

RAWLINGS SCHOOL OF DIVINITY

Developing a Strategic Model for Deacons as Servant Leaders within New Church Plants

A Thesis Project Submitted to
The Faculty of Liberty University School of Divinity
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Ministry

BY
Christopher M. Webb

Lynchburg, Virginia

Spring 2018

Copyright © 2018 by Christopher M. Webb
All Rights Reserved

Liberty University School of Divinity

Thesis Project Approval Sheet

Dr. Rick Rasberry
Associate Professor of Religion
Mentor

Dr. Gregory Faulls
Assistant Professor of Practical Studies
Reader

ABSTRACT

Developing a Strategic Model for Deacons as Servant Leaders within New Church Plants

Christopher M. Webb

Rawlings School of Divinity, 2018

Mentor: Dr. Rick Rasberry

The office of deacon is vital within the local church and often varies from one congregation to another. There are many misconceptions concerning the role and responsibilities of deacons. The Bible clearly defines deacons as those who function as servant leaders. The purpose of this project is to address the biblical, theoretical, practical and personal observations that will assist new church plants in equipping potential candidates for the office of deacon, as servant leaders. The project will address vital areas of deacon ministry that will include; discovering the history of deacon ministry, the biblical qualifications for a deacon, the relationship of the deacon to the pastor, and how a deacon is to serve within the local church. The project will address the biblical analysis of leadership. The project will examine the earthly life and ministry of Jesus Christ and demonstrate why He is the perfect model of servant leadership. The writer will survey new church planters to identify their knowledge and understanding of deacons as servant leaders. The data gleaned from the surveys will be utilized to assist pastors in adopting strategic deacon training as an added resource within new church plants. In a new church plant, the value of training and equipping deacons as servant leaders will lay a foundation that will build and foster effective leadership for years to come.

222 Words

DEDICATION

First and foremost, to the eternal, all-knowing, all-wise, and all-loving God, the Lord Jesus Christ, my savior, who is the owner of this thesis. To my lovely wife, Carmellia M. Webb, who always loves, prays and supports me, who strongly encouraged me to complete this project and my theological education. To my girls, Marlana, Maria, and Nayeli, who patiently allowed me the time to work and complete this project. To my parents, Revered Napoleon J. Webb and Pauline M. Webb, who have supported me and my family with prayer, love, and encouragement, during the time while this thesis was being completed. To my parents-in-law, James Gulley and the late Wanda Gulley, who have always given me love, prayer, and added support. To Dr. Michael Cummings and the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association, who encouraged and financially supported me throughout my theological education. To the late Dr. Charlie Davidson, who was serving as my mentor at the time of his passing. To Dr. Rick Rasberry, who was willing to serve as my mentor, who kept me encouraged to achieve a result to this end. To my reader, Dr. Gregory Faulls, who provided the support and direction to achieve a good result in the end. I dedicate this thesis to the above-mentioned people and offer my thanks, gratitude, and love to all of them.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Copyright.....	i
Approval Sheet.....	ii
Abstract.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	6
Limitations of the Project.....	8
Theoretical Basis.....	9
Statement of Methodology.....	11
Review of Literature.....	14
CHAPTER TWO: HISTORY OF DEACON MINISTRY.....	33
Biblical Background (Acts 6:1-7); A Prototype for Deacon Ministry.....	33
The Need for the Seven Men to Serve.....	34
Freeing the Apostles.....	36
To Promote and Protect Unity.....	37
Ministering to the Welfare of Needy.....	38
Other Biblical Passages Related to the Office of Deacon.....	39
Deacon Ministry in the Second through Fifth Centuries.....	40
Deacon Ministry in the Middle Ages (AD 500 to about 1500).....	41
Deacon Ministry from 1500 to 1800.....	42
Deacon Ministry from 1800 to the Present.....	43
Qualifications of a Deacon.....	46
What are the Biblical Qualifications for a Deacon?.....	47
“Likewise, deacons must be Reverent” (I Tim. 3:8).....	48
“Not Double-tongued” (I Tim. 3:8).....	48
“Not given to much wine” (I Tim. 3:8).....	49
“Not greedy for money” (I Tim. 3:8).....	50
“Holding the Mystery of the Faith with a Pure Conscience” (I Tim. 3:9).....	51
“But let him be tested; then let him serve as deacons, being found blameless” (I Tim. 3:10).....	52
Marital Status (I Timothy 3:11-13).....	53
Chapter Summary.....	55
CHAPTER THREE: PASTORAL LEADERSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH.....	56
The Heart of the Pastor.....	59
Positive and Negative Character Qualities.....	60
The Authority of the Pastor.....	61
Pastor as Leader.....	62
Pastor as Shepherd.....	65
Pastor as Teacher.....	69
Pastor as Equipper.....	70
Pastor as Equipper (Deacon Training).....	71

Chapter Summary.....	74
CHAPTER FOUR: A BIBLICAL ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP.....	76
Leadership that Connects through Communication.....	83
Jesus Christ, the Perfect Servant Leader.....	85
Defining Servant Leadership.....	93
Chapter Summary.....	96
CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH	97
Pastoral Tenure and Length of Church Establishment.....	99
Ongoing Deacon Training.....	101
Discovering, Developing and Deploying Spiritual Gifts.....	103
Pastor and Deacon Relationship.....	108
Conflict Resolution.....	109
A Deacon – Servant or Administrator?.....	113
Deacon Family Ministry Plan.....	115
Chapter Summary.....	117
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION.....	119
APPENDIX.....	129
A. Deacon Family Ministry Plan.....	129
B. Spiritual Gifts Survey.....	133
C. Deacon Training Slides.....	134
D. Survey Questions for Pastors.....	156
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	167
IRB APPROVAL DOCUMENT.....	177

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

The office of deacon is vitally important within the contemporary local church. While the role of deacon varies from one congregation to another in churches across America, the Bible clearly defines deacons as those who function within the local church as servant leaders. However, within local churches there are many positions concerning the role and responsibilities of deacons. Some churches hold that the function of deacon leadership existed only among the first-century churches. The project will cover several key components that are vitally important so that the pastor may understand his role in equipping and developing deacons to become servant leaders in the local church. The writer will biblically define the characteristics of a servant leader. This will be accomplished by making a comprehensive evaluation of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ and other biblical men of God who demonstrated servant leadership.

The project will demonstrate the importance of deacons finding their spiritual gifts. According to the Word of God, all born again believers in Christ have been spiritually gifted to accomplish the work of God in the local church.¹ The writer will also explain and provide information for local church plants concerning the importance of knowing how to deal with conflict within the local church. The project will explain the various challenges and changes the local church will encounter when addressing conflict. The writer will provide sessions that may be conducted as part of the process of training each individual deacon in the local church.

The writer has a passion to provide a place where people will experience a life-changing experience with God. The doors are open to people from all backgrounds, regardless of where they are on their spiritual journey. Every local church should strive to be a life-giving, Christ-centered,

¹ C. Peter Wagner, *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts: The Easy-to-Use Guide That Helps You Identify and Understand Your Unique God-Given Spiritual Gifts* (Chosen Books; Updated, Expanded ed. Edition, 2012), 3.

Bible-based, kingdom-focused, and Spirit-led church. The writer holds to the view that it is the overarching goal for a local church to infuse life with God's love.

The writer believes the fact that every new church plant and even well-established local churches should have and hold a God-like vision to reach and teach people to become faithful and fruitful disciples of Christ. The writer believes that to excel in its God-given potential, that a new church plant and its leadership must be faithful and fruitful followers of Christ, with the aim to share the gospel with their neighbors and unto the nations. The mission of a new church plant and its leadership is to love God, love others, share the gospel and make disciples, locally and around the world. The biblical basis for this understanding of the mission are the Great Commandment and the Great Commission.

As one considers the mission of a new church plant and its foundational love for God and others, one must take note of the occasion when Jesus gave the greatest commandment of all: “But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, ‘Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?’” (Matt. 22:34-36). Jesus’ reply challenged the religious folks of that day, and the same challenge is given unto all today. Jesus said, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matt. 22:37-40).

Leon Morris in his work, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, notes, “Jesus was asked for but one commandment, but he goes further and adds ‘a second’ that, he says, ‘is like it.’ Wholehearted love for God means coming in some measure to see other people as God sees them,

and all people as the objects of God's love."² Jesus makes it clear, those who love God will, in turn, have a deep and true love for others. According to Bloomberg, "Jewish interpreters had long recognized the preeminent value of each of these laws, but Jesus apparently was the first to fuse the two and to exalt them above the whole law."³ Blomberg asserts, "These two commandments are the greatest because all others flow from them; indeed, the whole Old Testament 'hangs' on them. In other words, all other commandments are summed up and/or contained in these."⁴

The Apostle Paul reiterates Jesus' teaching in his letter to the church in Rome, writing, "for he that loveth hath fulfilled the law" (Romans 13:8b). He echoes this truth in his letter to the Galatians: "For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Galatians 5:14). If the Great Commandment summarizes God's expectations of His people, then it must be part of the DNA of a new church plant.

The new church that is characterized by love for God and others will take as its marching orders as noted earlier, the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20). Jesus, in this text, provides a clear direction for any new church plant. The church planter must instill in the new church a passion to reach the lost that is compelled by the fear of the Lord and the love of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:11-15). To state it another way, however, staying true to what Christ said, church leaders must aim to share the gospel and make disciples.

New church plants and established churches alike, are to be groups of believers, who are aligned together with the biblical doctrine. The writer will survey pastors who have led their new

² Leon Morris, *The Gospel according to Matthew*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 563.

³ Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 335.

⁴ Ibid, 335.

church plant to adopt the Baptist Faith and Message of the Southern Baptist Convention.⁵ The Baptist Faith and Message provides clear direction for all new church plants as it relates to the church and its mission:

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ, governed by His laws, exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the office of pastor is limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation (Matt. 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:18; 1 Tim. 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Heb. 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Rev. 2-3; 21:2-3).⁶

Central to this definition of the New Testament church is its commitment to “seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth.” Bill Hull makes another important statement concerning the focus of a New Testament church. Hull asserts,

Unless the church makes making disciples its main agenda, world evangelism is a fantasy. There is no way to reproduce, multiply, and decentralize people and the Gospel without first diligently making disciples. The way we have proceeded has not produced the quality of people or the numbers of people to perform what Christ commanded.

Historically, the church has sporadically surged and declined, as a result of disobedience, and the evangelical church has largely remained disobedient to the Great Commission. The

⁵ The following statement provides information from the Baptist Faith and Message. “On June 14th, 2000, the Southern Baptist Convention adopted a revised summary of our faith. Baptist churches, associations, and general bodies have adopted confessions of faith as a witness to the world, and as instruments of doctrinal accountability. We are not embarrassed to state before the world that these are doctrines we hold precious and as essential to the Baptist tradition of faith and practice. (For further details, see also www.sbc.net).

⁶ R. Albert Mohler Jr., Richard Land, Charles Kelly Jr., *The Baptist Faith and Message* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway Press, 2007), 172.

refusal to consistently make disciples causes decline that leaves the church more defeated than before, and the world does not become evangelized.⁷

It should be noted, the writer holds the same view as Hull, as he asserts, “Pastors and church leaders have to become excited about the discipling movement.”⁸ The writer, however, believes pastors and church leaders alike must lead, having a servant leader mentality. Pastors and other church leaders are not able to make disciples unless they model a servant-like model themselves.

New church plants are to provide a place of worship where each person can experience relevant teaching, heartfelt worship, honest friendships, constant prayer, and compassionate care for those in need. If an individual is just checking out the "church scene" and investigating the claims of Jesus Christ, new church plants should provide help in the search. If an individual is a committed Christ-follower who wants to sink the roots of his or her faith even deeper, that individual should be able to find the resources he or she needs at that new church plant.

Finally, the project will also describe how to implement a deacon family ministry plan that will be strategically designed for any new church plant. The writer’s aim is to provide a comprehensive design of a comprehensive approach for deacon ministry that will be able to be tailored for any congregation’s own ministry setting. The strategic model for deacon ministry will aim to enable new church plants to establish a deacon ministry that will empower a deacon to serve in the local church as a servant leader.

The flexible approach for a deacon ministry will allow the local pastor to incorporate his own ideas and utilize the strategic model within his own church setting. Each deacon at the church plant may be assigned a group of church families. The deacon will have the overall responsibility of learning about, loving, and serving each family from a Christ-centered model.

⁷ Bill Hull, *The Disciple Making Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1990), 11.

⁸ Ibid, 12.

Statement of the Problem

There is a desperate need for every local church to provide proper training for its deacon leadership. The writer will assert that deacons should have a servant-hood mentality that is best modeled by Jesus Christ. Jesus was indeed the consummate servant leader.⁹ Any leader within the local church must lead with the mind of Christ. Paul said it best:

Therefore, if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. (Phil.3:1-8).¹⁰

One must agree, there are an astronomical number of challenges that the church is facing today. Local churches are faced with the dilemma of finding both men and women who are willing to provide much-needed leadership within the church. There is not only a problem of finding men and women who will provide the leadership that is necessary for the church to function properly, there is also the predicament of finding men and women who are qualified to provide leadership as presented in the Holy Word of God.

There are many local churches where proper training is limited.¹¹ The writer believes that it is imperative that churches find ways to give people proper training to succeed in their tasks. Anyone, whether it is in the church or in the secular setting, needs the proper training to perform

⁹ Michael Youssef, *The Leadership Style of Jesus: How to Make a Lasting Impact* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2003), 31.

¹⁰ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical passages referenced are in the New King James Version (Nashville, TN: HarperCollins Publishers, 1979).

¹¹ Richard Dresselhaus, *Deacon Ministry: Empowering Volunteers* (Springhill, MI: Gospel Publishing House, 2009), 8.

a task to the best of his or her God-given ability. The Word of God illustrates this. Paul challenges and encourages young Timothy to train the leadership that was so desperately needed in the early history of the church. Timothy was commanded, “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (II Tim. 2:2).

The writer strongly believes that this applies not only to the elders/pastors/bishops of the church, but to all church leaders. All church leaders, whether deacons, Sunday school directors, Sunday school teachers, or any other lay leadership, are called to a high standard of accountability and responsibility. The Bible reveals in the epistle of James the high degree of accountability that faces all leaders: “My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment” (James 3:10). Pastors and deacons alike need the proper training, for the Bible establishes these two offices to provide leadership to the local church.¹²

The writer conducted deacon training at Cornerstone Community Church.¹³ The writer was also asked to conduct deacon training for another church in the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSCNC). That other church has a rich history of producing spiritual leaders, such as evangelist and pastors. However, the church, over the last twenty plus years had never provided any training for its deacon leadership. Unfortunately, the church had not ordained

¹² I Timothy 3:1, 8-13; Paul through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit shares several qualifications that pertain to deacon leadership. See passage for further explanation.

¹³ Please note, Cornerstone Community Church (CCC) was a New Church Plant where the writer was serving at the onset of this thesis project. CCC disbanded August 28, 2017. CCC was a network new church plant of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSCNC). CCC was fully funded by the BSCNC. As a BSCNC plant, CCC was in cooperation with the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). CCC fully supported, prayerfully, financially, and physically the SBC. CCC adopted the SBC Baptist Faith and Message, as outlined in the 2000 Faith & Message of the SBC.

anyone as a deacon since 1996. Therefore, the writer, upon the request of the church and deacon leadership, conducted sixteen two-hour training sessions, two times a month, for eight months.

The project will share insights on the outcome and shortfalls of the training that was conducted over an eight-month period at the church the writer served prior to CCC. The writer focused on several areas of insight into deacon leadership, which helped the deacons understand both the biblical and historical role and responsibility of deacons. The deacon training focused on key areas that encouraged the spiritual growth and development that enables deacons to understand how to be a servant leader in the 21st Century local church.

Limitations of the Project

The author has outlined what he plans to accomplish in the thesis. He wants to be equally clear about areas that are outside the scope of the project and will not be treated. The project will not provide a deacon's manual for churches to use. The project, however, will provide several tools and resources for churches to utilize in the local church to provide a comprehensive Deacon Family Ministry Plan (DFMP).¹⁴ The writer's aim is to focus on the importance of a DFMP. The writer affirms the overall importance for a local church having some type of DFMP in place, which will ease the burden of the pastor, allowing him to focus upon his duties as biblically outlined in the New Testament. The writer will share more detail concerning the duties of a pastor as outlined in the Word of God in chapter four of this thesis. There is a misconception among local churches, especially within a smaller church, that the pastor is expected to carry the brunt of the load when it comes to the visitation ministry. While the writer understands that pastors are to be shepherd leaders and tend to the flock during times of distress, he will

¹⁴ Note; please see DFMP, Appendix A.

demonstrate that it is also the role and responsibility of deacons to assume this part of the ministry as well, as specified according to Acts 6:1-9.¹⁵

Third, and finally, the project does not provide an overview of the biblical reason(s) as to whether the Scriptures teach that women are called to serve as a deacon. Knowing the sensitivity and debate of this current issue, the writer does not argue for or against women serving as deacons.

Theoretical Basis

The office of deacon was brought into existence to meet definite needs which arose in the first church at Jerusalem.¹⁶ The apostles were being swamped with details in the daily ministration of the church's charitable support of poor widows and were being kept from their main calling, which was the ministry of the Word and prayer (Acts 6:1-7). In other words, the declaration of the Word, publicly and private devotion from the apostles were being challenged by the fact that the widows had a high expectation and need that had to be addressed if the early church were to maintain unity.

Jealousy among the Hebraic and the Hellenistic Jews became the status quo. The Hellenistic Jews began to complain. The Hellenistic widows were not getting as much help as the Hebrew widows were getting. The apostles did not deny that the ministry to the widows was being poorly carried out; rather, they appear to have attributed this to their own priority of prayer and preaching over "serving tables." The apostle Peter, being Spirit-led, proposed a solution to

¹⁵ Thabiti M. Anyabwile, *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons: 9Marks* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Publishers, 2012), 5.

¹⁶ Jamie Dunlop, "Deacons: Shock Absorbers and Servants" *9Marks Journal*, (May-June 2010). <https://www.9marks.org/article/deacons-shock-absorbers-and-servants/> (accessed October 18, 2017).

the conflict that had arisen: a new group of leaders, not to aggravate grumbling but to help keep it down by alleviating the problem.¹⁷ Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the apostles gave instructions on who and where to find the help that not only the church, but also the apostles, needed. The Holy Spirit led the church to designate seven men that had certain character qualities to come along-side of the apostles in order to aid in keeping down dissension and murmuring that came about from the widows who were being neglected.¹⁸ While understanding that the pastor is the ministering leader in a New Testament church, there are others (church leaders) whom God has ordained and placed in the local church in order to help accomplish the kingdom work God has set in place for each local church to do.

The apostle Paul gives clear instruction concerning spiritual gifts within the local church. Each one of the spiritual gifts is given to edify the body and to glorify Christ Jesus. Paul makes note of this:

Now 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. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gift of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kind of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills (I Cor. 12:1-11).

Paul makes note also, while there are many members, there is only one body, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks,

¹⁷ Paul Chappell, *The Ministry of a Baptist Deacon: A Handbook for Local Church Servant Leaders* (Lancaster, CA: Striving Together Publishing, 2010), 7.

¹⁸ Paul Newton and Matt Schmucker, *Elders in the Life of the Church: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2014), 23.

slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit” (I Cor. 12:12-13). C. Gene Wilkes asserts, “The word ‘deacon’ is a transliteration of the Greek word ‘*diakonos*,’ which can be translated ‘deacon,’ ‘servant,’ or ‘minister.’ Deacons are to be the ministering servants in the local church.¹⁹ Greenleaf asserts, “The etymology or root meaning ‘*diakonos*’ is ‘to raise dust in a hurry or by hastening.’ This does not mean to stir up confusion but to ‘be busy, to serve or do service’—for God and the church, thus, the deacons are to be the pastor’s assistants in ministry.”²⁰

Statement of Methodology

The writer will present the results of a survey consisting of thirty-five questions for pastors who are currently serving as new church planters. The survey will concentrate on the areas of leadership, theology, traditions, training, time, and transparency. The survey was constructed using Google forms and was emailed out to 425 new church planters.

The writer will survey pastors from new church plants to identify their knowledge and understanding of deacons as servant leaders. The data gleaned from the surveys will be utilized to assist pastors in adopting a strategic deacon training as an added resource within new church plants.

Using the results of the survey and published literature about servant leadership and the ministry of deacons, the project will provide for new church plants a strategic deacon training that will equip prospective deacons with the means to become servant leaders. In a new church

¹⁹ C. Gene Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1998), 4.

²⁰ Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership [25th Anniversary Edition]: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2012), 13.

plant, training and equipping deacons as servant leaders will lay a foundation that will establish a successful and biblical model for deacons to serve the church as servant leaders in the years to come.

The project will be laid out in the following order:

Chapter One – Introduction

Chapter one introduces the contemporary issues of deacon leadership. This chapter will help readers to understand the purpose of the thesis project and the writer's purpose and overarching aim, which is to present a strategic model of training deacons to become servant leaders in new church plants. This chapter will consist of the statement of the problem, limitations of the project, the theoretical basis, the statement of methodology, and literature of review.

Chapter Two – Background Information

Chapter two will introduce the biblical definition of a deacon. This chapter will present the history of deacon leadership in the local church from the apostolic era to the present. This chapter will focus on the various roles and duties of deacons and how they have changed through various eras of time. Some of those changes have been biblical; however, many of them have been unbiblical or extra-biblical. This chapter will take a glance at the changes and challenges of deacon ministry in the local church.

Chapter Three – Pastoral Leadership in the Local Church

Chapter three will introduce the roles and responsibilities of a pastor. This chapter will present the biblical spiritual character qualities that are required of a pastor. For someone to

understand the roles and responsibilities of a deacon, of which the Bible is essentially silent, the spiritual character qualities, call and function of a pastor must be explained. This chapter will explain the functions of the pastor in the local church.

Chapter Four – A Biblical Analysis of Leadership

Chapter four will present a biblical analysis of biblical leadership. This chapter will explain how servant leadership is vital in the local church if it is to function according to the Bible's mandates for a New Testament church. This chapter will explain the importance of servant leadership among deacons and other leaders in new church plants. This chapter will focus on the pastor's role and responsibility of equipping deacons to serve with a servant-hood mentality.

Chapter Five – Survey Findings

Chapter five will provide the overall findings of the survey that was emailed to new church planters. This chapter will evaluate the findings from the survey. The writer will provide the reader with data from the survey that will empower new church planters with information pertinent to deacon ministry within new church plants. This chapter will focus on the data gathered through the survey to demonstrate the need for pastors to equip deacon candidates with the tools necessary to help a deacon function as a servant leader.

Chapter Six – Conclusion

Chapter six will be a summary of the entire project. This chapter will be presented in such a way that, if alone were read, the reader would still capture the essence of the project. It will be designed to provide a comprehensive recap of the information presented in this project.

This chapter will address the challenges of deacon ministries in new church plants. This chapter will explain the model in a way that can be easily followed by anyone facing the need to implement a deacon ministry in a new church plant.

Review of Literature

To grasp a better understanding of “servant leadership,” one must know what the Bible and others say concerning a leader and servant leader. Various definitions from biblical and extra-biblical resources shed light on what being a leader and servant leader, in the local church, mean. There are also resources that explain the role and responsibility of both pastoral and deacon leadership in the local church.

Biblical Leadership Books

In *Developing the Leader within You*, John Maxwell defines leadership into one word, “influence.”²¹ Influence is defined by Maxwell as one’s ability to help others to follow him.²² Maxwell stresses that to move people to where they need to go, a leader must greatly influence his followers. He argues that certain qualities, such as management skills and listening skills, are needed in order to lead others effectively. A leader will never be able to rise above his or her ability to lead and influence others. This book will equip the reader with the tools needed to influence and inspire others to “buy into” and help accomplish the leader’s goals. This book is a practical guide to help leaders to lead through positive change.

Maxwell explains ten key principles that empower leaders with effective leadership ability. The ten key principles helped the writer of this thesis with strategic principles to

²¹ John C. Maxwell, *Developing Leaders within You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993), 1.

²² *Ibid*, 5.

empower and better equip his deacon to become a better leader in the new church plant. Maxwell explains the difference between managing and leading and insists that the skills necessary to lead well can be learned. In ten chapters, he seeks to inspire and prepare the way for his reader to become a genuine leader.

In *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*, the authors distill leadership into five practices that will be manifested by an exemplary leader.²³ The authors argue that leaders are at their best when bringing forth the best in themselves and others.

The five practices consist of the following: 1) Model the way. Effective leaders can demonstrate their overall purposes and values by setting examples lived out every day. 2) Inspire a shared vision. Leaders envision a preferred future and empower others to follow toward its achievement. 3) Challenge the process. When issues arise, an effective leader will discover methods to improve and get better. While people do not like to change, an effective leader will challenge others to change, even when they do not want to. This, of course, brings about risk, according to the authors. 4) Enable others to act. The ability to enable a person to act, according to the authors, allows others to innovate and take risk. The authors explain how effective leaders will nurture openness, involvement, personal satisfaction, and high levels of commitment to excellence in others so that they will be able to lead as well.²⁴ 5) Encourage the heart. The leader will help others to understand that everyone has an integral role and responsibility to accomplish the task. This practice fosters a clear demonstration of the value of others. The focus of the book is to challenge readers to lead like Jesus did by building a relationship with the followers,

²³ James, M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, ed., *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2004), 2.

²⁴ Ibid, 28.

inspiring and encouraging them, and modeling and teaching the desired behavior. The five practices outlined above provided key instructions for the writer to implement and incorporate into the process of growth and development for the pastor and a deacon of a new church plant.

Dr. Elmer Towns shares insight concerning leadership in *Biblical Models for Leadership*. Dr. Towns has spent extensive years studying and teaching the essential qualities of a great leader. He notes, “Leadership is the process of helping people do the worthwhile things they want to do.”²⁵ He shares quotes from well-known leaders including Ordway Tead, who is famously known for proclaiming, “Leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal, which they come to find desirable.”²⁶ This book provides aids that define proper perspectives of what makes a great leader. The understanding of what it takes to make a great leader is vital to new church planters and potential candidates as deacons.

Benjamin L. Merkle, author of the book, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*, helps his readers understand the biblical background of the New Testament deacon from an ecclesiological perspective. Not only does he write about a deacon’s role, but he also explains the relationship between the deacon’s office and the elder’s office.²⁷ The book is arranged in a Q&A format. This format poses and answers the key questions that leaders in local churches ask pertaining to effective leadership roles and responsibilities. The format allowed the writer to choose the issues that were most pertinent to new church plants and the effective leadership that is needed to have a successful new church plant.

²⁵ Elmer. L. Towns, *Biblical Models for Leadership* (Lynchburg, VA: Cengage Learning, 2000), 3.

²⁶ Ibid, 4

²⁷ Benjamin J. Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2008), 9.

Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness, by Robert K. Greenleaf, provides a great resource for local churches as they consider selecting those who will lead in a new church plant. The author provides the core essentials and practice of the servant leader at all levels of human life. Greenleaf offers three levels of what he calls “prophetic influence.”²⁸ The three levels of prophetic influence are: (1) family/community, (2) institutional, and (3) theological. The author describes the significance of what it means to be a servant leader and a follower. The author compares the servant leader and the follower and provides a contrast as well. Greenleaf explains that the servant leader must be capable to follow, before he can lead. The book provides clear, concise explanations and helpful instructions concerning servant leadership and how church leaders are to strive to fulfill the biblical mandate of the Great Commission as described in Scripture. Church planters and other leaders in a new church plant must apply the “prophetic influences,” so that the new church plant is able to become healthy and vibrant.

From his passion for pastoral ministry, Howard B. Foshee offers a great resource, *Now that you're a Deacon*, for the life and ministry of the deacon. This book offers practical and personal insights that help deacons become the leaders God has called them to be. The author helps his readers understand the key functions of a deacon within the local church. A combination of practical guidance and inspiration on character, relationship to church and pastor, stewardship, missions and more is found in the book, which provided great insight for the writer to share throughout the deacon training that he conducted. Foshee provides both practical and inspirational guidance for a deacon to understand the biblical function of his role.²⁹ Foshee

²⁸ Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 13.

²⁹ Howard B. Foshee, *Now that You're a Deacon* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1975), 13.

focuses on character, relationships between the church and the pastor, and the pastor and the deacon, stewardship, and the need for effective leadership in the local church. Foshee challenges his readers to consider the deacon as a servant leader.

The New Testament Deacon: The Church's Minister of Mercy, by Alexander Strauch, argues that deacons should be Christ-centered leaders. As explained by Strauch, Christ-centered leaders are those who lead with humility and service toward others, as Jesus demonstrated during His earthly ministry. He explains how important deacons are in the contemporary New Testament local church by demonstrating the rewards and significance of deacons in the church. Strauch answers questions such as: What are deacons supposed to do? Are they to serve as the church's executive board to whom the pastor-CEO reports? Are they to be the church's spiritual leaders? Who should be a deacon? Is a deacon simply a long-serving member whom the church honors with a title, like a politician receiving an honorary doctorate?³⁰

In *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership Development*, Dr. J. Robert Clinton offers insight concerning three specific questions: 1) Where do leaders come from? 2) What does it take to be a leader? 3) When does leadership begin? With each one of these thought-provoking questions in mind, Clinton explains how God uses various patterns to develop leaders. Clinton makes the point that leaders advance through six stages in their development and growth to become great leaders.³¹ The author explains how God, over the span of a person's life, empowers and enables him or her to become a leader who leads others well.

³⁰ Alexander Strauch, *The New Testament Deacon: The Church's Minister of Mercy* (Colorado Springs, CO: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 1992), 191.

³¹ J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader: Recognizing the Lessons and Stages of Leadership* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2012), 3.

In other words, Clinton argues that while there are some born leaders, there are others who develop into leaders through a lifetime process. The book offers the reader helpful key strategies to apply to deacon ministry that provided the writer with tools necessary for the deacon training sessions that were conducted.

Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership, by Alexander Strauch, emphasizes the biblical leadership deficiency in the local church. Strauch strongly argues that many local churches struggle from having biblically incompetent leaders in the roles of elder and deacon.³² This book presents an argument for the multiple-elder model of church leadership. The author explains core principles of biblical eldership: pastoral leadership, shared leadership, male leadership, qualified leadership, and servant leadership. For each one of the core principles, the author provides a biblical understanding of who can serve in the local church and what the roles and responsibilities are for those who serve in local church ministry. The book provides a clear view of biblical leadership as defined by Scripture. The book emphasizes a biblical model of leadership. The author provides a framework for church leadership and how it is to function in the local church, whether a well-established church or a new church plant.

The Baptist Deacon, by Robert E. Naylor, offers insights concerning the process of selecting and ordaining a deacon for deacon ministry in the local church. Naylor shares a comprehensive approach regarding servant leadership. Naylor explains the importance and significance of biblical leadership in the local church, so deacons and pastors can understand the deacon leadership office. The author shares insights from deep convictions that are biblically sound and supported. This book is for anyone who may consider serving in deacon ministry. Therefore, this book is a great resource for a potential candidate for deacon.

³² Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Colorado Springs, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 2003), 15.

The book describes the call, commitment, and convictions of a deacon in the local church. The author explains, a deacon must approach deacon ministry with a servant-hood mentality, as demonstrated by Christ Jesus Himself.³³ The prospective deacon who does not subscribe to a servant-hood approach to the office, is one who should not go into this ministry. This is a great insight for a potential candidate for deacon to consider strongly, before accepting the nomination for deacon ministry.

In *The Work of the Deacon and Deaconess*, Harold Nichols provides his practical and personal views after serving as a deacon. Nichols offers practical, suggestive content for deacons to implement within their own church setting. The author shares that deacon ministry should enable the pastor to focus on the role and responsibilities he has been called to fulfill.³⁴ The size of the church has no bearing on the responsibilities of the pastor, because the pastor is to place his main concentration of ministry on prayer and preaching. This is a great book that explains why and how the role of the deacon is to help the pastor. The author argues, deacon ministry is to consist of effective leadership, that lightens the load of the pastor through prayer and performing tasks that the pastor may ask the deacon to do, so that the pastor may focus on prayer and preaching.

Steve B. Cowan, editor of the book, *Who Runs the Church: Four Views on Church Government*, shares four views concerning a local church's governmental authority from a cross-denominational perspective.³⁵ The book describes factors church leaders must take notice of to

³³ Robert E. Naylor, *The Baptist Deacon* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 27.

³⁴ Harold Nichols, *The Work of the Deacon and the Deaconess* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1984), 13.

³⁵ Steve B. Cowan, ed., *Who Runs the Church: Four Views on Church Government* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 4.

maintain order and control within the church. It presents four different perspectives on leadership, based upon four different approaches to church government: Episcopalianism, Presbyterianism, Single-Elder Congregationalism, and Plural-Elder Congregationalism. The book provides for the writer helpful insights concerning four different perspectives about church leadership based upon four different types of church government. The four different perspectives about four different types of government, will provide various viewpoints concerning leadership and government for new church planters to consider as they decide what type of church government the new church plant will have.

Dr. Henry Webb explains the desperate need for servant leaders in the local church in his book entitled *Deacons: Servant Models in the Church*. The author argues how important deacons are in demonstrating servant leadership as seen through the life and ministry of Christ. For deacons to be effective in the local church, they must maintain the attitude and heart to minister not only domestically but also spiritually.³⁶ Dr. Webb explains, a call to deacon ministry is a call to serve. The author argues that deacons are called to minister to the body of Christ as they serve Christ for His glory. A deacon board is not to serve as a ruling body but as servant leaders. The book is an excellent resource for any new church plant that is looking to establish a biblical deacon ministry.

Deacons and the Church: Making Connections between Old and New, by John N. Collins, helps readers understand the role and responsibility of deacons, since the inception of the office, from a historical perspective, beginning with Scripture. The book is written for deacons from every denomination and provides clear and concise instructions for deacon ministry for new church plants. Collins argues the role and ministry of a deacon is clearly

³⁶ Henry Webb, *Deacons: Servant Models in the Church* (Nashville TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 23.

explained in Scripture as a servant leader for the congregation, commissioned by Christ, for the sacred mission of protecting church unity and supporting the pastor. Collins takes a historical view of deacon ministry. The author explains how the role of deacon ministry has changed over various eras throughout church history.³⁷ The book provides for the writer the history of deacons from the early church to modern times and informs chapter two of the project.

Victor D. Lehman in his book, *The Work of the Pastor*, offers his readers a practical book addressing circumstances pastors face, such as conflict management, pastoral care, worship preparation, transition, and identifying giftedness. Lehman argues that pastors are faced with various changes and challenges. Some of the challenges and changes are both positive and negative. With that in mind, a pastor must learn the skills and methods that will enable him to cope effectively with change.³⁸ According to Lehman, without having a clear view of the role and responsibility of church ministry, a pastor and those he is leading will not succeed. Lehman offers strategic instructions for a pastor to adopt in local church ministry. The instructions Lehman provides are both practical and personal, encouraging deacons to carry out their role and responsibility so that they will be able to help the pastor.

How to Impact and Influence Others: 9 Keys to Successful Leadership, by Dr. James Merritt, challenges readers, especially pastors, to understand key leadership factors. He writes from a pastor's heart, sharing effective biblical insights that empower the pastor to lead from a biblical viewpoint. This book provides an overall perspective of how effective leaders must have the ability to influence others in every aspect of their lives.³⁹

³⁷ John N. Collins, *Deacons and the Church: Making Connections between Old and New* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2002), 54.

³⁸ Victor D. Lehman, *The Work of the Pastor* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2004), 15.

Merritt argues, regardless of the circumstance and situation, leaders become better at leading others when they learn the process of leadership. Dr. Merritt argues that the level of leadership will never rise above the level of the character of the leader. This book provides his readers with precise biblical content that empowers leaders to understand the dynamics of leadership. This book is great for new church plant pastors, as Merritt helps pastors understand the power and presence of biblical leadership in the church that brings glory and honor to Christ Jesus.

Articles

Amy Simpson, author of *Confessions of a Ministry Introvert*, seeks to help her readers understand the importance of understanding various types of personalities. Simpson clearly explains how some people who are introverts tend to alienate themselves when it comes to dealing with others. Simpson extends to her readers a detailed process of helping others understand how introverts can fit in as leaders. Simpson argues strongly that when she discovered her introvert personality she found it to be a “gift rather than a liability.”⁴⁰ According to Simpson, some people argue that only extroverts can lead effectively.⁴¹ Simpson explains,

Introverts are a vastly diverse group of people who prefer to look at life from the inside out. We gain energy and power through inner reflection and get more excited by ideas than by external activities. When we converse, we listen well and expect others to do the same. We think first and talk later. Writing appeals to us because we can express ourselves without intrusion, and we often prefer communicating this way.⁴²

³⁹ James Merritt, *9 Keys to Successful Leadership: How to Impact and Influence Others* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2004), 54.

⁴⁰ Amy Simpson, “Confessions of a Ministry Introvert,” *Leadership Journal*: Vol. 34, No. 2 (2013), <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2013/spring/confessions-of-ministry-introvert> (accessed November 4, 2017).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

This article provides insight that will help the reader glean a proper understanding of various styles of leadership. Understanding extroverts and introverts will empower church leaders to know why a leader will lead the way he or she does.

The Biblical Qualifications and Responsibilities of Deacons, by Benjamin Merkle focuses on two questions: Who should be a deacon? What does the Bible say deacons should do?⁴³ Merkle explains that elders and deacons are the only two offices of church leadership. Merkle provides throughout the article biblical viewpoints that explain the different roles and responsibilities of elders and deacons. This article explains that while deacons have a crucial role in church ministry, it is different than that of the elder. This article provides helpful insights on both the qualifications and role of deacon ministry in the local church.

Deacons: Shock-Absorbers and Servants, was written by Jamie Dunlop, who serves as an associate pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. In this article, the author explains that the position of a deacon was created to promote unity in the early church.⁴⁴ While the early church was expanding with unusual growth, there were needs that were not being met by the church apostles. The author argues that the neglect was not intentional; rather, the supernatural growth caused the elders (Apostles) of the early church to be stretched, so that they were unable to take care of all the needs of the congregation. Therefore, the author in this article helps his readers to understand the reason and role of deacon ministry.

Deacons in the Early Church, by R.P. Symonds, argues that the need for a new level of leadership in the church to help the elders minister to the church was much recognized and

⁴³ Benjamin Merkle, "The Biblical Qualifications and Responsibilities of Deacons," *9 Marks Journal*: (May-June 2010), 8-11.

⁴⁴ Jamie Dunlop, "The Biblical Qualifications and Responsibilities of Deacons," *9 Marks Journal*: (May-June 2010), 5-7.

supported by the early church.⁴⁵ Deacon ministry was associated with visitation of the sick and taking care of the poor, which freed the elders to focus upon prayer and preaching the Word. Symonds reflects upon historical documents throughout church history, such as the 6th *Apostolic Canon*, Prudentius in his *Peristephanon*, and *The Testament of our Lord* to support his defense concerning deacon ministry and the role of deacons in the early church. The writer will glean from this article the fact that deacon ministry in the local church should continue in a new church plant, even as this ministry was a vital ministry in the early church.

