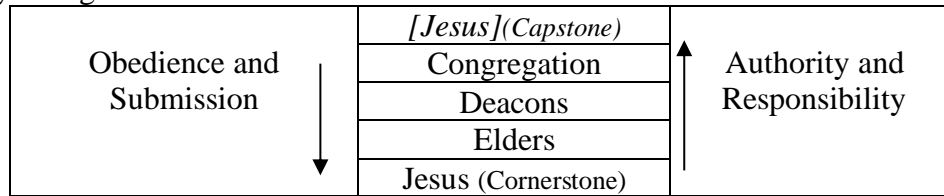


CFWL – May 18, 2025
1 Thessalonians 1:1a - Spiritual Leadership

- I. Paul, Silvanus, Timothy—founding Spiritual leaders
Graphically it might look like this:



II. Spiritual Leadership—an overview—Elders and Deacons

A. Elders

a. Ministry Established (Acts 1:15-26 [esp. 17, 20, 24-26]; 11:30; 14:23; Titus 1:5; Phil. 1:1)

b. Qualifications Given (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9)

Titus 1:6-9 (NKJV) *if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. ⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, ⁹ holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.*

c. Responsibilities

- Elders discern correct/incorrect doctrine (Acts 15:2-23)
Acts 15:2 (NKJV) *Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.*
- Elders oversee/rule/guide the church (Acts 20:17-28; 1 Tim. 5:17-19; Heb. 13:17)
Acts 20:28 (NKJV) *Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.*
- Elders are to pray for those in the church and lead in prayer ministry (James 5:16-18; Acts 6:3-4)
James 5:16 (NKJV) *Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*
- Elders anoint those who ask with oil for healing (James 5:14-15)
James 5:14 (NKJV) *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.*
- Elders are to shepherd the congregation (1 Pet. 5:1-5)
1 Peter 5:1-2a (NKJV) *The elders who are among you I exhort...² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers,*
- Elders are to be able to teach/preach as an “oracle” of God (1 Pet. 4:11; Eph. 4:11-13)
1 Peter 4:11 (NKJV) *If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*
- Elders are to be examples to the flock of Christian living (Heb. 13:7; 1 Cor. 11:1)
Hebrews 13:7 (NKJV) *Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.*

- Elders serve through these ministries and give an account of that service
Hebrews 13:17 (NKJV) *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

d. Command to honor (1 Thess. 5:12-14; 1 Tim. 5:17-19; Heb 13:7; Heb 13:17)

1 Timothy 5:17-19 (NKJV) *Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.*

e. Guidelines for discipline (specific—1 Tim. 5:17-19)

1 Timothy 5:19 (NKJV) *Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.*

B. Deacons

a. Ministry established (Acts 6:1-6; Phil 1:1)

Acts 6:3, 6 (NKJV) *Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business...⁶ whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.*

b. Qualifications given (1 Tim. 3:8-13)

1 Timothy 3:13 (NKJV) *For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

c. Responsibilities—To help the poor and assist the Elders (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3:12)

Acts 6:2-3 (NKJV) *Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables."³ Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business*

d. Command to honor (1 Thess. 5:12-14; Heb 13:7)

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 (NKJV) *And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you,¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.*

e. Guidelines for discipline (same as everyone else—Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1)

III. Spiritual Leadership of CFWL—we attempt to follow this pattern since “The Constitution of CFWL is the Holy Bible, especially the New Testament.”

IV. Challenge—to abide by Scripture and not add/subtract

- Being willing to follow our constitution—The Holy Bible without adding traditions of Man (these nullify/make void the Word of God—Matt. 1:5-6; Mark 7:9-13)
- Living in submission to one another
- God has specific lines of authority in His church and His blessings come by following them in our lives individually and corporately and we do not have the authority to add or subtract according to our pleasure. (Deut. 4:1-2; 12:32; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18-19)
Proverbs 30:5-6 (NKJV) *Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.⁶ Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.*
- Elders carry the greater authority, responsibility and accountability before God that is why they are to be followed and given double honor.