THE QUESTION

# Who guided the early church?

*Asked by a THF member on May 18, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 8 numbered quotations · the 48 early Christian passages and 218 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.*

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/who-guided-the-early-church

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

The early writers say the Holy Spirit guided the Church, as Christ promised. The Spirit worked through the apostles, who were sent by Christ, and then through the bishops, presbyters and deacons they appointed. Churches met together to settle hard questions and held fast to the teaching handed down from the apostles.

| | |
|---|---|
| **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. |

IN THIS STUDY


| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Christ promised the Spirit of truth | **2** | **6** | Later churches kept counseling together | **4** |
| **2** | The Spirit dwells in the Church | **2** | **7** | The apostles' teaching remained the guide | **4** |
| **3** | One Spirit worked in prophets and apostles | **2** | | What these passages don't tell us | **5** |
| **4** | Christ sent the apostles, filled with the Spirit | **3** | | The Sources: 48 early Christian passages and 218 Bible verses, with links | **5** |
| **5** | Apostles and church met to decide together | **3** | | | |


© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

POINT 1 OF 7

## Christ promised the Spirit of truth

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

In Tatian's gospel harmony, Jesus tells the apostles it is better that He goes away, so the Paraclete can come. He promises that the Spirit of truth will remind them of all the truth and speak what He hears.

**1** “However, when the Spirit of truth has come, he will remind you of all the truth. He will say nothing from himself, but whatever he hears, that he will say.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tatian,** *Diatessaron* 46 (c. 150–180 AD)
*THF's updated English*

**Source 9, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**

POINT 2 OF 7

## The Spirit dwells in the Church

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

Irenaeus says the faith received in the Church is kept fresh by the Spirit of God. He ties the Spirit and the Church so closely that where one is, the other is too.

**2** “This faith is continually renewed by the Spirit of God, like a precious treasure in an excellent vessel, causing the vessel itself to also renew.”

*later in the same passage*

“Where the Church is, there is the Spirit of God; and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church, along with every kind of grace; and the Spirit is truth.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book III* (c. 175–202 AD)
*THF's updated English*

**Source 11, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**

POINT 3 OF 7

## One Spirit worked in prophets and apostles

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

Novatian says the Holy Spirit was not new in the Gospel. The same Spirit spoke in the prophets and sent the apostles to the Gentiles, giving different tasks at different times while remaining one and the same.

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

**3** “For it was He Himself who accused the people in the prophets, and in the apostles gave them the appeal to the Gentiles.”

*later in the same passage*

“Rather, He is one and the same, distributing His offices according to the times, the occasions, and the impulses of things.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Novatian,** *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 29 (c. 240–258 AD) **Source 37, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
*THF's updated English*

POINT 4 OF 7

## Christ sent the apostles, filled with the Spirit

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

Clement of Rome says the apostles went out under Christ's orders, sure of His resurrection and full of the Holy Spirit. As they preached, they tested their first converts by the Spirit and appointed them as bishops and deacons.

**4** “Having received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand.”

*later in the same passage*

“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 47, page 8** **Read it in the library ›**
*THF's updated English*

POINT 5 OF 7

## Apostles and church met to decide together

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

Irenaeus retells the meeting in Jerusalem over whether Gentile believers must be circumcised. The apostles and the whole church gathered, and Peter pointed to the Holy Spirit given to the Gentiles as God's own testimony.

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

**5**

"When certain men came down from Judea to Antioch—where the Lord's disciples were first called Christians because of their faith in Christ—and tried to convince those who believed in the Lord to be circumcised and follow other aspects of the law, Paul and Barnabas traveled to Jerusalem to discuss the matter with the apostles, and the whole Church gathered together."

