

Bishops and Deacons

Paul mentions “bishops and deacons” in his opening salutation to the Philippians (1:1). Much more is said elsewhere in the New Testament about the qualifications and responsibilities of persons holding such church offices (1 Tim. 3:1–13; Titus 1:7–9). We do not know, however, whether the terms meant the same thing in every locale. The word “bishop” (in Greek, *episkopos*) means “overseer,” and the word “deacon” (in Greek, *diakonos*) means “one who serves.” At the time Paul wrote to the Philippians, these words may have been fairly generic designations for church leaders rather than technical terms for particular orders of clergy.