

# ACTS 6 - Discussion on Leadership

## I. The Church's MISSION

- The CHURCH — is to make disciples (Matt 28.18-20)
- The CHURCH — is to teach/equip the saints (Eph 4.11-14)
- The CHURCH — is to teach/present every man complete (Col 1.28-29)

## II. The Church's SERVANTS

- a *deacon* - All are called to serve Christ and one another
- Then there's the "*Deacon*" - capital "D" — the office of the servant/assistant in the Church. The best 1-phrase description for "The Deacon" is — *assistant to the elders*. They get things done.
- True deacons are happy to assist, undertake duties, preserve and promote unity, visit the sick, prepare for church gatherings, distribute money,
- Think of it this way: (1) elders lead ministry (2) deacons facilitate ministry (3) congregation does ministry

## III. The Church's DILEMMA

- Here's the catch: Maintaining the priority of prayer & preaching the gospel ISN'T EASY
- Pastors are often bombarded with problems that threaten to consume their time and turn their attention away. Not bad things but important yet time consuming matters.
  - This is where God's gift of DEACON comes in.
  - They play a vital role in making sure Local Churches keep Gospel Preaching at the very heart of the mission.

## IV. The Church's ORDERLINESS AND OFFICES

- Acts 6 - Apostles leading, administrating, praying, and teaching the Word.
- in Acts 6.1 - there was a conflict — some Greek-speaking widows were being neglected in the daily giving/distribution of food.
- UNTIL now, the apostles handled much of this (Acts 5) — but now it became clear that if they took on this new problem and prioritized it, they would neglect the ministry of the WORD (Acts 6.2, 4)
  
- the APOSTLES serve thru the ministry of the word and prayer
- the DEACONS serve the church by meeting physical and administrative needs.

- what is the simple job description?
  - spotting and meeting tangible needs
  - protecting and promoting church unity
  - serving and supporting the ministry of the elders
- The issue: Acts 6 shows that a problem arose in the church that threatened both the priority of the ministry of the word and the church's unity and caring for the weak — HOW did the church respond? by appointing **deacons!**
- the focus? the deacon is to protect and prioritize the church's preaching/teaching/praying ministry.
- Mark it: when the practical needs of the church threatened to overwhelm the apostles' time, the deacons stepped in to care for the needs.
- When division started creeping into the church, the deacons stepped in to create peace between emerging factions!

## V. THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY OF ADVANCEMENT

- (1) deacons **serve** the church
- (2) deacons take **initiative** - they serve proactively; they sniff out potential problems and initiate solutions. they see needs and look for ways to meet them and delegate to others specifically to meet those needs.
- (3) deacons **organize & mobilize & deploy** others — Deacons work hard to recruit, delegate others to help and join in the efforts. he can't and shouldn't do all the work. this cheats others out of the opportunity to serve.
- (4) deacons preserve and promote church **unity**. they spot threats and find solutions to preserve peace. it's a really protective, pastoral, observant, and diligent role!
- (5) deacons **assist** the elders — they protect the mission of the church by assisting the elders so that the elders can prioritize the ministry of the Word and prayer.

## VI. THE CHURCH'S ENCOURAGEMENT OF & CONSIDERATION OF "DEACONS"

- Find the deacon in your church and encourage him.
- Let him know how you appreciate what they do.
- Let them know they model what a Christlike heart of service looks like.
- BUT ALSO, ask if there are ways you can help. Ask if there's anything you can do to help shoulder the load.
- Perhaps you have a **DESIRE**, a God-given aspiration, to be a deacon. You should pursue it!

“Deacons who serve well acquire for themselves a good standing and a great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 3.13)