*later in the same passage*

"And God, who knows the heart, testified to them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us; and made no distinction between us and them, cleansing their hearts by faith."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book III* (c. 175–202 AD)
*THF's updated English*

**Source 10, page 6** Read it in the library ›

POINT 6 OF 7

## Later churches kept counseling together

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

Cyprian quotes a letter from the church at Rome agreeing that a hard question should be handled by a gathered council. Bishop, presbyters, deacons, confessors and faithful lay people all took part.

**6**

"You can know that I wrote this from their reply, for in their letter they wrote this: "However, what you yourself have also declared in so important a matter satisfies us: first, that the peace of the Church must be maintained; then, that after an assembly for counsel has been gathered, with bishop, presbyters, deacons, and confessors, as well as the laity who stand firm, we should deal with the case of the lapsed.""

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Cyprian,** *Epistles* (c. 248–258 AD)
*THF's updated English*

**Source 38, page 8** Read it in the library ›

POINT 7 OF 7

## The apostles' teaching remained the guide

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

Origen says that when believers disagree, the test is the teaching handed down from the apostles in an unbroken line. Tertullian adds that churches traced their bishops back to apostles such as John and Peter.

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

**7** "In the same way, since there are many who think they hold the opinions of Christ, and yet some of them think differently from those before them, the teaching of the Church, handed down in orderly succession from the apostles and remaining in the Churches to the present day, is still preserved."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *De Principiis (On First Principles)* (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 32, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
*THF's updated English*

**8** "The church of Smyrna records that Polycarp was placed there by John. In the same way, the church of Rome says that Clement was ordained by Peter."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Tertullian,** *On Prescription Against Heretics* 32 (c. 196–220 AD) **Source 28, page 7** **Read it in the library ›**
*THF's updated English*

THE LIMITS

## What these passages don't tell us

- These passages do not describe every way the Spirit guided individual believers day to day.
- They do not lay out one fixed method that all churches used for every decision.
- 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 48 early Christian passages and 218 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–48, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 49–164, in Bible order), then 102 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 *48 passages from 17 writers*

**Didache**, *c. 50–120 AD · source 1*

**1** *Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* 4 (1885 English) "in the place whence lordly rule is uttered, there is the Lord… [continues online] **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

**Hermas**, *c. 90–150 AD · source 2*

**2** *Shepherd* (1885 English) “square white stones which fitted exactly into each other, are apostles, bishops, teachers, and deacons, who have lived in godly purity, and have acted as bishops and teachers and deacons… [continues online] **read ›**

**Ignatius of Antioch**, *c. 98–117 AD · sources 3–8*

**3** *Epistle to the Philadelphians* also broken for all, and one cup is shared among them all: there is only one altar for the whole Church, and one bishop, with the presbytery and deacons, my… [continues online] **read ›**

**4** *Epistle to the Philadelphians* (on point 7) flee to the Gospel as to the flesh of Jesus Christ, and to the apostles as the presbytery of the Church. I also love the prophets as those who announced… [continues online] **read ›**

**5** *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* “deacons to the presbyters; the presbyters to the bishop… [continues online] **read ›**

**6** *Epistle to the Philadelphians* (1885 English) “also the nearest Churches have sent, in some cases bishops, and in others presbyters and deacons… [continues online] **read ›**

**7** *Epistle to the Philadelphians* (1885 English) “also the nearest Churches have sent, in some cases bishops, and in others presbyters and deacons… [continues online] **read ›**

**8** *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 ›**

**Tatian**, *c. 150–180 AD · source 9*

**9** *Diatessaron* 46 (1885 English) **Quote 1, page 2** “16:13 Howbeit when the Spirit of truth has come, he will remind you of all the truth: he will say nothing from himself… [continues online] **read ›**

**Irenaeus**, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 10–17*

**10** *Against Heresies: Book III* (1885 English) **Quote 5, page 4** “when Paul and Barnabas had gone up to Jerusalem to the apostles on account of this question, and the whole Church had convened together, Peter thus addressed them: “Men, brethren… [continues online] **read ›**

