseless and the foolish, and of a very old man disputing with young men; and you will be truly instructed, and approved before everyone living. **read ›**

96 **Wisdom of Sirach 44:4** leaders of the people by their counsels, and by understanding of the people's learning; wise words were in their instruction; **read ›**

97 **Letter of Jeremiah 1:73** Better, then, is a righteous man who has no idols, for he will be far from disgrace. **read ›**

98 **Susanna 1:34** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

99 **Susanna 1:50** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

100 **1 Maccabees 4:42** He chose unblemished priests, devoted to the law; **read ›**

101 **1 Maccabees 14:19** And these were read before the assembly in Jerusalem. **read ›**

102 **1 Maccabees 14:38** And King Demetrius confirmed him in the high priesthood accordingly, **read ›**

103 **1 Maccabees 14:42** and that he should be general over them, and that he should take charge of the sanctuary, to appoint men over its works and over the country and over the weapons and over the strongholds; **read ›**

104 **4 Maccabees 15:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

105 **1 Enoch 89:18** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

106 **1 Enoch 89:19** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

107 **1 Enoch 89:22** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

108 **1 Enoch 89:29** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

109 **1 Enoch 89:36** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

110 **1 Enoch 89:53** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

111 **1 Enoch 89:59** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

112 **1 Enoch 89:61** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

113 **1 Enoch 89:65** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

114 **1 Enoch 89:68** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

115 **1 Enoch 90:1** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

116 **1 Enoch 90:2** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

117 **1 Enoch 90:5** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

118 **1 Enoch 90:22** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

119 **Luke 1:5** In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. **read ›**

120 **Luke 11:4** And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'" **read ›**

121 **Luke 11:16** Others, testing him, sought from him a sign from heaven. **read ›**

122 **John 2:6** Now six stone water pots were set there for the Jews' purification, each holding two or three metretes. **read ›**

123 **Acts 3:2** A man lame from his mother's womb was being carried. They laid him daily at the temple gate called Beautiful to ask alms from those entering the temple. **read ›**

124 **Acts 6:3** Therefore, brothers, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this work. **read ›**

125 **Acts 9:14** Here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name." **read ›**

126 **Acts 20:28** Therefore pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock among whom the Holy Spirit has made you bishops, to shepherd the church of the Lord and God, which he purchased with his own blood. **read ›**

127 **Romans 3:15** their feet are swift to shed blood; **read ›**

128 **1 Corinthians 12:28** God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, and kinds of tongues. **read ›**

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129 **Philippians 2:15** so that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, **read ›**

130 **1 Timothy 3:1** The saying is trustworthy: if anyone aspires to the office of bishop, he desires a good work. **read ›**

131 **1 Timothy 3:2** The bishop therefore must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, orderly, hospitable, able to teach; **read ›**

132 **1 Timothy 3:5** but if someone does not know how to rule his own house, how will he care for the church of God? **read ›**

133 **1 Timothy 3:7** He must also have a good testimony from outsiders, so that he does not fall into reproach and the devil's trap. **read ›**

134 **1 Timothy 3:8** Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for shameful gain, **read ›**

135 **1 Timothy 3:10** Let them also first be tested; then let them serve if they are blameless. **read ›**

136 **1 Timothy 3:12** Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. **read ›**

137 **1 Timothy 3:13** For those who have served well gain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in faithfulness in Christ Jesus. **read ›**

138 **1 Timothy 5:7** Also command these things, that they may be without reproach. **read ›**

139 **1 Timothy 5:17** Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and in teaching. **read ›**

140 **Titus 1:5** I left you in Crete for this reason, that you would set in order the things that were lacking and appoint elders in every city, as I directed you— **read ›**

141 **Titus 1:6** provided a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, with faithful children who are not accused of reckless living and are not insubordinate. **read ›**

142 **Titus 1:7** For a bishop must be blameless as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for dishonest gain, **read ›**

143 **Titus 1:9** holding firmly to the trustworthy word that accords with the teaching, so that he may both exhort by sound doctrine and rebuke those who contradict it. **read ›**

144 **Titus 2:7** In all things show yourself an example of good works. In your teaching, show integrity, seriousness, incorruptibility, **read ›**

145 **Titus 2:8** and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us. **read ›**

146 **1 Peter 2:25** For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. **read ›**

147 **1 Peter 5:2** shepherd the flock of God which is among you, exercising the oversight, not under compulsion, but voluntarily; not for dishonest gain, but willingly; **read ›**

148 **1 Peter 5:3** not as lording it over those entrusted to you, but making yourselves examples to the flock. **read ›**

ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *73 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Numbers 17:2

Psalms 118:26

Song of Solomon 2:16

Isaiah 60:17 · 63:3

Jeremiah 1:5

Zechariah 9:9

Matthew 5:6 · 9:2 · 9:12 · 10:5 · 10:33 · 10:39 · 12:31 · 18:3 · 18:12 · 18:22 · 19:14 · 20:25 · 20:28

Mark 5:34 · 7:9 · 9:50 · 10:43

Luke 5:20 · 8:18 · 10:16 · 11:23 · 12:47 · 12:50 · 14:11 · 14:26 · 15:4 · 19:10 · 22:32

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John 4:27 · 10:11 · 10:12 · 20:22
Acts 1:8 · 14:23
Romans 2:4 · 8:16
1 Corinthians 1:26 · 6:9 · 6:10 · 9:25 · 10:23 · 14:34
Galatians 1:10 · 2:17 · 3:27 · 5:16 · 6:1 · 6:7
Ephesians 4:2 · 6:4
Philippians 1:18 · 1:27 · 4:8
2 Thessalonians 2:3
1 Timothy 3:4 · 3:6 · 5:9
2 Timothy 2:12 · 4:6
Hebrews 3:5
James 1:12
1 Peter 1:19 · 2:9 · 2:11
1 John 2:27
Revelation 3:12

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “What qualifications does the Bible give church leaders, and what was their work?” on July 31, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY