DEACONS OF HONOR

God's gift to the church is Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers.

Ephesians 4:11-12 ¹¹ And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

God's gift to the Pastor is elders or Deacons to the Pastor and the vision God has put in his heart and serve the church.

Acts 6:1-4 Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. ² 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; ⁴ but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word."



"Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven of you men of honest report full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business." Acts 6:3 (KJV)

The office of the deacon as an early development in the church.

Acts 6:1-4 (KJV)

"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of disciples unto them, and said, 'It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven of you men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. Bur we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.'"

<u>Deacons - Officer of the Church:</u> deacons must be qualified, they must meet some personal qualifications.

- Deacons must be "grave": serious, honorable, worthy, revered, highly respected, noble. It is being serious minded, the very opposite of:
 - Being flippant
 - Dishonoring oneself
 - Being shallow by being over-talkative
 - Having little respect because one is not grave or serious enough
 - Having surface religion only

Means that the deacon is serious-minded and committed to Christ and to the mission of the church; the mission of reaching the lost and meeting the needs of the desperate in a desperate world. We must still maintain a joyful spirit.

"Therefore let us not sleep, as do others: but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

1 Thessalonians 5:6-8 (KJV)

"A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach."

I Timothy 3:2 (KJV)

"Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things."

I Timothy 3:11 (KJV)

"A bishop must be a lover of hospitality, a love of good men, sober, just, holy. temperate."

Titus 1:8 (KJV)

"That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise...to be discrete, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their husbands, that the word of God not be blasphemed."

Titus 2:2-5 (KJV)

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior, Jesus Christ."

Titus 2:11-13 (KJV)

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."

I Peter 1:13 (KJV)

"But the end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer."

I Peter 4:7 (KJV)

2. Deacons must not be double-tongued, bearing tales, gossiping, saying "one thing to one person and something different to another." The quality of not being double-tongued is important. As a deacon ministers through visitation, one is often tempted to gossip or to say one thing to one person and something else to another person. Therefore, one must be a person of integrity, a person who speaks the truth—a person who is honest.

"And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not."

I Timothy 5:13 (KJV)

"Of His own will begot He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." James 1:18 (KJV)

"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters."

I Peter 4:15 (KJV)

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people..."

Leviticus 19:16 (KJV)

"A talebearer revealeth secrets; but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."

Proverbs 11:13 (KJV)

"The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly." Proverbs 18:8 (KJV)

"He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets; therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips."

Proverbs 20:19 (KJV)

"Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out; so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth."

Proverbs 26:20 (KJV)

- 3. The deacon must not be given to much wine.
- 4. The deacon must not be greedy of worldly gain.

<u>Deacon - Officer of the Church:</u> deacons must meet these very important spiritual qualifications.

- 1) deacons must hold to the mystery of the faith
- 2) hold it in good conscience
- 3) without controversy

Great is the mystery of godliness:

- God was manifest in the flesh
- Justified by the Spirit
- Seen by angels
- 4) deacons do not protect the sheep from the pastor's leadership, but rally support for the vision of the church
- 5) deacons do not protect the 'anonymous source'
- 6) deacons keep conflict private
- 7) confidentially is for that person's personal life

- 8) deacons should be prepared to confront conflict after prayer—asking for God's wisdom. (Document and take a witness)
- 9) deacons need to take every expression of conflict in the church seriously. The longer conflict remains before resolution, the greater the opportunity for its rapid growth. Though most people do not enjoy confrontation, it is an absolute necessity to bring peace in the midst of a storm. Allowing conflict to remain without resolution can undo the positive contributions achieved by the church and block its future opportunities.

Confrontation, accompanied by a spirit of love with the desire for reconciliation of all parties will protect your church from the effects of prolonged conflict.

We must be lead by the Spirit - sometimes prayer alone works because of those that may know a person and there can be a major ripple of conflict - timing is critical.

Proverbs 6:16-19

"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood.

- 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,
- 19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (KJV)
 - 10) deacons are for accountability and advisory rule to the pastor and staff. A servant's heart should be within every deacon.

MAY GOD GRANT TO US WISDOM AS WE LEAD HIS SHEEP.