**11** *Against Heresies: Book III* **Quote 2, page 2** defeated by their own arguments. On the other hand, it has been shown that the preaching of the Church remains consistent everywhere, stays steady, and is supported by the prophets… [continues online] **read ›**

**12** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English; on point 7) “As I have heard from a certain presbyter, who had heard it from those who had seen the apostles, and from those who had been their disciples, the punishment [declared… [continues online] **read ›**

**13** *Against Heresies: Book III* (on point 7) blessed apostles, having established and built up the Church, entrusted the role of the episcopate to Linus. Paul mentions Linus in the Epistles to Timothy. Anacletus succeeded him, and after… [continues online] **read ›**

**14** *Against Heresies: Book III* (on point 7) was also appointed by apostles in Asia to be the bishop of the Church in Smyrna. I saw him in my early youth, for he lived a very long time… [continues online] **read ›**

**15** *Fragments from the Lost Writings of Irenæus* the fast fosters the harmony of our shared faith. The presbyters before Soter who led the Church you now govern—namely, Anicetus, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, and Sixtus—neither observed it… [continues online] **read ›**

**16** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English; on point 7) “True knowledge is [that which consists in] the doctrine of the apostles, and the ancient constitution of the Church throughout all the world, and the distinctive manifestation of the body… [continues online] **read ›**

**17** *Against Heresies: Book IV* (1885 English; on point 7) “Wherefore it is incumbent to obey the presbyters who are in the Church,—those who, as I have shown, possess the succession from the apostles… [continues online] **read ›**

**Clement of Alexandria**, *c. 190–215 AD · sources 18–22*

**18** *Instructor* 3.12 do not wander, sure Helm of babes, Shepherd of royal lambs, gather Your simple children to give holy praise, to sing hymns without deceit with innocent mouths, to Christ the… [continues online] **read ›**

**19** *Instructor* 1.7 (1885 English) “our Instructor is the holy God Jesus, the Word, who is the guide of all humanity… [continues online] **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

**20** *Stromata* 6.13 “according to my opinion, the grades here in the Church, of bishops… [continues online] **read ›**

**21** *Stromata* 6.13 (1885 English) an one is in reality a presbyter of the Church, and a true minister (deacon) of the will of God, if he do and teach what is the Lord's… [continues online] **read ›**

**22** *Stromata* 7.1 (1885 English) “also, in the Church, the elders attend to the department which has improvement for its object… [continues online] **read ›**

### **Tertullian**, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 23–29*

**23** *On Modesty* 12 (on point 5) “sacrifices, and from fornications, and from blood. By… [continues online] **read ›**

**24** *On Prescription Against Heretics* 8 (1885 English; on point 4) “10:5 It is only at the last that He instructs them to go and teach all nations, and baptize them, Matthew 28:19 when they were so soon to… [continues online] **read ›**

**25** *On Prescription Against Heretics* 28 (1885 English; on point 1) “the Holy Ghost had no such respect to any one (church) as to lead it into truth, although sent with this view by Christ, John 14:26 and for this… [continues online] **read ›**

**26** *Against Marcion* 5 (on point 7) then this too will certainly be quite clear: what has been kept as a sacred deposit in the churches of the apostles has come down from the apostles. Let us… [continues online] **read ›**

**27** *Against Praxeas* 30 (on point 1) “the Leader into all truth, John 16:13 such as is in the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, according to the mystery of the doctrine of Christ… [continues online] **read ›**

**28** *On Prescription Against Heretics* 32 **Quote 8, page 5** if there are any heresies bold enough to place themselves in the middle of the apostolic age, so that they may seem to have been handed down by the apostles… [continues online] **read ›**

**29** *Against Praxeas* 2 (on point 1) living and the dead; who also sent from heaven from the Father, according to His own promise, the Holy Ghost, the Paraclete, the sanctifier of the faith of those who… [continues online] **read ›**