Biblical Content

In *Acts 6:1-7*, Luke describes the circumstances that led to the expansion of leadership in the early church. A dispute erupted as the Hellenistic contingent of the church complained to the Apostles that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. The Jerusalem Christian community had witnessed considerable growth; and as is so often the case with rapid increase, administrative problems developed.⁴⁶

A new level of leadership, the Seven, is created to take over the administration of the ministry to the widows, enabling the twelve apostles to focus upon prayer and preaching. Many interpreters agree that the appointment of the Seven was the precedent for the office of deacon in the church. This incident certainly demonstrates that as a church grows, the number of leaders must expand, lest growth be inhibited.

⁴⁵ R. P. Symonds, "Deacons in the Early Church," *Theology Journal*, no 425, (November 1, 1955): 408-414.

⁴⁶ John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville TN: Broadman & Holman, 1992), 178.

The selection of the Seven is followed by their installation. The congregation chose them and presented them to the apostles. The apostles confirmed the congregational decision by laying their hands on them.⁴⁷ Having weathered the threat, the church returns to its normal condition: growth. So integral to growth is the Word of God, the message of salvation, that Luke uses personification, saying literally, “The word of God grew” (see 12:24; 19:20).⁴⁸ Larkin goes on to say, “And today our churches should be marked by the same conviction—that the ministry of the Word is essential for growth and that growth is the normal condition of the church.”⁴⁹ This passage will provide the writer the biblical premise concerning the need of establishing support for the pastor so that the pastor has time and opportunity to focus on his key responsibilities, prayer and preaching.

In *Philippians 1:1*, Paul acknowledges both overseers and deacons in his greeting to the church. One will quickly notice that he uses the plural of the terms. Paul, in verse one, addresses this letter “to the saints which are at Philippi, with the bishops (pastors) and deacons.” This passage demonstrates the existence of deacon leadership in the first-century local church, which provides the biblical premise of deacon ministry in a new church plant.

The term “bishops” is synonymous with “presbyters” in the apostolic churches, both being renderings of the Greek word *presbyteros*. Paul used the same term to acknowledge “elders in the church” at Ephesus (Acts 20:17) and “overseers” (Acts 20:28). This passage is the only one in which Paul acknowledges the two distinct roles of leadership in his greeting to a

⁴⁷ Polhill, *Acts*, 182.

⁴⁸ William J. Larkin Jr., *Acts*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), Acts 6:7.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

church. O'Brien asserts, "These titles are to be understood in a functional rather than an official sense, that is, describing an activity rather than an office. Paul can refer to church workers on occasion without specifying an office (cf. Rom. 12:8; Gal. 6:6; 1 Thess. 5:12)."⁵⁰ Paul ordained both pastors and deacons in Philippi because he knew that both tiers of servant-leadership were needful for that church.

The Philippians 1:1 passage merely acknowledges the existence of deacons in the church in Philippi, without describing their duties. This passage however, establishes the fact that early in the church (only ten years after the church in Philippi was founded and about thirty years after the church began) both elder and deacon were functioning offices.

Ephesians 4:11-12, this passage explains how pastors are those who teach and preach. While there are other vital areas of leadership a pastor provides, a pastor's role and responsibility are "for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Deacons, too, have a crucial role in the life and the health of the local church. This passage however, provides that the role of a pastor is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. This passage provides insight for new church planters where the pastor is to focus his attention.

Hebrews 13:7, teaches the accountability of church members to their spiritual leader, the pastor. The pastor is the spiritual overseer of the church. He is first accountable to God and then to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of the church. This passage teaches church planters the enormous accountability he has to the Lord and His church.

In *Acts 6:3-5*, one will notice the qualifications for the group that many believe to be the first deacons. The question is sometimes asked, should a deacon meet all or some of the

⁵⁰ Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 48.

qualifications that are named in scripture? Each one of the qualifications pertains to biblical deacon leadership in the local church. While interpreters debate whether this passage serves as the first passage to introduce the need and the role of deacons, the writer believes this passage will provide a foundation to support deacon ministry in the local church.

In *1 Timothy 3:8-13*, Paul lists for Timothy the qualifications for deacons. Following Paul's discussion of a bishop's qualifications, he provides prerequisites that prospective deacons must demonstrate as followers of Christ Jesus. This passage is one of the key passages found in scripture on this topic, as it is the only list in the New Testament of qualifications for deacons. This passage will serve as the passage to indicate the qualifications of deacon leadership in chapter two.

In *Matthew 20:24-27* and the parallel passage in *Mark 10:42-45*, Jesus challenges His disciples' understanding of leadership, declaring that humility is essential to greatness in the kingdom of God, where leadership will be defined by service to others. He presents Himself as their example: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (*Mark 10:45*). This passage will be used in chapter four as the writer focuses on the subject, "Jesus, the Greatest Servant of All."

In *John 13:1-17*, Jesus provides a detailed example of what servant leaders do. Jesus, as the Son of God, demonstrates humility and service toward His disciples. Before He is crucified on the cross, Jesus models for His disciples and teaches them the heart of a servant. He explains that, if one is to serve Him he or she must be willing to serve others. Jesus teaches, "A servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him." This passage provides one of the clearest models of the servanthood mentality.

In *John 12:25-27*, Jesus makes a seemingly paradoxical, “He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.” This passage will contribute to the writer’s definition of a servant.

John 13:1-17 conveys his heart and humility as the Son of God as He assumes the role of a servant after celebrating His final Passover with His followers. He teaches His disciples that greatness is found in meeting others’ needs as He washes His disciples’ feet. Afterward, He commands them, “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet” (*John 13:14*). They do not understand, especially Peter. They would later understand, their perspectives having been improved after his death, burial, and resurrection. Jesus said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them” (*John 13:16-17*). Perhaps one hears echoes of that understanding as Peter appeals (rather than commands) elders not to lord it over their charges, but to lead them by example in *1 Peter 5:1-4*. This passage will help the writer to support the biblical character and conduct of leadership in the local church.

Philippians 2:5-11 is one of the greatest descriptions of both the humility and exaltation of Jesus Christ. Through His great example, His followers learn to humbly serve others. The Lord and Savior demonstrated the heart of a servant leader. While He had power both to lay down His life and pick it up again, Jesus emptied Himself and became obedient to the Father’s will and gave His life willingly on the cross of Calvary. This passage provides the writer with scriptural support of what servant leadership means and does not mean. The writer will explain this passage in more detail as he writes in chapter three concerning how leaders in the local

church are able to learn and apply how Jesus demonstrated humility, which is a key characteristic of being a servant.

The New Testament provides the heartbeat of Christ's mission for a local church. The Bible specifically explains how a local church is to be missional. *Matthew 28:19-20* provides the most direct commission found from the words of Christ. His followers are to "go." As they go, they are to make disciples who make disciples. Jesus promises even before the church was birthed that He would build His church *Matthew 16:18*. The love Christ has for the church is clearly expressed in the fact that He would build the church. Jesus makes a declaration that it would be the faith that men, women, boys, and girls place in Him and Him alone as "the Christ, the Son of the Living God" upon which the church would be built. Within this passage, Matthew challenges his readers with the reasons why church planting is necessary. The process of baptizing, teaching, and discipling all nations found in the Great Commission clearly expresses the need for church planting.

Romans 15:19-20 shows that church planting is an integral part of Paul's understanding and practice of mission. The spread of the gospel message was evidenced by new church plants being established in each one of the regions. Church planting was the central focus of Paul's ministry and call. God called him to carry the gospel from Jerusalem to the whole world. This passage provides for the writer the biblical premise for church planting.

In *Acts 1:8*, Luke shares the final command, words of Christ before His ascension. Found in this passage are the mission, the message, the meaning, and the method of church planting. As one goes to fulfill the command of Christ, there stands the need for local churches within each of the areas that Christ commanded and commissioned His followers to evangelize. This can be demonstrated by Paul's practice throughout his ministry as recorded in Acts. As Christ-

followers, each born again believer is to obey and help fulfill the Great Commission. Within the clarion call is the process of church planting. The writer will use this passage to solidify the need for church planting as the church goes into all the world to make disciples. The writer will focus on the plan, pursuit and purpose of church planting.

Some hold that *Romans 16:1* provides the first reference to an individual as a “deacon.” While there are controversial passages throughout Scripture, this is certainly one of the passages that comes with its own debate. The usage of the word deacon, *diakonos* in the Greek, sheds light of the meaning of the role and responsibility of a deacon. The reason why this passage brings about debate is that Paul applies it to the female servant who ministered within the local church at Cenchrea, Phoebe. Paul refers to himself and Apollos as *διάκονοι* in 1 Cor 3:5. He uses the same word for himself and those with him in 2 Cor 6:4. He refers to Timothy as *διάκονος* in 1 Tim 4:6. Passages such as these are why it’s precarious to see Phoebe as holding the office of deacon. Nonetheless, it is the same word used for the office, so the possibility must be considered. While there is continued debate concerning this passage concerning whether women are to be ordained as deacon, the writer will utilize this passage to provide the need for deacon leadership in the local church.

Acts 2:42 describes the practices to which the brand-new church that was born on the day of Pentecost was devoted. From this verse, the writer will draw four basic purposes of the New Testament church: 1) Doctrine – the church is systematically providing a platform where sound doctrine is taught and preached faithfully. 2) Fellowship – the local church is to be a people who are in fellowship, interacting with one another with a common purpose and plan to glorify Jesus as both Lord and Savior. 3) Breaking of Bread – one of the ordinances of the local church is to observe the Lord’s Supper, even as the Scripture teaches (I Cor. 11:21). 4) Prayer – the church,

God's people, are to gather for prayer. Prayer is a demonstration of total dependence upon God. The local church is a gathering of God's children for times of corporate and individual prayer. The writer will explain in detail why these four purposes of the church should be the primary role and responsibility of deacon ministry as well.

Colossians 3:23 provides the biblical and godly perspective for all church leaders. If a church leader is to serve, he or she is to serve well. The only manner to do so is found in this passage. Whatever a leader will do, whether it be in word or in deed, it is to be done wholeheartedly. The character and conduct of a leader will be demonstrated, not by what he or she knows, but by how he or she lives daily.

CHAPTER TWO HISTORY OF DEACON MINISTRY

Biblical Background, Acts 6:1-7-- A Prototype for Deacon Ministry

The historical timeline of deacon ministry has been debated by some. There are those who say Acts 6:1-7 records the establishment of deacon ministry. The Acts 6 passage does show the necessity of having an organized ministry that performs the job duties and tasks now associated with deacons in the local church. It should be noted, while the actual word deacon is not used in the Acts 6 passage, the ministry of the Seven is certainly a prototype for deacon ministry. The church had expanded at this point to record numbers. Over time, with the growth of the church and the high demands upon the Twelve, the care of the widow began to be neglected.

There are many who believe Acts 6:1-7 is the passage that solidifies the reason for having a systematized deacon ministry in the local church. The writer holds this same premise; the necessity of a deacon ministry within the local church is clear. As the church grows, so does its ministry need grow. The early church experienced this. The need for other gifted and qualified men to come alongside of the apostles was great. Needs were going unmet. Tension grew. The time was ripe for the stage to be set for other gifted men to join in the kingdom efforts, that was obviously bigger than those who were participating in it.

While the seven men who were chosen in Acts 6 were not called deacons, their service demonstrated the call of what a deacon should be focused on when he is ordained to the office of deacon. In his book, *The Baptist Deacon*, Robert Naylor argues, “The general agreement of many who see this passage Acts 6:1-7 as the beginning of deacon ministry. They are most often

called the Seven. It is a matter of general agreement, however, that the election of these seven qualified men is the real beginning of the deacon as a church officer.”¹

The Need for the Seven Men to Serve

The need for a deacon-esque ministry is depicted in the Acts 6:1-7 passage. There were several reasons why the need arose in the early church. Luke, the writer of the book of Acts, explains the circumstances that brought about the selection of other men to assist the twelve apostles. Luke helps his readers to see that as the church grows, so do the problems. Where there are people, there are problems. There was a clear sign that a storm was on the horizon. The storm arose because some were being neglected. The neglect certainly was not intentional on the apostles' part, however. One must consider that the church of Jerusalem at this point numbered well over five thousand Christ followers. The Jerusalem Christian community had witnessed considerable growth; and as is so often the case with rapid increase, administrative problems developed.²

The Gentile mission as such had not yet begun.³ The first recorded conflict that arose within the church was not between Jews and Gentiles, but between Hellenistic Jewish believers and Hebraic Jewish believers. The church had continued the Jewish custom of caring for the widows in their community.

¹ Robert E. Naylor, *The Baptist Deacon* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 7.

² John B. Polhill, *Acts*, The New American Commentary (Nashville TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 178.

³ *Ibid*, 178.

Each day, there was a distribution (probably of money) to the widows within the Jerusalem church.⁴ The widows within the Hellenistic group believed that they were being shortchanged in this distribution. Members of the Hellenistic group confronted the Twelve with their complaint. The apostles (church leaders) had to respond and react to the problem. Of course, with the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, the problem was solved by helping the other believers to see the need of choosing seven men to assist the Twelve. As it has been noted by the authors of *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, the apostles had a big problem on their hands. However, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, they led the church in the right direction.

When the apostles were informed of these complaints, they immediately adopted measures for arresting the further progress of any feeling of discontent, and for removing, at the earliest moment, any cause, which might weaken the union and brotherly love of the Christians. They introduced, at the same time, a division of labor, which the wants of the Church required, and which freed the apostolic office from tasks of inferior moment, that were inappropriate and that also occasioned a large expenditure of time. But they do not proceed to action in an independent manner.

They agree among themselves that a change is needed, and that a certain distinctly defined course ought to be adopted, and then communicate the result of their deliberations to the Church. But they do not undertake to nominate the individuals who are to be invested with the new office; they ask the Church to select and propose suitable persons, to whom they, the apostles, might assign that office.⁵

⁴ Barclay Moon Newman and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1972), 134–135. “In Jerusalem there were many widows of men who had lived most of their lives outside of the Holy City but had come to Jerusalem to die and to be buried. To care for these widows, the Jews had set up means whereby they would be given money for food. Evidently the Christian community had adopted a similar custom. The daily distribution of funds is literally “in the daily distribution,” and may be taken to refer either to funds (as in the TEV) or else to food. Considering the way, the Jews themselves handled the care for the widows, it is quite likely that the distribution is that of money rather than food.”

⁵ John Peter Lange, Philip Schaff, et al., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Acts* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008), 103.

When problems arise in the church, one should not depend upon his or her own intellect or wisdom to solve them. During times of great division, the church needs to depend upon the wisdom of Holy Spirit to work through the storm.

The apostles kept the church together by asking the offended party to choose seven men to address the need. “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. 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; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word’” (Acts 6:2-4). There has been a long discussion as to whether these seven represent deacons at all. Their careers following their selection to serve speaks heavily against calling them “deacons,” however, in Acts 6:2, they are said to “*diakoneo*,” which means “serve” tables.⁶

Freeing the Apostles

When the Hellenistic believers presented the problem to the Apostles, the Apostles’ response indicates what the role of the Seven would be in the local church of Jerusalem: “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables” (Acts 6:2). The apostles were to focus on preaching and praying, and these seven would free them to do so by taking over the daily distribution. The apostles (pastors) needed time to focus on the word of God. The seven men who were chosen were to protect and promote the freedom the pastors needed. One must note, the deacons were to set the pastors free, so that the pastors were able to conduct their calling, “not so much free from, as free to.”⁷ The early church pastors needed time to pray and

⁶ Polhill, *Acts*, 201.

⁷ Newman and Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts*, 9.

prepare. The pastors knew “the Lord was adding to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:46). That is the reason why the Seven were chosen, so that the pastors in the early church could have time to seek God to feed the flock that God had entrusted them to serve. It takes time for meditation, personal Bible study, and sermon preparation. Benjamin Merkle in his book, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*, notes,

Although the apostles realized the gravity of the situation before them, they also realized that for them to get distracted with serving tables would divert them from their primary calling of preaching the Word of God. The apostles were not indicating that it would be too humiliating for them to serve widows. Jesus had taught them that being a leader in His kingdom is very different from being a worldly leader (Matt. 20:25-27), and He washed their feet to demonstrate servant leadership (John 13:1-18). Rather, the apostles wanted to remain faithful to the calling and gifts they received from God. For them to leave the preaching of the Word to serve tables would have been a mistake. Instead, they proposed a better solution to this problem.⁸

The solution to the problem was the selection of the Seven. The Seven were chosen to free the apostles to do what they were called to do.

To Promote and Protect Unity

The seven men who were selected by the early church helped with the complaining from the widows. The complaints could bring about disharmony among the church members. Whenever there is disunity in the church, it does not function properly. That was the danger facing the church in this incident. The unity of the church was at risk. The seven men addressed the problem. They went to the aid of the widows. They ensured that they were not being neglected. Once this was addressed, it brought about the unity the church needed to move forward.

⁸ Benjamin J. Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2008), 228.

The seven men who were chosen provided the solution to the problem at hand. Anytime there is disunity in the church, deacons can serve as protectors to maintain unity among the believers, as demonstrated in the Acts 6 passage. The work of God can be hindered when there is disunity in the church. A deacon comes to the aid of the pastor, as the pastor preaches the Word of God, so that the pastor will not get sidetracked spending time to address issues that a deacon can address.

Ministering to the Welfare of the Needy

The Seven were selected for a clearly defined duty. Alexander Strauch explains that the Seven were:

- 1) To collect money and goods contributed to the needy (Acts 4:34, 35, 37; 5:2).
- 2) To distribute the money or goods to the needy (Acts 4:35).
- 3) To ensure that the church justly and fairly distributed the money; and
- 4) To coordinate the church's overall charitable services to the needy.⁹

The Bible clearly teaches, it is the church who should shoulder the responsibility of ministering to the welfare of the needy, such as widows. James, the half-brother of Christ, explains that “pure religion and undefiled” is demonstrated by visiting “orphans and widows in their trouble” (James 1:27). The Seven in Acts 6 were assigned to do just that, to attend to the needs of the widows. Douglas Moo notes, “One test of pure religion, therefore, is the degree to which we extend aid to the ‘helpless’ in our world—whether they be widows and orphans, immigrants trying to adjust to a new life, impoverished third-world dwellers, the handicapped, or the homeless.”¹⁰

⁹ Alexander Strauch, *Ministers of Mercy: The New Testament Deacon* (Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 1992), 33.

Paul provided clear instructions for the church to follow in their ministry to widows in I Timothy 5:3-16. Paul challenges young Timothy not to overlook widows. Paul explains who qualifies as a widow. Paul told Timothy to honor widows. “Honor” indicates that widows must be cared for.¹¹ It is clear, the Seven in Acts 6 were assigned to provide this type of ministry, so that the apostles would be able to attend to their duty as the under-shepherds of the early church. As a new church plant grows and the ministry expands, the church is to elect and ordain men who will minister to the needy. By doing so, the church will be effective and will fulfill its scriptural responsibilities.

Other Biblical Passages Related to the Office of Deacon

The Bible records only a few more occasions where the word deacon (*diakonos*) is used to refer to as an office. In Philippians 1:1, Paul greets the pastors (*episcopois*) and deacons (*diakonois*). I Timothy 3:8-12 provides a list of qualifications concerning deacons. Nothing, however, is said of their duties or functions. The only other time a person may be referred to as a deacon is near the close to the book of Romans.¹² Paul commends to the Roman church a woman named Phoebe. She is called a “servant (*diakonon*) in the church at Cenchrea.” Paul shares, “I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also” (Rom. 16:1-2).

¹⁰ Douglas J. Moo, *The Letter of James*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2000), 97.

¹¹ George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Paternoster Press, 1992), 215.

¹² *Ibid*, 215.

It is interesting to note that Paul uses a masculine noun, *diakonos*, to refer to Phoebe. Here the use of the masculine substantive to refer to a woman seems to make it clear that this was an official title, not merely a reference to Phoebe as a “servant” of the church as used in the New King James Version.¹³ If so, she is the only one who bears the title of “deacon” in the New Testament. One must note, the “Seven” in Acts 6:1-6 are never called deacons.

Regardless of the acceptance of whether the Acts 6 passage is the first account of an organized deacon ministry, the seven men who were selected demonstrate some of the same responsibilities a deacon must accept and carry out. The responsibility of “freeing the pastor,” “promotion and protection of unity,” and “ministering to the needy” are clearly understood to be the focus of contemporary deacon ministry.

Deacon Ministry in the Second through Fifth Centuries

According to Nichols, “By the time of Ignatius (about A.D. 100), there were three orders of clerics: bishops (minister), presbyter, and deacon, of whom the deacon was the lowest in rank. Deacons during this era had the role of providing charity to the widows and orphans.”¹⁴ They were true servant leaders.

Deacons took care of visitation ministry, especially toward those who were sick and homebound. Deacons visited people who were imprisoned. They helped the apostles keep watch over the flock. When a convert fell by the wayside, it was the deacon who went to the aid of that person who was in spiritual disarray. They helped to restore those members who had been excommunicated from the church. Early deacons assisted the pastor in administering the Lord’s

¹³ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 216.

¹⁴ Harold Nichols, *The Work of the Deacon and the Deaconess* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1984), 10.

Supper and with baptisms. They served as the pastor's right arm. They served at the pleasure of the pastor, from administrative duties, to visitation ministry.

Deweese gives a shining example of deacon ministry during this era. According to Deweese, a plague swept through Alexandria in about A. D. 259. During this plague, deacons "visited the sick fearlessly," "ministered to them continually," and "died with them most joyfully."¹⁵ Deacons are also found defending the faith during this era. As Waylan Lawrence Payne, Jr. notes,

A final area of ministry performed by these deacons included defending the faith. Even in the face of persecution many deacons had a Stephen-like loyalty to the cross. This is well illustrated by the example of the deacon Habib. According to ancient history, Emperor Licinius decreed that everyone was to worship Zeus, the mythological god of the Greeks. Habib, however, continued privately to worship the true God of heaven along with other believers. He "ministered and read the Scriptures, and encouraged and strengthened many by his words, and admonished them to stand fast in the truth of their belief, and not to be afraid of the persecutors; and gave them directions. Habib stood strong, even to the point of death. He was killed for his allegiance to Christ during this time of trial."¹⁶

Deacon Ministry in the Middles Ages (AD 500 to about 1500)

During the Middles Ages, the role and responsibility of deacons became less and less like that described in Acts 6. Deacon candidates took on a more formal role as a priest. It is noted that a deacon could not be ordained unless he was willing to become a candidate for the priesthood.¹⁷

¹⁵ Charles W. Deweese, *The Emerging Role of Deacons* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1979), 12-13.

¹⁶ Waylan L. Payne, Jr., "The Role of a New Testament Deacon: An Office to Hold or a Ministry to Perform?" (D.Min. diss., Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary, 1996), 240.

¹⁷ Deweese, 18.

Deacon Ministry from 1500 to 1800

While the church had drifted away from the role and responsibility of deacon ministry in the local church, there was a push for a return to the biblical mandate of the office of deacon. Great men (reformers) such as Martin Luther and John Calvin blazed the way for a return to Holy Scripture. John Calvin's view of the office of deacon is described by Timothy George. George notes, "Calvin did in fact hold the office of deacon in high esteem. Deacons were public officers in the church entrusted with the care of the poor. He urged that they be skilled in the Christian faith since, in the course of their ministry they will often have to give advice and comfort."¹⁸ Luther's view was akin to Calvin's: "The diaconate is the ministry, not of reading the Gospel or the Epistle, as is the present practice, but of distributing the church's aid to the poor"¹⁹

Great men in the early 1600's, such as John Smyth and Thomas Helwys, began to express their understanding of the office of deacon as that of carrying out the benevolence ministry of the church. In 1654, in what would become an often-repeated description, Thomas Collier pictured the work of deacons as that of serving tables.²⁰ Southern Baptist leaders would later utilize this description to describe the work of the deacon.²¹

Charles Deweese asserts, in the latter half of the eighteenth-century deacons were emerging to become, more-or-less, business managers. Deweese provides some historical trends concerning deacon ministry:

There were those, at the time, who saw this trend as a cause of concern. In 1852, one New York pastor/historian warned against the concept of the deacon as being a person, "Of so much importance and ecclesiastical consequence in the Church, that all the

¹⁸ Timothy George, *Theology of the Reformers* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1998), 241.

¹⁹ Deweese, *The Emerging Role*, 19.

²⁰ Derek Gentle, *The Biblical Role of Deacons* (May 17, 1998), 5.
http://www.baptiststart.com/print/role_of_deacons.html (accessed October 5, 2017).

²¹ *Ibid*, 5.

membership, and all the affairs in the Church, and the Pastor, must be dictated, and ruled and governed by him." In 1897, Edwin C. Dargan, professor of homiletics and ecclesiology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, warned of the tendency of deacons to act as "a sort of ruling presbytery."²²

There was a complete drift away from biblical authority concerning the deacon ministry in the 16th to the 18th Centuries. Consequently, God was at work in the life of His church, as He was laying on the hearts of godly men and women to get back to the tenets of His word.

Deacon Ministry from 1800 to the Present

Throughout church history, a question has led to this debate, are deacons needed now in the local church? From 1950, especially leading up to 1970, the debate of this question was intensifying. Robert Naylor, in his book, *The Baptist Deacon*, provides insight on the debate.

Naylor asserts,

The plain teaching of the New Testament should be enough to determine the doctrines and practices of Baptist Churches. No other reason for any belief or practice should be necessary. Thus, following the pattern of the New Testament is of first importance for all of the church, even its organizations. This conviction is basic in an evaluation of the office of deacon. It even calls for a willingness to examine the Baptist position to be sure of its complete accord with the Word of God.²³

Naylor does not hold back, nor does he stray from the authority of Scripture. Naylor continues to argue,

The leadership of the Holy Spirit gave rise to the office of deacon in the New Testament churches. Divine wisdom brought deacons into being, and divine ends were to be accomplished. While the office may be misinterpreted, and its usefulness nullified, God has put it into the pattern for a purpose, a purpose that should be discovered and accepted because of its eternal significance.²⁴

²² Deweese, *The Emerging Role*, 47-48.

²³ Naylor, *The Baptist Deacon*, 5-6.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 6.

In Baptist circles, a Family Ministry Plan was implemented and adopted by many Baptist churches during this era. The Family Ministry Plan was a way to turn the deacon ministry back toward a biblical perspective. Many churches, however, continued to subscribe to a non-biblical viewpoint. The “business manager” or “board of directors” concept is still the norm in many churches. Harold Nichols explains concerning the concept and duties of deacons in modern-day times:

Today the concept and duties of the deacon vary considerably from communion to communion. The Roman Catholic deacon is the assistant at the altar and is a member of the priesthood. The deacon in the Church of England is a member of the priesthood; he is given such ritualistic tasks as reading the gospel and assisting the priest, but he cannot consecrate the sacramental elements or pronounce absolution. The deacon in the congregational type of the church is a lay person who is chosen by the church.²⁵

There are, as explained by Derek Gentle, several reasons why there remains a conception of the deacons as the church’s “board of directors”:

- 1) As a carry-over from rural churches and the days when they had bi-vocational, perhaps half or quarter time "preachers," who were not on the field to tend to day to day ministry and administration.
- 2) Because of the conclusion that it is common sense to hash things out behind closed doors before bringing them out to the floor for a church vote; who else is there, besides the deacons, to hash things out?
- 3) Because some Christians have the gift of administration (or skills in that area) and the deacon body is the only place in their church's organizational structure where there is opportunity to serve the Lord in that way.
- 4) In order to provide reasonable accountability. Without such a body, an individual may become tempted to abuse his trust.
- 5) From the experience of deacons with a background in the business world (which would include R.B.C. Howell) or secular charitable institutions. Sometimes, it was the only model with which they have had any real familiarity.
- 6) Because some deacons would be out of their comfort zones - perhaps they don't know enough Bible to understand the New Testament teaching on the office of deacon or they

²⁵ Nichols, *The Work of the Deacon*, 10.

don't feel comfortable in doing ministry. So, they stick to that, which they are comfortable.²⁶

While this concept has no biblical warrant, many churches are still using the “board of directors” model for deacon ministry. In his book, *The Ministry of the Deacon*, Foshee list three evidences that deacons are operating under the concept of a board:

- (1) When all major recommendations from church operations and church committees are screened by the deacons whether they should go to the congregation.
- (2) When the pastor and staff members are directly responsible to the deacons rather than to the church.
- (3) When the use or expenditure of major church resources, such as facilities and finances, must first be approved by the deacons.²⁷

Throughout church history there has been a change of deacon ministry. From the prototype of deacon leadership, as explained in Acts 6:1-7, to the current “board of directors” model. No matter the challenges, deacons are to serve in the local church as servant leaders. The personal and public lifestyle of a deacon described in the Scriptural qualifications for deacons calls for that individual to serve as Jesus served: as a servant leader. The next section of this chapter will focus on the qualifications of a deacon and how the biblical qualifications call for the deacon to be a servant leader.

²⁶ Gentle, *The Biblical Role of Deacons*, 5.

²⁷ Howard B. Foshee, *Now that You're a Deacon* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1975), 5.

Qualifications of a Deacon

In this section of the chapter the writer will present the biblical qualifications of a deacon. One who serves as deacon must be aware of his role and responsibilities, which calls for that individual to serve in a capacity of servant leadership. The qualifications, as explained in Scripture, address both his public and private life. In order to serve as a deacon, one must be aware of the high accountability that is required of him from the local church he serves, but more importantly, from the King of Glory he represents.

Paul in I Timothy 3:1-7 addresses some of the qualifications for a “bishop” (pastor). Just as there are many misunderstandings of the role and responsibilities of deacon ministry in the local church, so are there concerning the pastor or bishop in the local church as well. Consequently, as Alexander Strauch in his book, *The New Testament Deacon: Church’s Minister of Mercy* asserts, “The New Testament speaks loudly and distinctly on the identity and duties of church elders.”²⁸ Strauch goes on to say:

Under the direction of the Holy Spirit of God, Paul and Peter charged the elders to shepherd and oversee the local church (Acts 20:17, 28; I Pet. 5:1,2). To no other group or single person do these two giant apostles give the mandate to shepherd and oversee the local church. Thus, it is the biblically mandated duty of the overseer-elders to (1) protect the church (2) teach the church, and (3) lead the church.²⁹

Whenever the church strays away from the biblical tenets of the truth concerning any leadership position it hinders that church from being an effective church that is pleasing unto Christ Jesus.

²⁸ Alexander Strauch, *Minister of Mercy: The New Testament Deacon* (Littleton, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 1992), 63.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 63-64.

What are the Biblical Qualifications for a Deacon?

As stated, Paul provides the only specific qualifications for a deacon in I Timothy 3:8-13. When one compares this passage with the first seven verses of the chapter, he will notice there are more qualifications and even duties listed for the pastor. The writer will address the role, responsibilities, and qualifications for elders/bishops/overseer in the first section of the next chapter. For now, the writer will provide an overview of the biblical qualifications for a deacon. Some may ask, why not also present the biblical roles and responsibilities? That is a great question. When someone studies all that the Bible records regarding deacon ministry he or she will notice Scripture does not provide a detailed outline of the role and duties of a deacon. Other than Acts 6:1-7, a prototype deacon ministry profile of what the “Seven” were appointed to do, not one verse in scripture provides this information.

There are several qualifications listed in the I Timothy 3:8-13 passage. Harold Nichols sees eight qualifications and asserts, deacons should:

- 1) Be serious;
- 2) Not doubled-tongued;
- 3) Not be addicted to much wine;
- 4) Not be greedy for gain;
- 5) Hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience;
- 6) Be tested first; those who prove themselves blameless may serve;
- 7) Be the husband of one wife;
- 8) Manage his children and home well.³⁰

Anyone who aspires to be a deacon should meet all these qualifications. With that in mind, there must be a special emphasis on each one of the qualifications to convey the importance and significance of deacon ministry in a new church plant.

³⁰ Nichols, *The Work of the Deacon*, 19-20.

Paul's list of qualifications for a deacon provides insight on the moral character of the individual who goes into the office of deacon. Benjamin Merkel, in his book, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*, asserts that the, "Focus of the qualifications is on the moral character of the person who is to fill the office."³¹ Merkel goes on to note, "Both the office of a church leader and the office of a church worker require the same type of person: a mature Christian whose behavior is above reproach."³²

"Likewise, deacons must be Reverent" (I Tim. 3:8)

The first qualification Paul lists demonstrate the importance of a deacon to have respect from others, especially from the people he may serve in the church. The Greek word Paul uses is rendered "reverent" (NKJV), "grave" (KJV), and "dignified" (ESV). Merkel explains, "The Greek word translated "dignified" (*semnos*) occurs only four times in the New Testament, Phil. 4:8; I Tim. 3:8, 11; Titus 2:2."³³ Wuest writes: "The word we want is one in which the sense of gravity and dignity, and of these inviting reverence, is combined."³⁴ The work of a deacon requires someone to serve among people who both honor and respect him.

"Not Double-tongued" (I Tim. 3:8)

Paul, in this qualification, stresses the importance of a deacon being straightforward.

Kenneth Wuest in his word study concerning this qualification notes,

³¹ Merkel, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 233. Dr. Merkel is Professor of New Testament and Greek Editor of the Southeastern Theological Review. Dr. Merkel has been serving at SEBTS since 2008.

³² Merkel, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 233.

³³ Ibid, 234.

³⁴ Kenneth S. Wuest, *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament, For the English Reader* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 1 Tim. 3:8.

The word “double-tongued” is *dilogos* (διλογος), “saying one thing and meaning another, and making different representations to different people about the same thing.” Expositors says: “Persons who are in an intermediate position, having in the same department, chiefs and subordinates, are exposed to a temptation to speak of the same matter in different tones and manner, according as their interlocutor is above or below them.”³⁵

Paul signifies the importance of deacon not living a lifestyle of questionable credibility. The words of a deacon must be trusted, for if not, then he will not be able to serve effectively.³⁶ The deacon is not to spread rumors to different groups of listeners.³⁷

“Not given to much wine” (I Tim. 3:8)

Paul’s wording of this standard has generated much debate. Paul demands in the previous paragraph that the pastor be, “not given to wine.” Paul seems to warn the pastor not to drink at all; however, he appears to insist that the deacon not drink too much. So, what is Paul saying concerning this qualification? Alcohol can be a deadly tool in Satan’s hands and bring shame upon the church and reproach to the good news.³⁸

Some Bible scholars search other passages of Scripture to seek to discover the Bible’s teaching concerning the usage of alcohol for Christian leaders and even lay members of the local church. Harold Nichols, notes,

In the time of Jesus and Paul, wine was used as a substitute for water because water was scarce and was often impure. In all the recorded history there have been those who have overindulged in strong drink, and the warning here is against such a practice by deacons.

³⁵ Wuest, *I Tim. 3:8*.

³⁶ Merkel, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 234.

³⁷ Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, The New American Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 116.

³⁸ Simon J. Robinson, *Opening up 1 Timothy* (Leominster: Day One Publications, 2004), 59. The *Greek* includes *besides* this, not indulging in *the brawling, violent conduct towards others*, which proceeds from being given to wine. The opposite of “patient” or (*Greek*) “forbearing,” reasonable to others (see on Philp. 4:5).

In view of the fact that today water is plentiful and pure, Paul would probably say that deacons should not drink intoxicating beverages.³⁹

It should be noted, the writer holds to the same view: deacons, pastors, indeed, all church leaders should abstain from intoxicating beverages. It has the strong potential of bringing a reproach on the testimony of both the leader and the church.

“Not greedy for money” (I Tim. 3:8)

Paul instructs young Timothy that church leaders are to be cautious concerning the financial ministry of the church. Nichols notes something very interesting concerning this:

Nowhere is it recorded that Jesus blamed those who had more money than others. However, he was very critical of those who put their possessions first. Giving possessions top priority promotes the desire to acquire something that someone else has. We realize that the Bible throws much light on acquisitiveness when we read such passages as those about Zacchaeus, the widow’s mite, and the rich young man, or the parable of the rich farmer.⁴⁰

Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin comment,

There are those whose economic situation requires their employment in a second job if their total income is to provide adequately for their families. When persons have two jobs, they may have little or no time to devote to the deaconship. Careful consideration, therefore, should be given as to whether they should be called upon to serve as deacons if these circumstances continue.⁴¹

Knute Larson argues concerning this issue,

Paul always distanced himself from those who taught or preached for the sake of money. It is not surprising that he warned against deacons pursuing dishonest gain. Perhaps

³⁹ Nichols, *The Work of the Deacon*, 21-22.

⁴⁰ Nichols, *The Work of the Deacon*, 23.

⁴¹ Lea and Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, 116–117. The deacon is to avoid the temptations of materialism by “not pursuing dishonest gain” (not given “to questionable money-making,” TCNT). Any deacon would face the temptation of using his spiritual office for financial gain. He is not to develop a questionable integrity by currying favors for mercenary ends. The quest for gain becomes base or dishonest whenever one makes personal gain rather than God’s glory the prime object of life. The use of this term does not merely prohibit the quest for gain in a dishonest manner. That would obviously be blatantly wrong. What Paul prohibited was the use of a spiritual office for material benefit, even if no dishonesty or illegality was present. The deacon is not to be perceived as greedy. In Titus 1:7 Paul used this same word (*aischrokerdēs*) requirement for overseers. Compare this with the appeal to the overseer in 3:3 that he not be “a lover of money.”

stories were still circulating about Judas pocketing the disciples' money for himself while presenting himself as a true follower of Jesus. Paul understood the lure of money, so he was careful in the area of finances, making certain that neither he nor the churches could be accused of greed or money-making schemes (1 Thess. 2:5; 2 Cor. 8:20–21).⁴²

The bottom line is, a deacon must keep himself pure as it relates to the greediness of money. In fact, a deacon must demonstrate himself to be above reproach regarding finances before he can become a deacon, and he must maintain that financial integrity as he carries out his ministry as a deacon. If he does not maintain a Christlike lifestyle concerning his handling of money, he will destroy his ministry.

“Holding the Mystery of the Faith with a Pure Conscience” (1 Tim. 3:9)

Paul in this qualification is speaking concerning the gospel. This refers to the doctrinal beliefs of the faith. Deacons “are to hold firm to the true gospel without wavering.”⁴³ As it is in the contemporary church, so it was in the early church, false teaching was rampant. False teaching is one of the tactics of the evil one. Deacons, therefore, must know what they believe and why they believe it. He should be able to explain what he believes in a way that he points people to Christ Jesus as the one and only Savior of mankind.

There are cardinal truths, such as the incarnation of Christ (1 Tim. 3:16), the indwelling of the Spirit (Eph. 1:13–14), the unity of Jesus as God and man (Phil. 2:6–8), the gospel of Christ and the good news of salvation (1 Cor. 15:2–5; Acts 4:10–12), the mystery of lawlessness (2

⁴² Knute Larson, *I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, vol. 9, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 187. Knute Larson earned his Doctor of Ministry from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and a Master of Divinity from Grace Theological Seminary.

⁴³ Merkel, *40 Questions*, 235.

Thess. 2:7), and the return of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:9–11). There is a body of truth to be believed.⁴⁴ Deacons are held to a very high standard. Larson goes on to explain,

These truths must be held with conviction and become a part of the church leader's life and heart. But not only must God's revelation be believed; it must be held with a clear conscience. In the first century, the conscience was seen as the seat of the will. To hold truth with a clear conscience was not only to agree intellectually but volitionally as well. Intellect and mind must agree with life and purpose. Doctrine must penetrate to the person's will so that his conscience before God and others is blameless as he lives biblical truth in his daily life.⁴⁵

Deacon leadership must be approached with reverence, considering this qualification alone. Paul, however, does not stop with this qualification, but he goes on to share another qualification that address the deacon's personal lifestyle.

