

First Among Equals

Leader Among Leaders

By Alexander Strauch



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First Among Equals

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The question we seek to answer in this study is this: How do we explain Peter's relationship to the other eleven apostles, since he is so exceptionally prominent among them as speaker and leader?

If you doubt his prominence, take your Bible concordance and look up the name Peter. Then search the names of Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, Simon the Zealot, or James the son of Alphaeus. We know little or nothing about these other apostles. Yet they were all equally apostles with Peter, preaching the gospel, teaching the Word, performing signs and wonders, making significant decisions for the church, distributing church funds, sending out letters and delegates (see notes below).

Was Peter "head" of the apostles? Were the other apostles his assistants or advisors? Were they subordinate to him? Was he the supreme bishop of the Church, wielding the keys to the kingdom (Matt. 16:18-19)?

What is interesting, and most instructive, is that the Gospels give Peter no special, exclusive title to differentiate him from the other apostles (see Matt. 23:8-12). As one scholar who has written extensively on Peter puts it, "[Peter] is ascribed no leading position at all in relation to the group of the Twelve; on the contrary, he appears only as the most representative of the disciples."¹ And this is deliberate, based on Jesus' unique teaching on humility, love, servanthood, and brotherhood. As Jesus said, "You are all brothers," "You have one instructor, the Christ," and "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled" (Matt. 23:8, 10 ESV²). The Christian community is a family of brothers and sisters.

Furthermore, it is not only Peter who stands out among the apostles. In the Gospels, James and John are often highlighted by Jesus along with Peter, while the other apostles are left unmentioned (Matt. 26:37). Undoubtedly, Jesus had no difficulty in teaching brotherly equality and

¹ Oscar Cullmann, *Peter Disciple, Apostle, Martyr: A Historical and Theological Study* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 32.

² Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture is taken from the ESV (English Standard Version).

simultaneously acknowledging diversity of giftedness and leadership influence within the family of brothers and sisters.

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One way to describe the relationship of Peter to the other eleven apostles is by the ancient Roman description “first among equals” (Latin: *primus inter pares*; Greek: *protos metaxy ison*) or in the case of Peter, James, and John: “first ones among equals” (*primi inter pares*). Merriam-Webster defines “first among equals” this way: “the leader of a group of people who is officially considered equal in rights and status to the other members of the group.” While such definitions are helpful, we must base our understanding of the phrase upon the context of Jesus’ repeated teaching on brotherhood (sisterhood), humble servanthood, and Christ-like loving community.

The term “first among equals” is employed here **to describe a reality that existed between Peter and the other apostles. It is not an official title.** It is not a separate office. It is not a justification for autocratic leadership or one-man rule of the local church. I doubt the other apostles walked around calling Peter “first among equals.”

It is undeniable that Peter, especially after the ascension of Christ into heaven, acted as the chief spokesman of the Twelve (see notes below), and the outstanding gifted leader among them. We can describe him as first among his equals without reducing the other apostles to be his advisors or subordinates (Eph. 2:20; Rev. 21:14). “Among the Twelve,” Richard Bauckham correctly states, “Peter is clearly the pre-eminent figure . . . though himself subject to the apostles as a group (Acts 8:14).”³

Being first among his equals does not make Peter the supreme apostle or pope. Peter did not preside over the other apostles as head. He was not the presiding bishop of the Jerusalem council (Act 15:6-29). Instead, at the council he acted more as a missionary spokesman for the Gentile mission, and later his work would not entail organizational head over the church in Jerusalem but traveling gospel preacher. Peter was first *among* his equals, not *over* his equals. If he was over his equals, they would not be his equals in the office of apostle.

³ Richard Bauckham, *The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting*, vol. 4 “The Book of Acts in Its Palestinian Settings” (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 428.

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The concept of first among equals is not a foreign concept to the Bible.⁴ In Acts 15:22, Barsabbas and Silas are called “leading men among the brothers.” “It is interesting,” remarks one commentator, “that they are described as ‘leading men among the brothers’ but are neither apostles nor elders, though both are later described as ‘prophets’ (Acts 15:32).”⁵ All in the believing community are equally brothers and sisters in Christ, but some brothers stand out as leaders.