### **Early Liturgies**, *c. 200–400 AD · source 30*

**30** *Divine Liturgy of St. James* 1 (on point 2) “for Your holy, catholic, and apostolic Church throughout the world. Even now, O Lord… [continues online] **read ›**

### **Hippolytus**, *c. 200–236 AD · source 31*

**31** *Refutation of All Heresies* 1 (1885 English; on point 2) “none will refute these, save the Holy Spirit bequeathed unto the Church, which the Apostles, having in the first instance received, have transmitted to those who have rightly believed… [continues online] **read ›**

### **Origen**, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 32–35*

**32** *De Principiis (On First Principles)* (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 5** “seeing there are many who think they hold the opinions of Christ, and yet some of these think differently from their predecessors, yet as the teaching of the Church, transmitted… [continues online] **read ›**

**33** *Against Celsus* 2 (on point 1) “when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all the truth. For He shall not speak of Himself… [continues online] **read ›**

**34** *Against Celsus* 29 (1885 English; on point 5) “as there is some obscurity about this matter, without some explanation is given, it seemed good to the apostles of Jesus and the elders assembled together at Antioch, and also… [continues online] **read ›**

**35** *De Principiis (On First Principles)* 3 “the Acts of the Apostles, the Holy Spirit… [continues online] **read ›**

### **Gregory Thaumaturgus**, *c. 240–270 AD · source 36*

**36** *A Sectional Confession of Faith* 1 (on point 3) “Corinthians 12:3-13). And again he says, "For if he who comes preaches another Christ whom we have not preached, or if you receive another spirit that you have… [continues online] **read ›**

### **Novatian**, *c. 240–258 AD · source 37*

**37** *Treatise Concerning the Trinity* 29 **Quote 3, page 3** “When the Spirit of truth shall come, He will direct you into all the truth… [continues online] **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

**Cyprian**, *c. 248–258 AD · sources 38–40*

**38** *Epistles* (1885 English) **Quote 6, page 4** "that an assembly for counsel being gathered together, with bishop, presbyters, deacons, and confessors, as well as with the laity who stand fast, we should deal with the case of… [continues online] **read ›**

**39** *Epistles* (on point 4) "But deacons ought to remember that the Lord chose apostles, that is, bishops and overseers… [continues online] **read ›**

**40** *Epistles* (on point 6) I have written and what they have replied may be made known to our brothers. Moreover, if any bishops from other places, my colleagues, or any presbyters or deacons, are… [continues online] **read ›**

**Apostolic Constitutions**, *c. 250–380 AD · sources 41–44*

**41** *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 4) "among us, you yourselves are not ignorant of them. For you certainly know that those named by us bishops, and presbyters, and deacons, were made so by prayer and by… [continues online] **read ›**

**42** *Apostolic Constitutions* prayer, let one of the bishops elevate the sacrifice upon the hands of him that is ordained, and early in the morning let him be placed in his throne, in… [continues online] **read ›**

**43** *Apostolic Constitutions* you gather an assembly of the Church, since you are like the captain of a great ship, arrange the meetings with all possible skill. Instruct the deacons, like sailors, to… [continues online] **read ›**

**44** *Apostolic Constitutions* (on point 5) we, the twelve apostles of the Lord, who are now together, give you these divine constitutions concerning every form of the church. Paul, the chosen vessel, our fellow apostle, is… [continues online] **read ›**

**Malchion**, *c. 260–280 AD · source 45*

**45** *Epistle Against Paul of Samosata* 1 (on point 6) ministers throughout the world—both bishops and presbyters and deacons—and to the whole Catholic Church under heaven: Helenus, Hymenaeus, Theophilus, Theotecnus, Maximus, Proclus, Nicomas, Aelianus, Paul, Bolanus, Protogenes, Hierax… [continues online] **read ›**

**Anonymous** · *source 46*

**46** *Treatise on Re-Baptism* 1 (on point 4) mightier than I, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose: He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire," Matthew 3:11. For this reason… [continues online] **read ›**