“But let them be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless” (I Tim. 3:10)

The prospective deacon must be tested and found blameless in order to serve. The word translated “tested” is passive, so Paul is telling Timothy to allow the prospective deacon to be tested. It's only upon testing that he can be proven blameless—or otherwise. One must note, blameless is not perfect. It is only Christ, who was perfect. Knight explains:

How this is to be done is not specified. The letter itself makes the requirements public, and 5:22ff. indicates that time must be given to appraise a man's life. From this we can conclude that the testing is to be a thoughtful and careful evaluation of a man's life by a congregation aware of these needed qualifications. The hoped-for positive outcome of the testing is expressed in the present active imperative of *διακονέω* (PE*: here; v. 13; 2 Tim. 1:18), which means generally “serve” but in this context most likely means “serve as a *διάκονος*,” i.e., enter into the church office for which they have been tested (see also BAGD s.v. 5). This use of the verb helps us to understand how a group of church officers

⁴⁴ Larson, *I & II Thessalonians*, 187.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 188.

received as their title the noun *διάκονος*, which states in a substantive the task that the verb *διακονεῖν* says they are engaged in. The relationship of noun and verb may well indicate a semantic link with the Seven of Acts 6, whose official task for the church was designated with the verbal phrase *διακονεῖν τραπέζαις* (Acts 6:2).⁴⁶

Knight continues to provide helpful insight concerning this qualification. Knight asserts,

ἀνέγκλητοι ὄντες specifies what the outcome of the testing must be before the potential candidates may enter into service as deacons. Prospective deacons will be *ἀνέγκλητος*** (1 Cor. 1:8; Col. 1:22; Tit. 1:6, 7; the synonym of *ἀνεπίλημπος* in 3:2), “beyond reproach” or “blameless” in the moral realm if a fair appraisal judges that they have each of the listed positive qualifications and none of the listed negative traits as characteristics of their life.⁴⁷

Deacons have an accountability not only to the local church but also, and more importantly, to Christ Jesus. A man of great character must demonstrate it first before being selected as a deacon. The next three verses characterize a deacon’s public and personal life. As I Timothy 3:8-9 focuses on the deacon and his moral conduct and character, so do the next three verses. The next few statements Paul makes focuses on the wife of a deacon. With that in mind, the writer will focus on the next three verses as one unit.

Marital Status (I Timothy 3:11-13)

Paul was writing during a unique era. Paul had to address this issue so that the problems of immorality would not be entertained or allowed in any local church of that day, and even today. Paul made sure he made it clear, as he addressed this issue. Merkel makes it clear, as he states concerning the wife of a deacon,

⁴⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 172. PE Pastoral Epistles* all occurrences (If there are multiple occurrences of the word, can it be a hapax?) of the word or phrase in Paul or in the Pastoral Epistles are cited BAGDW. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, tr. W. F. Arndt and F. W. Gingrich. 2nd ed. rev. and augmented by F. W. Gingrich and F. W. Danker from Bauer’s 5th ed. (1958), Chicago, 1979.

⁴⁷ Ibid, 170. ** Each occurrence of the word or phrase in the New Testament is listed or it is identified as a New Testament hapax legomenon. If it occurs more than once, can it be a hapax?

According to Paul, the wives of deacons must “be dignified, not slanders, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. First, like her husband, the wife must be dignified, or respectable. Second, she must not be a slanderer or a person who goes around spreading gossip. Later, Paul warns younger widows to remarry so that they do not learn to become idle, “going from house to house, and not only idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying what they should not (I Tim. 5:13; cf. 2 Tim. 3:3; Titus 2:3).⁴⁸

Merkel continues to provide helpful insight concerning the wife of a deacon, as he asserts, “A deacon’s wife also must be sober-minded, or temperate. Thus, the deacon’s wife must be able to make good decisions and must not be involved in things that might hinder such judgment.”⁴⁹

Merkel continues,

Finally, she must be “faithful in all things” (cf. I Tim. 5:10). This requirement is general in nature and functions similarly to the requirements for elders to be “above reproach” (I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6) or for deacons to be “blameless” (I Tim. 3:10). The wife of a deacon must be a trustworthy person. The character of a deacon’s wife is important to the success of his ministry. She must be committed, self-controlled, and faithful like her husband. Paul does not mention that the wives first must be tested, however, since it is not they, but their husbands, who are appointed to the office.⁵⁰

The question comes to mind, what are the specific details as to a deacon’s role and responsibility? That is a good question. Paul describes the qualifications of the deacon, but not his duties. The writer holds to the understanding that the only way to answer the question is to consider the Bible’s description of the duties of the other church officer, the pastor.

There must be a proper understanding concerning the distinction between elders and deacons. The local church that fails to understand the difference between the two church offices, will experience discontent and division. Many churches experience the problem of pastor and deacon struggles because they have failed to understand the distinction. Strauch notes,

As most churches know, conflict between shepherds and deacons is not uncommon and can arise from both sides. Indeed, any organization with two or more groups holding

⁴⁸ Merkle, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 236.

⁴⁹ *Ibid*, 236.

⁵⁰ *Ibid*, 236.

official responsibilities will face tensions. The better we understand the differences between shepherds (overseers-elders) and deacons, the more able we will be to avoid conflicts. When we don't understand these differences, power struggles and misunderstandings raise their ugly heads.⁵¹

Chapter Summary

In the first section of the next chapter, the writer will provide a clear understanding concerning the role and responsibility of the pastor in the local church. Taking inventory of the pastor and his biblical duties will help the church to begin to develop an understanding of the complementary role of the deacon. Part of the next chapter will provide the distinction concerning the two offices, as several scripture passages will be explained. The writer believes that for a new church plant to be fruitful, reaching the lost and making disciples, maintaining a proper perspective of the two offices, as outlined in the Bible, is imperative.

⁵¹ Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 77.

CHAPTER THREE PASTORAL LEADERSHIP IN THE LOCAL CHURCH

The Bible establishes two offices in the local church, pastor and deacon Phil. 1:1. In I Timothy 3:1-13, Paul provides the qualifications of the two offices. The writer believes that the terms shepherd, elder and bishop all refer to the same office of pastor, as outlined in the Baptist Faith and Message.¹ Paul provides a comparison of the qualifications of bishops and deacons in I Timothy 3:1-13. Each one of the qualifications is given to demonstrate the high calling on the two New Testament offices. Being that the writer has already provided a thorough explanation concerning the deacon, his origin, his qualifications, his high calling, in chapter three, the writer in this chapter will provide information concerning the pastor.

The role, duties, calling, and the qualifications of a pastor will be carefully examined. The writer believes that for the church to understand and appreciate the office of deacon in the local church, there must be a proper understanding and appreciation of the office of the pastor.

Dr. Harold Willmington explains that there are nine specific areas of leadership for the pastor:

- | | | |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | To administer the ordinances | Matt. 28:19–20 |
| 2. | To be a man of prayer | 1 Tim. 2:1 |
| 3. | To warn his flock | 1 Tim. 4:1, 6 |
| 4. | To study the Word | 2 Tim. 2:15 |
| 5. | To preach the Word | 2 Tim. 4:2; Acts 6:2–4 |
| 6. | To exhort and rebuke | 1 Thess. 5:12; Titus 2:15 |
| 7. | To watch over souls, his own and those of others | Acts 20:28–31; Col. 4:17; 1 Tim. 4:6; 6:11; Heb. 13:17 |

¹ Charles Kelley, Richard Land and Al Mohler, *Baptist Faith and Message 2000* (Nashville, TN: Lifeway Press, 2007), 87.

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------|---|
| 8. | To feed and lead his flock | Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2 |
| 9. | To be an example to all | 1 Cor. 11:1; 4:16; Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:9;
1 Tim. 4:12; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:3 ² |

On the Day of Pentecost, as stated in Acts 2, God began the universal church. While God demonstrated his grace and extended mercy during the Old Testament period, there is a new revelation of God’s work during the New Testament era. God in His own mind chose fallen men and women to become human instruments of His grace and mercy. It is through this act of power that God reveals His glory through the “Church.” The Greek word translated "church" in the English Bible is *ekklesia*. The root of this word is the Greek word *kaleo* (to call), with the prefix *ek* (out).

In the Old Testament, God called out, through Abraham, a great nation (Israel), to become the chosen ones of God’s plan. The plan of God is revealed Himself ultimately by God sending His Son, Jesus the Christ, who would come through the lineage of God’s elect, Israel. God made an unconditional covenant with Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3). God promised Abraham that through his lineage, He would make a great nation. It is through Jacob, Abraham’s grandson who would become the father the twelve tribes of Israel. As the story unfolds, Jacob’s new name would become known as “Israel.” The Hebrew word for “community” is *qāhāl*, which the Greek translation of the Old Testament often renders as *ekklēsia*, “church.”³

² H.L. Willmington, *Willmington’s Book of Bible Lists* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 1987), 230–231. Dr. Willmington is founder and dean of the Willmington School of the Bible at Liberty University and of Liberty Home Bible Institute in Lynchburg, Virginia.

³ Daniel Akin, *A Theology for the Church*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman, 2007), 768. Dr. Akin serves as current president of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Wake Forest, North Carolina. 795.

It is during the New Testament era that God established Christ's *ekklēsia* (Matthew 16:18) and began to raise up leadership to serve in the local church (Acts 14:23; 20:17-35; I Timothy 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9). Through the spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit, the church is equipped to fulfill the Great Commission. The task of sharing the gospel and making disciples is an enormous task. For the church to function properly, certain leadership is paramount (cf. Ephesians 4:11-16). Dr. Daniel Akin helps his readers to understand that stability and strength of a local church are found in leaders who are God-called and qualified to serve. Akin notes,

As with any gathered body of people, the church must be led. Universally and locally, the head and chief shepherd of the church is Christ (Eph. 4:1-16; Heb. 13:20; I Pet. 5:4). Christ did not establish any sort of leadership structure, explicit or implicit, for the universal church during his earthly mission. Thus, between congregations of Christians relationships are purely voluntary in nature. Inside the local congregation, however, the New Testament's teaching is different. The church is established with a simple order of leadership.⁴

It serves to note, the church functions when the leadership serves according to the biblical principles prescribed in the Word of God. Dr. Akin list five biblical principles about church leaders.

- 1) Church leaders should be explicitly qualified.
- 2) Church leaders should be particularly reputable with outsiders.
- 3) Church leaders should also possess a keen sense of accountability.
- 4) Church leaders should exercise authority.
- 5) Church leaders should edify the church.⁵

As noted previously, Scripture provides two offices of leadership for the local church, deacon and pastor. In his consideration of the office of deacon, Akin observes, "Jesus presented

⁴ Akin, *A Theology for the Church*, 796.

⁵ *Ibid*, 797-798.

himself as a type of deacon (Matt. 20:28; Luke 12:37; Rom. 15:8).”⁶ Akin also asserts, “Christians are presented as deacons of Christ or his gospel.”⁷

In this chapter, the writer will explain how the pastor is to proclaim the gospel with the goal of reaching persons for Christ and fostering intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual growth. The pastor is to love and affirm persons and families. He is to do this without bias or prejudice. He should provide counseling to members and nonmembers and to keep confidential such communication, so that the unsaved will respect his office as pastor. The writer will explain why the pastor is the key leader, shepherd, teacher, and equipper in the new church plant.

There are several qualifications that are pointed out in scripture for the pastor (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). Paul refers in 1 Timothy to the qualifications for the “bishop” and in Titus to the qualifications of the “elder.” As has been previously noted in this thesis, in the New Testament, the words “pastor,” “elder” and “bishop” are interchangeable. As one reads Paul’s two lists, two defining areas of the pastor’s life are clearly emphasized: the pastor’s character and his conduct.

The Heart of the Pastor

A pastor who serves in the local church has the task of leading God’s people with the aim of helping his flock to become imitators of Christ (Gal. 5:1; I Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Heb. 13:1). The pastor is called to equip, encourage, excite, expound, and many more duties as outlined in Scripture. Anderson notes an interesting fact, at times is often overlooked by many, observing,

Although the Bible often states the kinds of things that elders, pastors, or overseers do, nowhere does it specify the talents we expect in them. Nowhere does it state that they must be exceptional managers, visitors, pulpiteers, or teachers. Although they need those qualities to perform their duties, the Bible’s major emphasis is in an entirely different

⁶ Akin, *A Theology for the Church*, 798.

⁷ *Ibid*, 798.

direction; instead of insisting on how well a person is able to perform a certain function. It focuses instead on what kind of a person he is.⁸

Local church leaders are just as human as those whom they lead. The Bible demands, though, that those who lead the church attain the sterling character to which all believers should aspire.

Positive and Negative Character Qualities

Merkel sees “situational and family” qualifications and “moral” qualifications in the requirements for the pastor.⁹ He divides the requirements into positive characteristics for a pastor to emulate and the negative characteristics a pastor is to avoid.

Positive Characteristics	Negative Characteristics
Above Reproach (I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6)	Not a Drunkard (I Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7)
Sober-minded (I Tim. 3:2)	Not Violent (I Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7)
Self-controlled (I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8)	Not Quarrelsome (I Tim. 3:3)
Respectable (I Tim. 3:2)	Not a Lover of Money (I Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7)
Hospitable (I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8)	Not Arrogant (Titus 1:7)
Gentle (I Tim. 3:3)	Not Quick-tempered (Titus 1:7)
A Lover of Good (Titus 1:8)	
Upright (Titus 1:8)	
Holy (Titus 1:8)	
Disciplined (Titus 1:8) ¹⁰	

Pastoral leaders are called to embody the high standard to which all believers are to aspire. A pastor has been called and ordained to lead God’s people, and he is to do so with the “servant spirit” that characterized Jesus in His earthly ministry. The deacon is often envisioned

⁸ Robert C. Anderson, *The Effective Pastor: A Practical Guide to the Ministry* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1985), 4.

⁹ Benjamin Merkle, “The Biblical Qualifications and Responsibilities of Deacons,” *9 Marks Journal: Biblical Thinking for Building Healthy Churches* (May-June 2010), 109-116, 117-123.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, 109-123.

as the servant of the church, but the pastor is that, as well. The writer will now list and describe the areas of leadership to which a pastor has been called.

The Authority of the Pastor

A pastor has God-granted authority to lead the church. That authority however, is limited. The limited authority starts and stops with the One who called him, God. A pastor is to care for the church. A pastor is to provide what the church needs so that the church is equipped to fulfill the Great Commission and obey the Great Commandment. Haygood's definition of the term "pastor" is instructive. In the *Holman Bible Dictionary*, B. Spencer Haygood defines the word, "pastor:"

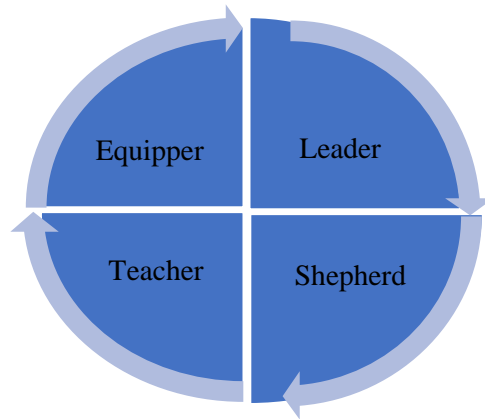
Common translation of the Greek noun *poimen* (Eph. 4:11) and its verb form; also, the Hebrew *ra'ah* (Jer. 3:15; 10:21; 12:10; 22:22 KJV). Literally, a shepherd or one who keeps animals (Gen. 4:2; 13:7; 46:32, 34; Exod. 2:17; Isa. 13:20; Jer. 6:3; Luke 2:8, 15, 18, 20) but used figuratively of those called by God to feed (Jer. 3:15; John 21:16), care for (Acts 20:28), and lead (1 Pet. 5:2) His people, who are His "flock" (Num. 27:17; 1 Kings 22:17; Jer. 3:15; 10:21; 12:10; 22:22; Ezek. 34:2, 5, 7–10; Zech. 10:3; John 21:16; Acts 20:28; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 5:2). Much instruction directed toward such church leaders can be found in the Pastoral Epistles (1 and 2 Tim. and Titus).

Preeminently, the idea is applied to and fulfilled in Christ (Isa. 40:11; Mic. 5:2; Zech. 13:7; Matt. 2:6; 25:32; 26:31; Mark 14:27; John 10:11, 14; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25; Rev. 7:17) and God Himself (Pas. 23:1; 27:9; 47:5; Jer. 23:3; 31:10; Ezek. 34:12, 23–24; Hos. 13:5). In the NT pastor (shepherd) appears to depict aspects, or functions, of the responsibilities of the overseer/elder (1 Pet. 2:25, where the two are put together in Christ).¹¹

The writer also agrees with Merkel that the pastor's leadership can be categorized into four areas: leading, shepherding, teaching, and equipping. The following chart depicts a

¹¹ B. Spencer Haygood, "Pastor," in *Holman Bible Dictionary*, ed. Chad Brand et al. (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 1250.

continuous flow of pastoral leadership through these four areas:



Pastor as Leader

The pastor is called to lead the church and he is to lead by demonstrating the heart of a godly servant. The servant mentality is exemplified by knowing and showing Christ through the pastor's actions and attitude.

According to Paul and Peter, a pastor is to provide exemplary leadership (I Tim. 3:5; I Pet. 5:1-5). Paul states that a man must “rule well his own household” if he is to be considered for the office of pastor. Paul then asks, “For if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?” (I Tim. 3:5). This analogy explains the level of authority the pastor is to have in the local church: he is rule/lead/care for the church just as a husband/father is to rule/lead/care for his family.¹²

According to Strauch, a local body of believers need leadership to guide and guard them along the way of the Lord.¹³ He asserts, “A congregation needs leadership, management, governance, guidance, counsel, and vision.” Especially in a new church plant, these are provided

¹² Merkel, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 89.

¹³ Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership* (Colorado Springs, CO: Lewis and Roth Publishers, 2003), 26.

by the pastor. there are many areas of leadership that is much needed. A pastor must lead in the areas of administration. Organizing the Bylaws and Constitution of the new church plant takes godly wisdom and leadership. In the areas of establishing and implementing a budget, the pastor is to provide guidance. In the areas of helping to select qualified, skilled, talented and gifted lay leaders, the pastor is to step up and provide the appropriate instruction. The leadership of a pastor is vital throughout the required phases of a new church plant.

Rick Warren has famously categorized the purposes of the church as prayer, evangelism, discipleship, ministry, and worship. He claims for a church to be healthy, each one of the five functions of the church, prayer, evangelism, discipleship, ministry, and worship, must be present so that the church is able to maintain its vibrancy.¹⁴ The pastor of the church plant must make it clear from the beginning that the identity of this new congregation will be bound up in accomplishing these purposes. Without the leadership of the pastor in the initial stages of a new church plant, there will be competing ideas about the church's identity and purposes among those who join, and the church will head for failure.

Some may disagree how much leadership a pastor should provide in each of the five church functions listed by Warren. One must note, leadership comes from the top down, not the opposite. New church plants will fail and do fail, when deacons, and the congregation will not allow the pastor to provide the necessary leadership that is needed to establish the new church plant. Strauch asserts, "The eldership must clarify direction and beliefs for the flock. It must set goals, make decisions, give direction, correct failures, affect change, and motivate people. It

¹⁴ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995), 5.

must evaluate, plan, and govern. Elders, then, must be problem solvers, managers of people, planners and thinkers.”¹⁵

A pastor does not have the right to demand that the congregation he is serving to submit to him as lord over the church (I Peter 5:3). The apostle Peter states this clearly:

The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away (I Peter 5:1-5).

A pastor is to lead by example. Biblical leadership is humble, servant leadership.¹⁶ Jesus left us the greatest example of leadership as (Phil. 3:5-8). The writer will focus on how Jesus Christ is our greatest example of servant leadership in chapter four.

A pastor is not called to be a dictator. Anderson explains, “A leader is not someone who whips his people from behind, urging them to get or keep going. He is someone who goes in front, setting the pace and inviting his people to follow.”¹⁷ The writer believes, there are times when the deacon, lay leaders, and congregation may not understand and be fully aware biblically of how the church is to function appropriately. The pastor provides effective leadership by carefully teaching the church’s purposes, equipping the members to exercise their gifts and employ their talents to help fulfill those purposes, and encouraging his flock to follow him as pastor, as prescribed in the Word of God.

¹⁵ Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 26.

¹⁶ Merkel, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 90.

¹⁷ Anderson, *The Effective Pastor*, 159.

Robert L. Saucy explains, “Elders are charged with the general oversight and care of the church. Their function includes, administration, pastoral and instructional duties.”¹⁸ Not only is a pastor called to lead, is called to shepherd the flock God has entrusted him to serve.

Pastor as Shepherd

Shepherding the flock of God requires an attitude of humility. The reason for a pastor to lead in humility as a shepherd is found in I Peter 5. Jesus Christ led with humility, therefore the pastor as the under-shepherd is to lead by the same example of Jesus. Peter puts it, “Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; or as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock” (I Pet. 5:1-3). The word “shepherd” was at first used literally (like its Latin equivalent) of a keeper of sheep.¹⁹ The term derives from the “Latin *pastor*, meaning ‘herdsman’ or ‘shepherd’, hence a shepherd of souls.”²⁰

In an article published by LifeWay, Ray Gilder lists six basic aspects of the pastor’s shepherding role:

- 1) Feed the flock
- 2) Love the flock
- 3) Lead the flock
- 4) Keep the flock together
- 5) Tend the flock
- 6) Protect the flock²¹

¹⁸ Robert L. Saucy, *The Church in God’s Program* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1972), 143.

¹⁹ James Hastings, John A. Selbie, et al., eds., “PASTOR,” *A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing with Its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology* (New York; Edinburgh: Charles Scribner’s Sons; T. & T. Clark, 1911–1912), 692.

²⁰ F. L. Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1237.

²¹ Ray Gilder, “Six Basic Aspects of the Pastor as Shepherd.” LifeWay.com <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/Basic-aspects-of-pastor-as-shepherd>. (accessed October 22, 2017) LifeWay Christian Resources is one of the world’s largest providers of Christian resources. LifeWay’s headquarters is in Nashville, TN.

These six basic aspects listed by Gilder are commonly recognized as the overall duties of a pastor. A pastor as a shepherd is first to “feed the flock.” What Gilder is saying is, just as sheep need to be fed by their shepherd, so does the flock of God need to be fed spiritually by their pastor. The people of God grow as disciples by reading, hearing, meditating upon, and obeying the word of God. Gilder argues, “The primary function of a pastor is to feed the flock the Word of God. A pastor can give himself to many different ministry activities throughout the week but if he does not have a message from God when he stands to speak, he has failed in his most important responsibility.”²²

Gilder explains that the next function of the pastor as a shepherd is to “love the flock.” A pastor must have a Christ-like love for the people God has entrusted him to serve. It is Christ Jesus who gives the pastor the ability to love even the unlovable. There are times when some members of a congregation of people are just hard to love. The pastor as shepherd, however, is to love them “in spite of” themselves. Jesus died for the church, which demonstrates His deep love for the church. It is for the pastor as shepherd to love the church as well. No congregation will trust a pastor unless he demonstrates that he loves them. Gilder notes, “The first step to lead is to love.”²³

The third duty of the pastor as a shepherd, is to “lead the flock.” Gilder asserts, “A congregation that is not being led will wander and scatter.”²⁴ The pastor as a shepherd is to lead by example, as already noted. The pastor as a shepherd is to lead out front. It is hard for the people follow if they see nobody leading. Just as Jesus, the Great Shepherd, left an example that

²² Gilder, *Six Basic Aspects*.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ *Ibid.*

His people should follow (I Pet. 2:21), even so the pastor should be an example for his congregation.

The fourth duty for a pastor as shepherd is to keep the flock together. There are some sheep who tend to wander away from the flock. Merkel asserts, “Paul indicates that the goal of teaching is not only to encourage believers by giving them biblical instruction but also to firmly rebuke those who oppose the truth of the gospel.”²⁵ Gilder argues that conflict will cause the sheep to wander. Whenever the pastor is caught in the middle of conflict, he must lean on and learn from the Lord how to keep the sheep together and overcome conflict. Gilder asserts, “One of the most challenging functions of a pastor is to the keep the flock together.”²⁶ The writer believes that a primary way the pastor accomplishes this job is by teaching and training the deacons to understand and employ the principles of conflict resolution. The writer will explain this in further detail later in this thesis project.

The fifth duty of a pastor as a shepherd is to tend to the flock. Just as a shepherd out in the wilderness tends to his sheep, so must the pastor tend the needs of his congregation. Gilder argues, “Tending to the flock includes providing general oversight, visiting the sick, counseling those with special needs and performing weddings and funerals.”²⁷

The final responsibility Gilder identifies of a pastor as a shepherd is protecting the flock. There are many “wolves” who may try to come among the flock to harm them. They may sow dissension or propagate false doctrine. It is the duty of a pastor as a shepherd to protect the flock from the raging wolves. The pastor must protect his flock from himself, too. Part of that is

²⁵ Merkel, *40 Questions*, 101.

²⁶ Gilder, “*Six Basic Aspects*.”

²⁷ *Ibid*.

teaching the church to always listen with discernment, regardless of who is teaching or preaching. Gilder notes, “Paul warned the leaders at Ephesus about the wolves that would seek to destroy the flock. A pastor must not only preach the truth, he must expose error.”²⁸

The writer believes there are two other responsibilities of a pastor. The pastor has the duty to teach sound doctrine and to equip his flock for the work of the ministry. Paul made this clear in his letter to the Ephesians,

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love (Eph. 4:11-16).

Paul’s instruction challenges the pastor and the flock to understand the responsibility of the pastor. The pastor is not merely the “chief minister” of the church. He is to be the “chief equipper of ministers” in the church. Paul makes it clear that the pastor is to focus on helping his flock to be well prepared to do the work of the ministry. In the next section of this chapter, the writer will explain the pastor’s duties as “teacher” and “equipper.”

²⁸ Gilder, “*Six Basic Aspects.*”

Pastor as Teacher

The New Testament clearly presents the ability to teach as a requirement Paul gives for the elder, but not the deacon.²⁹ There are some who may question, is there a distinction between pastor and teacher, or is Paul saying that the role of pastor is both pastor/teacher? Marvin R. Vincent explains an interesting fact concerning the classification of pastor and teacher being the same,

Pastors or *shepherds*. The verb ποιμαίνω *to tend as a shepherd*, is often used in this sense. See on 1 Pet. 5:2; Matt. 2:6. The omission of the article from teachers seems to indicate that pastors and teachers are included under one class. The two belong together. No man is fit to be a pastor who cannot also teach, and the teacher needs the knowledge which pastoral experience gives.³⁰

The equipping process is conducted by a pastor teaching the Word of God. Teaching the word is a strenuous process. It takes an ample amount of time for a pastor to be prepared to rightly divide the Word of God. The writer believes the deacon is to help guard this time-consuming process of sermon preparation for the pastor by shouldering some of the responsibilities of congregational leadership.

Paul exhorts young Timothy about the importance of teaching by the pastor. Paul says, “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine” (I Timothy 4:12-13).

Paul in verse thirteen exhorts Timothy to give attention to public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching “(doctrine).” Merkel argues, “The importance of solid, gospel teaching in the church is vital to the church’s existence. The Word must be preached, and it is the task of

²⁹ Merkel, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 92.

³⁰ Vincent, *Word Studies*, 390.

the elders to preach that Word.”³¹ The pastor is called with a heavenly calling by and from God to teach the Word in a way that empowers God’s people to live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ (Jer. 3:15; Acts 20:20-21; 28-31; Eph. 4:11-12; Tit. 1:9).

Pastor as Equipper

The role of the pastor as an equipper is vital. The health of the church is dependent upon sound biblical doctrine that empowers, excites, and equips the children of God to be faithful, fruitful followers of Jesus Christ. A pastor has the enormous responsibility of equipping the next generation behind him. He is to come along-side of those who are following him and empower them to be ready when the pastor passes the baton of faith. The pastor must not only equip all believers in his church for fruitful service, he must especially equip leaders for both the present and the next generation for his church. Biblically, that includes training faithful men who will serve as elders and deacons.

In a new church plant, the pastor may be the sole spiritual leader at first, but as he disciples new believers, he will begin to identify those who demonstrate the potential to serve as deacons. The pastor is to equip the prospective deacon to become a servant leader in the church. The pastor is to come alongside that man in a way that helps him to see the key traits that are necessary to effectively lead the people he may be selected and ordained to serve. Merkel notes, “The task of raising up new leaders in the church does not belong primarily to Bible colleges or seminaries. It is the task of the elders to identify those young (or not so young) men who will be faithful to carry on the gospel message.”³² The pastor must select men who may serve as deacons in a new church plant.

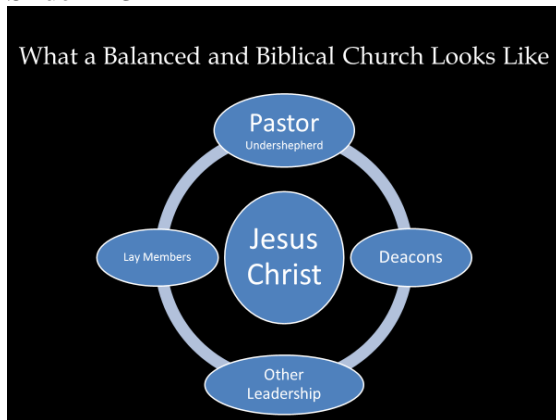
³¹ Merkel, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 93.

The writer in the next section of this chapter will present the material he used for training deacons in two churches. As noted earlier, the deacon training was conducted over an eight-month period. There were two sessions each month, each lasting about one and a half hours. The sessions were conducted as a Q&A dialogue. Throughout the sixteen sessions, deacons who were already serving and potential deacons were trained and taught various challenges a church will experience. The writer explained that deacons are selected and ordained to help with the challenges that will arise in the church. The writer believes these same sessions will empower church planters to train potential deacons in their new church plants.

The content of the deacon training sessions was originally presented as PowerPoint presentations. While the writer will not include all the PowerPoint slides in this section, all of them will be provided in the appendix of this thesis project.

Pastor as Equipper (Deacon Training)

Slide # 131



Slide # 132

Image was blocked due to copyright.

³² Merkel, *The Biblical Qualifications*, 94.

Slide # 133

Slide # 134

The office of a Deacon demands a high level of commitment, a mature knowledge of the faith, and dedication to fellowship and service. Paul summarizes it best,

"For those who have served well as Deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 3:13)

Image was blocked due to copyright.

The Bible calls for the pastor to serve as the key leader in the local church. The four PowerPoint slides were discussed in open dialogue to help the deacons who were being trained to understand the dynamics of leadership in the local church. There must be a balanced and biblical approach to the local church so that it may function properly. When considering deacon ministry in a new church plant, the pastor must challenge the potential deacon concerning the call and responsibility of the calling that God has placed upon the life of a pastor. It is important for the deacon to see that his own calling is to be understood in relation to the calling of the pastor. The deacon serves the church as an extension of the pastor's ministry. The deacon must have a well-developed relationship with the pastor.

Slide # 135

**What is the Relationship between
Pastor and Deacon?**

Image was blocked due to copyright.

The deacon must be taught that he is to serve under the leadership of the pastor. The pastor is to equip his deacon to see the deacon's subordinate role in the ministry, and the pastor is to give spiritual direction. The deacon must understand that he is to be loyal to the pastor. This loyalty is demonstrated through prayer, encouragement and fellowship. There must be a deep sense of love and unity between the pastor and deacon.

Slide # 136

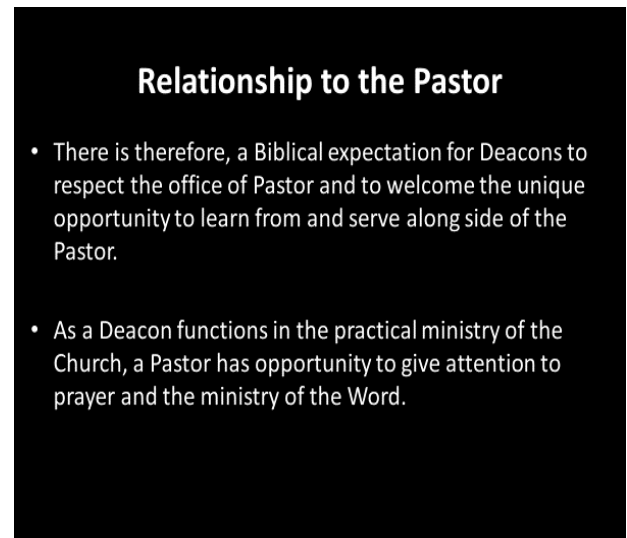


Relationship to the Pastor

A Deacon should serve under the leadership and spiritual direction of the Pastor and should be loyal to the Pastor in

- prayer support
- encouragement and
- fellowship.

Slide # 137



Relationship to the Pastor

- There is therefore, a Biblical expectation for Deacons to respect the office of Pastor and to welcome the unique opportunity to learn from and serve along side of the Pastor.
- As a Deacon functions in the practical ministry of the Church, a Pastor has opportunity to give attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

The pastor teaches the deacons of their responsibilities to relieve him of some administrative responsibilities so that he may focus upon evangelism, preaching, prayer, and communicating his vision for the church. He must also communicate this understanding to the new church plant's members so that they all understand the deacon's responsibility to protect and preserve the pastor's ability to focus on his key duties as pastor.

The key duties of prayer and ministry of Word of God will be done in a decent manner when the pastor as equipper takes time to train his deacon to fulfill his role as a deacon. The pastor as the key equipper focuses on his role and teaches the congregation the biblical definition of deacon in the local church.

Chapter Summary

The pastor has a high calling that comes directly from God. Church leadership is so important, it requires godly pastors who are noted for their character in the church and in the community. Pastors are to serve as servant leaders as well. The Lord Jesus Christ demonstrated what the church meant to Him. He demonstrated it by stepping out of eternity and coming into time to live among and redeem His own (John 3:16; Eph.1:7-10; Col. 1:13-14).

“Everything rises and falls on leadership.”³³ The pastor has the accountability to the new church plant to serve as leader, shepherd, teacher and equipper. He cannot succeed alone. The pastor must provide leadership so that others are trained and well equipped to partner with him for the work of the ministry. Even as the pastor identifies and trains those who will serve as deacons, he must help them to understand that their role is one of subordination to and support for the pastor.

As Alexander Strauch points out,

According to the New Testament writes Paul, Peter, and James, the overseer-elders protect the church from false teachers, exhort the saints in sound doctrine, teach, preach, pray for the sick, and judge doctrinal issues. In broad terms, they lead, oversee, shepherd, and care for the local church of God. Therefore, let no one demean their office or usurp their duties and let no deacons think they are the church’s overseer-elders.³⁴

Within the Church, it is pastors who have been called by the Holy Spirit to have spiritual care over the flock of God. The pastor has been given oversight of the church. In a new church plant if the pastor does not serve as the leader, shepherd, teacher, and equipper, then that new church plant will probably fail.

³³ John C. Maxwell, *21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader: Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999), Introduction, Kindle eBook.

³⁴ Strauch, *Biblical Eldership*, 65-66.

The pastor is not a dictator, nor a taskmaster, nor a boss. The pastor is to serve as a servant leader. The pastor must remember that the Good Shepherd (Jesus) does not drive His sheep, but He leads them, and He loves them. The pastor as under-shepherd should do the same. From the human standpoint, it would be much easier to have centralized human authority in the church. From this perspective, obedience would be mandatory. However, that is not God's way. The pastor is to oversee the church by being an example to the flock and by leading, training, and loving them so that the church may be able to function according to the Word of God.

The pastor is to serve in the way that Jesus demonstrated through His life and ministry. The clear and consistent leadership of Jesus is a model for twenty-first-century leadership to follow. Jesus' example of servanthood will be examined in chapter four. There, the writer will explain the definition of leadership. He will explain how Jesus expressed the way a leader is to serve in the local church. The writer will provide for new church plants the model of New Testament of leadership as molded by Jesus, the quintessential servant leader.

CHAPTER FOUR A BIBLICAL ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP

“Everything rises and falls on leadership.”¹ Holy Scripture has a lot to say concerning leadership. Leadership is important, but not everyone is able to lead others in a preferred direction, with an aim in mind. The Word of God presents the stories of both men and women who led others with a common goal of accomplishing a task. Great leaders, as seen throughout the Bible, have the abilities and capability to lead others with a purpose.

John Maxwell asserts, “Leadership is not about titles, positions, or flowcharts. It is about one life influencing another.”² For deacons, one responsibility that weighs most heavily is the call to lead. To become an effective leader, the deacon must understand that leaders are not necessarily effective based upon their individual power or intellect. As Maxwell points out, leaders who are effective have the ability to equip and empower others to lead.³ A deacon who maintains this perspective can be an effective leader.

A deacon partners with the pastor to give leadership to the congregation. He helps each member to “buy into” the pastor’s vision for the church, discover his own gifts, and employ them in cooperation with the others in the church to help fulfill that vision. An effective deacon comes along-side others and empowers them to be fruitful. An effective deacon fosters an atmosphere among the team, so that everyone accomplishes the task. A successful leader is that one who can provide what is needed, so that others are able to find and sense meaning in what they are trying to accomplish.

¹ John C. Maxwell, *21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader: Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1999), Introduction, Kindle.

² Ibid, 13.

³ Ibid, 22.

A potential deacon must understand, being a great leader is about helping others accomplish a great task, with the satisfaction and desire for one to do their best.

Drawing from the teaching of Ordway Tead, Towns points out, “Leadership is the activity of influencing people to cooperate toward some goal, which they come to find desirable.”⁴ It has been said, “Leaders have two important characteristics: first, they are going somewhere; second, they are able to persuade other people to go with them.”⁵ Within the military sector, leadership has been correctly recognized to be defined as a process: the ongoing process by which a military leader exerts great influence over others to accomplish the mission set forth.⁶

Throughout the Bible, those whom God used to lead, had a God-given ability to empower, equip, and excite others to do a great work. Leadership is the art of changing a group from what it is to what it ought to be. There are number of biblical examples of effective leadership. One of the greatest of those examples is Nehemiah. Nehemiah was a layman and a builder who focused his attention on the protection of the people of Jerusalem.

The book of Nehemiah chronicles the leadership that Nehemiah gave to the Jews who had returned to Jerusalem from exile in Babylon. He came to Jerusalem in 445 B.C., some 13 years after Ezra had led a group of Jews to the Holy Land out of Babylonian exile. Ezra was a priest and Bible teacher who focused his attention on the purification of the people of Jerusalem.

The purposes of the books of Ezra and Nehemiah are: 1) To reassure the returning exiles that God would keep his covenant with them (Neh 9:32) and that there was, therefore, “hope for

⁴ Maxwell, *21 Indispensable Qualities*, 3.

⁵ Ibid, 5

⁶ Ibid, 12

Israel” (Neh 10:2); 2) To demonstrate the power of prayer (Ezra 9-10; Neh 9) and the importance of the Word of God in times of crisis (Nehemiah makes frequent references to reading from the law); and 3) To show what can happen when just one person (Ezra and Nehemiah, respectively) takes a stand for the Lord.

A leader will be challenged by the passion and zeal of Nehemiah to lead the repatriated Jews to “Arise and Build” (Neh 2:18). The following outline of Nehemiah 1:1-4 not only demonstrates the heart and passion of Nehemiah, as a leader whom God used, but captures the heart of what it takes to be an effective leader.