In a list of the names of the apostles, Matthew refers to Peter as “first,” not first in number, which is obvious, but in prominence (Matt. 10:2).⁶

Peter’s position among the Twelve should be neither exaggerated nor diminished. We must be aware of the tendency either to elevate Peter to

⁴ Gen. 49:8-12, 22-26; Deut. 33:16-17; Acts 13:50; 14:12; 15:22; 16:12; 17:4; 25:2. The “first among equals” leadership relationship can also be observed among the Seven who were chosen to relieve the apostles in Acts 6. Philip and Stephen stood out as prominent figures among the five other brothers (Acts 6:8-7:60; 8:4-40; 21:8). Yet, as far as the account records, the two held no special title or status above the others. The concept of “first among equals” is further evidenced by the relationship of Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Paul and Barnabas were both apostles (Acts 13:1-3; 14:4; 15:36-39; 1 Cor. 9:1-6), yet Paul was first between the two because he was “the chief speaker” and dynamic leader (Acts 13:13; 14:2). Although Paul was plainly the more gifted of the two apostles, he held no formal ranking over Barnabas; they labored as partners in the work of the gospel. A similar relationship seems to have existed between Paul and Silas, who was also an apostle (1 Thess. 2:6).

⁵ James D. G. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1996), 207.

⁶ D. A. Carson comments, “Matthew uses ‘first’ in connection with Peter; the word cannot mean he was the first convert . . . and probably does not simply mean “first on the list,” which would be a trifling comment (cf. 1 Cor. 12:28). More likely it means *primus inter pares* (‘first among equals’; cf. further on 16:13-20)” (*Matthew*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 1 [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995], 237). Darrell Bock also comments on Luke 22:32, “[Peter’s] responsibility will be to make [the brothers’] faith more resolute in its allegiance to Jesus. Peter is again considered the first among equals” (*Luke*, Baker Exegetical Commentary, vol. 2 [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996], 1743). (cont.) Commenting on Peter’s confession in Matthew 16, Turner writes, “It is not Peter alone but as first among equals, since the context makes it clear that Peter is speaking for the apostles as a whole in Matt. 16:16” (David L. Turner, *Matthew*, Baker Exegetical Commentary [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008], 407).

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an unscriptural position or to underestimate his significant influence among the Twelve. It is indeed hard to accurately describe his status since the New Testament does not give him a distinct title.

A thorough study of this subject will show that the eleven apostles were stronger as a group with Peter, because Peter challenged, energized, strengthened, and ignited the group. Without Peter, the group would have been less effective. When surrounded by the eleven other apostles who were his equals, Peter also became stronger and more balanced, and was protected from his impetuous nature and his fears. Together they were a more effective team of leaders.

The advantage of the principle of “first among equals” is that it allows for functional, gift-based diversity within the eldership team without creating an official, superior office over fellow elders. Just as the leading apostles, such as Peter and John, bore no special title or formal distinctions from the other apostles, elders who receive double honor (1 Tim. 5:17) form no official class or receive no special title. The differences among the elders are functional, not formal.

We must not forget that in the body of Christ,

... there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Cor. 12:4-7)

Some spiritual gifts are more public, verbal, or of the leadership type (Rom. 12:8; “the one who leads”). Thus, people with these kinds of gifts will stand out more prominently in the believing community. Some people are multi-gifted; they have both teaching and leadership gifts. They will naturally stand out among their brothers and sisters as leaders and teachers, and as people whom the church body will follow. They are “leading men among the brothers [and sisters]” and gifted by God for a leadership role (Acts 15:22).

Terminology

Some Bible teachers do not like the term “first among equals.” Or they don’t understand the term as used for Peter and the eleven apostles. But that is not a problem. One can use some other term to explain Peter’s prominence and relationship among his fellow apostles, e.g., “Leader among leaders.” But one does have to explain Peter’s obvious prominence

among the twelve apostles, especially as seen in the book of Acts after our Lord's ascension (see the study below). The first eleven chapters of Acts focus primarily on Peter as the outstanding person of the early Church.

Some Bible teachers fear that the concept of "first among equals" is too easily turned into "first" without equals and a loss of parity among the church elders. This is a very legitimate concern, and a common problem. But abuses of a truth should not negate its proper use or description.

John Murray's warning concerning this problem bears repeating:

"Plurality is written in the boldest letters in the pages of the New Testament, and singularity bears the hallmark of despotism to Christ's institution. . . .