**Clement of Rome** · *sources 47–48*

**47** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Quote 4, page 3** "Thus, preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits of… [continues online] **read ›**

**48** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (on point 4) Our apostles also knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would be conflict regarding the office of the episcopate. For this reason, considering that they had obtained perfect foreknowledge… [continues online] **read ›**

**THE BIBLE** *116 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

**49** **Exodus 24:14** And they said to the elders, "Stay quietly here until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you; if anyone has a case to be judged, let him go to them." **read ›**

**50** **Exodus 29:30** The priest from among his sons who succeeds him, who goes into the tabernacle of witness to minister in the holy place, shall put them on for seven days. **read ›**

**51** **Exodus 40:15** You shall anoint them as you anointed their father, and they shall serve me as priests; and so they shall have an anointing of priesthood forever, throughout their generations." **read ›**

**52** **Leviticus 4:15** The elders of the congregation shall lay their hands on the head of the calf before the Lord, and they shall slaughter the calf before the Lord. **read ›**

**53** **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 ›**

**54** **Numbers 1:44** This is the count made by Moses and Aaron and the leaders of Israel, twelve men: one man for each tribe; they were by tribes, according to the houses of their families. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

55 **Numbers 4:16** Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest is overseer of the oil for the light, the compounded incense, the daily sacrifice, and the anointing oil, with the oversight of the whole tabernacle and of all that is in it, in the holy place, in all the works." **read ›**

56 **Numbers 11:16** Then the Lord said to Moses, "Gather to me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom you yourself know to be elders of the people and their scribes; and bring them to the tabernacle of witness, and they shall stand there with you. **read ›**

57 **Numbers 11:24** So Moses went out and spoke the words of the Lord to the people; and he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and set them all around the tabernacle. **read ›**

58 **Numbers 11:25** Then the Lord came down in a cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was upon him and put it upon the seventy men, the elders; and when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, but did not do so again. **read ›**

59 **Numbers 15:23** just as the Lord commanded you by the hand of Moses, from the day the Lord gave the command to you and onward throughout your generations, **read ›**

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

61 **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 ›**

62 **Numbers 27:23** and he laid his hands on him and appointed him, just as the Lord had commanded Moses. **read ›**

63 **Ezra 1:2** "Thus says Cyrus king of the Persians: The Lord God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he himself has charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judea. **read ›**

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

65 **Ezra 8:11** of the sons of Bebai, Zechariah the son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males; **read ›**

66 **Ezra 9:4** Then everyone who followed the word of the God of Israel gathered to me because of the faithlessness of the exiles; and I sat still in silence until the evening sacrifice. **read ›**

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

68 **Song of Solomon 2:11** For behold, the winter is past, the rain is over, it has gone its way. **read ›**

69 **Song of Solomon 7:13** The mandrakes have given a fragrance, and at our doors are all choice fruits, new and old; my kinsman, I have kept them for you. (Septuagint Song of Solomon 7:14 (Song of Solomon 7:13 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

70 **Isaiah 13:15** For whoever is caught will be overcome, and those who are gathered together will fall by the sword. **read ›**

71 **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 ›**

72 **Jeremiah 24:5** Thus says the Lord God of Israel: Like these good figs, so I will regard for good the Jews who were carried away captive, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans. **read ›**

73 **Jeremiah 30:6** Ask, and see: has a male given birth? And what of the fear in which they shall hold their hips and salvation? For I have seen every man, and his hands are on his hips; faces have turned to paleness. (Septuagint Jeremiah 37:6 (Jeremiah 30:6 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

74 **Jeremiah 30:24** The anger of the Lord's wrath shall by no means turn back until he has acted and until he has carried out the purpose of his heart; in the last days you shall know these things. (Septuagint Jeremiah 37:24 (Jeremiah 30:24 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

75 **Jeremiah 42:3** Let the Lord your God tell us the way in which we should walk, and the thing that we should do." (Septuagint Jeremiah 49:3 (Jeremiah 42:3 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