- 1) The Concern Nehemiah had for his people (vs. 2-3).
 - A. He was Concerned about his Family.
 - B. He was Concerned about his Future.
- 2) The Character of Nehemiah (vs. 4).
 - A. He was a man of Prayer.
 - B. He was a man of Patience.
- 3) The Compassion Nehemiah had for his people (v. 4).
 - A. His Compassion caused him to Move.
 - B. His Compassion caused him to Mourn.⁷

Effective, biblical leadership in a new church plant is vital to its health and the accomplishment of its mission to reach the lost and make disciples. Nehemiah demonstrates this type of effective and biblical leadership. As noted in the outline, Nehemiah had a genuine concern for others. Nehemiah exemplified his passion for God and others through prayer and

⁷ The sermon outline was a six-part message series the writer preached, entitled “Arise and Build.” The writer preached this message series with the aim to empower, encourage, and equip the church leadership, from the life of Nehemiah leadership principles that engage others to excel in his or her leadership roles. Nehemiah, a lay leader, serves as an example to leaders alike, how God will use someone, when that individual is totally submitted to God’s plan and purposes. As L.W. Batten asserts, “Nehemiah is a conspicuous instance of the right man in the right place. It was his privilege to render great service to his nation, for which both his character and his position fitted him. He was patriotic, courageous, and God-fearing; he knew how to exercise the inflexible will of an autocrat, as well as to be persuasive when that would best accomplish the good end he had in view.” L. W. Batten, “NEHEMIAH,” ed. James Hastings et al., *A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing with Its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology* (New York; Edinburgh: Charles Scribner’s Sons; T. & T. Clark, 1911–1912), 507.

patience. Nehemiah's compassion not only moved him to tears (1:4), it motivated him to intercession (1:5-11) and to action (2:5).

Although Ezra had authorization from King Artaxerxes for the resources needed in Jerusalem when he led a group of exiles there a dozen years before, the city still lay in disarray and the wall in ruins. When Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem, he first examined the walls and gates of the city in order to see for himself the scope of the problem he had come to address (Neh 2:11-15). He then gathered together the people and their leaders to cast the vision for rebuilding the walls (Neh 2:16-18). Nehemiah wisely appealed both to the civic spirit of the people and to their own personal interests. Chapter 3 of Nehemiah shows that the work groups were assigned the responsibility for the section of the wall closest to their own families' homes.

People can be divided into three groups: 1) Those who make things happen; 2) Those who watch things happen; 3) Those who wondered what happened.⁸ The first group are the leaders, and Nehemiah is a striking example. He demonstrates the proper balance of the spiritual and "practical" aspects of leadership. Regarding the spiritual side of leadership, Dr. James Merritt lists nine keys to successful leadership. Merritt argues that possessing these nine-character traits enables a leader to make a lasting impact on others. Drawing from the teaching of Paul concerning the fruit of Spirit, Merritt lists the nine traits as follows:

- 1) Love
- 2) Joy
- 3) Peace
- 4) Patience
- 5) Kindness
- 6) Faithfulness
- 7) Goodness
- 8) Gentleness
- 9) Self-control⁹

⁸ Towns, *Biblical Models for Leadership*, 1.

Merritt asserts that because the Holy Spirit bears this fruit in the life of a Christian leader, that individual has the “God-given potential to use his influence to impact others, shape futures, change lives, and make an eternal difference.”¹⁰

That is what leadership is, “influence.”¹¹ In order to influence people, the leader must be trusted by them to be worthy of following. In a new church plant, leaders must work from the outset to build a trusting relationship with those whom they hope to attract as followers. Both the pastor and the deacon must have that same leadership character. George Barna notably states, “The American church is dying due to a lack of strong leadership.”¹² Without strong leadership, a new church plant will suffer. While the pastor serves as the key leader, he must have a team of leaders partnering with him who have the same mind and strength.

Leadership in the local church that is healthy and holy is vital to its vibrancy. Waldo Werning asserts,

Pastoral ministry and leadership is defined by people, not programs, for people are more important than church policies. Strong leaders keep their focus on biblical imperatives and the authority of Christ to function as Christ’s mission. They look for spiritual productivity, not new programs. They spend time on building trust and on partnerships, not on problems and procedures. They generate energy for growth and are not concerned about their comfort zones.¹³

⁹ James Merritt, *How to Impact and Influence Others: 9 Keys to Successful Leadership* (Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2011), 14.

¹⁰ Merritt, *How to Impact*, 7.

¹¹ John Maxwell, *Leadership 101: What Every Leader Needs to Know* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002), 1.

¹² George Barna, *Leaders on Leadership* (Ventura: Regal Books, 1997), 18.

¹³ Waldo J. Werning, *Renewal for the 21st Century Church* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1988), 122.

Biblical leadership is healthy and holy leadership. The Bible makes it clear that a biblical leader follows the Lord and His will, both publicly and privately. It is this that will engender trust in people's hearts that will cause them to follow his leadership.

Within God's Holy Word, a one finds great leaders whom God used to carry out His will, work, and word, to reveal Himself to mankind. God raised up many men and women and developed them to become spiritual leaders that would lead others to follow God. Author and founding president of Leadership Transformations, Inc., Stephen A. Macchia, explains in his book, *"Becoming a Healthy Church,"* "The healthy church identifies and develops individuals whom God has given the gift of leadership and challenges them to become servant-leaders."¹⁴ A leader will empower those who are following him or her to reach their full God-given potential.

John Maxwell makes some very profound statements concerning leadership in his book, *Developing the Leader within You*, which the writer incorporated into the deacon training lessons. Maxwell points out four key essentials on leadership. He fits all leaders in one of four categories or levels of leadership:

The Leading Leader:

- Is born with leadership qualities.
 - Has seen leadership modeled throughout life.
 - Has learned added leadership through training.
 - Has self-discipline to become a great leader.
- Note: Three out of the four of these qualities are acquired.

The Learned Leader:

- Has seen leadership modeled most life.
- Has learned leadership through training.
- Has self-disciplined to be a great leader.

¹⁴ Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 115. Macchia, in his book provides the ten traits of vital ministry. Macchia argues the ten traits are essential ingredients of a healthy ministry. The ten traits are as follows: 1) God's Empowering Presence. 2) God-exalting Worship. 3) Spiritual Disciplines. 4) Learning and Growing in Community. 5) A Commitment to Loving and Caring Relationships. 6) Servant-Leadership Development. 7) AN Outward Focus. 8) Wise Administration and Accountability. 9) Networking with the Body of Christ. 10) Stewardship and Generosity.

Note: All three qualities are acquired.

The Latent Leader:

- Has just recently seen leadership modeled.
 - Is learning to be a leader through training.
 - Has self-discipline to become a great leader.
- Note: All three qualities are acquired.

The Limited Leader:

- Has little or no exposure to leaders.
 - Has little or no exposure to leadership training.
 - Has desire to become a leader.
- Note: All three can be acquired.¹⁵

A deacon in the local church serves as a leader in some form or fashion. A deacon must venture into the areas of life where he can make a lasting impression and impact on others. It has been said that a person can have a positive or negative effect on others. The choice is for the individual to decide if he wants not only to communicate, but to connect in an influential manner with others. The writer explained how a good leader will understand the importance on connecting with his or her followers. For a leader to connect well, he or she must have the ability to communicate well.

Effective leaders empower others by communicating truth. Maxwell even argues, “Those who do connect take their relationships, their work and their lives to another level.”¹⁶ Leaders must understand the concept that communication is more than transmitting information. Effective communication requires connecting. Whether one-on-one, in a group, or with an audience, connecting with others in an effective manner fosters good communication. Leaders

¹⁵ John Maxwell, *Developing the Leader within You* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1993), 8.

¹⁶ John Maxwell, *Everyone Communicates; Few Connect* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2010), 11.

who are concerned with communicating their message will take steps to ensure that they are connecting with their people.

Leadership that Connects through Communication

A leader will, number one, make an extra effort to foster a connection that goes beyond mere communication.¹⁷ A good leader will go the extra mile to foster the relationship in which he will be able to provide good leadership.¹⁸ A good leader who wants to connect with his or her people will also say positive things. People want to know that they are valued and when they feel appreciated and accepted then they will follow the leader. A good leader will demonstrate trust on a level that fosters leadership that provides an atmosphere for a leader to see his people follow. A leader must love and appreciate what he is doing and when his people recognizes his enjoyment, then his followers will get on board with his leadership.¹⁹

Having a sense of unconditional love for his people will enable him to accept his people both collectively and individually without reservation. An unconditional love portrays the love of Christ that He himself demonstrated on the Cross of Calvary. The love connection is a powerful element in the relationship between leader and followers. If the followers are convinced their leader loves them and wants the best for them, they will often be willing to follow him, overlooking shortcomings he may have. Maxwell explains “Connecting is the ability to identify with people and relate to them in a way that increases your influence with them.”²⁰ Connecting

¹⁷ Maxwell, *Everyone Communicates; Few Connect*, 14.

¹⁸ Paul Newton and Matt Schmucker, *Elders in the Life of the Church: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2014), 93.

¹⁹ Maxwell, *Everyone Communicates; Few Connect*, 23.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 3.

will either make or break a leader regardless of the skills and ability he or she may have. “If you want to succeed, you must learn how to connect with others.”²¹ Maxwell notes,

People cannot succeed in life without communicating effectively. It’s not enough just to work hard. It’s not enough to do a great job. To be successful, you need to learn how to really communicate with others.²²

The secret to success is for a leader to connect with others. Regardless of an individual’s experience, age, background, and talent, without having the ability and skills to connect it is impossible for a person to lead. Connecting is not about the person who is communicating, but it is all about others. Solomon stated,

He who winks with the eye causes trouble, but a prating fool will fall. The mouth of the righteous is a well of life, but violence covers the mouth of the wicked. Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins. Wisdom is found on the lips of him who has understanding, but a rod is for the back of him who is devoid of understanding. Wise people store up knowledge, but the mouth of the foolish is near destruction (Prov. 10:10-14).

A good leader will recognize the importance of focusing on others rather than oneself. Maxwell notes,

Connecting is never about me. It’s about the person with whom I’m communicating. Similarly, when you are trying to connect with people, it’s not about you – it’s about them. If you want to connect with others, you must get over yourself. You must change the focus from inward to outward, of yourself and onto others. And the great thing is that you can do it. Anyone can. All it takes are the will to change your focus, the determination to follow through, and the acquisition of a handful of skills!²³

There are various reasons why people have the “ME” mentality. Immaturity will prohibit a person from focusing on others rather than himself. However, Maxwell argues,

²¹ Maxwell, *Everyone Communicates; Few Connect*, 3.

²² *Ibid*, 2.

²³ *Ibid*, 29.

Maturity is the ability to see and act on behalf of others. Immature people don't see things from someone else's point of view. They rarely concern themselves with what's best for others. In many ways, they act like small children.²⁴

The true model of a leader is Jesus Christ. Jesus is the embodiment of servant leadership.²⁵ In Luke 22:24-30, He makes it clear leaders are not to "lord it over" others. Jesus further challenges his disciples that "the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves" (v. 26).

The writer in the next section of this chapter will show that while there are others who modeled servant leadership, Jesus Christ models it perfectly. The writer will define what it means to be a servant leader as well.

Jesus Christ, the Perfect Servant Leader

It was in the year 1970 that Robert Greenleaf coined the term, "Servant Leadership."²⁶ Greenleaf explains that servant leaders are those who lead by the example Jesus Christ demonstrated in His earthly life and ministry. Greenleaf states,

The Servant-Leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. The best test, and difficult to administer, is this: Do those served grow as persons? Do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, and more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society? Will they benefit, or at least not further be harmed?²⁷

²⁴ Maxwell, *Developing the Leader*, 30.

²⁵ Gordon L. Coulter, "The Servant Leader." *Christian Education Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring, 2003): 23-45, (accessed, December 16, 2017), <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/205458916?accountid=12085>.

²⁶ David Duby, "The Greatest Commandment: The Foundation for Biblical Servant Leadership" (2009). Faculty Publications and Presentations. (accessed December 16, 2017) http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/busi_fac_pubs/11.

²⁷ Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1977), 7.

For a leader to lead effectively, the leader must be a servant first. Gene Wilkes, in his book, *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership*, wrote, “You will never become a servant leader until you first become servant to the Leader.”²⁸ One who leads others for Christ, however, is not only a servant to Christ, he is also a servant to those whom Christ entrusts to his leadership. Servant leaders do not lead by manipulating others to get what they want. A servant leader will lead by helping others to recognize that they have a defining role and reason to be part of the team. Coulter clearly explains,

There is no question that leadership power is most often used to manipulate, force, or steer people on a desired course. Servant leadership uses power to empower others. Christ's example illustrates several outcomes of this empowerment. First, Jesus' power was given to us, the church, so we could become joint heirs with him in the kingdom of God. His intention was to empower us as "Christ"-ian models for others, so we can accomplish kingdom objectives as a team. Second, Jesus empowered his disciples through the time he spent with them. He taught them how to walk intentionally. He modeled servant leadership alongside them. Third, Christ modeled empowerment through humility. Humility is exemplified in Plett's description of the lead character in *Watership Down*: He was discerning and able to bring to the fore the giftedness of others. He was authentic, and others recognized his integrity. He had clearly conquered his own ego needs and preferred that others receive credit, which might rightly go to him. He sought consensus and participation in decision-making. He had the heart of a servant. Christ never sought to prove himself to any of his followers. He only sought to serve.²⁹

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the Spotless Lamb of God, stepped out of eternity and came into time, and took upon Himself the form of human flesh, and dwelt among people, “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). The apostle Paul shares in his epistle to the church at Philippi how the Lord Jesus showed forth humility and how Christians should model after Him. Paul’s words were:

²⁸ Gene C. Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1998), 7.

²⁹ Coulter, *"The Servant Leader."*

Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! (Phil. 2:5-9).

Peter Thomas O'Brien, in his exegetical commentary on the book of Philippians, states,

This magnificent passage (vv. 6–11) is an early Christian hymn in honor of Christ. It is the most important section of the letter to the Philippians and provides a marvelous description of Christ's self-humbling in his incarnation and death, together with his subsequent exaltation by God to the place of highest honor.³⁰

In addition, H. D. M. Spence-Jones comments,

The apostle refers us to the supreme example of unselfishness and humility, the Lord Jesus Christ. He bids us mind (comp. Rom. 8:5) the things which the Lord Jesus minded, to love what he loved, to hate what he hated; the thoughts, desires, motives, of the Christian should be the thoughts, desires, motives, which filled the sacred heart of Jesus Christ our Lord. We must strive to imitate him, to reproduce his image, not only in the outward, but even in the inner life. Especially here we are bidden to follow his unselfishness and humility³¹

While Paul's point is that all of Christ's followers should be characterized by selflessness and humility, this is especially true for those who lead. The Bible makes it clear, a leader is to follow the example of Christ Jesus. There is no mistake, Jesus is the perfect model for a servant leader.

Jesus is the model for true Christian leadership. "The great leader is seen as a servant first, and that simple fact is the key to this greatness."³² A leader in a new church plant must be like-minded with Jesus, as lead as a servant leader. A servant leader meets and ministers to the needs of others. Greenleaf notes, "It has generally been my experience that the very top people of truly great organizations are servant leaders. They are the humblest, the most reverent, the most

³⁰ Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 186–187.

³¹ H. D. M. Spence-Jones, ed., *Philippians*, The Pulpit Commentary (New York: Funk & Wagnall Company, 1909), 59.

³² Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 21.

open, the most teachable, the most respectful, the most caring, and the most determined.”³³ Each one of these character traits Greenleaf mentions must be present in the life of a servant leader in the church. Robert James Utley asserts,

Christians are admonished to follow Christ’s example in two ways: (1) He left His pre-existent, divine glory to become a human, not for Himself, but for others; and (2) He was willing to die, not because of His own sins, but for others’. Christ’s followers are to emulate these self-giving, self-abasing characteristics (cf. 1 John 3:16). We are our brother’s keeper because our brother is in the image and likeness of God!³⁴

The words of the apostle Paul in Philippians 2 parallel what Jesus taught himself in Mark’s Gospel. Jesus raises a thoughtful note concerning what it means to become great. Jesus challenges His listeners to take heed when someone has a desire to become great. Jesus came to serve and not to be served. Jesus makes it clear, He came to give His life. The giving of His life would set the example of placing the needs of others above one’s own needs or comfort. Mark writes,

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him, saying, “Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask.” And He said to them, “What do you want Me to do for you?” They said to Him, “Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory.” But Jesus said to them, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They said to Him, “We are able.” So, Jesus said to them, “You will indeed drink the cup that I drink, and with the baptism I am baptized with you will be baptized; but to sit on My right hand and on My left, is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared.” And when the ten heard it, they began to be greatly displeased with James and John. But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great one’s exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many” (Mark 10:35-45).

³³ Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership*, 147.

³⁴ Robert James Utley, *Paul Bound, the Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison (Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, Then Later, Philippians)*, vol. 8, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997), 180.

Wilkes asks the great question, “Are you a leader after the example of Jesus?”³⁵ He then continues,

If so, make a practice of humbling yourself, taking the lesser position, looking for ways to be attentive to other people. Exaltation is God’s choice, not yours. Christian leaders—most of all—should be known for acting counter to the culture of success. God will choose those who will be up front.³⁶

It is Jesus who embodies what it means to practice humility, which exemplifies the heart of a servant leader. A leader must demonstrate the attitude of Christ as he or she leads others. The action and attitude when Jesus washed the feet of His disciples portrays the practice of a servant leader (John 13:1-17). After celebrating Passover with His disciples, Jesus arose from the table, took up a basin and towel, and began to wash their feet. When Jesus came to Peter, he refused. Peter did not fully understand why Jesus would do this, being the Messiah. D. A. Carson asserts. “Peers did not wash one another’s feet, except very rarely and as a mark of great love. Some Jews insisted that Jewish slaves should not be required to wash the feet of others; this job should be reserved for Gentile slaves, or for women and children and pupils.”³⁷ Gangel asserts,

In the brilliant kenosis passage of Philippians 2, we read about the condescension of Christ “who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness” (Phil. 2:6–7). The Philippians passage speaks about the human nature of the Savior, but here we see it in action.³⁸

³⁵ Wilkes, *Jesus on Leadership*, 585.

³⁶ *Ibid*, 600.

³⁷ D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Leicester, England; Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 462.

³⁸ Kenneth O. Gangel, *John*, vol. 4, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 249.

This was a teaching moment for the disciples. Jesus explained that His disciples should follow what He did. They needed to see first-hand the meaning of servant leadership. Andreas J. Köstenberger asserts,

Incredibly, Jesus' followers were not convinced by these words. As the account of the foot washing in John 13 makes clear, they needed a more than a mere verbal instruction—they needed an object lesson, a visual, practical demonstration of what Jesus' teaching looked like in action. Are they so different from many of us today?

The object lesson was not for the church to institute a sacrament of foot washing this would be to institutionalize what was meant by Jesus only as an example of the kind of attitude he sought to promote. "Washing one another's feet" should be taken rather as an emblem of lowering oneself to mere another's need *whatever* that need happens to be at a particular moment. In the Upper Room, the need of the hour was clean feet. In your and my life, the need may take on a virtually limitless number of forms. We must be perceptive and caring in order to identify such needs and then meet them as we are able. As Paul wrote, "Carry each other's burdens and in this way, you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Gal. 6:2). Or again, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4).³⁹

His disciples followed Him, but they did not fully understand all Jesus was teaching them. It was after the sending of the Holy Spirit to indwell all followers of Christ, that His disciples began fully to understand what He was teaching them during his earthly ministry.

Jesus came to serve and not to be served (Mark 10:45). This is the purpose for which he came.⁴⁰ Even the resplendent beauty of the Son of Man came from the fact that He as Very God of Very God, became incarnate in human flesh and a servant to mankind.⁴¹ Wuest moves on to explain, "What a check this gently given teaching must have put upon the personal ambitions of the disciples. 'Minister' is *diakonos* (διακονος), a servant seen in his activity of serving.

³⁹ Andreas J. Köstenberger, *Encountering John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1999), 147.

⁴⁰ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 2002), 421.

⁴¹ Wuest, *Mk 10:42*.

‘Servant’ is *doulos* (δουλος), the most servile term for a slave.’⁴² Bratcher and Nida point out concerning the passion of Jesus coming to serve,

Not to be served but to serve may be rendered quite explicitly as ‘did not come to have servants but to give himself to be a servant.’ One may also translate as ‘not to have servants but rather to be a servant.’⁴³

James A. Brooks notes,

By aspiring to places of greatness, the disciples were in danger of becoming like Gentile rulers. Here Jesus emphatically stated that his disciples must not be like Gentile rulers but like ‘servants’ (*diakonoi*), originally those who waited on tables*, and like a “slave” (*doulos*, one totally owned by another and possessing no rights except those given by his or her master). A servant type of ministry, of which Jesus himself is the best example, is set forth.⁴⁴

Jesus set a standard of what true ministry is about. When church leaders in a new church plant aim to follow the example of Jesus, the leaders will lead to please the Lord, and those who are part of the new church plant will experience the presence of the Holy Spirit as they participate in the kingdom work the church is called to do. Church leaders are pleasing Jesus Christ when the leaders lead like Jesus. Jesus led so that others may see how to lead.

Jesus was indeed a servant leader, because of the humility He demonstrated by coming to earth from glory. Servant leaders lead in a way that is different from most of the political leaders today. Jesus took time and opportunity to help His disciples. He helped them to understand what it meant to serve one another. As stated, a servant leader will try his or her utmost to identify the needs of others and begin to minister to them.

⁴² Wuest, *Mk 10:42*.

⁴³ Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of Mark*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 337.

⁴⁴ James A. Brooks, *Mark*, vol. 23, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 170. *In other contexts, the word refers to a church officer. Its nontechnical meaning, however, has considerable significance for the kind of persons deacons should be.

Jesus in so many ways demonstrated what it means to be a servant leader. Jesus taught his disciples by example the passion and compassion of a true servant leader. Jesus, in his passion, was willing and able to go to the cross. Jesus fulfilled his mission with passion, at the right time, in the right manner, in the right place. Jesus demonstrated in his compassion for others what servant leadership looks like.

No matter the day or the hour, Jesus always took time and made opportunities to minister to the needs of others. His compassion for those in need was seen when he stopped in his busy schedule to heal the sick, make the lame to walk, cause the blind to see, and make the deaf to hear. Jesus was moved with compassion when he noticed something about the crowd. Matthew writes, “But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd” (Matt. 9:36). The compassion of a true servant leader will compel him to minister to those who need a helping hand.

As already stated, the writer believes that Jesus Christ is the perfect model of a servant leader. The writer has addressed some of the qualities of a servant leader as they were modeled in the life and ministry of Christ. In the next section of this chapter, the writer will define servant leadership. The writer will take note of various authors who themselves model servant leadership and provide their definition of servant leadership. The writer will also consider various biblical examples of men who demonstrated servant leadership.

Defining Servant Leadership

Many books have been written concerning servant leadership. Many seminars are held year after year, trying to explain what a servant leader is. Some say a servant leader is someone who can lead God's people toward a fresh encounter with God.⁴⁵ A leader with God-given skills and abilities of servant leadership demonstrates it through a willingness to help and offer hope to God's people that leads them to a closer walk with God. This is the premise of authors Henry and Richard Blackaby in their book, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People to God's Agenda*.

A servant leader is someone who has the God given ability to lead others toward God's agenda.⁴⁶ The authors share a detailed explanation of the difference between secular leadership and servant leadership. They contrast what God is looking for in a leader with what is expected in a leader by most people who do not share the same concept of servant leadership. The authors state that God is, in fact, not "necessarily looking for leaders," but God is looking for both "men and women willing to be molded into his servants."⁴⁷

Servant leadership is not merely skill a person can go to school to learn; it is also a gift. Leadership is a calling from God. The authors carefully explain that while there are certain principles from secular leadership that can be applied toward servant leadership, there is a vast difference between the two approaches. Because servant leadership is a gift and a calling, servant leaders need to walk with vigor and vision that is renewed through the working of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ John MacArthur, *The Book on Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2004), 166.

⁴⁶ Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 3.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, XI.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, 24.

The authors explain the Holy Spirit's role in the life of a leader in the local church. They describe the difference between secular leadership and leadership in the local church. The authors explain while any person from any walk of life, regardless of race, creed or socioeconomic background, can become a secular leader, it is only that person who has experienced a spiritual and supernatural birth who can lead as prescribed in the Word of God. While the world has its own ways of making a successful leader, the Bible clearly explains the difference between what the world thinks and what God requires.

There are many innovations that have been introduced to church leaders. These innovations can either help or hinder a local church from moving in the direction God has intended. While there are a variety of innovative methods that have been devised by those who have sought to appeal to the unchurched, it is vital that the methods adopted always serve to advance the message, which never changes. The authors assert with clarity "Never innovate your church for the sake of innovation."⁴⁹ The authors challenge their readers to recall that the purpose of the church is to fulfill the Great Commission. Every local church is called to fulfill the plan of God to proclaim the gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15), to "make disciples" for Jesus Christ by baptizing them into visible union with the local church and instructing them in all the teachings of the Lord (Matthew 28:18-20).

Regardless of what other churches may be doing or have done with their methods of reaching their community, it is important to be reminded that while the methods may change (and they will), the principles in the word of God will never change. New church plant leaders

⁴⁹ Elmer Towns, Ed Stetzer, and Warren Bird, *11 Innovations in the Local Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2007), 246.

must stay true to the word of God. However, the leadership of a new church plant must be willing to find and figure out methods that will reach their world, but without compromise.

A servant leader finds way and methods to stay abreast of where the church is and where the church is heading. While a servant leader will stay innovative to reach the lost and make disciples, a servant leader will never compromise the tenets of the faith because he is, above all else, a servant of Christ. A servant leader will allow the Lord Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, to lead him or her in the right direction for the church.

The world-renowned J. Oswald Sanders, author of *Spiritual Leadership*, explains in detail concerning servant leadership:

Spiritual leaders are not elected, appointed, or created by synods, or by church assemblies. God alone makes them. One does not become a spiritual leader by merely filling an office, taking course work in the subject, or resolving in one's own will to do the task. A person must qualify to be a spiritual leader.⁵⁰

Sanders points out that spiritual leadership comes by the appointment of God. Sanders also claims,

Religious position can be conferred by bishops and boards, but not spiritual authority, which is the prime essential of Christian leadership. That comes—often unsought—to those who in earlier life have proved themselves worthy of it by spirituality, discipline, ability, and diligence, men who have heeded the command: “Do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them,” and instead have sought first the kingdom of God. Spiritual leadership is a thing of the Spirit and is conferred by God alone. When His searching eye alights on a man who has qualified, He anoints him with His Spirit and separates him to his distinctive ministry (Acts 9:17, 22:21).⁵¹

Servant leadership is a God-given quality. A servant leader is one who has a teachable spirit.

Formal leadership training, obtaining mentoring from a mentor, and listening to others who

⁵⁰ J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2007), 25.

⁵¹ Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*, 25-26.

model servant leadership are just a few ways a leader can continue to develop his or her leadership skills.

Chapter Summary

The writer believes that presenting the example of Jesus as the perfect model for servant leadership will clearly empower a new church plant to identify and develop the leaders that are needed for the new church plant to be both healthy and holy. It is the responsibility of the pastor to model this servant leadership. By the pastor's example of servant leadership, he will be able to inspire and equip candidates as deacons to become servant leaders. A new church plant can build on its strengths and deal with its weakness to become a healthy church by following the model of Christ as a servant leader.

The writer believes that a deacon must be a servant with passion and compassion for others. A potential candidate for deacon must model the same character as Jesus. The writer believes the pastor has a clear role in the process of ordaining godly men who will serve in the role as deacon. The next chapter will provide the analysis of the survey portion of this thesis project. The survey findings explain the great need for new church plants to elect and ordain men who demonstrate servant leadership as modeled by Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE ANALYSIS OF THE RESEARCH

The researcher surveyed thirty-six new church planters in the areas of theology, traditions, training, and transparency. The survey consisted of thirty-five questions addressing topics such as biblical, theological, personal and finally, practical. While the entire survey will not be addressed in this chapter, the writer will highlight the responses to several questions from the survey that provide for the core findings. The writer will include the entire survey in the appendices.

The survey was designed to gather information regarding the office of deacon and how important the role of a deacon is in a new church. While the role of deacons varies from one congregation to another in churches across America, the focus of the research is on the Bible's definition of a deacon as a leader who serves the local church as a servant leader.

Within the local church, there are many misconceptions concerning the role and responsibilities of deacons. All local churches, either well-established churches or new church plants should strive to be healthy. For a local church to be healthy, its leaders must be healthy. For the leaders to be healthy, the leaders must be servant leaders (as established in the previous chapter). Biblically, there are two offices of servant leadership for the local church: pastor/elder and deacon.¹ Some churches do not have deacons, holding that the function of deacon leadership existed only among first-century churches. Many new church plants have decided to adopt a church polity that includes elder rule. That type of church polity excludes even the consideration

¹ Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 119.

of an organized deacon ministry.² The perspective of the author at the beginning of the research for this thesis was that the office of deacon is vital for the local church and particularly so for a new church plant.

The biblical portion of the survey was crafted by asking common questions based upon the qualifications of a deacon found in I Timothy 3:8-14. The apostle Paul gave young Timothy several qualifications for deacons, who were to function as servant leaders in the local church. Paul, knowing the high calling and demand of deacon ministry, enumerated key character qualities that a deacon must manifest in his lifestyle. The church was to select men of sterling character to lead them, as exemplified by the qualifications.

The men who are to serve in the role of deacon are to be recognized by the church as having a “good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom” (Acts 6:3). While the Acts 6 passage does not apply the word deacon to the seven who were selected by the church and ordained by the apostles, as noted earlier in chapter two of this thesis project, the writer believes that the Acts 6 passage presents a prototype for deacon ministry.

The research questions were designed to ask pastors of the new church plants their personal observations concerning each question. The survey was designed to elicit valuable information from new church plants and church planters about the value of deacon ministry. The data compiled from the applied research will empower pastors and new church plant leaders to recognize the need to identify men who have these character qualities who may serve in the role of deacon as a servant leader.

² Paul Newton and Matt Schmucker, *Elders in the Life of the Church: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2014), 59-63.

Pastoral Tenure, Length of Church Establishment and Why New Church Plants Fail

The first survey question asked, “How many year(s) have you been serving as pastor at your current church?” Out of the thirty-six responders, the largest percentage of church planters have been serving for five years or longer. Ten (27.78%) out of thirty-six church planters, have been serving five years or longer. Six (16.67%) have been serving for three years, eight (22.22%) who have been serving for two years and six (16.67%) who have been serving for one year.



The researcher is encouraged by the number of respondents who have ministered five years or longer in the churches that they established. Dr. James Emery White explained in his article, “Why New Churches Fail,”

Every year, over 1 million people in this country start a business. Forty percent of them will close by the end of the first year. Within 5 years, more than 80 percent of them will fail. Of the 20 percent that make it past the first 5 years, 80 percent won’t make it past the second 5.

The statistics are about the same for new churches, and church-planting studies with denominations bear this out. Just as there are reasons why new businesses fail, there are reasons for new church failures. Having worked with church planters for several years

and having planted a new church, I have seen some common problems in churches that fail or do not flourish.³

White suggested five reasons why new churches fail,

- 1) Lack of Ministry Gifts. Many new churches fail because the point leader or leadership team lack the ministry gifts needed to plant a successful church. Certain gifts are essential for a successful start of a church... Ministry is through spiritual gifts; and if the proper gifts are not present, the going will be tough.
- 2) Lack of Money. New churches cost more and tend to bring in less during the first few years through offerings than church planters think. Many new churches submerge because they don't have sufficient capital to stay afloat...
- 3) Wandering in No-Man's-Land. New churches also fail because they are wandering in no-man's-land regarding the people they are trying to reach. This is particularly the case for those churches wishing to be contemporary rather than traditional, or seeker-targeted rather than oriented toward the already convinced... Define your vision for the church, and then be pure in its presentation and operation...
- 4) Failure to Contextualize. They take something from outside their context and put it into a form for their context. The impetus behind many new churches is an excitement about a church that sparked the imagination and vision of those desiring to plant a church. These leaders try to replicate or model that church. When leaders do this, they often fail to do the hard, creative work of taking that model and shaping it to their unique situation...
- 5) Small-Church Mentality. A final mistake common among new churches is a small-church mentality that permeates the entire community of faith.⁴

The writer of this thesis believes it is vital for the survival of a new church plant that the members sort out, plan, and live out its vision, mission, and core values. Whenever the members fail to adhere to the three foundational aims, 1) sort out 2) plan 3) live out its vision, mission, and core values, the new church plant will likely become another statistic.

New church plants are necessary because they have the tendency and better opportunity to reach a community for the gospel's sake.⁵ In new church plants, the work of gospel

³ James E. White, *Why New Churches Fail*, http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200004/022_why_new_chuches_fail.cfm, (accessed November 3, 2017).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Aubrey Malphurs, *Planting Growing Churches for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004) at: "400-05," Kindle edition.

penetration must be the focus and vision of church planters. Mark Dever in his book, *Understanding Church Leadership*, makes an interesting point concerning the kingdom work that is to be done:

There is much more work that needs to be done in Baptist churches around the world. The practice of membership in so many churches falls woefully short of the biblical picture. This, in turn, tarnishes our witness to the gospel and hinders our evangelism and discipling. Bloated membership lists, plummeting baptismal ages, irregular attendance, and the absence of church discipline mark too many of our churches. The changes needed for us to bear a distinct witness of life and light to our dark and dying day are great.⁶

Stephen Macchia asserts that churches must be creative in their efforts to reach the lost, stating, “Lots and lots of creative efforts of evangelism are needed to meet the spiritual hunger in the people of our day. The Christian church has the best answer for those who hunger and thirst – Jesus.”⁷ As Jesus stated in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20), the church is to “go” to the world with the gospel. It takes strong and effective leadership to round the troops up and get them to marching. Without such leadership, things will not get done properly. The pastor of a new church plant has the biblical responsibility and role to be the leader who takes charge by leading out front in the efforts of advancing the kingdom.

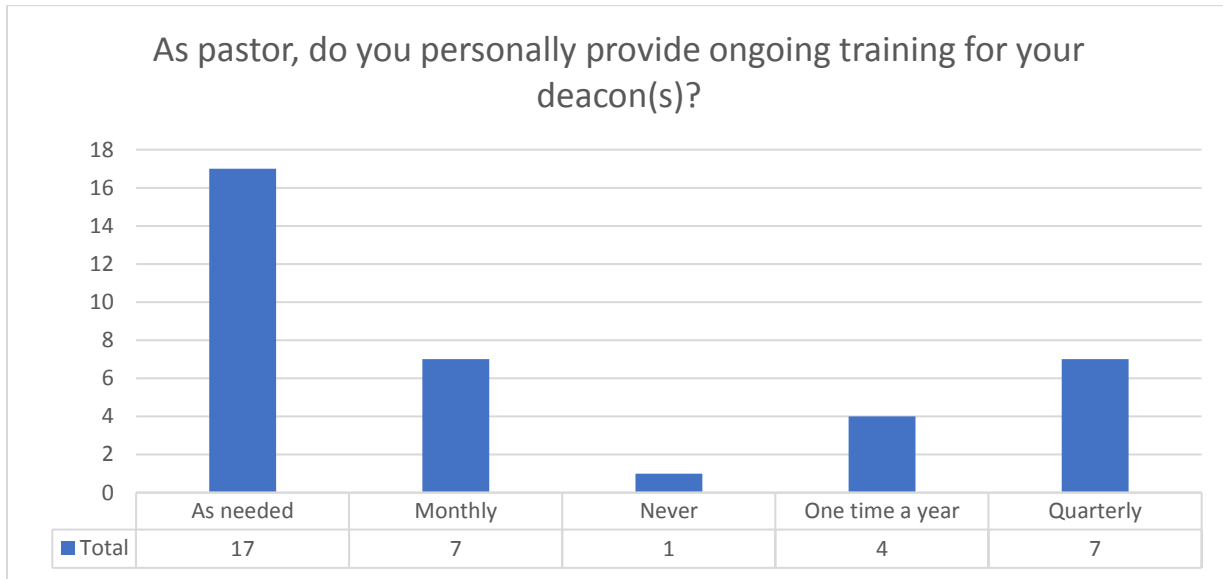
Ongoing Deacon Training

The third survey question asked, “As a pastor, do you personally provide ongoing training for your deacon(s)?” Seven pastors (19.44%) provided personal, ongoing deacon training monthly. There were also seven (19.44%) who provide deacon training quarterly. Four (11.11%) stated they provided ongoing deacon training on a yearly basis. 47.22% (seventeen) of

⁶ Mark Dever, *Understanding Church Leadership* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2016), 53.

⁷ Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 221.

pastors provide deacon training “as needed.” One (2.78%) of the thirty-six pastors surveyed stated that he does not provide any training.



The writer believes it is the pastor’s responsibility to train the leaders who will serve alongside of him. Paul makes an assertion about the importance of training leaders to continue and expand the work of the church (2 Tim. 2:2). The pastor must take interest and time to teach and train those who will provide strategic leadership in the church (Eph. 4:11-12). As it has been stated, “A servant leader looks to influence and empower others to grow in a way that conforms to the image of Jesus Christ.”⁸ However, the church body recognizing the reasons for church leaders and deacons to fully understand their role in a new church plant is vital for it to function properly, or even survive.

The writer believes that deacon training is a necessity and should be required. All potential candidates for the office of deacon should go through mandatory deacon training before

⁸ Zoleka Marcia Adams, "Establishing a Servant Leader Training Program to Equip, Empower and Excite Lay Leaders for Ministry at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church." Order No. 3462593, Drew University 2011. In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, (accessed November 27, 2017), 19, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquestcom.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview>.

being ordained. An unwillingness to be taught how to serve should be a disqualifier. Having a teachable spirit is paramount in the attitude of a servant leader.⁹

One way the pastor can generate a desire to be trained among the deacons is by creating an expectation that the deacons will be active in ministry. As Henry Webb observes, “Once the deacons themselves place a priority on ministry, training will follow as naturally as night follows day.”¹⁰ The writer suggests for new church plants to make a mandatory deacon training a part of their church bylaws.

Discovering, Developing, and Deploying Spiritual Gifts

The writer believes that every born-again believer in Christ, at the time of regeneration, receives at least one spiritual gift to equip him or her for service. For this reason, the writer included a session on spiritual gifts within the local church in his deacon training.¹¹ The lesson was designed to answer questions posed by C. Peter Wagner, in his book entitled *Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts*: “When you become a follower of Christ, you receive gifts from the Holy Spirit. How can you know for certain which gifts you have? And once you do know, how should you use your gifts to best serve God?”¹²

Paul said it best, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant” (I Cor. 12:1). The apostle wanted the believers at Corinth to understand the purpose, power and promotion of spiritual gifts. Paul knew, for the church to move forward, believers had

⁹ Victor D. Lehman, *The Work of the Pastor* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2004), 9.

¹⁰ Henry Webb, *Deacons: Servant Models in the Church* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 6.

¹¹ Please see Appendix C for spiritual gifts lesson that the writer taught, during deacon training, 137-140.

¹² C. Peter Wagner, *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books Publishers, 2012), 3.

to understand spiritual gifts.¹³ It is in the local church that all believers discover, develop and deploy their spiritual gifts. In Paul's treatment of the issue in 1 Corinthians 12-14, it also becomes evident that spiritual gifts can be utilized in an unhealthy manner.

