

Leadership in the Body of Christ – Part 2

Review

- The church in the NT is described as a body with many members (Rom. 12:4-5). Jesus is the head of the body (church) & we are the members. If we (the body) are to function properly, we must obey the instructions of the Head by His **word & Spirit**.
- There are two offices or official roles for leadership in NT: Overseer & Deacon (Phil. 1:1).
- Last week we looked at the office of Overseer. We learned that the calling is from God, the office is established by God & reserved for male leadership. Qualifications: high standards in his personal, family & church life & his life among unbelievers. Duties: Leading & protecting, feeding & **caring for practical needs – this duty may be delegated to the deacon:**

I. The Office of a Deacon (1Tim. 3:8)

A. The origin of this office (Ac. 6:1-3)

*The church is intended to meet the needs of people soul & body (Ac. 2:41-44; 4:4, 32-37; 5:12-14) – thousands of new believers with basic needs & the church was feeding the needy daily. However racism & partiality was affecting the distribution. The Overseers (Apostles) were responsible for the distribution & resolving the problem – **ruling**. The Overseers call a church meeting to address the problem & indicate that they need help or assistance in order to maintain their priorities (v. 2-3).*

B. The office is established by God (Php. 1:1; 1Tim. 3:8)

“διάκονος” means the servant of a master or a superior; an assistant. Whenever practical needs of church members are more than overseers can manage, God has determined that deacons are to be selected to assist.

C. The office is reserved for male leadership, but women may assist (Ac. 6:3; 1Tim. 3:11)

*“pick out from among you seven **men**” = (άνήρ). Also “the husband of one wife” & “manage ... household”. However, the deacon must have certain spiritual & moral character qualifications (Ac. 6:3)*

II. The Qualifications of a Deacon (1Tim. 3:8-10, 12-13)

A. Observe the man in his personal life (v. 8)

- Dignified (*behavior that is worthy of respect & honor*)
- **Not** double-tongued (*not saying the same thing twice but differently; hypocritical or two-faced in speech*)
- **Not** addicted to much wine (*Not enslaved to alcohol...*)
- **Not** greedy for dishonest gain (*Rejects gaining money by compromising biblical principles*)

He is to have self-control with his mouth & hands. He is not to be controlled by his tongue, alcohol or money but by the HS – “full of the Spirit & wisdom”!

B. Observe the man in his family life (v. 12)

- Husband of one wife (*if married, not polygamous; not unbiblically divorced [Mt. 19:9; 1Co. 7:15]; loves wife*)
- Manages his children well (*children willingly obey him*)
- Manages his own household well (*Demonstrates wise leadership at home*)

C. Observe the man in his church life (v. 9-10)

- Hold to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience (*his lifestyle must be consistent with the word of God; obedient to the revealed will of God*)
- Let them be tested first (*the men must be examined by the congregation & church leaders*); “δοκιμάζω” means to make a critical examination to determine genuineness.

Not required to have the gift of teaching or to be a mature Christian

Blameless in all these areas: *Willing to correct any legitimate sin in any area of his life; no willful hidden areas of sin*

III. The Duties of a Deacon (Ac. 6:2-3)

“serve tables” & “this duty” – meeting physical needs = MERCY!

A. Manage the care for needy church members (Ac. 6:1-3)

Needs are food, clothing & shelter (1Tim. 6:8; Jas. 1:27).

B. Manage the finances of the church (Ac. 4:37; 5:2)

Collecting & managing money is necessary in ministry; even Jesus had a treasurer (Jn. 12:6; 1Co. 16:1-2).

CONCLUSION

Now my beloved brothers & sisters in Christ, we can see that Jesus (the Head) has carefully designed the plan for leadership in the church to ensure that His church is cared for spiritually & physically. There is no better way or plan & we will only have peace & joy when we willingly obey. The Lord has saved us & given us new hearts; we've been changed from the inside. We have the light of the gospel in us & the Spirit of God to show us the truth. So rejoice today for the eyes of your heart are open & you can see the truth; love the truth; hope & faith in the truth. And because you know the truth you have been set free. You are free today; free right now. Only trust & obey!

If you are not a Christian, you cannot see yet. You may think that you see and understand what I'm talking about, but Jesus says you cannot really understand unless you have been born again; born from above. You must be changed from the inside; your thoughts, desires, will & emotions must all be radically changed. **The gospel...**

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