"The principle of parity [equality] is co-ordinate with that of plurality. Strictly speaking there can be no plurality if there is not parity. For if one is in the least degree above the others, then, in respect of that hegemony [superior authority], there is no longer plurality. Plurality applies to all government of the church, and there must therefore be parity in the plurality. There is not the slightest evidence in the New Testament that among the elders there was any hierarchy; the elders exercise government in unison, and on a parity with one another."⁷

One very important aspect of the biblical concept of "first among equals" is Jesus' repeated teaching on humility, love, servanthood, and brotherhood. Jesus reminds all his disciples that they are not to be like the autocratic leaders of the world, who love lofty titles, high position, and public praise. Instead they are to be humble servants of one another, equally brothers (Matt. 23:5-12). *First among equals must never be viewed in isolation from Jesus' teachings of servant greatness, brotherly equality, and loving community.*

Equality and Diversity within the Eldership

In words directed to the elders of the church at Ephesus Paul said, "The Holy Spirit has made you [all of you] overseers, to shepherd the church of God" (Acts 20:28, words in square brackets are added for emphasis or clarification). He later wrote to the church at Ephesus, "The

⁷ *Collected Writings of John Murray*: vol. 2 (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1977), 346.

elders who rule well [some elders] are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching” (1 Tim. 5:17). From these two pivotal texts addressed to the church at Ephesus, we learn that both equality and diversity exist within a biblical eldership.

Equality

On the side of equality Acts 20 teaches that all the elders:

- Have been charged by the Holy Spirit as “overseers” to “shepherd [pastor] the church of God” (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1, 2).
- Share equally the authority and responsibility for the pastoral oversight of the entire congregation: “Be on guard ... for all the flock” (Acts 20:28; italics added).
- Are equally accountable to the entire eldership body and under the loving pastoral care of the entire eldership body (Acts 20:28a).

In addition to Acts 20, these passages also show equality within eldership. All elders:

- Are equally responsible to be alert to the constant dangers of false teaching and to guard the flock from false teachers (Acts 15:6; 20:28-31; Titus 1:9-13).
- Are equally responsible to teach Scripture and rebuke false teachers (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9).
- Are to be publicly examined as to the biblical qualifications before serving as an overseer (1 Tim. 3:10; 5:22-25).
- Are responsible to visit and pray for the sick (James 5:14).
- Share the designations “elder” and “overseer” (Phil.1:1; 1 Tim. 5:17).
- Are to be appreciated, esteemed “very highly in love,” honored, protected from slander, and obeyed (1 Thess. 5:12,13; 1 Tim. 5:17,19; Heb. 13:17).

Diversity

Although all elders share equally the same office and pastoral charge, there is at the same time rich diversity within the eldership. It is obvious

that not all elders on an elder council are equal in giftedness, effectiveness, influence, time availability, experience, verbal skills, leadership ability, or biblical knowledge. First Timothy 5:17-18 is the key text that acknowledges diversity within the eldership council. Paul tells Timothy and the congregation that:

- Not all elders labor diligently “at preaching and teaching” (clearly implied in 1 Tim. 5:17). Although all elders must be able to teach, to refute false teachers, and be spiritually alert to the dangers of false doctrine, nowhere does Scripture assert that all elders have the spiritual gift of teaching or evangelism or the same degree of proficiency at teaching or preaching the gospel. This implies that some elders (at least one) will have a more prominent or effective role than other elders in the public teaching ministry to the whole church.
- Not all elders “rule well [a marked proficiency]” (1 Tim. 5:17). Although all elders must be able to lead and manage their homes well, not all have the spiritual gift of leadership or the same degree of leadership skills (Rom. 12:8). This implies that one elder or some elders will display more prominent leadership initiative and influence within the eldership body.
- Not all elders receive “double honor” from the congregation and its elders, but it is mandated that those laboring in the Word or ruling well be compensated for their diligent work (1 Tim. 5:17-18; Gal. 6:6).

So Scripture supports both equality and diversity within a church eldership council. In a biblical eldership both must be constantly balanced and maintained without jealousy or conflict, an impossible task without the Holy Spirit and hearts obedient to Christ’s humble servant teaching.

The Twelve Apostles

As discussed above, the New Testament beautifully illustrates the concept of equality and diversity within the eldership by means of the twelve apostles. Our Lord appointed twelve apostles, not one apostle with eleven advisors. He trained and sent out all twelve to preach and heal (Matt. 10:1–11:1). He did not train one man to be the head of his Church. He dedicated himself to training a team of men who would eventually work together as a leadership body.