Paul taught the believers at Corinth that while there are diversities of gifts, the same Holy Spirit who administers spiritual gifts, brings about unity in the body.¹⁴ Paul provides clear direction and definition concerning spiritual gifts, stating,

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gift of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kind of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many (I Cor. 12:4-14).

All believers have been commissioned to ministry.¹⁵ God never commands a born-again follower to perform a task without providing the necessary resources to accomplish that task (Judges 6:11-14; Jer. 1:3-10; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8). Peter teaches that every believer has been given a gift (or gifts) essential to the ministry that brings glory to God.¹⁶ Peter commands, “As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10).

¹³ D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians, 12-14* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books Publishers, 1996), 16.

¹⁴ Carson, *Showing the Spirit*, 17.

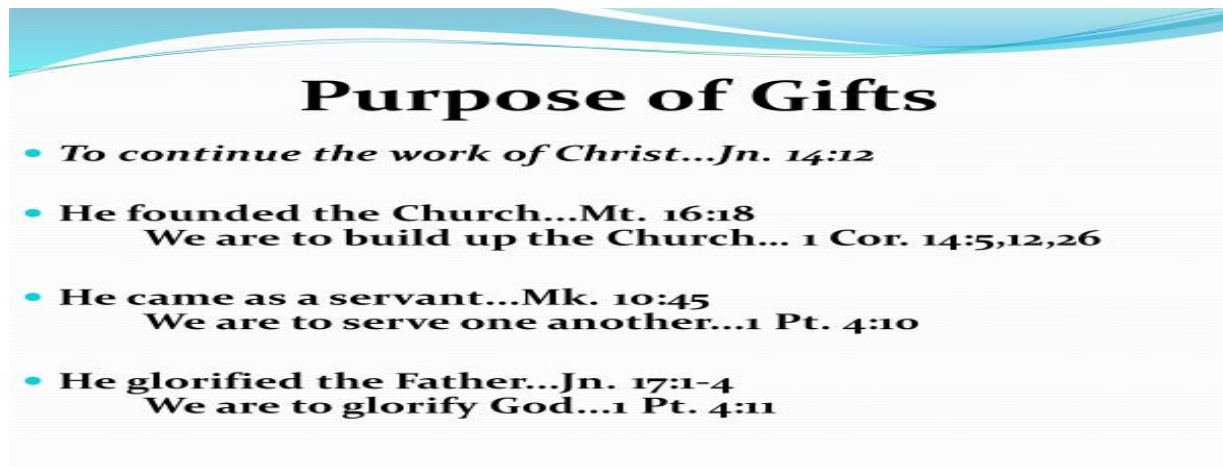
¹⁵ J. I. Packer, *Keep in Step with the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books Publishers, 1984, 2005), 21.

¹⁶ Sinclair B. Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit: Contours of Christian Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 43.

As one studies, the question will come to mind, “Why are spiritual gifts administered within the body of Christ?” The Word of God reveals three overarching reasons why the Holy Spirit equips the members of the body of Christ with spiritual gifts:

- 1) To build up the Church (1 Cor. 14:5,12,26; Eph. 4:16)
- 2) To minister to one another (1 Peter 4:10)
- 3) To glorify God (1 Peter 4:11)

The following PowerPoint slides were presented during the deacon training the writer conducted in two pastorates. During each one of the trainings conducted, the writer was asked an astronomical number of questions about spiritual gifts. The group of men demonstrated great interest in the topic. It was during the training session on spiritual gifts that the writer discerned that the ordained deacons had never had opportunities to receive formal training.



Purpose of Gifts

- ***To continue the work of Christ...Jn. 14:12***
- **He founded the Church...Mt. 16:18**
We are to build up the Church... 1 Cor. 14:5,12,26
- **He came as a servant...Mk. 10:45**
We are to serve one another...1 Pt. 4:10
- **He glorified the Father...Jn. 17:1-4**
We are to glorify God...1 Pt. 4:11

Discovering Our Gifts

- ❑ Gifts can be discovered in several ways.

1. Inventories
2. Identification by others
3. In-service Experience

Developing Our Gifts

- ❑ Development of gifts is done by three primary means.

1. **Education** - Gifts can be developed or sharpened through study. Study gives us a knowledge base from which we can work. Our study can acquaint us with facts about our gifts that can make us more effective in using our gifts in ministry.
2. **Exercise** - The old adage that experience is the best teacher applies here. The most effective pattern of development might be to discover the gift, assign the person to a ministry, and then offer some type of training or education. The need for the education would be far more evident if the gift was being exercised in some kind of service.
- 3. **Example** - Example is one of the most powerful means available to those trying to develop the gifts of others. Jesus recognized the power of example. He taught by example. Stressing the importance of service to one another, Jesus washed His disciples' feet at the last supper. When seated with them again, He said, *I've given you an example that you should do as I have done to you (John 13:15).*

Deploying Our Gifts

- If spiritual gifts are never DEPLOYED in service, any study of gifts becomes purely a mental exercise in futility.
- Gifts have been given to use.

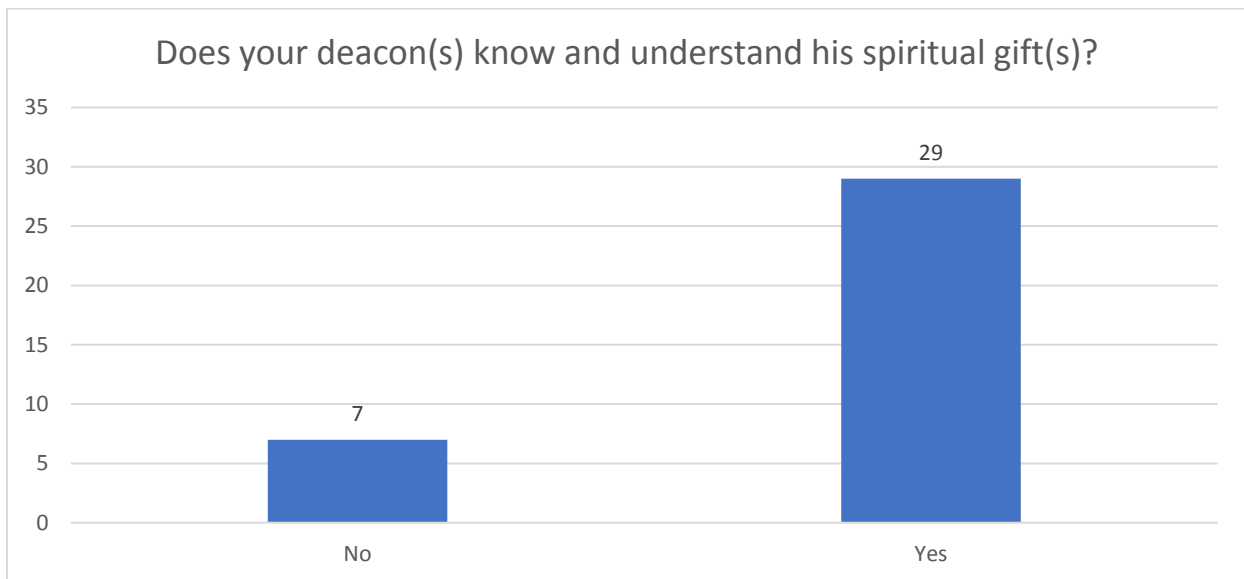
Two Arenas exist in which gifts should be Deployed.

1. **The Church** - The church offers opportunities to utilize a wide range of gifts. Ministry within the structure of the church family calls for a variety of persons and gifts. A variety of needs engage believers in ministry to one another. The program organizations (Sunday school, discipleship, missions, music) require people to serve as teachers, leaders, directors. Committees give outlets for many believers to serve the church with their gifts. Worship services and outreach efforts engage other members' gifts. Ministries of support, care, and equipping within the church family provide occasions to express our love for one another.

Two Arenas exist in which gifts should be Deployed.

2. The World – Ministry, however, should not stop with our own. If it does, we will fail to use all the gifts God has given us. Every believer has his or her own “world.” It is the sphere within which they operate. It includes their families, neighborhoods, circles of friends, business acquaintances.

The writer discerned the need to survey church planters, due to the amount of interest during the training the writer conducted. The writer asked the following survey question: “Does your deacon(s) know and understand his spiritual gift(s)?”



Out of thirty-six church planters who were surveyed, twenty-nine church planters who reported that the deacons who were serving knew and understood their spiritual gift(s). There were, however, seven church planters who reported that the deacons who were serving did not know what their spiritual gifts were or did not have a proper understanding of their spiritual gifts.

Based on the response to the training that was conducted and the survey findings, the writer believes the pastor must provide proper teaching and training concerning spiritual gifts. It is not until the spiritual gifts are understood and exercised that the church will fully function, per God's design and direction.

Pastor and Deacon Relationship

Mike Bonem observes, "Until Christ returns, the church will continue to be God's instrument for carrying out the Great Commission, and human beings will be called on to provide the leadership."¹⁷ "Leadership is the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of organizational goals."¹⁸ Providing effective and supportive leadership requires fostering a healthy relationship between the leader and his followers.

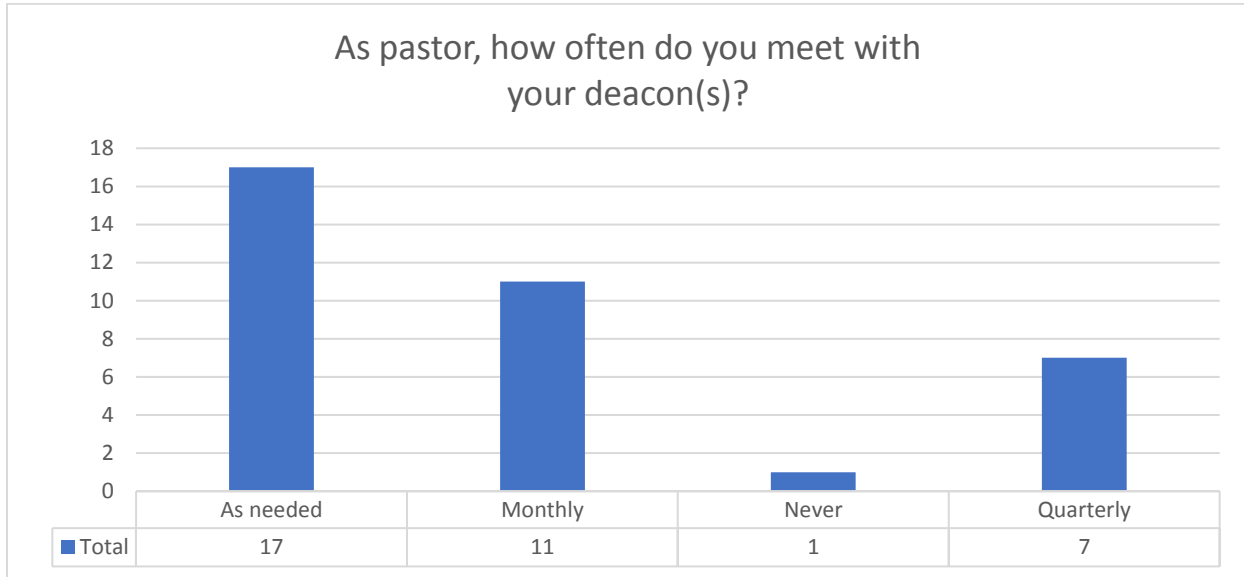
The writer believes that followers learn to trust their leader as they get to know him, and that the leader must be intentional about the regularity and content of the meetings he has with his followers. The relationship building process takes time and trust.¹⁹ It has often been proven, if someone does not know an individual, he will be hesitant to follow that person. For that reason, the pastor of the new church plant must meet often with his deacons. The survey results prove something interesting, only eleven (30.55%) of pastors say they meet with their deacon, monthly. One pastor answered by saying he never meets with his deacon.

¹⁷ Mike Bonem, *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership: Tapping the Wisdom of the World for the Kingdom of God* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishing, 2011), 7.

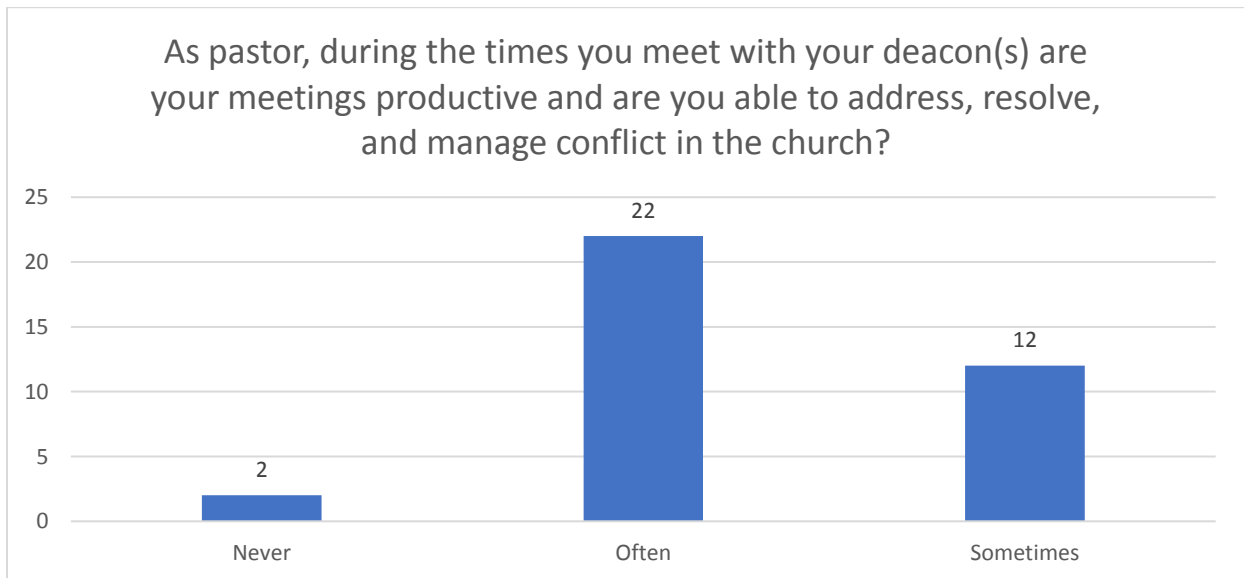
¹⁸ Boone, Larry W. and Sanya Makhani. "Five Necessary Attitudes of a Servant Leader." Review of Business 33, no. 1 (Winter, 2012): 83-96, (accessed November 13, 2017), <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1367068417?accountid=12085>.

¹⁹ Ken Blanchard, Martha Lawrence and Cynthia Olmstead, *Trust Works! Four Keys to Building Lasting Relationships* (New York: HarperCollins Books, 2013), 55.

The writer believes that a trusting relationship can be fostered during the training sessions. The ongoing training sessions offer time and opportunity for the pastor and deacon to get to know one another, behind the scenes.



Conflict Resolution



Where there are people there are problems. There are no problem free churches. Local churches are filled with a multitude of issues.²⁰ The tough issues do not go away on their own. Pastors, deacons and others who may be involved must try when trouble arises to bring about a resolution that preserves the unity of the church.

In the survey, twelve pastors (33.3%) affirmed that they “sometimes” have productive meetings with their deacons and are able to address, manage, and resolve conflict, while twenty-two pastors (61.1%) stated that they “often” do. During the training sessions that the writer conducted, conflict resolution was one of the areas that was addressed. Deacons need to know how to deal with conflict properly.

Slide # One

Negatives of Conflict

- Causes pastors to leave churches.
- Causes personal hurt and loss of relationships.
- Builds hostility and destroys fellowship.
- Will actually make people sick: spiritually, emotionally, and physically.
- Causes a loss of momentum and a loss of motivation.

33

²⁰ Will Mancini, *Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishing, 2008), 7.

During the training sessions, the writer addressed the negative results of conflict. As noted in slide two, a pastor may leave his pastorate because of unresolved conflict in the church. Deacons have an obligation to help maintain church harmony. Just as Christians have a communion because of their common bond in Jesus Christ, deacons should be “endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3).

Many church planters tend to forget the problems that will take place in a local church. However, there are ways to handle problems and conflicts within a setting, regardless of its manner. Elmer Towns, in *Biblical Models of Leadership*, shares some effective principles in resolving conflict:

- 1) Recognize the inevitability of conflict and be prepared for it when it rises.
- 2) Learn to identify the usual sources of conflict within the group.
- 3) Recognize your options in pursuing peace in a conflict situation.
- 4) Establish some basic ground rules that form the basis of a lasting reconciliation.
- 5) In your dealings with others, apply some common-sense principles of human relationships.²¹

John Maxwell explains the process for solving conflicts. First, someone must identify the real problem.²² Maxwell writes, “Too many times we attack the symptoms, not the cause.”²³ Next, a leader must prioritize and then define the problem.²⁴ Even in the process of defining the problem(s), one must first ask the right question(s), talk to the right people, get the hard facts and

²¹ Elmer Towns, *Biblical Models for Leadership*, 62-64.

²² John Maxwell, *Developing the Leader within You* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993), 85.

²³ *Ibid*, 86.

²⁴ *Ibid*, 88.

be willing to get involved in the process.²⁵ Maxwell writes, “Problems should be solved at the lowest level possible, because that is where they appear.”²⁶

Someone once said, “Leadership has a harder job to do than just choosing sides, it must bring sides together.”²⁷ That is exactly where a good leader will focus his leadership: bringing sides together. Solving conflict can indeed be a hard task. However, when a leader is focused and heading in the right direction to resolve conflict, he or she will find ways to empower others to become great leaders as well.

Norma Cook Everist argues, “Our religious beliefs about conflict determine how we approach conflict.”²⁸ She continues, “To move from a contentious toward a collaborative way of dealing with conflict, the leadership involved need to consider the relationship of collaboration to conflict. Are the two opposites? Do we work through conflict to get to collaboration?”²⁹

Moving from contention to collaboration takes hard work. Many individual leaders overlook the importance of finding and fostering effective ways of resolving conflict. Anytime an individual leader fails to collaborate with others, then he or she fails to effectively overcome conflict. Sometimes leaders need to learn how to overcome conflict by avoiding conflict all together. Thomas E. Hatley argues,

All conflict comes from sources other than God. Satan's rebellion in Heaven was the first conflict (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:13-17). In Genesis 1:25-26 we find that the Lord

²⁵ Maxwell, *Developing the Leader within You*, 88-91.

²⁶ *Ibid*, 91.

²⁷ Towns, 57.

²⁸ Norma Cook Everist, *Church Conflict: from Contention to Collaboration* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2004), 3-4.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 3-4.

had created a perfect world and a perfect man and woman to have dominion over that world. Conflict on earth began when Satan deceived Eve and when Adam fell into compromise in disobeying God (Genesis 3:1-8).

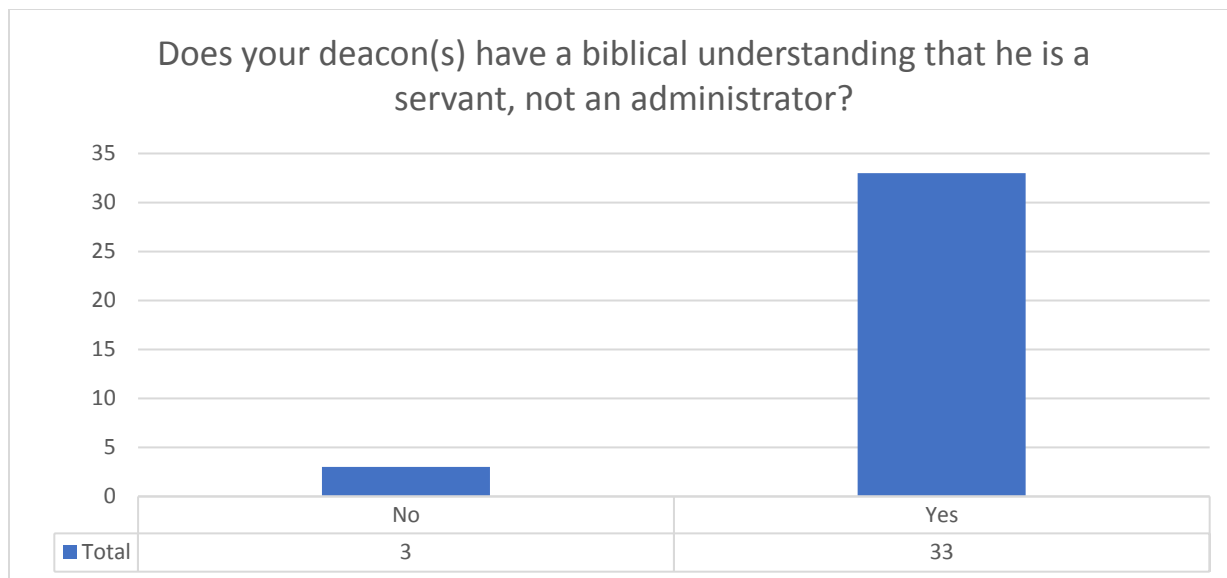
The Lord dealt with this rebellion swiftly. There was first a confrontation with all the parties involved. For Adam there was a time of accountability brought to bear. Next, three curses each were placed upon the serpent, the woman, and Adam. Thus, accountability for their actions was established. Lastly, a point of redemption was established.³⁰

Knowing when to address conflict and when not to address it is a great strength. The writer has experienced first-hand that conflict is inevitable even in a new church plant. People have different points of view, so church conflict will take place. The question is, will deacons and other church leaders know how to address, manage, or resolve that conflict? Conflict is not restricted to the rank-and-file membership of the church; it can occur among the leadership, as well. The pastor and deacons must recognize that fact and agree in advance how to deal with that conflict without disrespecting one another, discouraging their followers in the church, creating disunity, or derailing the church from the accomplishment of its God-given mission.

A Deacon -- Servant or Administrator?

With some astonishment, the writer was pleased to notice the overall response concerning the next survey question: "Does your deacon(s) have a biblical understanding that he is a servant, not an administrator?"

³⁰ Thomas Eugene Hatley, "The Development of a Consultant Ministry to Evangelical Churches in Need of Conflict Management" (D.Min. thesis project, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 1994), 33-34.



The pastors gave an overwhelmingly positive response. Thirty-three pastors (91.7%) shared that their deacon(s) had a biblical understanding of their role as a servant not an administrator.

Throughout church history, the profile of deacon ministry has moved from servanthood ministry to administration. Waylan L. Payne, Jr. also emphasizes the servanthood mentality of the prototypical deacons of Acts 6,

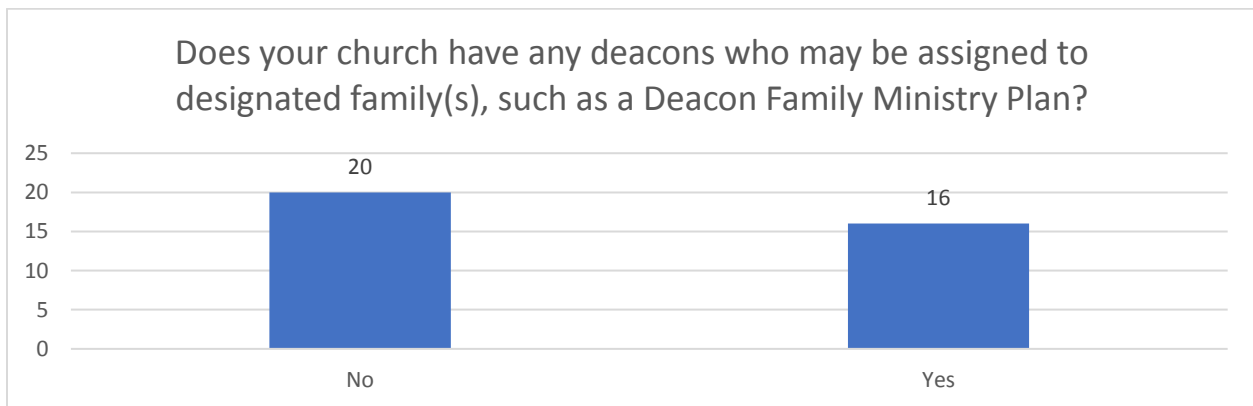
Several things are certain. These men did not simply hold a church office or position but rendered service that was vital to the life of the first church. They were not second-class Christians but served as primary role models for the rest of the church. Their ministry did not focus on overseeing or administrating the church, but, more importantly, on ministry to people. These men were not worldly and apathetic but gave evidence of being filled with the Spirit and with the wisdom of God's word. Because of their irreproachable lifestyles and their high level of commitment, these men were the finest examples of devotion among the Christian community. The seven men appointed as the first deacons were willing to serve, even to the point of death, showing firsthand what it meant to take up the cross and follow Jesus (cf., Philippians 2: 1-8). These men, willing to witness and serve at all costs, were living examples of humble servanthood.³¹

³¹ Waylan L. Payne, Jr. "The Role of a New Testament Deacon: An Office to Hold or a Ministry to Perform?" (D.Min. diss., Liberty University School of Divinity, 1996), 23.

The writer believes church planter's must make sure that the potential candidate for deacon and the new church members understand that the role of the deacon is to be a servant and not an administrator.

Deacon Family Ministry Plan

The next survey question asked, "Does your new church have any deacons who may be assigned to designated family(s), such as a Deacon Family Ministry Plan?" It was interesting to notice the answers concerning this question.



Sixteen pastors stated that their church plants have an established Deacon Family Ministry Plan. Such a plan ensures that no family in the church fails to receive needed ministry by entrusting every family to the care of a deacon. In the book of Acts, men were chosen to assist the apostles with administering food among all the widows in the church. This freed the apostles to concentrate on praying and teaching the Word of God. Today in the local church, the pastor's primary responsibility is to teach the Word. Depending upon to the size of a church, a pastor may not be able to effectively minister to each member's needs. To free the pastor to concentrate on preaching/teaching of the Word, the deacons take a lead role in ministering to these needs.

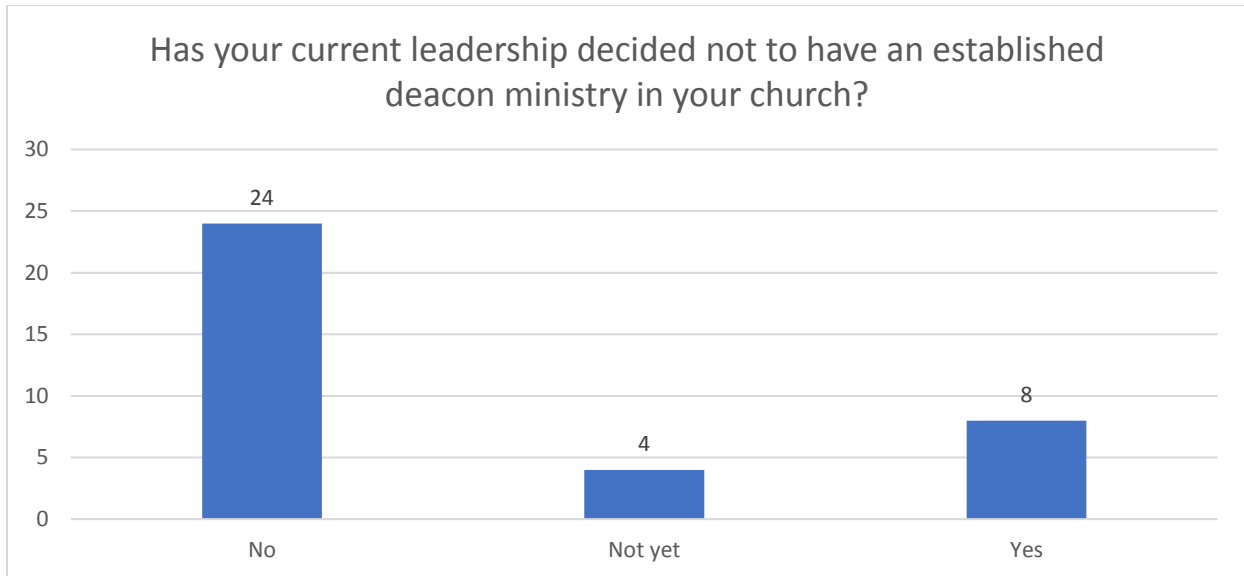
The writer went through a process of teaching the new church plant he served the importance of having every member assigned to a deacon. The deacon in turn, cares for those

members assigned to him. Some aspects of this care include:

- Educating members about church policy and doctrine.
- Providing guidance and direction on an appropriate Sunday school class or small group ministry.
- Locating the church ministry for which members' spiritual gifts are most suited.
- Listening to burdens, and in confidence, upholding their needs before the Lord.
- Providing spiritual counsel as deemed necessary.
- Providing encouragement when there is suffering or congratulations when celebration.
- Caring for those members who are suffering due to illness, job loss, death of a loved one, or other misfortunes.
- Arranging for meals to be delivered to a member who is recuperating from surgery or illness.
- Providing short-term financial assistance from the Benevolent Fund when a member experiences a financial shortfall due to job loss or disability.

Deacons are elected and ordained to a great work. The writer believes one of the reasons there are misunderstandings and misconceptions about deacon ministry is a lack of direction and guidance from the pastor as to what the responsibilities of the deacon are.

Twenty-four (66.7%) pastors shared that the new church plant they serve does not currently have a deacon ministry. There were eight pastors (22.2%) who stated that the leadership has decided not to have an established deacon ministry in their new church plant. The line of reasoning behind that decision was not addressed in the survey. The writer believes the reason for a new church plant not having an established deacon ministry is because a pastor wants to establish his own authority in the early days and to have direct control of the culture before sharing such leadership. Also, it is often due to not having mature deacon candidates available in the early days of the new church.

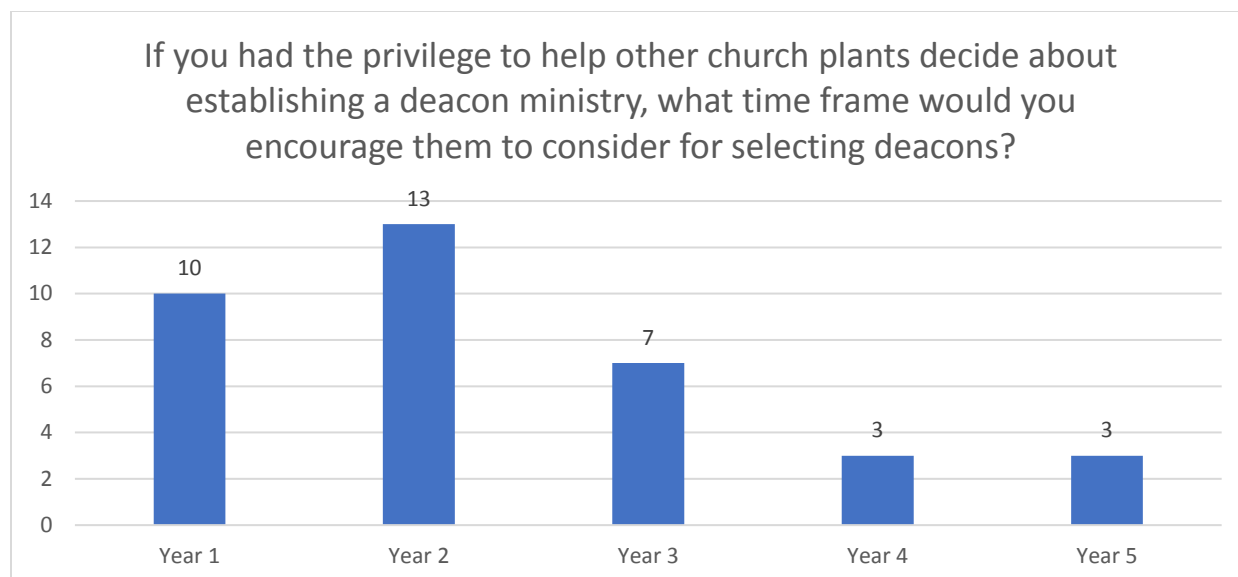


There is a growing number of new church plants that are going to a different leadership model than that of typical Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) churches. The church polity of the SBC typically is pastor-led, deacon-served, and congregational-approved.

Chapter Summary

There were some interesting facts from the survey portion of the project concerning the overall perspective of new church planters. The writer discovered among pastors surveyed a great-than-expected appreciation for the biblical role of deacon ministry in new church plants.

The writer believes that deacon ministry in new church plants is much needed, but the new church plant must receive proper teaching and potential deacons must receive proper training. Church planters were asked, “If you had the privilege to help other church plants decide about establishing a deacon ministry, what time frame would you encourage them to consider for selecting deacons?” The results indicate that there is a variation among church planters.



Ten pastors (27.8%) would recommend beginning a deacon ministry in year one. 13 pastors (36.1%) would recommend beginning a deacon ministry in year two. Seven (19.7%) pastors answered that year three is the time to elect and ordain deacons in a new church plant. The writer believes there should be a waiting period of ample time and opportunity of teaching and training before a candidate is selected for the office of deacon.

A closely related question was asked in the survey: “Personally, as a pastor, do you believe that an established deacon ministry in the local church is needed?” Of the 36 pastors surveyed, 31 (86.1%) said yes, an established deacon ministry was needed. It should be noted, however, that five pastors (13.9%) said that there is no need for an established deacon ministry in the church.

In the final chapter of this thesis project, the writer will provide a careful summarization of the project and its findings. The writer will examine how new church plant leaders will be able to analyze the findings and implement the findings and apply them to their own new church plant.

CHAPTER SIX CONCLUSION

The purpose of this project was to demonstrate the need for training and equipping men to serve as deacons in new church plants. The writer explained the biblical call for servant leadership within the local church. The project explained how the office of deacon is indispensable and often varies from one congregation to another. There is a desperate need for servant leaders to serve one another in every church family. The writer discovered through this research and from personal experience that if church leaders do not serve with the mind and heart of Jesus, then the church will experience the consequences of becoming unstable and unhealthy and may potentially disband.¹

The writer learned from the project that leaders who serve well, are those who make sure the needs of others are being met physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. In a new church plant, meeting the needs of others is imperative. For a new church plant to become a fruitful and vibrant church, its leaders must follow the method and manner of Jesus who exhibited the heart of a servant leader.

The premise of the writer in this project is that the role of the deacon is indispensable in a new church plant. He argues that it is the church planter's responsibility to identify prospective deacons early in the process and to mentor them to become his leadership partners who understand that they serve the Lord by serving His church and supporting the leadership of the pastor. In this mentoring process, Jesus Christ displayed should be upheld by the pastor as the

¹ The writer of this project provided leadership as a church planting pastor for a new church plant in Southeastern North Carolina. The new church plant, Cornerstone Community Church (CCC), was affiliated with the Baptist State Convention of NC and was in full corporation with the Southern Baptist Convention. CCC had made a petition to come under a one-year watch care process with the Burnt Swamp Baptist Association, Pembroke, NC. Unfortunately, due to various lines of reasoning, CCC disbanded during the month of August 2017. The new church plant only lasted one year. The writer believes there are several research items addressed and explained in this project that led to the new church plant having to disband.

perfect model of servant leadership. During His earthly life and ministry, Jesus met and ministered to the various needs of mankind. He took time to speak into the lives of many. Those to whom He ministered were immediately transformed.

As noted throughout the project, there are various scripture passages that explain how Jesus demonstrated a perfect model of servant leadership. Jesus Christ said, "...a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him" (John 13:16). Jesus provides an example for all leaders to follow. Jey J. Kanagaraj explains an explanation of how Jesus demonstrated servant leadership, which is expressed through humility and service to others. Kanagaraj writes,

The world is looking for leaders who would be creative and who would set themselves as models for others to follow. Normally, the world thinks of a leader as an important figure who efficiently asserts his/her authority to subdue others. John's Gospel, which was written at a time when there were competing claims for religious leadership, challenges such worldly understanding of leadership and portrays Jesus as a unique and exemplary leader, who, by an act of foot-washing, demonstrated that the true leadership authority lies in enduring love for others, in humility and service. By offering himself to die on the cross for human salvation, Jesus has become the source of life and the cleansing agent for those who yield themselves to him so that they might be aptly equipped to fulfil their mission in the world productively and with servant attitude. Since he has set himself as an example of love, humility, simplicity and service, and enables his followers to reflect these leadership qualities in the world, Jesus, whom John portrays, is the distinct example of leadership for us today.²

The project explained how Jesus gave the disciples an object lesson in humility to rebuke their jealousy, pride, and strife exhibited during the last meal they had together before He was crucified. The lesson of the example applies to all the relations of believers with one another. It is one that is continually needed.³ As noted throughout the project, servant leaders are those who have the heart to serve others with humility.

² Jey J. Kanagaraj, "Johannine Jesus, The Supreme Example of Leadership: An Inquiry into John 13:1-20," *Themelios* 29, no. 3 (2004): 15.

³ A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1933), John 13:15.

In Philippians chapter 2:1-11, Paul describes the humility of Jesus. Paul exhorts his readers to have the mind (or attitude) of Jesus Christ. Jesus humbled Himself to take on the form of a man and the attitude of a servant, which led Him to die the death of a criminal on behalf of those whom He desired to save. While Paul presents Jesus' example of selfless humility as the model for all Christians, it is especially paradigmatic for Christian leaders. Dongho Cho posits that when the leader adopts the attitude of humility displayed by the Lord, it will affect not only his actions, but his motivations:

Humility means that the leader does not want to have the greatest power to make decisions but intends to share the leadership for the sake of the ministry and invests in making many leaders in the church.⁴

From the writer's own personal experience as a church planter, this same mindset should especially be displayed in the heart of leaders in a new church plant, Kenneth Wuest explains this idiom Paul uses in his exhortation:

The words "let this mind be" are the translation of one Greek word which means, "to have understanding, to be wise, to direct one's mind to a thing, to seek or strive for." The word seems always to keep in view the direction which thought of a practical kind takes. The expression could be translated in several ways, each of which while holding to the main idea, yet brings out a slightly different shade of meaning.

The entirety of the thought, in the exhortation seems to be that of urging the Philippians to emulate in their own lives, the distinctive virtues of the Lord Jesus spoken of in 2:2-4. It is the habitual direction of our Lord's mind with reference to self that is in the apostle's thinking, an attitude of humility and self-abnegation for the benefit of others, which should be true also of the Philippians.⁵

The writer explains that in a new church plant, the act of humility is vital, in both word and deed. The deacon and other church leaders must display humility as they serve others. The

⁴ Dongho Cho, "Leadership Principles and Applications for Establishing a Christ Centered Church in South Korea" (D.Min. diss., Liberty University School of Divinity, 2016), 123.

⁵ Wuest, *Phil. 2:5*.

writer learned the pastor/elder must remind his deacon and other leaders of the importance of serving humbly. A new church plant will not be able to fulfill its vision and mission if its leadership does not lead with the passion of leading through love, humility, simplicity and service to others.

The writer explored the history of deacon ministry, the biblical qualifications for a deacon, the relationship of the deacon and the pastor, and how a deacon is to serve within the local church. He recognizes the appointment of the Seven to assist the Twelve (Acts 6) as the precedent for the office of deacon and suggests that the purpose for which they were appointed is the closest thing Scripture gives to a job description for deacons. The research of the project clearly demonstrates, however, that throughout the history of deacon ministry, deacons have taken on various roles and duties that are not found in the Acts 6 passage in their service to the church.

The writer summarized that the office of a deacon demands a high level of commitment. 1 Timothy 3:1–13 refers to two church offices—overseer (*ἐπίσκοπος*, *episkopos*) and deacon (*διάκονος*, *diakonos*)—and describes the types of persons qualified for these offices.⁶ A deacon must be dedicated to fellowship and service toward others. Paul summarizes it best, "For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus," (1 Tim. 3:13).