76 **Jeremiah 50:8** Depart from the midst of Babylon and from the land of the Chaldeans, and go out, and be like dragons before the sheep. (Septuagint Jeremiah 27:8 (Jeremiah 50:8 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

77 **Amos 1:5** And I will break the bars of Damascus, and utterly destroy the inhabitants from the plain of On, and cut off a tribe from the men of Haran; and the select people of Syria shall be taken captive, says the Lord. **read ›**

78 **Amos 1:7** And I will send forth a fire upon the walls of Gaza, and it shall devour its foundations. **read ›**

79 **Amos 3:9** Proclaim it to the regions among the Assyrians, and to the regions of Egypt, and say, "Gather yourselves on the mountain of Samaria, and see the many marvels in her midst, and the oppression that is in her." **read ›**

80 **Jonah 4:1** But Jonah was grieved with a great grief, and he was thrown into confusion. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

81 **Nahum 1:2** God is jealous, and the Lord avenges; the Lord avenges with wrath; the Lord avenges himself on his adversaries, and he removes his enemies. **read ›**

82 **1 Esdras 1:2** having set the priests in their robes by their daily courses in the temple of the Lord. **read ›**

83 **1 Esdras 4:35** Is not he great who does these things? And truth is great, and stronger than all things. **read ›**

84 **1 Esdras 4:36** All the earth calls upon truth, and heaven blesses it, and all works shake and tremble, and with it there is nothing unrighteous. **read ›**

85 **1 Esdras 4:38** But truth endures and is strong forever, and it lives and prevails forever and ever. **read ›**

86 **1 Esdras 4:41** And he stopped speaking. Then all the people shouted, and then they said, “Great is truth, and it is strongest!” **read ›**

87 **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 ›**

88 **1 Esdras 7:2** supervised the holy works very carefully, working together with the elders of the Jews and the temple officials. **read ›**

89 **1 Esdras 8:11** So all who are of such a mind, let them set out with you, as it has seemed good to me and to my seven friends, the counselors, **read ›**

90 **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 ›**

91 **1 Esdras 9:4** and that whoever did not come within two or three days, according to the judgment of the ruling elders, should have his cattle given over to the temple, and he himself should be cut off from the multitude of the captivity. **read ›**

92 **1 Esdras 9:38** And the whole multitude gathered together in the open square before the gate of the temple toward the east, **read ›**

93 **Wisdom of Solomon 1:5** For the holy Spirit of discipline will flee from deceit, and will withdraw from foolish thoughts, and will be rebuked when unrighteousness comes in. **read ›**

94 **Wisdom of Solomon 1:7** For the Spirit of the Lord has filled the world, and that which holds all things together has knowledge of every word spoken. **read ›**

95 **Wisdom of Solomon 3:9** Those who trust in him will understand truth, and the faithful will stay with him in love, for grace and mercy are for his chosen ones. **read ›**

96 **Wisdom of Solomon 7:23** loving mankind, steadfast, sure, free from care, all-powerful, overseeing all, and passing through all spirits that are intelligent, pure, and most subtle. **read ›**

97 **Wisdom of Solomon 7:27** Though she is one, she can do all things, and while remaining in herself she renews all things; in every generation she passes into holy souls and makes them friends of God and prophets. **read ›**

98 **Wisdom of Solomon 9:17** Who has known your counsel, unless you gave wisdom and sent your holy Spirit from on high? **read ›**

99 **Wisdom of Solomon 12:1** For your incorruptible Spirit is in all things. **read ›**

100 **Wisdom of Sirach 4:28** Contend for the truth even to death, and the Lord God will fight for you. **read ›**

101 **Wisdom of Sirach 21:19** Instruction is shackles on the feet of the foolish, and like manacles on the right hand. **read ›**

102 **Wisdom of Sirach 36:20** A crooked heart will give sorrow, but a man of much experience will repay him. (Septuagint Wisdom of Sirach 36:25 (Wisdom of Sirach 36:20 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