Yet within the apostolic team, Peter, James, and John stand out prominently among their fellow colleagues. Peter especially stands out as

the chief speaker of the apostolic body and the prominent figure among the Twelve—“first, Simon” (Matt. 10:2). It was to Peter that Jesus said, “When you have turned again, strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:32). In response to Peter’s well-known confession, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” Jesus famously said, “Upon this rock [that is, the confessing, Christocentric Peter], I will build my church” (Matt. 16:18).⁸ Peter acted as spokesman for the Twelve; what he confessed represented the entire group of apostles, who would form the “foundation” of the Church (Eph. 2:20; Rev. 21:14).

Some fifteen years after Christ’s death, Peter, John, and James (the half-brother of Jesus) are considered by the people “pillars” of the church in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:9). Yet despite Peter’s prominence (Gal. 2:7-8), Peter is considered *one* of the pillars of the church, not *the* pillar.

A Deeper Look at 1 Timothy 5:17-18

Elders who lead “well” and especially those who work hard at teaching are to be treated as worthy of double honor. Note that both those who lead well, that is, those with leadership/administration gifting, and those who labor at teaching are in view here. Both types of elders deserve double honor, not just the traditional one-person pastor.

Worthy of Double Honor: The imperative verb translated *be considered worthy* means “to be rightly deserving” or “to be entitled to” double honor. Paul is not making a suggestion. “Double honor” is a requirement, an obligation on the part of each member of the congregation. All who have benefited from the leadership and teaching of such elders are to take part in this practical matter. The point is that certain elders—not all elders—are to receive double honor. This is not meant to create jealousy among elders, but rather it is intended to strengthen the eldership while acknowledging that not all elders possess the same giftedness and leading from God.

⁸ Many, if not most, conservative evangelical scholars believe that Jesus was making a play on words using Peter’s name, and that he, that is, the confessing Peter, is the rock. As a group, not Peter alone, the apostles form the foundation of the Church (Eph. 2:20; Rev. 21:14). See D. A. Carson, *Matthew*, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 367-375; Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew, A Commentary*, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, rev. 2004), 118-138.

Material Provision: Regardless of the precise meaning of “double honor,” the context makes it clear that material or financial honor is included. First Timothy 5:17-18 is part of a larger context in which a series of honor commands appear: “honor” genuine widows (5:3-16), give “double honor” to certain elders (5:17-18), and give “all honor” to non-Christian slave masters (6:1, 2a). “Honor” is the key word. In the cases of destitute widows (5:16) and certain elders (5:17), honor includes respect as well as material provision. “All honor” in the case of a slave and his non-Christian master means respect and valuable service. The context determines the differences in nuances of meaning of the word *honor*.

The Scripture Says: Paul feels so strongly about those who labor in the Word and their rightful entitlement to “double honor” that he immediately backs up his imperative command. In verse 18, he quotes two Scripture passages to bolster his injunction on double honor: “For the Scripture says, ‘You shall not muzzle the ox when it treads out the grain,’ and, ‘The laborer deserves his wages’” (Deut. 25:4; 1 Cor. 9:11). The hard-working ox must not be denied its share in the harvest. The worker is worthy of his wages. And the laboring elder is worthy of material provision for his needs. This is a New Testament principle of church order and life.

These verses from Deuteronomy, Luke, and 1 Corinthians reveal what “double honor” means; namely, material compensation. Similarly, Paul writes in Galatians 6:6: “Let the one who is taught the word share all good things [spiritual and material, Luke 16:25] with the one who teaches.”

Extremes

Two unbiblical extremes have historically distorted the biblical concept of equality and diversity within the eldership. One extreme is to sacralize and professionalize one gifted elder, making him in effect a Protestant priest: the minister, the chief shepherd, the anointed one, or the one who alone can bless, preach, and administer holy things. The other extreme is to force complete equality among the elders, allowing for no special giftedness, calling, function, or financial provision for any member. With God’s help, let us seek to represent accurately and completely Christ’s instructions on this important subject.

Further Scriptures Showing Equality and Diversity

The Apostles Acting Together as Christ's Official Appointed Body of Leaders and Teachers

Acts 1:2-14 – [Jesus] had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them . . . appearing to them during forty days. . . . And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem. . . . So when they had come together, they asked him . . . You will be my witnesses . . . As they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven (the ascension) . . . Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount. . . . And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room where they were staying (the names of the 11 apostles follow in verse v. 13). All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer. . . .

Acts 1:23-26 – And they put forward two . . . And they prayed and said . . . And they cast lots for them . . . he [Matthias] was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Acts 4:33 – And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony.

Acts 4:35 – and laid it [money/proceeds] at the apostles' feet and it was distributed

Acts 4:36 – Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas

Acts 4:37 – [Barnabas] laid it at the apostles' feet.