It is crucial for a deacon to maintain proper relationships in a new church plant. A new church plant must avoid power struggles among its membership. The deacon plays a critical role here. He must maintain the perspective that his office is an extension of the pastor's ministry. He

⁶ Brian J. Tabb, "Deacon," ed. John D. Barry et al., *The Lexham Bible Dictionary* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).

must never be perceived as disloyal to the pastor. Additionally, he must (like the pastor) cultivate in the congregation a spirit of love for one another and unity in devotion to fulfilling the church's mission that will help to preclude the factionalism that can destroy a young church plant. The writer has experienced this personally. When church leaders do not focus on the essentials of kingdom work, such as, evangelism, discipleship, prayer, fellowship, and worship, then the new church plant will cease to continue.

The writer discovered from church planters surveyed, there was a consensus that expressed the need of deacons in a new church plant. This finding was contrary to the writer's expectations. The question was asked in the survey: "Personally, as a pastor, do you believe that an established deacon ministry in a new church plant is needed?" Of the 36 pastors surveyed, 31 said yes, an established deacon ministry was needed. It should be noted, however, that five pastors (13.9%) said that there is no need for an established deacon ministry in the church. The reason why the findings are contrary to the writer's expectation is his perception that many church planters seem to be adopting a plurality of elder model of church government and de-emphasizing the office of deacon (or dispensing altogether with it).

Another finding that was contrary to the writer's expectation relates to whether the deacon understands his role to be that of a servant and not an administrator. With some astonishment, the writer was pleased to notice the overall response: thirty-three pastors (91.7%) shared that their deacon(s) had a biblical understanding of their role as servants, not administrators. As noted in the project, throughout church history, the profile of deacon ministry has moved from servanthood ministry to administrator. However, the survey established there was an overwhelming response from church planters that their deacon understands his role to be that of a servant leader.

While all those church planters who responded answered all the questions, the writer experienced a shortcoming from the amount of those who responded. The writer emailed over 400 church planters in the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. There were only thirty-six church planters who responded. The writer would have loved to have more responders in the survey portion of the project.

One element of the research that was not addressed was whether there are scriptural passages that support women to serve as deacon. While there is some debate over the issue, the writer finds this could develop into a new area of research that will equip churches with what the Bible has to say concerning this issue.

Another element that was not addressed, that could be developed into further research, this project did not include the development of a deacon manual. The writer found several deacon manuals during his research; however, there are only a few dissertations or thesis projects that focus on this subject in its entirety. The writer believes this area of research will empower church leaders and deacons with further tools to strengthen the well-established churches and new church plants alike.

While the focus of this project was new church plants, the writer believes that this project can be utilized for well-established churches as well. The writer believes this project can be utilized for empowering, equipping and exciting pastors and ordained deacons with a tool to explain the biblical call and expectation for a deacon to serve as a servant leader in the local church.

The writer also believes there is a need for resurgence of biblical servant leadership in the well-established churches. Throughout church history, leading up to contemporary church life, deacon ministry has slipped away from the biblical role for deacon ministry in the local church.

The writer believes this subject matter could be developed into a strong thesis project as well, which could be entitled, “A Call and Need for a Biblical Resurgence for Servant Leaders in the Local Church.”

Consequently, after experiencing the unfortunate disbandment of CCC, the writer has learned several factors of the biblical, practical, and theological need for church leadership to understand what the Bible has to say concerning church government and polity.

The writer has been reminded that not only must the candidate for deacon is to focus on the Lord Jesus as his primary relationship, but so must all church members. For a new church plant to survive, all church members must allow the vertical relationship with the heavenly Father to remain the top priority. Without this vertical relationship being what it ought to be, the candidate for deacon and church members alike will discover their relationships horizontally will be distorted. The principle concern for church leaders is their walk with God. In a new church plant, if the church members do not have a strong, growing vertical relationship with the Father, then the new church plant is asking for trouble.

New church planters must remember and even teach their members that nowhere in the New Testament is there even a hint that the deacons are to function as a board of directors, or as administrators of the church's business affairs. The “classic” role of the deacon is the role of service. John Calvin recognized two classes of deacons, those who administered the alms and those who cared for the poor and sick.⁷ This is in keeping with the use in extra-biblical writings of the Greek word from which we get “deacon,” to mean “waiter,” “servant,” “steward,” or “messenger.”⁸ As servant leaders, deacons are to be available for counsel, guidance, and accountability for church ministries.

⁷ Cross and Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary*, 458.

All church members are to work diligently to promote and protect harmony in the church. In a spirit of humility, service, cooperation and unity, church members are to focus their attention upon one another's needs and the needs of the larger community of which they are a part. Elwell and Beitzel assert,

The NT presents servanthood in the sense of ministry or service as a mark of the whole church—that is, as normative for all disciples (Mt 20:26–28; Lk 22:26, 27). Jesus' teaching on the final judgment equates ministry with feeding the hungry, welcoming strangers, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and imprisoned (Mt 25:31–46). The entire NT emphasizes compassionate care for individuals' physical and spiritual needs as well as the giving of one's self to meeting those needs. Such service is ultimately a ministry to Christ himself (Mt 25:45).⁹

Nothing preserves the spirit of unity in the church as much as does the involvement of all its members in the fulfillment of the mission of the church. It is sadly true, however, that conflicts do occur in the church. When the early church experienced its first taste of internal unrest, the leaders acted swiftly to solve the underlying problem. The Seven were appointed to ensure that all the widows were treated equitably, harmony was restored in the church, and the result was continued growth in numbers as even many priests trusted Jesus as their Messiah (Acts 6:1-7). Likewise, today, when issues and concerns arise, that are divisive, it is time for all church members to step up and preserve church unity. What is true for all believers is especially so for a deacon. He, as a servant leader of the congregation, is to stand up for what is right and ensure church harmony is maintained and the church's mission is advanced. A deacon must remind the members that the hallmark of Jesus' followers is love for one another, evidenced by harmony and peace in the church.

⁸ Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, "Deacon, Deaconess," *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 589.

⁹ *Ibid*, 589.

New church planters must be reminded that a deacon or a candidate for deacon should serve under the leadership and spiritual direction of the pastor. There is no way biblically for it to work any other way. A deacon serves as an extension of the ministry of the pastor, so he must be loyal to the pastor. A deacon is to support the pastor through ongoing prayer. When the deacon openly prays for the pastor during a worship service or meetings, the members will notice that the deacon is concerned about his pastor. The members will appreciate this openness of support and will catch on and pray for the pastor as well. Phil Stevenson writes,

Our lifestyle communicates a message to those we lead. Leaders must go beyond simply teaching lessons; they must be examples of what they teach. Leaders reproduce who they are. As one adage puts it, “The only thing that walks back from a tomb with the mourners and refuses to be buried is character.” What we say will be forgotten, but what we are will survive us.¹⁰

Jesus knew that the church would be led by leaders. He chose and trained those who would be the first leaders of His church. He taught them the importance leading others with a servant’s heart. The same lessons they were taught by Jesus apply to the church today. In the account of the Last Supper, Jesus does something unexpected:

Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so, he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him (John 13:3-5).

Jesus, in this account, humbled himself and served His disciples. Afterward, he drove home the lesson:

“Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me Teacher and Lord, and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them” (John 13:12-16).

¹⁰ Phil Stevenson, *5 Things Anyone Can Do to Lead Effectively, You Can!* (Indianapolis, IN: WPH, 2007), 53.

Jesus was teaching that those who lead others in His name must do it as He demonstrated, with humility. Jesus demonstrated how to lead others effectively. The model Jesus presented is the perfect model that should be imitated by well-established churches and by new church plants, as well. Life transformation and the eternal destinies of real people depend on the redemptive message entrusted to the local church. It is servant leaders who strive to lead others well that make a change in the lives of others.

When a church planter aims to teach and train a deacon and other church leaders to serve others as servant leaders, the church will profit if everyone will obey and fulfill the Scriptures taught. The writer believes that training a potential candidate for deacon is imperative in a new church plant. Stevenson lists five characteristics that sum up the heart of a servant leader. These five characteristics ought to be used by the pastor as he trains his deacon,

- 1) A servant-leader creates ways to get things done, instead of criticizing what is undone.
- 2) Servant-leaders move ahead, instead of moan from behind.
- 3) Servant-leaders apply themselves to helping, instead of avoiding times to help.
- 4) Servant-leaders have an outgoing attitude and will invest in the lives of others.
- 5) Servant-leaders waste little effort on the “cant’s” and focus on the “cans.”¹¹

Without the pastor taking time to train his deacons and other church leaders, the church will experience impediments that possibly could be avoided. Deacons who are trained to function as servant leaders will help the pastor to handle problems that will arise in the growth and development of a new church plant, will support the pastor, and will strengthen the church to obey the Great Commandment and fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 22:36-40) and (Matthew 28:19-20).

¹¹ Stevenson, *5 Things Anyone*, 34-37.

APPENDIX A

DEACON FAMILY MINISTRY PLAN

The office of Deacon is an important part of any Baptist Church. Deacons are called by God and elected by the church to serve in numerous ways, such as assisting with the ordinance of the Lord's Supper; visitation of those suffering from illness, injury, or some other great needs of life; and assisting the pastor in his daily duties and responsibilities. At Cornerstone Community Church, our deacons have an assigned number of families for which they are to minister and serve as Christ served.

Because our deacons care for you and your family they are committed to the Deacon Family Ministry Plan. We want to make certain that every member and family in our church experience the love and support of the whole congregation. We want to be known throughout our community as a loving and caring church, a place that people can call home!

WHAT IS A DEACON FAMILY MINISTRY PLAN?

It is a plan through which the deacons can join the pastor in ministering to the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of each church member and family. The church families are divided into groups that are assigned to our active deacons, who will minister to them as the need arises.¹

Benefits of the plan:

1. The entire church is strengthened.
2. Families will be reminded that the church cares for them.
3. Trust in the deacons will grow.
4. Families will be able to discuss their problems with the deacon and benefit from his ministry.
5. Various ministry programs of the church will be interpreted more clearly.
6. Fellowship of the church is strengthened.
7. It will lighten the load of the pastor.
8. Deacons will discover the real meaning of the servant role.²

THE DEACON MINISTRY PLAN IS DIVIDED INTO EIGHT (8) MINISTRY AREAS:

1. Hospital Visitation Ministry. The purpose of the hospital ministry is to provide encouragement and support for those who are hospitalized. This ministry goes beyond visitations and ensures that the needs at home are addressed.
2. Bereavement Ministry. The purpose of the bereavement ministry is to provide comfort and support during times of sorrow and grief to individuals and families who have experienced the death of a friend or family member.
3. Homebound Help ministry. The purpose of the homebound ministry is to provide care for those in the congregation experiencing illness or, due to reasons beyond their control, are confined to home.

¹ The writer adopted and adapted wording from the "Deacon Family Ministry Plan," First Baptist Church, Union MO, (accessed December 18, 2018), <http://www.fbcunion.org/DeaconsFamilyList>.

² Rolen C. Baily, *Training for Servanthood: A Basic Training Guide for Baptist Deacons*, (accessed December 21, 2018), <https://bgav.org/church/deacon/>.

4. New Members – This entails providing information to new members concerning the church’s covenant, bylaws, and doctrine.
5. Communications Ministry – Carrying out this ministry involves follow up (via phone contact) any first-time visitors to provide any information concerning the church and to see if there are any needs to be met to provide ministry to the family.
6. Nursing Home Ministry – Members of the church who are residents of a nursing home, will be visited to offer prayer and encouragement and to administer the Lord’s Supper.
7. Benevolence and Crisis Ministry – It is the goal of Cornerstone Community Church to help financially through our benevolence fund or to find someone to aid members of our church family who are in need. All requests will be kept strictly confidential among the people involved in helping you through your time of crisis. Cornerstone’s benevolence fund is supported from contributions from its members. One (1) designated deacon will serve/be available as the contact person for any needs that may arise with any church member(s) and be responsible to contact to two (2) other deacons to determine the amount to be given and then contact church secretary so that the monies can be distributed.
8. The designated contact deacon will inform the pastor so that he is aware of the need that was met by the church.

How can a deacon help you? There are some specific ways your deacon wants to try to help.

- Visitation – The first visit will be to get acquainted with you and your family. However, your deacon will make other visits throughout the year when someone in your family is in the hospital or you have sorrow or sickness in the home.
- Witnessing to unsaved family members – One of your deacon’s chief concerns is that every member of your family knows Christ as Savior.
- Rejoicing with you and your family – Your deacon will share your joy when you celebrate important events or accomplishments in your life.
- Being a friend – As your deacon listens to your troubles and concerns, you will know someone cares.
- Giving support in times of crisis – Sometimes your deacon can help you through the crisis by listening and giving support. At other times, your deacon will know someone or a community agency that can help.
- Answering questions about your faith or about church.
- Your deacon will watch for opportunities for you to use the talents, skills, and abilities God has given you.
- Praying for you and with you – Believing that you are important and believing in the power of prayer, your deacon will join with the pastor and other deacons in praying for you and each member of your family.

In the Deacon Family Ministry Plan, every member and every family has a deacon. The more effectively the plan works in our church, the closer our church will come to being a real family in Christ.

If you do not know who your deacon is, you can find out by calling the Pastor at any time.

Once again, how can a deacon help you?

- Visiting you
- Rejoicing with you and your family
- Giving support in times of crisis
- Answering questions about faith or the church
- Helping you know and find fellowship with other members and families in the church
- Helping you find ways to serve in and through the church
- Praying for you and with you
- Witnessing to one's family members
- Being a friend

In our Deacon Family Ministry Plan, every member and every family has a deacon. Feel free to call your deacon. Your deacon will seek to help you or link you to another helping person.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A DEACON

In accordance with the meaning of the word in the New Testament, deacons are to recognize their roles as ministering servants of the church. They are to be members of this church whose character and qualifications meet those that are specified in Timothy 3:8-13, Acts 6:1-6, and Titus 1:6-9.

The deacon body shall serve under the leadership of the pastor and assist him by performing some pastoral duties in order to free him for the ministry of the Word and other pastoral duties. The deacons will support and work with the pastor as follows:

- To lead the church in achievement of its mission
- To minister to believers and unbelievers
- To care for the church's members and others in the community
- To demonstrate consistent stewardship through the deacon's example in tithing to the church
- To demonstrate Christ-like consecration, loyalty, prayer support and faithfulness to the local church program
- To visit the sick, needy, and indifferent of the church
- To encourage and strengthen new converts and the spiritually weak
- To be available at the worship services for assisting the pastor in receiving new members and counseling those who make new decisions
- To be able to serve the Lord's Supper
- To be available to serve on a Deacon Ministry Team

In accordance with the meaning of the word and the practice of the Church in the New Testament, deacons are to be servants of the Church. Their task is to serve with the pastor in performing the pastoral ministries of our church.

For more information on the Deacon Ministry Plan, please contact your deacon or the pastor.

SHARED MINISTRY CONCEPTS

1. Deacons minister with others in the church:

- a. Understand your role in relationship to that of other partners in ministry. What is your main role?
- b. All partners are equal in responsibility, though not in gifts and skills.
- c. You are to be a role-model leader in your ministry.
- d. Remember you are responsible to God and the congregation who selected you as a deacon.

2. Deacons minister with the pastor:

- a. The pastor is expected to be first among equal partners as the church leader.
- b. Deacons are to work as a support team alongside the pastor in ministry, both to the church and unchurched.
- c. Deacons also minister to their pastor and his family.
- d. Deacons need to be visibly supportive of the pastor.
- e. Deacons should work cooperatively with their pastor in worship opportunities.

DUTIES OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE DEACON BOARD:

The duties will include the following, regardless of the size of the church or the number of deacons:

1. Always serve with a heart of humility and readiness to lead by example for other deacons and church family to recognize that he is a Spirit-filled deacon.
 2. Assist the pastor in planning, conducting, and evaluating deacons' meetings.
 3. Assist the pastor to provide deacons with adequate training and resources for their work.
 4. Guide deacons in organizing and conducting a ministry to families in the church.
 5. Serve as a voice to all other church committees/council to properly interpret the service of a deacon(s) in relation to the total work of the church.
 6. Participate in all deacon work, including ministering to a group of families in the deacon family ministry program.
 7. Report when deemed necessary to the church on the work of the deacons.
 8. Assist the pastor as deemed necessary in conducting and evaluating the work of another deacon(s).
 9. Be responsible so that the Lord's Supper and Baptism are ready when scheduled by the pastor.
 10. Give guidance to the pastoral ministries of the church when it is without a pastor.
 11. Be ready and available to assist the pastor for any other service as deemed necessary.
-

APPENDIX B

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SURVEY³

Teach what the Bible says about spiritual gifts.

Here are a few verses to get you thinking about what you need to reinforce with your ladies (Paul's basic description of a spiritual gift can be found in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11):

- Each believer is given at least one gift (1 Corinthians 12:7).
- The Holy Spirit determines who receives which gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11).
- Each gift is equally valuable (1 Corinthians 12:21-26).
- We are commanded to use our gifts (1 Peter 4:10).
- We are to use our gifts to serve others for the benefit of the body (Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:12).
- Exercising our gifts will help us develop spiritual maturity (Ephesians 4:13).

³ LifeWay Christian Resources, “*Spiritual Gifts Survey*,” (accessed December 21, 2018), https://www.lifeway.com/lwc/files/lwcf_mycc_030526_spiritual_gifts_survey.pdf

APPENDIX C Deacon Training Slides

Developing a Strategic Model for Deacons as Servant Leaders within New Church Plants

“Training Sessions”

The High Calling of the DEACON

“Saved to Serve”
Session ONE

The **Definition** of a Deacon Calls for a Man of God

- The Word Means SERVER
- The Word Means WAITER
- Dia, through, and konos, dust = Deacon means “through the dust”
- A logical meaning is one who walks through the dust while leading a camel on which another rides, thus serving the need of the rider.

Where did the Ministry of a Deacon begin and Why?

- Acts 6: 1-7; 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.” ⁵ And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, ⁶ whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. ⁷ Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith. Acts 6:1-7 (NKJV)

The **Biblical Qualifications** of a Deacon

- A man is not ordained as a deacon in order to acquire these qualifications. He is ordained because he already has them.
- A prospective deacon should be put to the test before he is given the trust to be a deacon.

The **Biblical Qualifications** of a Deacon

- A Deacon is to be above reproach both within and without the church (I Tim. 3:10).
- Be filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:3).
- A Deacon is to abstain from any association with alcohol, drugs, etc., that would distort his testimony or cause another believer to stumble (I Tim. 3:3; 8).
- A Deacon is not to be self-centered, quick-tempered, violent or contentious (I Tim. 3:3).
- A Deacon is to be free from the love of money and diligently seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness (I Tim. 3:3; 8; Matt. 6:33).

The **Biblical Qualifications** of a Deacon

- He must have control of his tongue as evidenced by the fact that he is not a gossiper, can keep confidences, and is not a critical person (1 Tim. 3:8; James 3:2).
- He must be one who manages his own household well, resulting in love and respect from his wife and children if he is married. He must be a one-woman type man with a demonstrated knowledge of the God-ordained institution of marriage (1 Tim. 3:12).
- He must know what he believes and be able to discern false doctrine, as well as share the truth with others (1 Tim. 3:2; 9; Col. 3:16; Psalm 119:11).

Thought to Ponder!!!

A Deacon's & Lay Leaders' Service is not just a position to hold; it is a mission to fulfill and work to be done.

The **Biblical Qualifications** of a Deacon

- He must be a mature Christian, not a new and immature convert (1 Tim. 3:6; 10).
- He must have a N.T. view of financial stewardship evidenced by his regular practice of giving generously through the local church as God has prospered him. Certainly every deacon would tithe 10% of his total income to the ministry of the local church (1 Cor. 16:1-2).
- He must recognize the God-given leadership role incumbent upon the pastor and seek to serve under that leadership (Titus 1:5-9).

Session 2: Objectives

- ✓ Maturing & Developing Deacons & Lay Leadership
- ✓ Leaders who develop Followers / Leaders who develop Leaders
- ✓ What is Leadership?
- ✓ Servant Leadership Defined
- ✓ Jesus as the Model
- ✓ Small Churches
- ✓ Role & Responsibility of Deacons & Lay Leadership
- ✓ Growing through Change

DEVELOPING DEACONS

(From *Into the Future*, Elmer Towns and Warren Bird, Fleming H. Revell, 2000, pages 163-174)

God's purpose for pastors (as well as teachers, evangelists, prophets, and apostles) is to "prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." – Eph. 4:12-13

Leaders who Develop Followers

Need to be needed
Focus on weaknesses
Develop the bottom 20 percent
Treat their people the same for "fairness"
Hoard power
Spend time with others
Grow by addition
Impact only people they touch personally.

Leaders who Develop Leaders

Want to be successful
Focus on strengths
Develop the top 20 percent
Treat their leaders as individuals for impact
Give power away
Invest time in others
Grow by multiplication
Impact people far beyond their own reach

(From John Maxwell, *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, 133)

What is Leadership?

- Influence
- People are looking for those they can trust
- Politics: Statesmen verses politicians
- Leadership in Business: Leaders are expected to see the future...leads a diverse group of people
- Leadership in the Church: Barna said, "the American church is dying due to a lack of strong leadership."

The Servant Leader's Task

- ❖ The SL leaders task is to move people from where they are to where God wants them to be...persuasion and example...people have encountered God and obey His will.
- ❖ SL leaders depend on the Holy Spirit...Moses.
- ❖ SL leaders are accountable to God...calling...taking people from where they are to where God wants them to be.
- ❖ SL leaders can influence all people...Joseph.
- ❖ SL leaders work from God's Agenda...

Servant Leadership: Jesus as the Model

- Jesus sought His Father's Will.
- Jesus vision for His life and His followers came from God.
- The key to Jesus' leadership was the relationship He had with His Father.
- Jesus developed His relationship with God and with others. LK 2:52
- Knowing God's will allows you to stay on course and not get side tracked.

15

Small churches are important.

God must love them, He made
so many of them.

75% of churches in the U. S.
average 140 or less in worship.

16

Church Attendance by Size Churches

- 50% of churches with under 100 in attendance
- 33% of churches with 100-349 in attendance
- 11% of churches with 350-999 in attendance
- 6% of churches with 1,000 in attendance

Dudley, *Effective Small Churches*, 11

17

Role and Responsibility of Deacons

To Handle Church Growth

- A Church experiences growing pains much like a child as he or she is growing up and experiencing changes. When the church grows, the needs grow, cost grow, and someone must pay the price for that growth.
- The Early Church didn't change in order to grow it changed because it was growing.

To Protect Church Harmony

- Deacons have a great responsibility to help maintain church harmony. Just as Christians have a spiritual union, because of their common bond in Jesus Christ, deacons should be "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

What mountains to die for
Some mountains fuss over
Other mountains fight over
Few mountains die for

Methods are many,
principles are few.
Methods may change, but
principles never do.

The "bottom line" in issues is knowing when to stand firm and what to update, i.e., "grounded on the Rock, but streamlined to the needs of today."

To Provide for the Needy

- Deacons are called to meet the needs of people, they ought to do so faithfully so the pastor can do what he has been called to do. Pastors are blessed when they are surrounded by deacons who are serious about service.
- The Pastor has a built-in desire to minister to every member of the church, but because this is usually not possible to do, deacons are called on to assist. The pastor therefore, can lead in confidence knowing that the people needs are being met just as if he were doing it himself.

To Prioritize the Ministry

- Deacons are to come along side of the pastor to assist him in the areas that would distract the pastor from properly studying, praying, and teaching the word of God.

Some Areas Of Ministry That Keep Pastors Busy

- **Preaching, praying, reading, managing, visioning, evangelizing, caring, counseling, training, networking, preparing, emailing, calling... These are just a few things that fill up the pastor's time.**

To Ensure Gospel Penetration

- Because the apostles in the early church keep their priorities, and had appointed men to serve the people, the church experienced great results. What were they?
- The Word of God INCREASED!!
- The Number of Disciples MULTIPLIED!!

GROWING THROUGH CHANGE, INNOVATION AND TRANSITION

THE MAXWELL FORMULA FOR CHANGE

People change when:
They hurt enough to change, fed up.
They learn enough to change, education.
They receive enough to change, strength.

Thought to Ponder!!!

Being a LEADER is not about status; it is about service. It is not a position to hold; it is a work to be done.

A NEW LOOK AT SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Session 3

Gifted for Ministry

- *Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.*

1 Corinthians 12:1-3

What is a Spiritual Gift?

- A spiritual gift is—a supernatural ability given by God's grace empowering believers for service and displaying the presence of God in our lives.

Spiritual Gifts, Talents, and Skills

- What's the difference between a spiritual gift, a natural talent, and a skill?
- Aren't they all the same?
- The short answer is—no, they are not the same.

Spiritual Gifts

- A **spiritual gift is a supernatural evidence of God's presence in a Christian's** life. The spiritual gift is given to equip and to empower us for the particular service or ministry that God has given us to do in and through the Body of Christ, the Church. Spiritual gifts come as a result of a spiritual birth. (It is unclear exactly when these gifts are given—at the salvation experience or as they are needed by the Church. God could do either. *When is not nearly so important as the fact that they are given.*)

Talents

A **talent is a natural ability resulting from a natural birth. A talent is a result** of the combination of the physical, psychological, emotional factors composing our natural bodies.

Skill

A **skill is simply the learned application of spiritual gifts or natural talents.**

What Is a Spiritual Gift?

- Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of **administrations**, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of **operations**, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the **manifestation** of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

—1 Corinthians 12:4-7

What Is a Spiritual Gift?

- In this passage, four different words are used by Paul that reveal insights into spiritual gifts. Paul used the words *gifts* (v. 4), *administrations* (v. 5), *operations* (v.6), and *manifestation* (v.7) in addressing the idea of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:1).

You Have Charisma

- God has gifted us for salvation.
- God in His grace has given us a variety of gifts. One of those gifts is salvation. The New Testament affirms that believers in Jesus Christ are saved by God's grace. Paul states this throughout his letters, but never more clearly than in his letter to the Ephesian Christians, *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast* (Eph. 2:8-9).
- Salvation is an expression of God's grace—a free gift motivated by His love and mercy.

You Have Charisma

- God has also gifted us for service.
- As believers, we have all been commissioned to ministry. God never commands us to do something without providing the necessary resources. Peter instructs us that every believer has been given a gift (or gifts) essential to the ministry that God has called us to do.
- *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10).*

Why are the gifts given?

- To build up the Church
- To minister to one another
- To glorify God

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Purpose of Gifts

- *To continue the work of Christ...Jn. 14:12*
- *He founded the Church...Mt. 16:18*
We are to build up the Church... 1 Cor. 14:5,12,26
- *He came as a servant...Mk. 10:45*
We are to serve one another...1 Pt. 4:10
- *He glorified the Father...Jn. 17:1-4*
We are to glorify God...1 Pt. 4:11

Spiritual gifts are given to Christians who become DEACONS for the same reasons. DEACONS are to build up the Body of Christ, to minister to the needs of others, and to glorify God. The specific service will be determined by the particular gifts given to each DEACON individually and to the DEACON group as a whole.

Spiritual Gifts

The New Testament Lists

The Function of the Body

➤ Several basic facts help us understand how God intends the Church to function.

1. *All members have gifts.*
2. *All members do not have the same gifts.*
3. *All members are placed in the Body by God.*
4. *All members are necessary for the Body to function as it should.*

Discovering Our Gifts

☐ Gifts can be discovered in several ways.

1. **Inventories**
2. **Identification by others**
3. **In-service Experience**

Deploying Our Gifts

- If spiritual gifts are never DEPLOYED in service, any study of gifts becomes purely a mental exercise in futility.
- **Gifts have been given to use.**

Image was blocked due to copyright.

God has already
designed the Church.
What we must do is
find the design!

Developing Our Gifts

☐ Development of gifts is done by three primary means.

1. **Education** - Gifts can be developed or sharpened through study. Study gives us a knowledge base from which we can work. Our study can acquaint us with facts about our gifts that can make us more effective in using our gifts in ministry.
2. **Exercise** - The old adage that experience is the best teacher applies here. The most effective pattern of development might be to discover the gift, assign the person to a ministry, and then offer some type of training or education. The need for the education would be far more evident if the gift was being exercised in some kind of service.
- 3. **Example** - Example is one of the most powerful means available to those trying to develop the gifts of others. Jesus recognized the power of example. He taught by example. Stressing the importance of service to one another, Jesus washed His disciples' feet at the last supper. When seated with them again, He said, *I've given you an example that you should do as I have done to you (John 13:15).*

Two Arenas exist in which gifts should be Deployed.

1. **The Church** - The church offers opportunities to utilize a wide range of gifts. Ministry within the structure of the church family calls for a variety of persons and gifts. A variety of needs engage believers in ministry to one another. The program organizations (Sunday school, discipleship, missions, music) require people to serve as teachers, leaders, directors. Committees give outlets for many believers to serve the church with their gifts. Worship services and outreach efforts engage other members' gifts. Ministries of support, care, and equipping within the church family provide occasions to express our love for one another.

Two Arenas exist in which gifts should be Deployed.

2. **The World** – Ministry, however, should not stop with our own. If it does, we will fail to use all the gifts God has given us. Every believer has his or her own “world.” It is the sphere within which they operate. It includes their families, neighborhoods, circles of friends, business acquaintances.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

LEARNING TO MANAGE CHURCH CONFLICT

Image was blocked due to copyright.

BASIC UNDERSTANDING OF CONFLICT

Definition

Most definitions are similar

Conflict is "an expressed struggle, between at least two parties, who perceive incompatible goals, scarce rewards, and interference from the other party in achieving their goals." Frost and Wilmont

37

Conflict is most likely with close friends. Strangers seldom fight. The presence of conflict indicates a high degree of trust, confidence, and respect. The absence of conflict shows the lack of these things. Conflict does provide the opportunity for growth.

(McSwain, p. 35).

38

Conflict is closely related to power. Conflict can cause a loss of relationships, a loss of self-esteem, a loss of motivation, and a loss of momentum. Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts completely.

Wallace says (p. 47f) that power causes conflict through: abuse, assignment, assumption, and absence.

(also see Gangel and Canine, p. 199f)

39

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Conflict is not static. It increases, diminishes, and/or produces changes.

Everist, Church Conflict, 27

63 1

TYPES OF CONFLICT
Wallace p. 31; McSwain, ch. 2-4

1. IMPERSONAL-facts, values, goals, and methods (how to raise money, where to put piano, doctrine, to build or not to build)
2. INTRAPERSONAL-within the individual (stress, making decisions, changing jobs, etc).
3. INTERPERSONAL-between people in areas such as power struggles, personal grievances over petty differences.
4. INTER-GROUP OR ORGANIZATION (conflict can be between two or more organizations).

64

TYPES OF CONFLICT
Everist, Church Conflict, 15f and 58

1. Intrapersonal
2. Interpersonal
3. Conflict over issues: BELIEFS
4. Conflict over facts: TRUTH
5. Conflict over values: WORTH
6. Conflict over goals: MISSION
7. Conflict over means: MINISTRY

65

CONFLICT IN THE BIBLE

Examples

Teachings

66

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

¹ Frank Schmitt, *Pastoral Leadership: PLED 970* (Lynchburg, VA: Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, Spring Semester, 2010). The slides on pages 142-149 of this thesis project, are the slides that were used.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Four causes of conflict

Wallace (p. 32)

- 1. Confusion** (chapter 3)
Ignorance is behind confusion
Distortion brings confusion
Mood of moment increases confusion
Conflict by confusion is in 2 areas:
 Roles are caused by presumptions and pressures.
 Goals may be unclear, too many, or too divergent.

71

- 3. Control of power** (Chapter 5).
Power causes conflict in 4 ways:
 - abuse (domination and intimidation),
 - assignment (excessive, ambiguous, or exclusive),
 - assumption,
 - and absence (interruption, abdication, or deterioration).
- A closed power system will cause conflict

- 4. Communication**

73

- 2. Substantive** is caused by a difference of opinions about facts, goals, ends, or means. To resolve this type of conflict the leader needs to check facts and be sure they are right.
- 3. Emotional.** These are related to the first two sources. Anytime that personal values become attached to either attitudinal or substantive forms of conflict then another dimension has been added.
- 4. Communicative** in which the cause is actually one of communication and understanding.

75

TEACHINGS IN BIBLE

Jesus prayed that all believers might be as one (John 17:11)

Be at Peace is used in some form in Eph. 4:3; Rom. 12:16, 18; 14:19; and I Thess. 5:13; Mark 9:50; II Cor. 13:11; Heb. 12:14; I Peter 3:8, 11.

Warnings of continuous conflict are give in James 3: Wisdom from above--peace loving James 4:1, Wars and fightings among you. Gal. 5:15, Biting and devouring one another.

Christians are told to do everything without complaining or arguing. Phil. 2:1-4

70

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Four sources of conflict

McSwain and Treadwell (pgs 25f and 87f)

- 1. Attitudinal** is caused by differences of feelings or perspectives about persons and issues.
 - Prejudices,
 - stereotypes,
 - particular beliefs
 - all fit into this classification.
 - The more attitudes are shared the less likely there will be conflict. Whenever a group changes it opens up the possibility of having attitudes that are not shared by all in the group. The coming of a new pastor can be an example of this.

74

Other sources of conflict

Misunderstanding between line and staff about authority. This is common between the music and youth staff persons. Who is responsible for the youth music?

Competition between departments such as children and youth departments, especially youth church departments and church day school departments. This is generally related to competition for limited resources, such as time, money, facilities, and personnel.

Overlapping or ambiguous responsibilities between two or more persons. Conflict erupts over who is responsible

76

EMOTIONS AND CONFLICT

Conflict goes through four negative emotions
(Huttenlocker, p. 19f)

1. Anger
2. Guilt
3. Anxiety
4. Frustration that leads to two alternatives: reconciliation or fracture.

77

Pastoral Cycles of Conflict

McSwain and Treadwell (p. 144)

- The conclusion of the "honeymoon" after 3-6 months is generally a time of conflict intensity.
- The second intensity of conflict occurs in 18-24 months and determines the tenure of the pastor.
- If he survives this conflict he can expect cycles about every 5 years.

78

BENEFITS OR ADVANTAGES OF CONFLICT

79

BENEFITS OF CONFLICT

- ✓ Conflict is generally seen as very negative, but it is both positive and negative.
- ✓ Conflict brings change and change alters the status quo and the positions of those in power, therefore they resist conflict and resist change.
- ✓ Conflict is generally necessary and desirable for those who are oppressed.
- ✓ The opposite of conflict is apathy.

80

Wallace (p. 25) gives 3 benefits:

Evidence of concern, vigor, and hope. A church with no conflict is dead.

Indication that one is going in the right direction. Luke 6:26,
Woe when all men speak well of you.

Produces personal growth and church growth through the experience.

81

Values of organizational conflict McSwain and Treadwell (p. 118)

1. Helps to develop identity
2. Develops solidarity (unity)
3. Perseverance
4. Search for better ways

82

Negatives of Conflict

- Causes pastors to leave churches
- Causes personal hurt and loss of relationships
- Builds hostility and destroys fellowship
- Will actually make people sick: spiritually, emotionally, and physically
- Causes a loss of momentum and a loss of motivation

83

Negatives of Conflict

- Wastes time, energy and money that could be used for ministry.
- Produces discouragement and a sense of failure.
- People will mistreat others during a time of conflict.
- Conflict hurts a church's witness in the community.

84

- People gather in clusters to discuss issues outside regularly scheduled meetings
- Rumors lead to suspicion and shunning
- Members are dissatisfied with outcomes, feeling only that they have lost
- People leave and stop attending any church

Everist, Church Conflict, p. 27

85

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Consequences of conflict

Wallace (p. 90f)

IMMEDIATE EFFECTS

1. Stop action—Quenches the Spirit
2. Exposes strengths, weakness of individuals (self-knowledge), and elevates some who help to resolve conflict.
3. Loss of momentum.
4. Loss of motivation.
5. Loss of relationship.
6. Loss of self-esteem.
7. Loss of members and money.

87

LEARNING TO MANAGE CHURCH CONFLICT (PART 2)

BENEFITS OR ADVANTAGES OF CONFLICT

BENEFITS OF CONFLICT

- ✓ Conflict is generally seen as very negative, but it is both positive and negative.
- ✓ Conflict brings change and change alters the status quo and the positions of those in power, therefore they resist conflict and resist change.
- ✓ Conflict is generally necessary and desirable for those who are oppressed.
- ✓ The opposite of conflict is lack of interest.

89

90

Wallace (p. 25) gives 3 benefits:

- Evidence of concern, vigor, and hope. A church with no conflict is dead.
- Indication that one is going in the right direction. Luke 6:26, Woe when all men speak well of you.
- Produces personal growth and church growth through the experience.

91

Values of Organizational Conflict

McSwain and Treadwell (p. 118)

1. Helps to develop identity.
2. Develops solidarity (unity, harmony).
3. Perseverance.
4. Search for better ways.

92

NEGATIVES OF CONFLICTS

93

Negatives of Conflict

- Causes pastors to leave churches
- Causes personal hurt and loss of relationships
- Builds hostility and destroys fellowship
- Will actually make people sick: spiritually, emotionally, and physically
- Causes a loss of momentum and a loss of motivation

94

Negatives of Conflict

- **Wastes time, energy and money that could be used for ministry**
- **Produces discouragement and a sense of failure**
- **People will mistreat others during a time of conflict**
- **Conflict hurts a church's witness in the community**

95

- **People gather in clusters to discuss issues outside regularly scheduled meetings**
- **Rumors lead to suspicion and shunning**
- **Members are dissatisfied with outcomes, feeling only that they have lost**
- **People leave and stop attending any church**

Everist, Church Conflict, p. 27

96

LEARNING TO MANAGE CHURCH CONFLICT (PART 3)

Conflict is a fact of life, as the New Testament attests. Church conflict can be handled destructively or openly.

Deacons can be a major factor in determining which it will be.

RESOLVING CONFLICT

98

A DEFINITION:

Church conflict occurs when two or more members **CLASH** in disagreement, or in opposition to each other.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

HOW TO CURB OR DE-ESCALATE CONFLICT Leas (p. 98f)

- De-escalate when the conflict is fair and played out within limits or bounds.
 1. Describe what you see happening
 2. Make statements of invitation--suggest a way to resolve
 3. Pay equal attention to process and issues
 4. Establish boundaries

103

WAYS OF APPROACHING CONFLICT

105

3. **Withdraw:** Walk around it
 - step over it,
 - don't try to move it, and you will not stir up any stink.
 - Peace at any price.
 - However, Mickey and Wilson point out that "avoidance or denial of conflict is the least favorable resolution. It is ultimately the most painful and expensive way of responding to a situation." (p. 27)

107

ACTIONS FOR PASTOR TO TAKE IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Ron Susek, Firestorm, p. 135f

- Step **Out**: Set a spiritual example.
- Step **In**: Mediate the conflict.
- Step **Over**: Rise above the conflict.
- Step **Up**: Confront the conflict.
- Step **Back**: Let the conflict burn itself out.
- Step **Down**: Resign from the conflict.