103 **Wisdom of Sirach 37:15** And above all these things, pray to the Most High that he may direct your way in truth. **read ›**

104 **Wisdom of Sirach 45:15** Moses filled his hands and anointed him with holy oil; it became for him an everlasting covenant, and for his seed for the days of heaven, to minister to the Lord and to serve as priest together, and to bless his people in his name. **read ›**

105 **Baruch 1:16** and to our kings and to our rulers and to our priests and to our prophets and to our fathers, **read ›**

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

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

108 **1 Maccabees 3:55** After this Judas appointed leaders of the people, commanders of thousands and of hundreds and of fifties and of tens. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

**109** **1 Maccabees 4:42** He chose unblemished priests, devoted to the law; **read ›**

**110** **1 Maccabees 14:19** And these were read before the assembly in Jerusalem. **read ›**

**111** **1 Maccabees 14:38** And King Demetrius confirmed him in the high priesthood accordingly, **read ›**

**112** **1 Maccabees 14:41** and that the Jews and the priests were well pleased that Simon should be their leader and high priest forever, until a faithful prophet should arise; **read ›**

**113** **3 Maccabees 2:11** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

**114** **3 Maccabees 7:13** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

**115** **4 Maccabees 13:15** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

**116** **4 Maccabees 15:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

**117** **1 Enoch 49:3** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

**118** **1 Enoch 89:22** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

**119** **1 Enoch 104:10** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

**120** **Luke 12:12** for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that same hour what you must say.” **read ›**

**121** **John 14:17** the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, because he remains with you and shall be in you. **read ›**

**122** **John 14:26** But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and will remind you of all that I said to you. **read ›**

**123** **John 15:26** When the Comforter has come, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will testify about me. **read ›**

**124** **John 16:7** Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Comforter will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. **read ›**

**125** **John 16:8** When he has come, he will convict the world about sin, about righteousness, and about judgment; **read ›**

**126** **John 16:13** However, when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide you into all truth, for he will not speak from himself; but whatever he hears, he will speak. He will declare to you things that are coming. **read ›**

**127** **John 17:17** Sanctify them in your truth. Your word is truth. **read ›**

**128** **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 ›**

**129** **Acts 6:6** whom they set before the apostles. When they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. **read ›**

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

**131** **Acts 11:2** When Peter had come up to Jerusalem, those who were of the circumcision contended with him, **read ›**

**132** **Acts 13:3** Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. **read ›**

**133** **Acts 14:23** They appointed elders for them in every church and, after prayer with fasting, commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. **read ›**

**134** **Acts 15:4** When they reached Jerusalem, the church, the apostles, and the elders welcomed them, and they reported all that God had done with them. **read ›**

**135** **Acts 15:6** The apostles and the elders were gathered together to see about this matter. **read ›**

**136** **Acts 15:22** Then the apostles and elders, with the whole church, decided to choose men from among them and send them to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas: Judas called Barsabbas and Silas, leading men among the brothers. **read ›**

**137** **Acts 15:23** They wrote this letter to be delivered by them: “The apostles, the elders, and the brothers, to the brothers among the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia: Greetings. **read ›**

**138** **Acts 15:28** For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit, and to us, to lay no greater burden on you than these necessary things: **read ›**

**139** **Acts 16:4** As they passed through the cities, they delivered the decrees decided by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for them to observe. **read ›**

**140** **Acts 20:17** From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and summoned the elders of the church. **read ›**

**141** **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 ›**

**142** **Acts 26:3** especially because you are expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews. Therefore I beg you to hear me patiently. **read ›**

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don’t republish.

