

Lesson #3: The Structure and Development of Leadership

Luke presents an “orderly account” in the book of Acts—his second narrative addressed to Theophilus—chronicling events up to his own present time. This approach likely explains the abrupt ending of the book. Even early on we see the structure of leadership and governance on open display. Peter takes the role of spokesman for the working of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, and the Healing of the lame man at the temple who was healed and standing before the Jewish leaders (Acts 2 -5). The Apostles have the people appoint deacons from among them of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom to deal with feeding widows fairly.

1. Based on Lesson #3 and the events recorded in Acts 2 through 6, what patterns or principles about the organization and growth of church leadership can be identified, and how did these contribute to the development of the early Christian community?
2. What qualities or actions of the leaders described in Acts 2–6 appear most significant for guiding and sustaining the church, and how might these observations shape our understanding of effective leadership today?

Notable Events; Stephen the 1st martyr, and Philip evangelizing in Samaria

Stephens death by stoning and persecution that arose in Jerusalem of the early church caused the church to be scattered to other areas. We also see ministry and the work of the Holy Spirit through others outside of the ministry of the Apostles in Acts 6 through 8. It is worth noting that when Philip preaches in Samaria and Baptizes the new believers, he calls for the apostles, they send Peter and John who lay hands on the new converts and they receive the Holy Spirit.

1. In what ways does the ministry of individuals like Stephen and Philip illustrate the value of empowering others beyond the original apostles within the church’s hierarchy, and how might this inform our approach to shared ministry roles today?
2. How does the early church’s method of appointing leaders and distributing responsibilities challenge or affirm our current understanding of spiritual authority, accountability, and collaboration within church leadership structures?