102

5. Structure the process by deciding who will be involved, what are the limits and the timing.
6. Review common goals (general)
7. Respond with descriptions and not threats
8. Use a third party (expert and objective)

104

STRATEGIES FOR HANDLING CONFLICT

1. Attack
2. Work through
3. Withdraw: Walk around it

106

STYLES OR TYPES OF CONFLICT MINISTERS

A number of different approaches can be taken to resolving conflict. McSwain and Treadwell suggested five different styles or types of conflict ministers. (pgs. 41f, and 170f) Gangel and Canine give animal names and descriptions for these, p. 233, 245.

108

RESPONSES TO CONFLICT

Everist, Church Conflict, chs 6-12

1. Avoidance
2. Confrontation
3. Competition
4. Control
5. Accommodation
6. Compromise
7. Collaboration

114

Image was blocked due to copyright.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

115

PROCESS FOR RESOLVING CONFLICT

McSwain and Treadwell, pp. 28f.

- **Step One: Spot potential conflict.**
 1. **Assumptions.** People make various assumptions about conflict based on past experience, folklore, authority figures, feeling tone, and degree of resistance to change. Factors such as age, educational level, attitudinal flexibility will affect a person's resistance to change.
 2. **Context.** Study the context for conflict caused by prior events, personal interaction, organizations (structures and policies) within the church, and stress.

116

- **Step Two: Avoid conflict with integrity if possible, or engage potential conflict before it develops.**
 1. **Gather** more information.
 2. **Allow** time to resolve the conflict
 3. **Assess** the maturity of the persons involved, especially their self-confidence and willingness and ability to accept responsibility.
 4. **Test** the emotional level of the conflict with the persons involved.

117

“Avoiding conflict may be wise when certain conditions exist: low priority, short term, high risk, pain, despair, and guilt. Generally not an acceptable approach if conflict is of significant magnitude or continuing duration.”

(Huttenlocker, p. 29f).

118

- **Step Three:** Engage conflict events productively. A conflict event is an encounter between persons with differences. The response might be fight, fright, flight, or freedom.

1. Diffuse by testing awareness of the facts, explaining the history of the conflict, enlarging the conflict group by bringing others who are mature and objective, and refer the situation to the best forum for discussion, and finally delaying any action.

2. Solve the problem causing the conflict using a typical problem solving process (collect data, list options, prioritize options, depersonalize options, and develop a consensus).

129

- **Step Four:** Conclude the conflict through decision making. Here the leader, seeking to resolve the conflict, has a very specific list of duties to perform.

1. **State the purpose.**

Leas suggests problems with defining the problem (p.72-75)

- 1) Generalization-detaches the experience from the specific event that caused the problem.
- 2) Deletion-omits part of the story.
- 3) Distortions. Problem should be defined in terms of "Who is doing or not doing what to whom." Criteria are given on p. 75.

120

2. **Outline the rules.**

- a. Solve conflict, not assign blame
- b. Keep meeting until resolved
- c. Results are confidential
- d. Be willing to change
- e. Tell the truth
- f. Deal with issues and not personalities

121

3. **Observe the emotions.**

4. **Engage emotions** at different levels using illustrations, teaching, and testimony.

5. **Reject any games attempted.**

- a. suffering servant
- b. "isn't it wonderful"
- c. paternal grandfather
- d. "since I came"
- e. "if you really love me" (p. 46)

6. **Give the individuals freedom to decide.**

122

Step Five: Celebrate the conclusion.

The conclusion will be either a 'win-win,' a 'win-lose,' or a 'lose-lose' situation.

123

PERSONAL CONDUCT OF THE LEADER IN RESOLVING CONFLICT

1. Don't lose emotional control (Eph. 4:26, Be angry and sin not)
2. Don't deceive, but speak the truth in love (I Peter 2:22, Nor was guile found in his mouth)
3. Don't presume (Psa. 19:18, Keep me from presumptuous sins)
4. Don't try to retaliate, but be forgiving.

124

HOW TO REDUCE AN UNPRODUCTIVE CONFLICT

(Chung and Megginson, Organizational Behavior, 266-67)

1. Locate a common enemy
2. Find a subordinate goal (one that will appeal to all the parties)
3. Individualize the rival groups (help them to get to know each other and do away with stereotypes)
4. Restructure the organization
5. Use a 3rd party intervention

125

- **Dealing with the Positive**

1. Evaluate - Why, what, who, and what is it worth
2. Communicate -
 - a. Articulation, voice it;
 - b. Information, enough;
 - c. Concentration, listen
3. Supplication - prayer

126

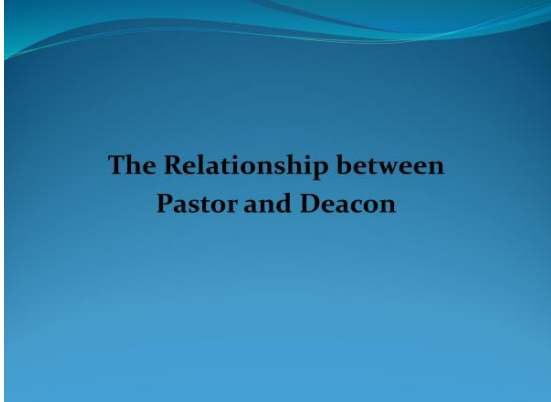


Image was blocked due to copyright.



Image was blocked due to copyright.

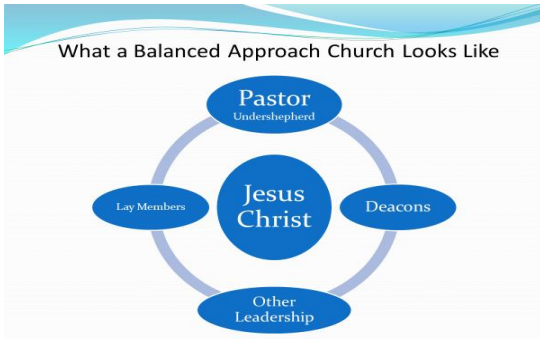


Image was blocked due to copyright.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

The office of a Deacon demands a high level of commitment, a mature knowledge of the faith, and dedication to fellowship and service. Paul summarizes it best,

"For those who have served well as Deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus" (I Tim. 3:13)

RELATIONSHIPS OF A DEACON

- The Deacon's primary relationship is to the Lord, and without this vertical relationship being what he ought to be, his horizontal relationships will be distorted. The principle concern of a Deacon is their walk with God.

Relationship to the Deacon's Family

The New Testament mentions a Deacon's responsibility in relation to his wife and children; therefore, the Church feels that a Deacon should give his family first priority in his devotion, care and ministry.

Relationship to Church Ministries

- Nowhere in the New Testament is there even a hint that the Deacon Body is to function as a board of directors, or as administrators of the Church's business affairs.
- Deacons are SERVANTS first and last.
- As SERVANT LEADERS, the Deacon Body is available for council, guidance, and accountability for Church ministries.

Relationship to Church Members

- Deacons are to be active in ministry to the Church family, and to promote peace, harmony, and a spirit of cooperation and unity among the membership.
- The one inescapable duty of the Deacon in the New Testament was the protection of the Church fellowship. When things arise that are divisive, it is time for a Deacon who believes the Book to stand up and say: "We cannot do it this way in this Church. We must have harmony and peace if we are to follow Christ." That could make the difference between a great, fruitful Church and an ineffective, dried-up one."

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Some Areas Of Ministry That Keep Pastors Busy

- Preaching, praying, reading, managing, visioning, evangelizing, caring, counseling, training, networking, preparing, emailing, calling, visiting... These are just a few things that fill up the pastor's time.

8 Fold Function and Responsibility of the Pastor

- The Pastor has overall responsibility for oversight and direction of the church (1 Pet. 5:2; Heb. 13:17).
- The Pastor is responsible to seek in all matters the mind of Christ (who is the head of the Church) through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and Word of God (Eph. 1:22; Col. 1:18; 1 Pet. 5:2).
- The Pastor is responsible to provide instruction for the maintenance of healthy relationships within the church (Gal. 6:1; 1 Thess. 5:12-13; 2 Thess. 3:14-15).
- The Pastor is responsible to exercise at least oversight of the financial matters of the church (Acts 11:30).

8 Fold Function and Responsibility of the Pastor

- The Pastor must be apt to teach and able to exhort the church in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict the truth (Eph. 4:11; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9).
- The Pastor should lead (with appropriate congregational input) in the appointing of deacons as necessary to accomplish the mission of the church (Acts 6:1-6).
- The Pastor is to lead by example (Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:2-3).
- The Pastor is to lead in the exercise of the church discipline (Gal. 6:1), but not to the exclusion of the entire body when warranted (Matt. 18:15-22; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Cor. 2).

Basic Aspects of the Pastor as Shepherd

Feed the Flock – The primary function of a pastor is to feed the flock the Word of God. A pastor can give himself to many different ministry activities throughout the week but if he does not have a message from God when he stands to speak, he has failed in his most important responsibility. Studying the Word of God is demanding work but it is essential to feeding the flock. Just any sermon will not do. It must be a message from God's Word that is needed by that congregation at that time.

Love the Flock – No congregation will follow a pastor very far until they are convinced that he loves them and that they can trust him.

Lead the Flock – A congregation that is not being led will wander and scatter. It is the responsibility of the pastor to seek and share the plan or vision of God for that church. The writer of Proverbs tells us that "where there is no vision the people perish".

Basic Aspects of the Pastor as Shepherd

Keep the Flock Together – One of the most challenging functions of a pastor is to keep the flock together. Resolving conflicts and uniting various personalities under one goal consumes a vast amount of energy and time.

Tend the Flock – The Lord is our Shepherd. His work in our lives as pictured in Psalms 23 is a good example of tending the flock. Tend the flock includes providing general oversight, visiting the sick, counseling those with special needs and performing weddings and funerals. This is where a mentor can prove very helpful.

Protect the Flock – A pastor not only deals with sheep, he must deal with wolves. Paul warned the leaders at Ephesus about the wolves that would seek to destroy the flock. A pastor must not only preach the truth, he must expose error. This is why we must reprove and rebuke.

Relationship to the Pastor

A Deacon should serve under the leadership and spiritual direction of the Pastor and should be loyal to the Pastor in

- prayer support
- encouragement and
- fellowship.

Relationship to the Pastor

- There is therefore, a Biblical expectation for Deacons to respect the office of Pastor and to welcome the unique opportunity to learn from and serve along side of the Pastor.
- As a Deacon functions in the practical ministry of the Church, a Pastor has opportunity to give attention to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

THE OFFICE OF DEACON IS NOT

A church director—nor a Board of Directors.

Not a figurehead—but to be elected for service.

Not a "church boss" or a "pastor's boss."

Not to be chosen because of social or financial position, nor chosen in order to get him to attend services. Let him first be proven. 1 Tim. 3:10.

To Handle Church Growth

- A Church experiences growing pains much like a child as he or she is growing up and experiencing changes. When the church grows, the needs grow, cost grow, and someone must pay the price for that growth.
- The Early Church didn't change in order to grow it changed because it was growing.

To Protect Church Harmony

- Deacons have a great responsibility to help maintain church harmony. Just as Christians have a communion because of their common bond in Jesus Christ, deacons should be "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3).

To Provide for the Needy

- Deacons are called to meet the needs of people, they ought to do so faithfully so the pastor can do what he has been called to do. Pastors are blessed when they are surrounded by deacons who are serious about service.
- The Pastor has a built-in desire to minister to every member of the church, but because this is usually not possible to do, deacons are called on to assist. The pastor therefore, can lead in confidence knowing that the people needs are being met just as if he were doing it himself.

To Prioritize the Ministry

- Deacons are to come along side of the pastor to assist him in the areas that would distract the pastor from properly studying, praying, and teaching the word of God.

Deacons are to be active in ministry. This will enable the Pastor(s) to feed the flock faithfully and to be able to spend the necessary time in prayer for God's direction and inspiration in leading the Church.

Image was blocked due to copyright.

Definition of VISION

- WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH: BUT HE THAT KEEPS THE LAW, HAPPY IS HE. PROVERBS 29:18

Definition of VISION

- Vision is a clear mental portrait of a preferable future, communicated by God to His chosen servant-leaders, based upon an accurate understanding of God, self and circumstance. - George Barna
- Vision is having an acute sense of the possible. It is seeing what others don't see. And when those with similar vision are drawn together, something extraordinary occurs.

WHY DOES A LEADER NEED TO LEARN VISION?

- Vision is part of what it means to be a Leader. One of the early titles of the Old Testament prophet was "Seer."
- Vision will give a leader direction.
- Vision will give followers a dream to adopt as their own.
- Vision will motivate us out of our complacency to achieve what might be otherwise beyond us. It stretches us to greater faith in God.
- Vision will help us endure the dark hours and difficult days. we will encounter in any leadership task.

David later on life identified seven steps in discerning God's vision for your life and ministry (Ps. 37:3-8).

- Trust in the Lord.
- Do what you know is right to do.
- Count on the faithfulness of God.
- Delight yourself in the Lord.
- Commit your way to the Lord.
- Rest in the Lord.
- Abandon anger, wrath and other attitudes which tend to distract you from God's vision.

VISION is seeking to find the answer to SEVEN questions.

- Who are we?..... Objective
 - Where are we now?..... Evaluation
 - How did we get here?..... Past trends
 - Where are we going?..... Forecasts & assumptions
 - How do we get there?..... Goals and Strategies
 - What is the biggest need of the church?..... Priorities
 - What is our timing?..... Schedule
- When these SEVEN questions are answered a church will have plans that will give them direction as they move into the future.

What is the Value of a Vision? The Valuable Vision...

- STARTS FROM WITHIN
 - Down deep within
 - Only God can give you a vision for your church/ministry
 - Rick Warren- "If you want to know the temperature of your church, put a thermometer in your own mouth"
 - Your people will only go as far as you go
 - Vision starts with the leader then goes to the staff then goes to the people

What is the Value of a Vision? The Valuable Vision...

- IS BUILT ON THE PAST
 - Tradition is not necessarily a bad thing
 - David's example
 - Past victories help you me more trustworthy
 - Must consider your people's past as well
- SPEAKS TO THE PEOPLE'S NEEDS
 - Federal Express started because the people wanted reliable delivery service
 - H & R Block does 1 out of 10 people's income taxes- They saw the need
 - Jerry Falwell saw the need for a liberal arts, Bible believing school

What is the Value of a Vision? The Valuable Vision...

- CHALLENGES PEOPLE TO DO MORE THEN THEY THINK THEY CAN DO
 - Vision draws out the drive in winners
 - JFK said there would be a man on the moon
 - Martin Luther King had a dream that all people would be treated equally
 - If problems are bigger than our vision and dreams, they will stop us
- SOLVES PROBLEMS
 - If vision is bigger than our problems, it will overcome
 - Obstacles are things you see when you take your eyes off the goal

What is the Value of a Vision? The Valuable Vision...

- PROVIDES GUIDANCE
 - Direction cannot be given in
 - rules and regulations
 - policy manuals
 - organizational charts
 - Each of these facilitate direction they do not give direction
 - Direction must be birthed with a vision/dream
 - It continues when a leader accepts the vision
 - It has to be modeled
 - It becomes a reality to others

What is the Value of a Vision?

The Valuable Vision...

- ATTRACTS WINNERS
 - Vision has to consume you
 - Jesus Christ has to consume you
 - Winners stretch to the vision
 - Whiners shrink from the vision
- UNITES PEOPLE
 - People want to be a part of something that is successful
 - The whiners will phase out
- GIVES MOMENTUM
 - People will be driven to accomplish the goal

THE VISIONARY LEADER

- WHAT IS A VISIONARY LEADER?
 - The visionary leader is one who defines the task of leadership not by what could be done but by what should be done. He looks beyond his own abilities or the immediate needs to recognize a larger goal. Then, he develops effective strategies to accomplish that vision. In the process, he accomplishes much more than he might have originally thought possible.

THE VISIONARY LEADER

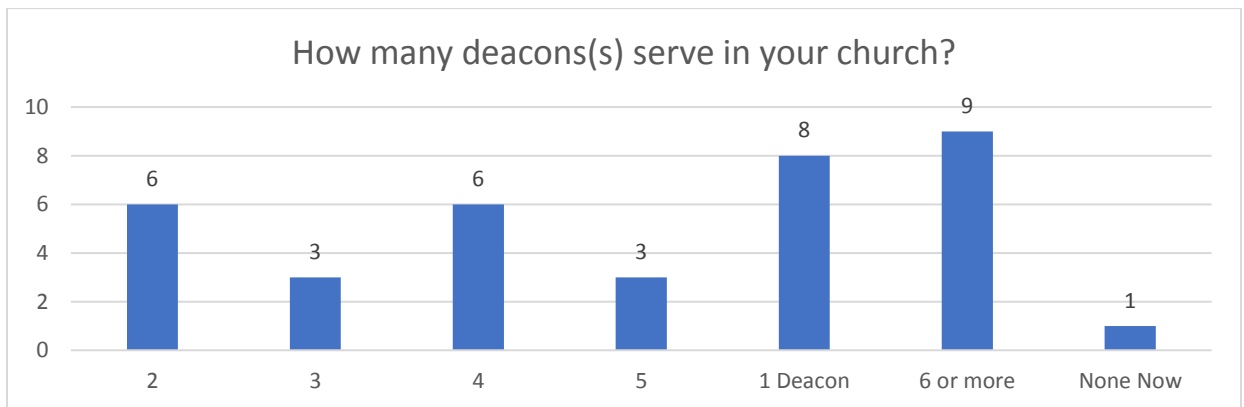
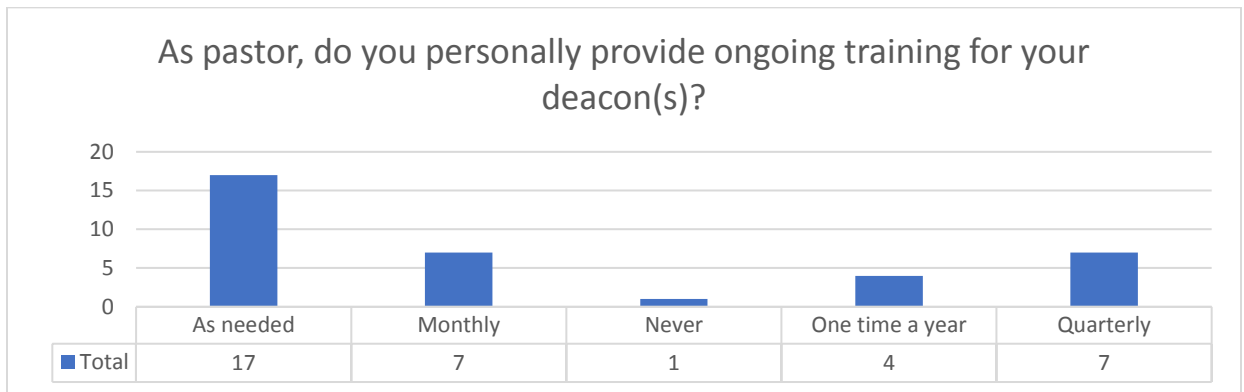
- WHO IS THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF THE VISIONARY LEADER?
 - Paul understood some ways of doing ministry were more effective than others. He realized much more could be accomplished not by working harder, but by working smarter. Therefore, he developed a series of strategies to effectively accomplish his ministry goals. In the 2000 years since, church leaders have not been able to improve upon the Pauline strategy (2 Tim. 4:7-8 and Phil. 3:13-14).

There are certain areas of ministers to be done by a deacon(s) in order to accomplish God's work.

TEAM

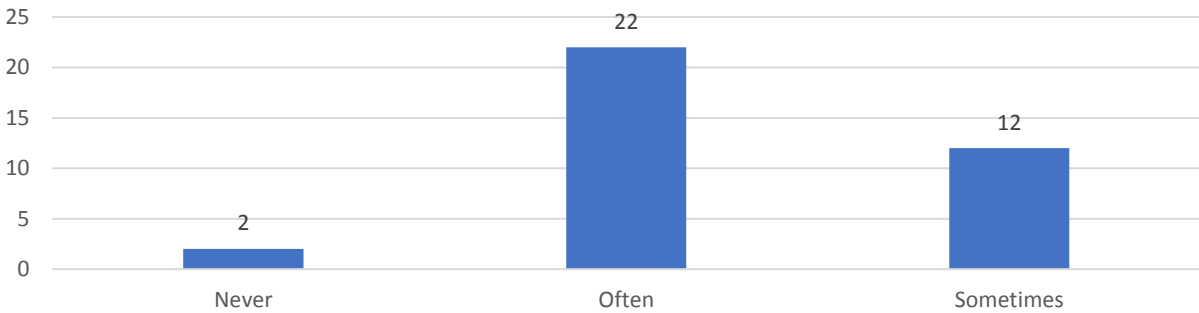
Together
Everyone
Achieves
More

APPENDIX D
Survey Questions for Pastors¹

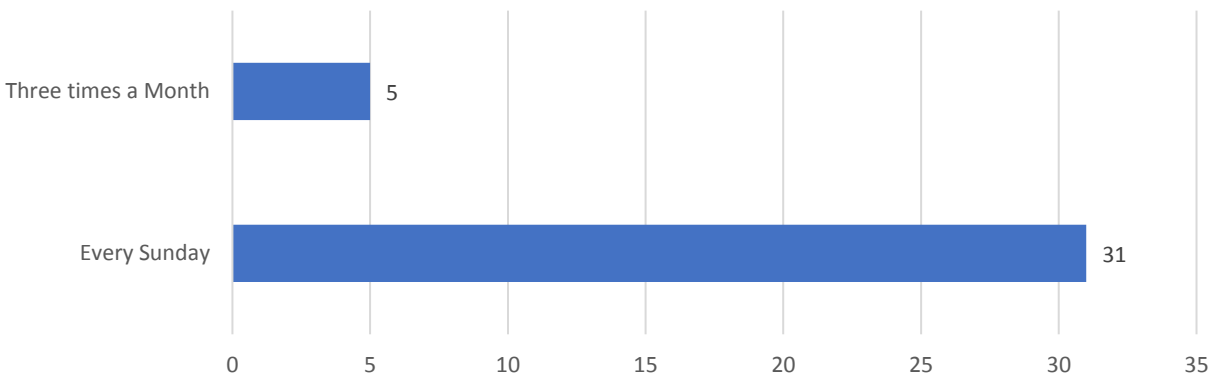


¹ Pastor Survey Questions. Powered by Google Forms/Surveys.

As pastor, during the times you meet with your deacon(s) are your meetings productive and are you able to address, resolve, and manage conflict in the church?

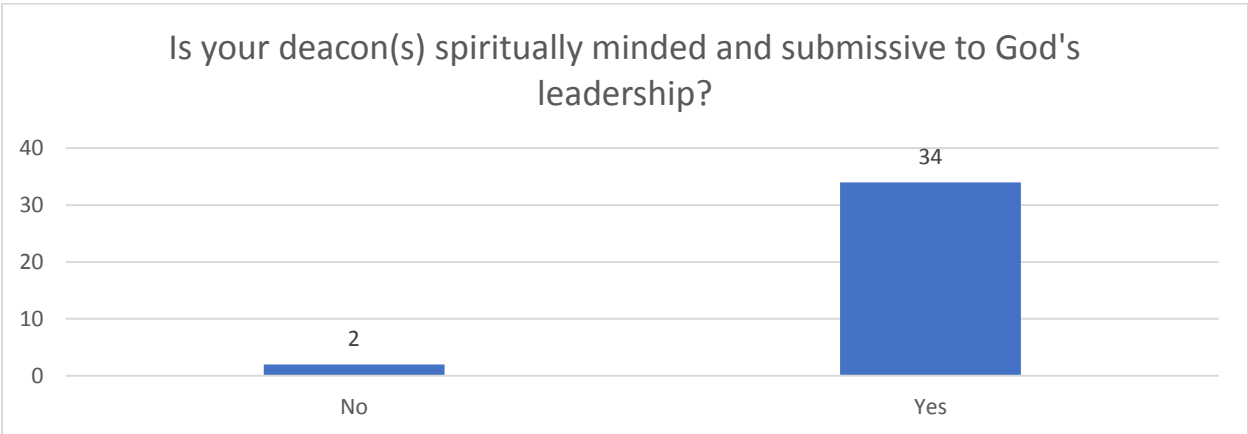
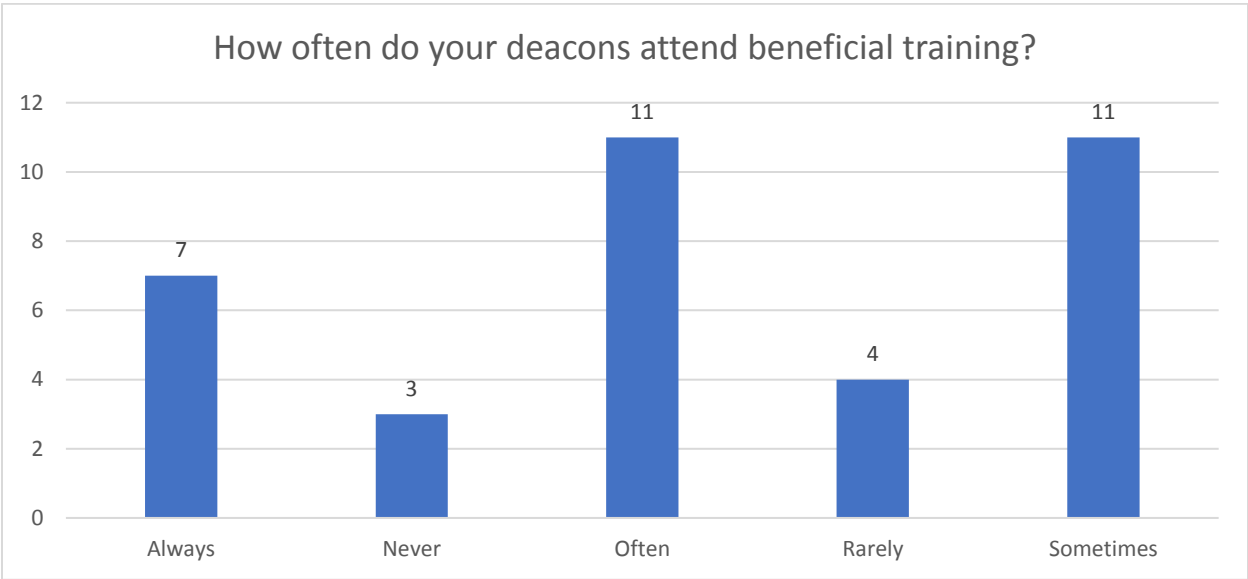
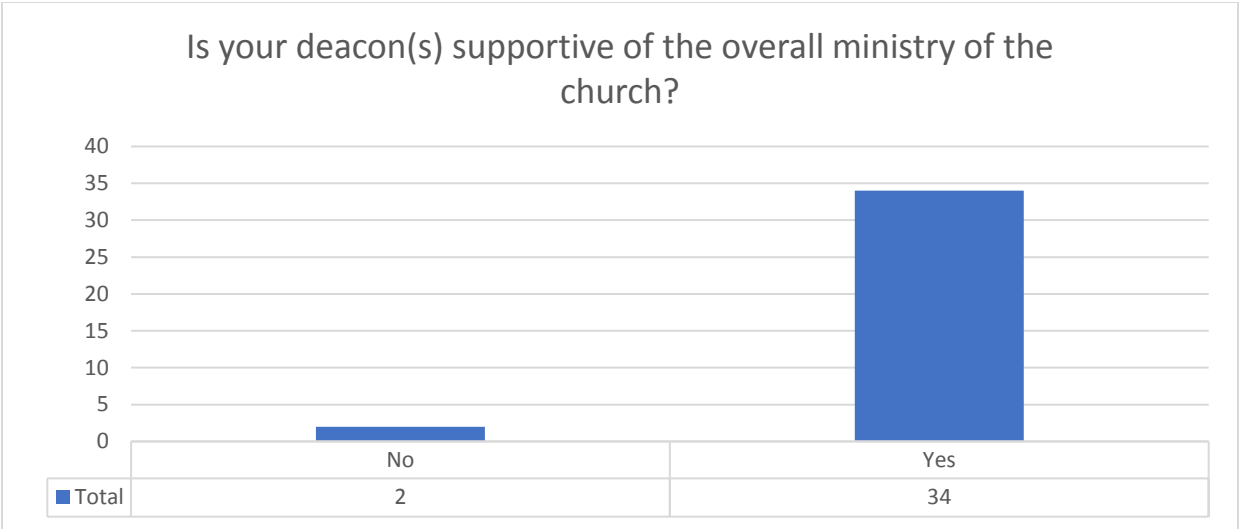


Does your deacon(s) attend weekly Sunday morning worship services?

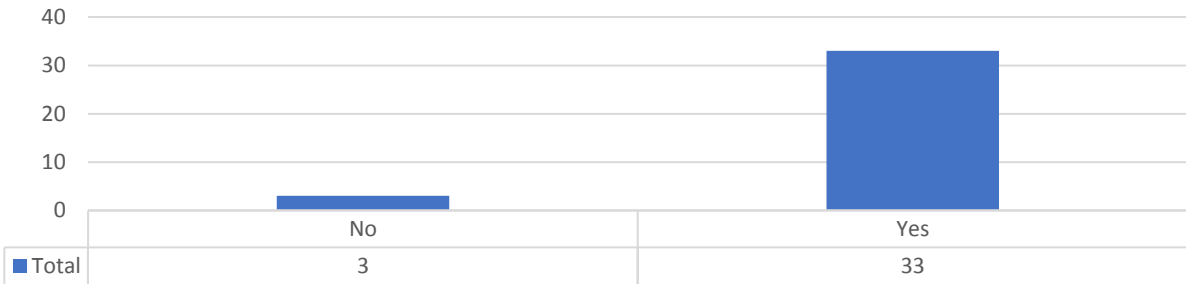


Does your deacon(s) actively serve in some ministry in the life of the church?





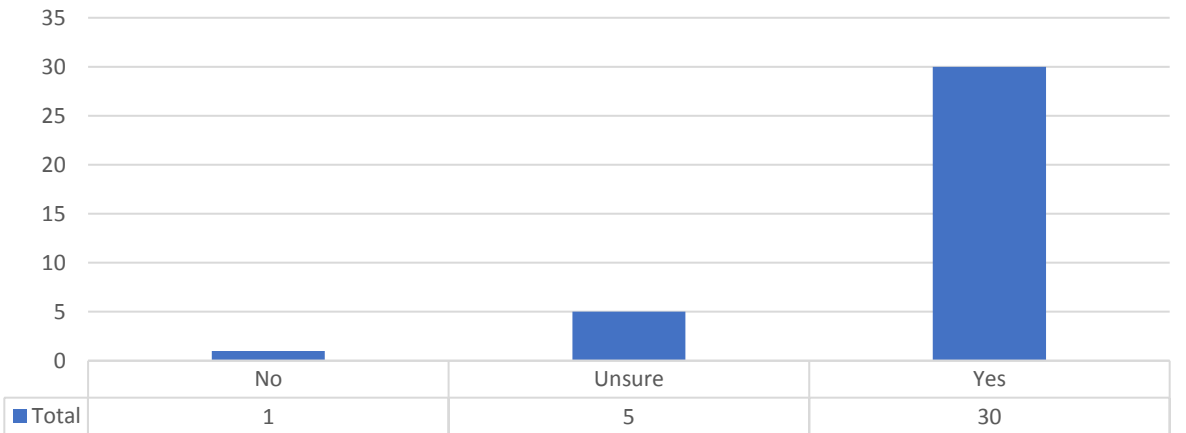
Does your deacon(s) have a spiritual knowledge and understanding that provide sound direction for the ministry of the church?

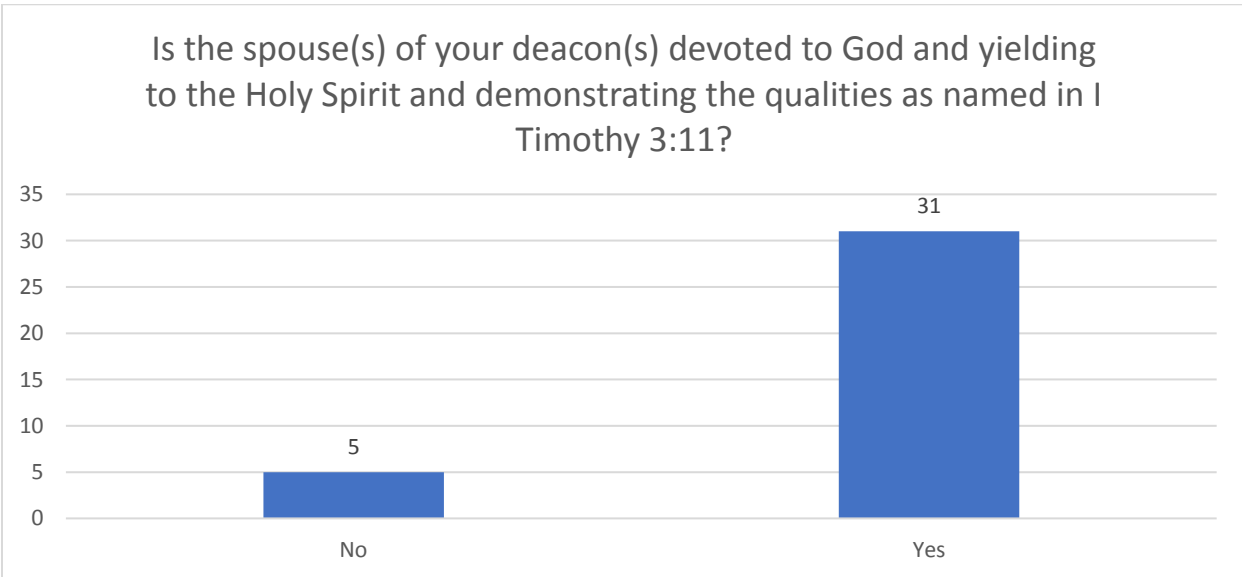
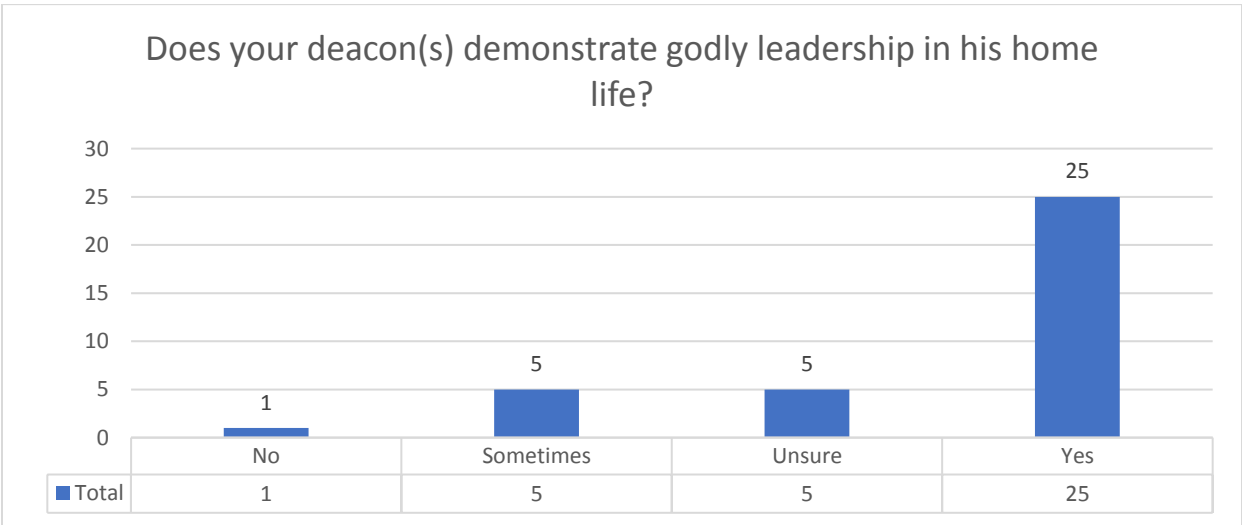
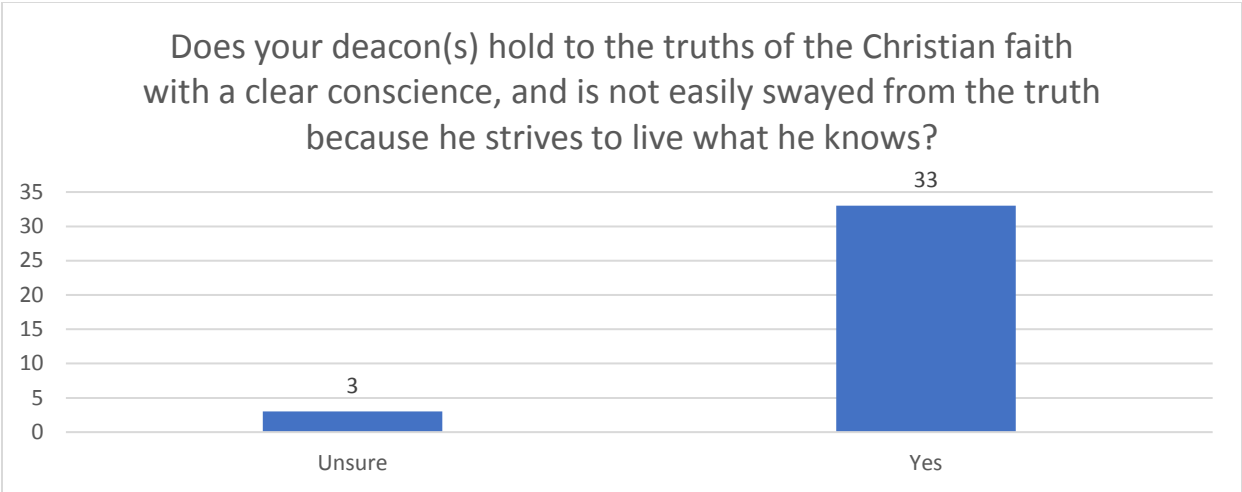


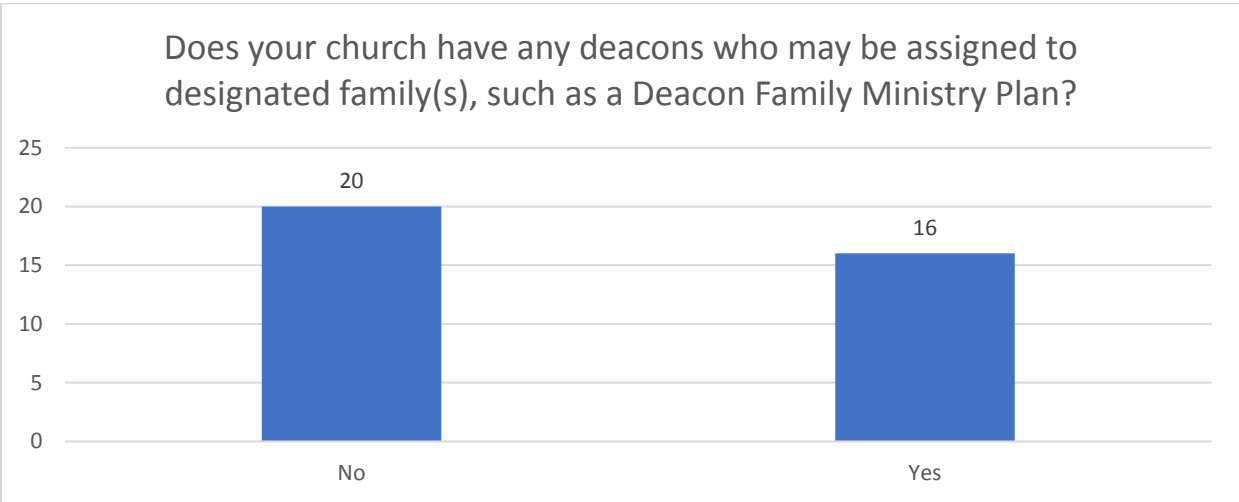
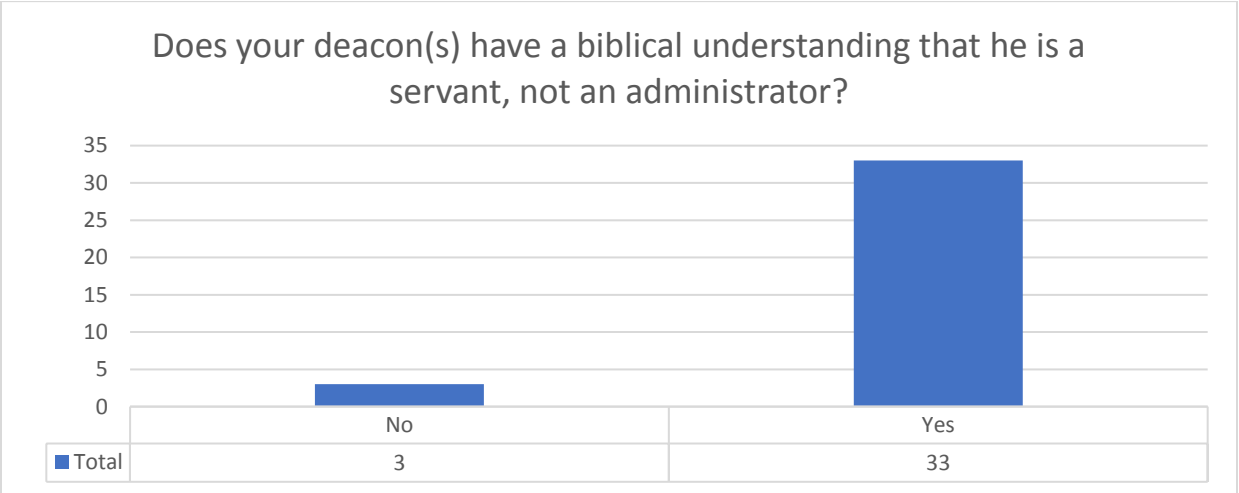
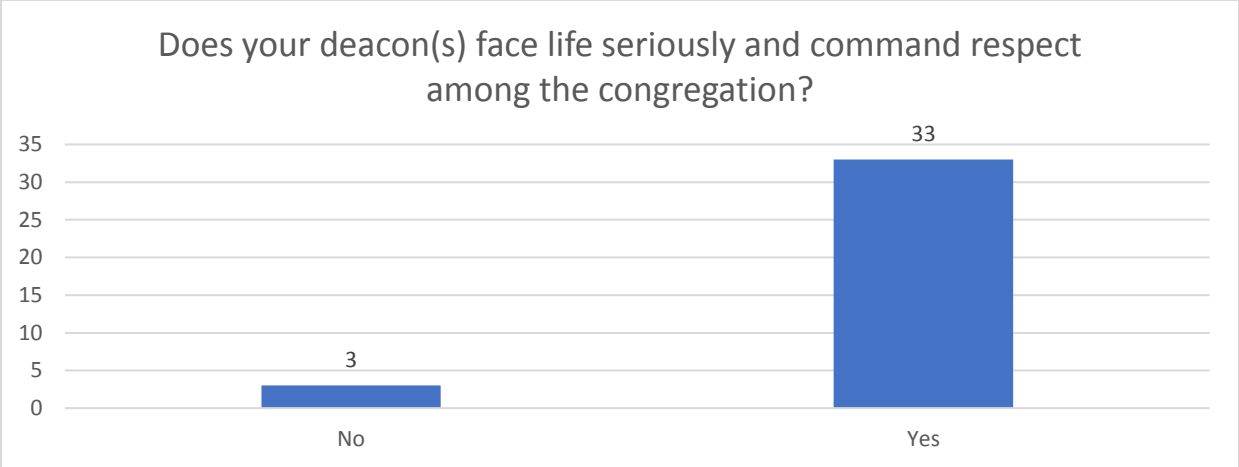
Does your deacon(s) demonstrate integrity and honesty to others, and have a believable Christian life?