Acts 5:2 – Ananias] laid it [the proceeds] at the apostles' feet.

Acts 5:12 – Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles

Acts 5:18-21, 25 – [the Sadducees] arrested the apostles and put them in public prison. . . . [after they were released from prison by the angel] “Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.” When they heard this [from the angel] they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach. . . . “Look! The men [apostles] whom you put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching people.”

Acts 5:27 – The 12 apostles arrested, released and standing before the Jewish council. The high priest questioned them.

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Acts 5:29-32, 40-42 – But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. . . . And we are witnesses to these things.”. . . and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them. . . . Then they left. . . rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer. . . . And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

Acts 6:1-7 – And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men. . . whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word. . . . These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

Acts 8:2 – they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles.

Acts 8:14 – Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John.

Acts 9:27 – Barnabas took [Paul] and brought him to the apostles.

Acts 10:39, 41-42 – And we are witnesses of all that he did. . . . but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses (the Twelve), who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people. [Peter speaking]

Acts 11:1 – Now the apostles and the brothers who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

Acts 13:31 – and for many days he appeared to those who had come up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are now his witnesses to the people.

Acts 15:2 – Paul and Barnabas and some of the others were appointed to go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and the elders about their question.

Acts 15:4 – They were welcomed by the church and the apostles and the elders

Acts 15:6 – The apostles and the elders were gathered together to consider this matter.

Acts 15:22 – Then it seemed good to the apostles and the elders, with the whole church, to choose men.

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Acts 15:23 – The brothers, both the apostles and the elders, to the brothers.

Acts 16:4 – The decisions that had been reached by the apostles and the elders who were in Jerusalem.

Peter Among the Apostles as their Chief Speaker

Acts 1:15-22 – Peter stood up among the brothers and said. . . . “So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time. . . . one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.”

Acts 2:14-36 – But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice.

Acts 2:37-40 – they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do? And Peter said to them. . . .

Acts 4:1- 12 – Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them. . . .

Acts 5:3-10 – [Ananias] laid it at the apostles’ feet. But Peter said, “Ananias why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?” And Peter said to her. . . . But Peter said to her (vv. 8-9).

Acts 5:29 – But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men.”

Acts 8:20 – But Peter said to him [Simon]. . . .

Acts 15:7, 14 – Peter stood up and said to them... God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel.

Peter’s Miraculous Healing Acts

Acts 5:15-16 – so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them.

Acts 9:32-42 – Peter travels to Lydda and heal Aeneas, and at Joppa Peter raises Dorcas from the dead.

Peter’s Miraculous Rescue from Prison

Acts 12:3-17 – Herod arrested Peter. . . put him in prison (the story goes on with the miraculous rescue through a series of miracles.)

Peter Acting Alone

Acts 9:32-42 – Peter travels to Lydda and heal Aeneas, and at Joppa Peter raises Dorcas from the dead.

Acts 10:1-48 – Most notably, the Lord sent Peter to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles, Cornelius and his household. Moreover, Peter is given a heavenly vision to teach him about what the Lord says is clean and unclean, Jews and Gentiles (vv. 9-16). In Peter's words: "God has shown me that I should not call any person common or unclean" (v. 28). It is Peter who witnesses a Gentile Pentecost and the baptism of Gentiles (vv. 44-48).

Acts 11:1-18 – Peter is questioned by the circumcision party about fraternizing with Gentiles, preaching the gospel to them, and baptizing Gentile converts. Peter responds: "If then God gave the same gift [Holy Spirit] to them [Gentiles] as he have to us [Jews] when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way" (v. 17).

Acts 15:7, 14 – Peter stood up and said to them . . . God made a choice among you, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.

Peter and John

Acts 3:3-5 – Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple . . .

Acts 3:11-12 – [The lame man healed] clung to Peter and John.

Acts 4:1-23 – As they [Peter and John] were speaking to the people . . . the Sadducees came upon them [and arrested them]. . . . Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. . . . But Peter and John answered them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge" . . . When they were released, they went to their friends and reported what the chief priests and elders had said to them.

Acts 8:14-25 – The [apostles] sent to them Peter and John. . . they prayed for them. . . . Then they laid their hands on them. . . . the laying on of the apostles' [Peter and John's] hands. . . . Now when they had testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they returned to Jerusalem

James

Acts 12:2 – Herod killed James the brother of John

Paul and Barnabas

Acts 14:4 – [Paul and Barnabas] They two were leading men among the brothers (also Acts 14:26-15:2)