143 **Acts 28:16** When we entered into Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard, but Paul was allowed to stay by himself with the soldier who guarded him. **read ›**

144 **1 Corinthians 1:16** I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. **read ›**

145 **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 ›**

146 **2 Corinthians 4:2** But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by the manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. **read ›**

147 **Galatians 1:8** But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach to you a gospel other than what we preached to you, let him be cursed. **read ›**

148 **Galatians 2:5** We did not yield to them in submission even for an hour, so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. **read ›**

149 **Ephesians 2:20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone, **read ›**

150 **Ephesians 4:11** He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, shepherds and teachers; **read ›**

151 **1 Thessalonians 5:21** Test all things, and hold firmly that which is good. **read ›**

152 **1 Timothy 2:7** for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I speak the truth in Christ, I do not lie—a teacher of the Gentiles in faithfulness and truth. **read ›**

153 **1 Timothy 3:15** but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how one ought to conduct oneself in God's house, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. **read ›**

154 **1 Timothy 4:14** Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the elders. **read ›**

155 **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 ›**

156 **1 Timothy 5:22** Lay hands hastily on no one. Do not be a participant in other people's sins. Keep yourself pure. **read ›**

157 **1 Timothy 6:3** If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not consent to sound words, the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, **read ›**

158 **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 ›**

159 **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 ›**

160 **Titus 2:15** Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you. **read ›**

161 **1 Peter 5:1** I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings, and a partaker of the glory to be revealed: **read ›**

162 **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 ›**

163 **1 John 2:20** And you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. **read ›**

164 **2 John 1:2** because of the truth which remains in us and will be with us forever: **read ›**

## ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *102 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.*

**Exodus** 23:14

**Leviticus** 19:15

**Joshua** 1:10

**Proverbs** 22:6 · 31:20

© 2026 The Historic Faith · Library only, never the web · For personal study; please don't republish.

**Isaiah** 1:15 · 1:17 · 60:17 · 63:3
**Matthew** 3:11 · 5:6 · 5:9 · 7:7 · 10:5 · 12:32 · 15:11 · 15:24 · 21:32 · 27:46 · 28:19
**Mark** 7:9 · 12:39 · 16:19
**Luke** 1:35 · 5:39 · 10:16 · 11:23 · 12:10 · 12:47 · 12:50 · 20:46 · 21:37 · 22:46
**John** 1:3 · 3:13 · 5:39 · 11:41 · 14:16 · 14:18 · 15:20 · 16:12 · 20:22
**Acts** 1:4 · 1:8 · 1:11 · 2:17 · 4:32 · 7:55 · 8:16 · 8:18 · 9:5 · 11:15 · 15:7 · 15:30 · 19:5
**Romans** 8:7 · 8:9 · 8:32 · 15:27
**1 Corinthians** 2:12 · 6:10 · 7:40 · 8:8 · 9:25 · 10:4 · 12:3 · 12:8 · 14:33 · 15:3 · 15:6 · 15:41
**2 Corinthians** 1:3 · 4:13
**Galatians** 3:27 · 5:17
**Ephesians** 4:2 · 4:9 · 4:13 · 6:5 · 6:9
**Philippians** 1:18 · 2:2 · 3:16 · 4:3
**Colossians** 3:22 · 4:1
**1 Thessalonians** 4:17 · 5:12
**1 Timothy** 4:1
**Titus** 2:14
**Hebrews** 6:6 · 10:12 · 13:7
**James** 5:16
**1 Peter** 1:19 · 2:5 · 2:9
**1 John** 2:27
**Revelation** 3:21 · 4:4 · 11:16 · 22:18

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

## ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “Who guided the early church?” on May 18, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

**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 above, 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.

**How to cite this study.** The Historic Faith, “Who guided the early church?” Early Church Questions, published November 9, 2026, https://thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/who-guided-the-early-church. To cite one quotation, add its number and source, for example “quote 1, source 9.”

© 2026 The Historic Faith. Selection, arrangement and editing by THF; machine-compiled text and public-domain quotations are not claimed. For personal study; please don’t republish.

THEHISTORICFAITH.COM

THE END OF THIS STUDY