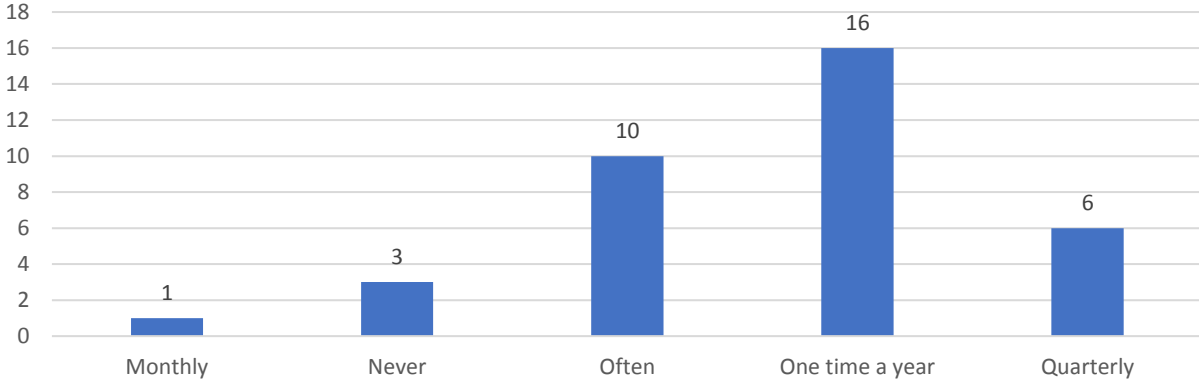
Is your deacon(s) free from the love of money and other earthly possessions?



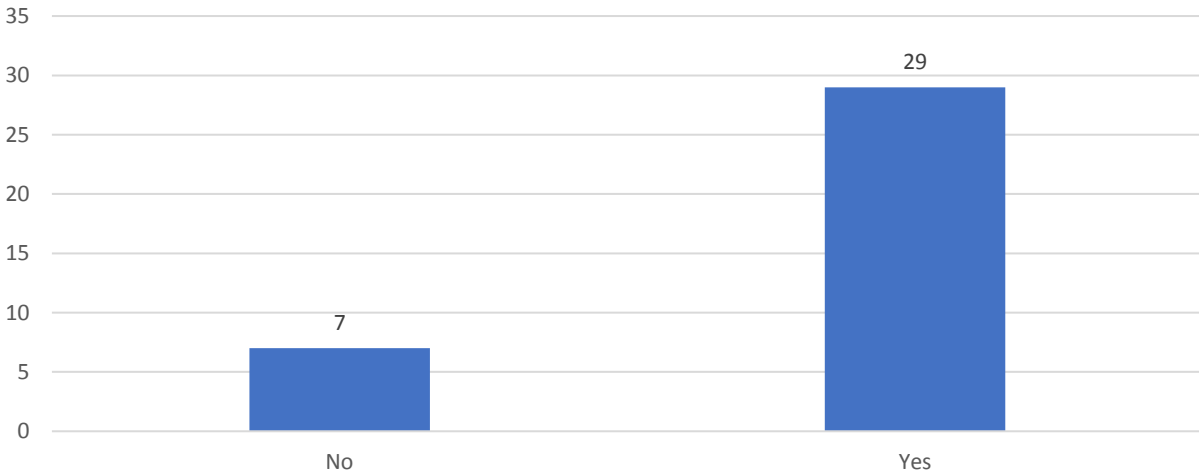




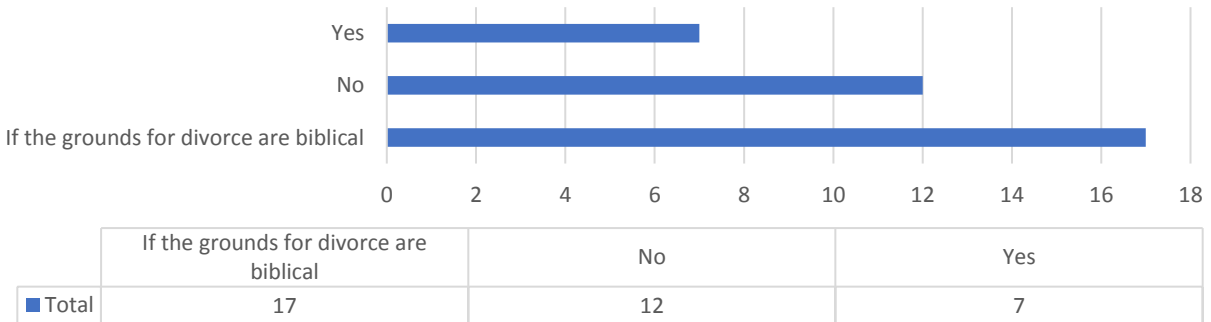
As pastor, how often do you share through teaching and preaching the importance and significance of deacons in the local church?

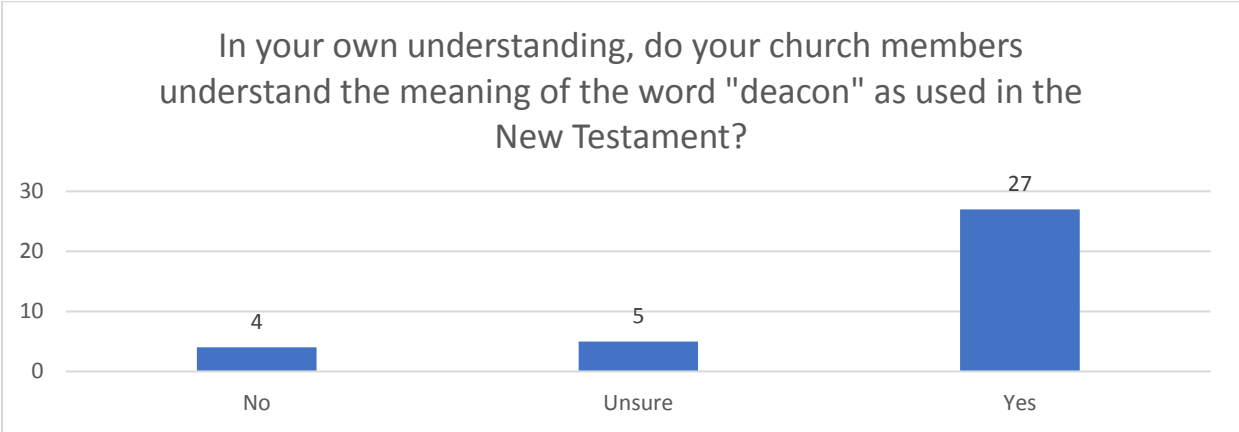
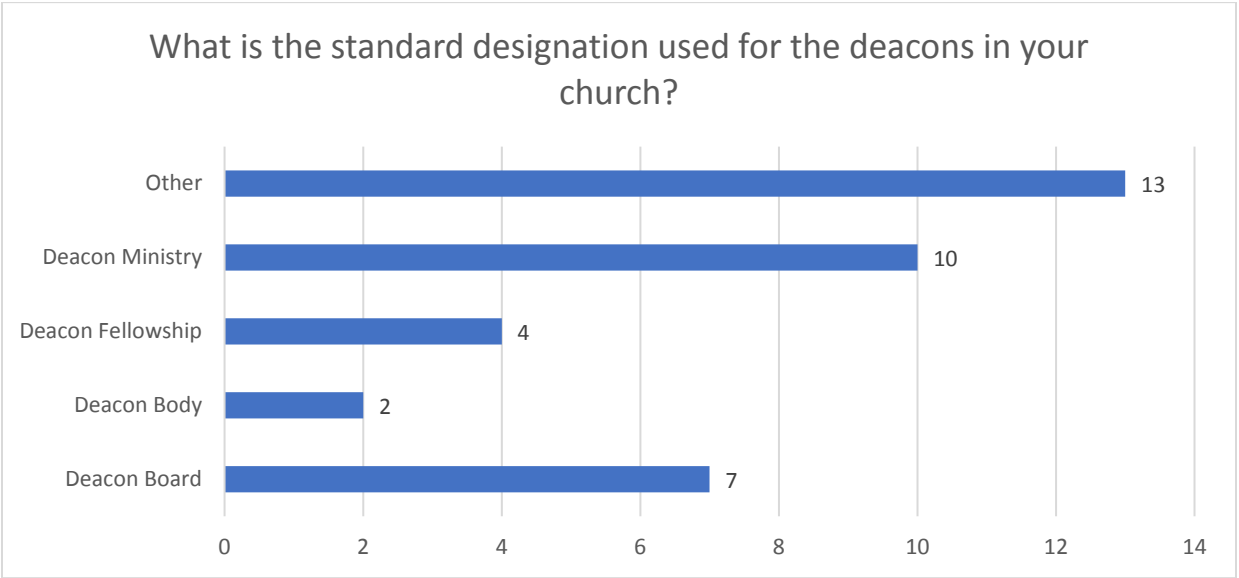
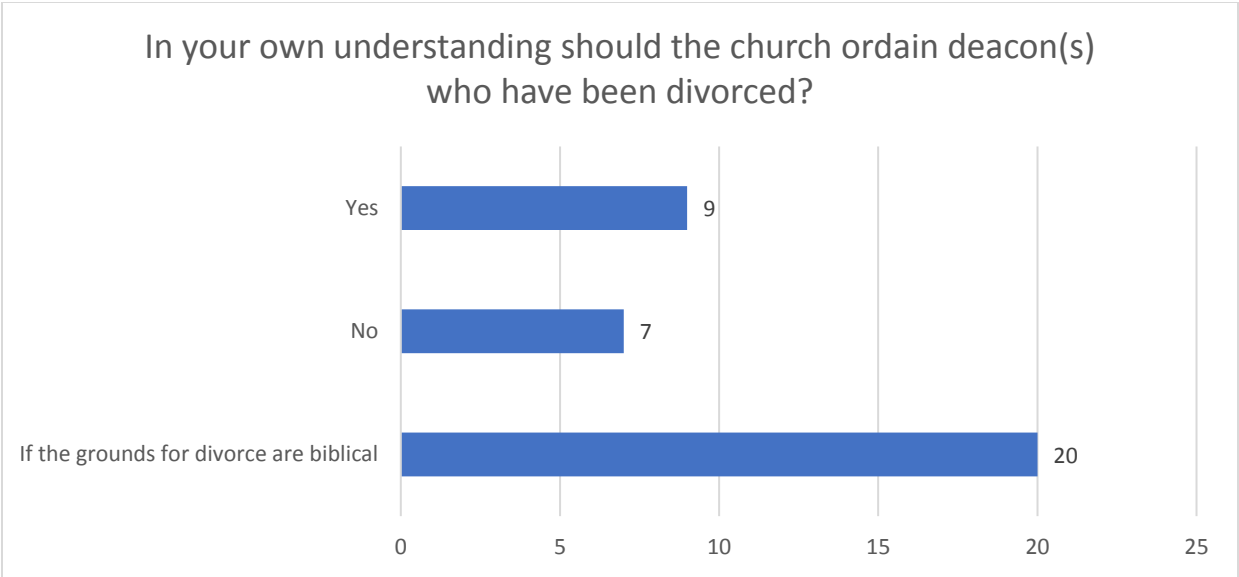


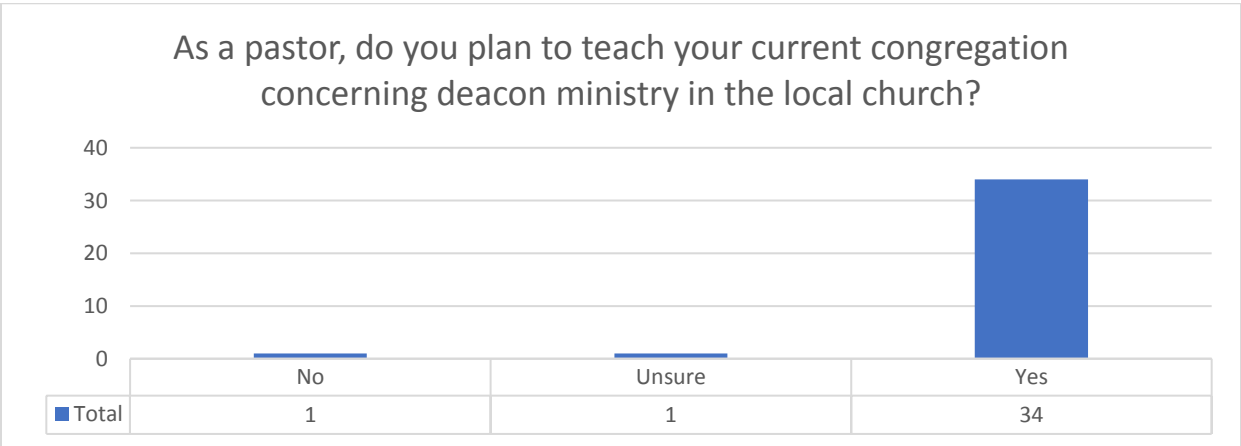
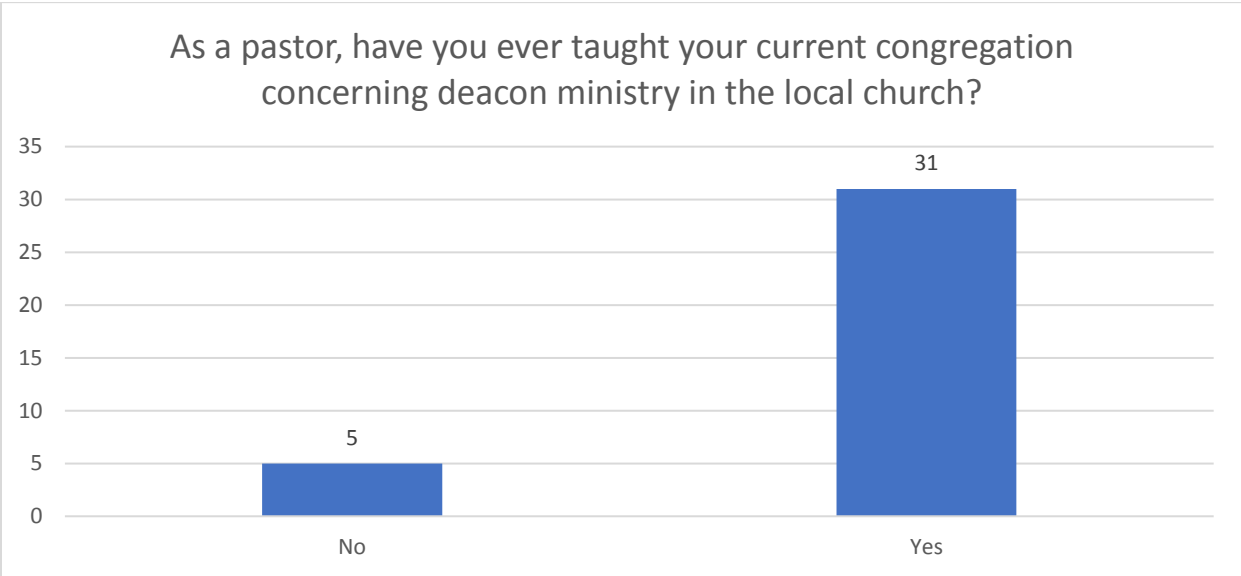
Does your deacon(s) know and understand his spiritual gift(s)?



Does your church ordain deacon(s) who have been divorced?



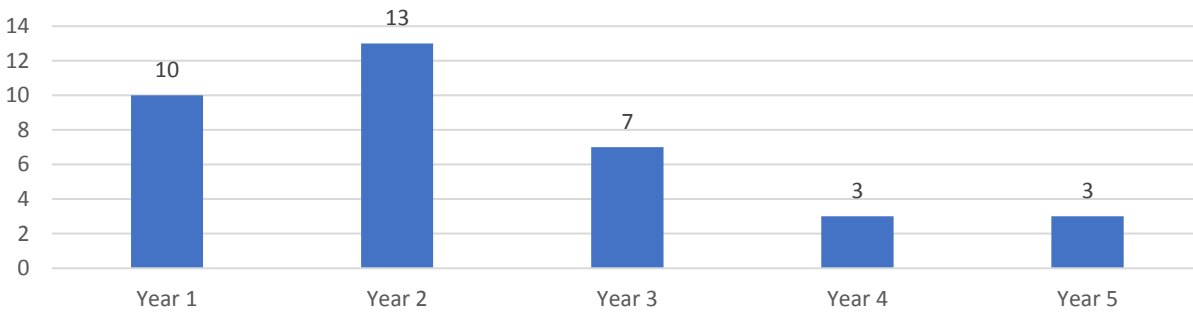




If you currently have an established deacon ministry in your church, would you as pastor, encourage other new church plants evaluating a deacon ministry to wait longer before selecting deacons?



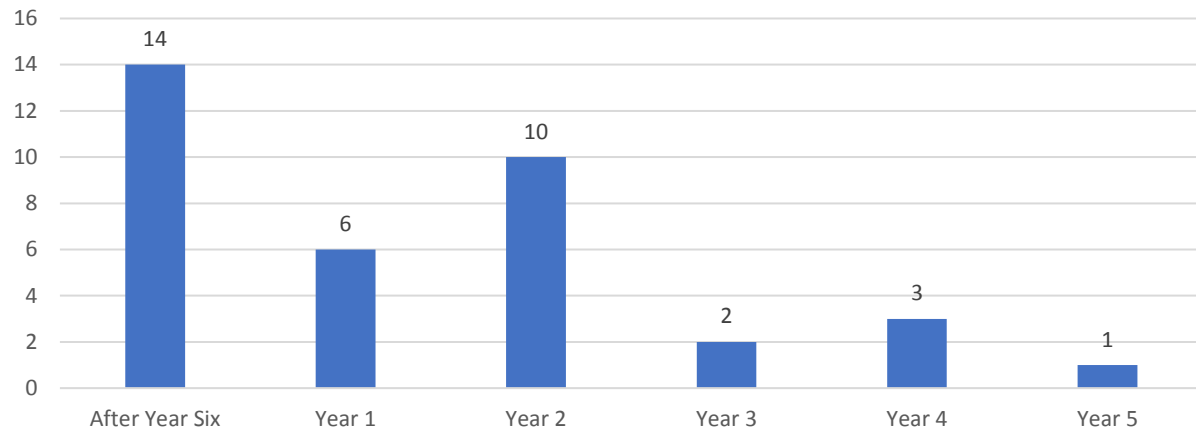
If you had the privilege to help other church plants decide about establishing a deacon ministry, what time frame would you encourage them to consider for selecting deacons?



Personally, as a pastor, do you believe that an established deacon ministry in the local church is needed?



If you do not yet have functioning deacons at your church,
when do you plan to add them?



BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adams, Zoleka Marcia. "Establishing a Servant Leader Training Program to Equip, Empower and Excite Lay Leaders for Ministry at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church." Order No. 3462593, Drew University, 2011. (accessed November 27, 2017). In PROQUESTMS ProQuest Central, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search.proquest.com/docview/878553708?accountid=12085>.
- Akin, Daniel. ed. *A Theology for the Church*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2007.
- Anderson, Leith. *A Church for the 21st Century*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1992.
- _____. *Leadership That Works*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2002.
- _____. "Leading into the Future," in *Renewing Your Church through Vision and Planning: 30 Strategies to Transform Your Ministry*, ed. Marshall Shelley, vol. 2, Library of Leadership Development. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997.
- Anderson, Robert C. *The Effective Pastor: A Practical Guide to the Ministry*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1993.
- Anthony, Michael J. *The Effective Church Board: A Handbook for Mentoring and Training Servant Leaders*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993.
- Anyabwile, Thabiti M. *Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons: 9Marks*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2012.
- Autry, James A. *The Servant Leader: How to Build a Creative Team, Develop Great Morale, and Improve Bottom-Line Performance*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2001.
- Baily, Rolen C. *Training for Servanthood: A Basic Training Guide for Baptist Deacons*. (accessed December 21, 2018). <https://bgav.org/church/deacon/>.
- Barna, George. *The Power of Team Leadership: Achieving Success through Shared Responsibility*. New York: Random House, 2001.
- _____. *The Power of Vision*. Ventura: Regal, 1992.
- _____. *Leaders on Leadership*. Ventura: Regal, 1997.
- Batten, L. W. "Nehemiah," ed. James Hastings et al., *A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing with Its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology*. New York; Edinburgh: Charles Scribner's Sons; T. & T. Clark, 1911–1912.
- Bennis, Warren G. *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge*. New York: Harper & Row, 1985.

- _____. T. Cummings and G. Spreitzer, eds. *The Future of Leadership: Today's Top Leadership Thinkers Speak to Tomorrow's Leaders*. Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons, 2001.
- _____. *On Becoming a Leader*. Boston: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1989.
- Blackaby, Henry and Richard Blackaby. *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001.
- Blanchard, Ken., Martha Lawrence and Cynthia Olmstead. *Trust Works! Four Keys to Building Lasting Relationships*. New York: HarperCollins Books, 2013.
- Blomberg, Craig. *Matthew*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992.
- Blum, Edwin A. "John," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 2. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985.
- Bond, Stephen Bradley. *Spiritual Authority: God's Way of Growing Leaders*. Joplin: College Press Publishing Co., 1995.
- Bonem, Mike. *In Pursuit of Great and Godly Leadership: Taping the Wisdom of the World for the Kingdom of God*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishing, 2011.
- Boone, Larry W. and Sanya Makhani. "Five Necessary Attitudes of a Servant Leader." *Review of Business* 33, no. 1 (Winter, 2012): 83-96. (accessed November 13, 2017). <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1367068417?accounted=12085>.
- Bratcher Robert G. and Eugene Albert Nida. *A Handbook on the Gospel of Mark*, UBS Handbook Series. New York: United Bible Societies, 1993.
- Brooks James A. *Mark*, vol. 23, The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991.
- Carson, D. A. *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians, 12-14*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books Publishers, 1996.
- _____. *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Leicester, England; Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991.
- Cedar, Paul A. *Strength in Servant Leadership*. Waco: Word, 1987.
- Chappell, Paul. *The Ministry of a Baptist Deacon: A Handbook for Local Church Servant Leaders*. Lancaster, CA, Striving Together Publishing, 2010.

- Cho, Dongho. "Leadership Principles and Applications for Establishing a Christ Centered Church in South Korea." D.Min. diss., Liberty University School of Divinity, 2016.
- Clinton, J. Robert. *The Making of a Leader*. Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1988.
- Collins, John N. *Deacons and the Church: Making Connections Between Old and New*. Harrisburg, PA. Morehouse Publishing, 2002.
- Coulter, Gordon L. "The Servant Leader." *Christian Education Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring, 2003): 23-45, (accessed, December 16, 2017).
<http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/205458916?accounted=12085>.
- Cowen, Gerald. *Who Rules the Church? Examining Congregational Leadership and Church Government*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003.
- Criswell, W. A. *Criswell's Guidebook for Pastors*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980.
- Cross, F. L. and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- De Pree, Max. *Leadership Is an Art*. New York: Doubleday Press, 1989.
- _____. "Visionary Jazz," in *Renewing Your Church through Vision and Planning: 30 Strategies to Transform Your Ministry*, ed. Marshall Shelley, vol. 2, Library of Leadership Development. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997.
- Dever, Mark. *Understanding Church Leadership*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2016.
- Deweese, Charles W. *The Emerging Role of Deacons*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979.
- Dinkmeyer, Don C. *Leadership by Encouragement*. Delray Beach, FL: St. Lucie Press, 1996.
- Dodd, Brian J. *Empowered Church Leadership: Ministry in the Spirit According to Paul*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003.
- Dresselhaus, Richard. *Deacon Ministry: Empowering Volunteers*. Springhill, MI: Gospel Publishing House, 2009.
- Duby, David. "The Greatest Commandment: The Foundation for Biblical Servant Leadership" (2009). Faculty Publications and Presentations. (accessed December 16, 2017).
http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/busi_fac_pubs/11.
- Dunlop, Jamie. "Deacons: Shock Absorbers and Servants: Biblical Thinking for Building Healthy Churches" *9Marks Journal*, no. 5 (3/31/2010): accessed October 18, 2017.
<https://www.9marks.org/article/deacons-shock-absorbers-and-servants/>.

- Elwell Walter A., and Barry J. Beitzel, ed. "Deacon, Deaconess." In *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988.
- Engle, Paul E. & Steve B. Cowan. *Who Runs the Church? Four Views on Church Government*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.
- Everist, Norma Cook. *Church Conflict: From Contention to Collaboration*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004.
- Fee, Gordon D. *Philippians*, vol. 11, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1999.
- Finzel, Hans. *The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders Make*. Wheaton: Victor, 1994.
- Ford, Leighton. *Transforming Leadership: Jesus' Way of Creating Vision, Shaping Values and Empowering Change*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1991.
- Foshee, Howard B. *Now that you're a Deacon*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1975.
- France, R. T. *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI; Carlisle: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 2002.
- Ferguson, Sinclair B. *The Holy Spirit: Contours of Christian Theology*. Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 1996.
- Gangel, Kenneth O. *Feeding and Leading*. Wheaton: Victor, 1989.
- _____. *Acts, vol. 5*, Holman New Testament Commentary. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998.
- Gentle, Derek. *The Biblical Role of Deacons*.
http://www.baptiststart.com/print/role_of_deacons.html; Journal Title volume, no. issue 12, 2010. (accessed October 5, 2017).
- George, Bill. *Authentic Leadership: Rediscovering the Secrets to Creating Lasting Value*. Valley Forge: Jossey-Bass, 2003.
- Gilder, Ray. "Six Basic Aspects of the Pastor as Shepherd." LifeWay.com.
<http://www.lifeway.com/Article/Basic-aspects-of-pastor-as-shepherd>. (accessed October 22, 2017).
- Goetz, David L. "Introduction," In *Renewing Your Church through Vision and Planning: 30 Strategies to Transform Your Ministry*, ed. Marshall Shelley, vol. 2, Library of Leadership Development. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997.

- Greenleaf, Robert K. *Servant Leadership*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1977.
- _____. *On Becoming a Servant-Leader*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996.
- _____. *Servant Leadership [25th Anniversary Edition]: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press TM, 2012.
- Hansen, David. "Church of Your Dreams." In *Renewing Your Church through Vision and Planning: 30 Strategies to Transform Your Ministry*, ed. Marshall Shelley, vol. 2, Library of Leadership Development. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1997.
- Hastings, Wayne A. *Trust Me: Developing a Leadership Style People Will Follow*. New York: Random House Inc, 2004.
- _____. and John A. Selbie, et al., eds., "*Pastor*," *A Dictionary of the Bible: Dealing with Its Language, Literature, and Contents Including the Biblical Theology*. New York; Edinburgh: Charles Scribner's Sons; T. & T. Clark, 1911–1912.
- Hatley, Thomas Eugene, "The Development of a Consultant Ministry to Evangelical Churches in Need of Conflict Management" (1994). Doctoral Dissertations and Projects. 197. <http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/197> (accessed December 21, 2017).
- Haygood, B. Spencer. "*Pastor*." In *Holman Bible Dictionary*, ed. Chad Brand et al. Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003.
- Hughes, R. Kent. *Living on the Cutting Edge: Joshua and the Challenge of Spiritual Leadership*. Westchester: Crossway, 1987.
- Hull, Bill. *The Disciple Making Church*., Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1990.
- Hunter, Joel C. "Clearing Your Vision," in *Renewing Your Church through Vision and Planning: 30 Strategies to Transform Your Ministry*, ed. Marshall Shelley, vol. 2, Library of Leadership Development. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997.
- Hunter, Kent R. *Moving the Church into Action*. St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989.
- Hybels, Bill. *Courageous Leadership*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.
- Jones, G. Curtis. *1000 Illustrations for Preaching and Teaching*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1986.
- Kanagaraj, Jey J. "Johannine Jesus, The Supreme Example of Leadership: An Inquiry into John 13:1–20," *Themelios* 29, no. 3, 2004.
- Keener, Craig S. *Matthew*, vol. 1, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

- Keller, Timothy. *Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God*. New York: Penguin Random House Publishers, 2014.
- Knight, George W. *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Carlisle, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press, 1992.
- Kouzes, James and Barry Posner. *The Leadership Challenge for Christians*. Valley Forge, San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, 2003.
- _____. *Christian Reflections on the Leadership Challenge*. Valley Forge, San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons Publishers, 2004.
- Lange, John Peter and Philip Schaff, et al., *A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures: Acts*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2008.
- Larkin, William J. Jr. *Acts*, vol. 5, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995.
- Larson, Knute. *I & II Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, vol. 9, Holman New Testament Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000.
- Lea, Thomas D. and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, vol. 34, The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992.
- Leas, Speed. *Creative Leadership Series: Leadership and Conflict*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1982.
- Lehman, Victor D. *The Work of the Pastor*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2004.
- Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, to the Ephesians and to the Philippians*. Columbus, OH: Lutheran Book Concern, 1937.
- Macchia, Stephen A. *Becoming a Healthy Church: 10 Traits of a Vital Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999.
- Malphurs, Aubrey. *Being Leaders: The Nature of Authentic Christian Leadership*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003.
- Mancini, Will. *Church Unique: How Missional Leaders Cast Vision, Capture Culture, and Create Movement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishing, 2008.
- Maxwell, John C. *Developing Leaders around You*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1995.
- _____. *Developing the Leader within You*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1993.

- _____. *Everyone Communicates, Few Connect: What the Most Effective People Do Differently*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2010.
- _____. *Leadership 101: What Every Leader Needs to Know*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002.
- _____. *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork: Embrace Them and Empower Your Team*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2001.
- _____. *21 Indispensable Qualities of a Leader: Becoming the Person Others Will Want to Follow*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999.
- Merkle, Benjamin L. *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2008.
- _____. *The Biblical Qualifications and Responsibilities of Deacons*, 9 Marks Journal: Biblical Thinking for Building Healthy Churches, May-June 2010.
- Merritt, James. *How to Impact and Influence Others: 9 Keys to Successful Leadership*. Eugene, Oregon: Harvest House Publishers, 2011.
- Meyer, Paul and Randy Slechta. *The Five Pillars of Leadership: How to Bridge the Leadership Gap*. Tulsa, OK: Insight Publishing Group, 2002.
- Miller, Calvin. *The Empowered Leader*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1995.
- Mohler, R. Albert Jr., Richard Land, Charles Kelly Jr. *The Baptist Faith and Message*. Nashville: Lifeway Press, 2007.
- Moo, Douglas J. *The Letter of James, The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2000.
- Morris, Leon. *The Gospel according to Matthew, The Pillar New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992.
- Naylor, Robert E. *The Baptist Deacon*. Nashville, TN, Broadman & Holman, 1955.
- Newman. Barclay Moon and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*, UBS Handbook Series. New York: United Bible Societies, 1972.
- Newton, Paul and Matt Schmucker. *Elders in the Life of the Church: Rediscovering the Biblical Model for Church Leadership*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publishers, 2014.
- Nichols, Harold. *The Work of the Deacon and the Deaconess*. Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1964, revised 1984.

O'Brien, Peter Thomas. *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991.

Packer, J. I. *Keep in Step with the Spirit*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books Publishers, 2005.

Payne, Waylan L., Jr. "The Role of a New Testament Deacon: An Office to Hold or a Ministry to Perform?" D.Min. diss., Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary, 1996.
<http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/922>. (accessed December 19, 2017).

Polhill, John B., *Acts*, vol. 26, The New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992.

Pedroza, Dwayne. "Vision Impaired: A Model to Make Vision a Reality for Church Plants" (2014). Doctoral Dissertations and Projects.,
<http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/934>. (accessed December 3, 2017).

Robertson, A.T. *Word Pictures in the New Testament*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1933.

Robinson, Simon J. *Opening 1 Timothy*. Leominster, MA: Day One Publications, 2004.

Sanders, J. Oswald. *Spiritual Leadership*. Chicago: Moody, 1967.

Saucy, Robert L. *The Church in God's Program*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1972.

Schaller, Lyle. *The Change Agent*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1972.

_____. *Strategies for Change*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1993.

Simpson, Amy. *Confessions of a Ministry Introvert*, Leadership Journal: Money, Vol. 34, No. 2 (2013), <http://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2013/spring/confessions-of-ministry-introvert>. (accessed November 4, 2017).

Spence-Jones, H. D. M. PHILIPPIANS, vol. 28, The Pulpit Commentary. London, New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1909.

Stanley, Andy. *The Next Generation Leader*. Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2003.

Stevenson, Phil. *5 Things Anyone Can Do to Lead Effectively, You Can!* Indianapolis, IN: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2007.

Stott, John. *Basic Christian Leadership: Biblical Models of Church, Gospel and Ministry*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2002.

Strauch, Alexander. *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*. Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth, 1995.

- _____. *Minister of Mercy: The New Testament Deacon*. Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 1992.
- Symonds, R. P. *Deacons in the Early Church*, Theology Journal, Volume: 58th issue: 425, page(s): 408-414. Issue published: November 1, 1955.
- Tabb, Brian J. "Deacon," ed. John D. Barry et al., The Lexham Bible Dictionary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016).
- Towns, Elmer. *The 8 Laws of Leadership*. Lynchburg, VA: Church Growth Institute, 1992.
- _____. *Biblical Models for Leadership*. Lynchburg, VA: Harcourt, 2000.
- _____. Ed Stetzer, and Warren Bird, *11 Innovations in the Local Church*. Delight, AR: Gospel Light Publications, 2007.
- Utey, Robert James and Paul Bound. *The Gospel Unbound: Letters from Prison (Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon, Then Later, Philippians)*, vol. 8, Study Guide Commentary Series. Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 1997.
- Vincent, Marvin Richardson. *Word Studies in the New Testament*, vol. 3. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1887.
- Wagner, C. Peter. *Leading Your Church to Growth*. Ventura, CA: Regal, 1984.
- _____. *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts: The Easy-to-Use Guide That Helps You Identify and Understand Your Unique God-Given Spiritual Gifts*. Ada, MI: Chosen Books, 2012.
- Warren, Rick. *The Purpose Driven Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 1995.
- Webb, Henry. *Deacons: Servant Models in the Church*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001.
- _____. *Equipping Deacons in Caring Sessions: Vol. 1*. Nashville: LifeWay Press, 2012.
- Werning, Waldo J. *Renewal for the 21st Century Church*. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, St., 1988.
- White, James Emery. *Why New Churches Fail*.
http://enrichmentjournal.ag.org/200004/022_why_new_chuches_fail.
 (accessed November 3, 2017).
- Wuest, Kenneth S. *Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: For the English Reader*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997.
- Wiersbe, Warren W. *On Being a Servant of God*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1993.

Wilkes, C. Gene. *Jesus on Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998.

Williams, Dennis E. and Kenneth O. Gangel. *Volunteers for Today's Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993.

Willmington, H.L. *Willmington's Book of Bible Lists*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1987.

Youssef, Michael. *The Leadership Style of Jesus*. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1986.

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

September 15, 2017

Christopher Webb

IRB Exemption 2958.091517: Developing a Strategic Model for Deacons as Servant Leaders within New Church Plants

Dear Christopher Webb,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101(b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:101(b):

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP

Administrative Chair of Institutional Research

The Graduate School

LIBERTY
UNIVERSITY.

Liberty University | Training Champions for Christ since 1971