

Acts 6:1-6

THE OFFICE OF DEACON INSTITUTED

- I. Their ordination.
 - A. The occasion was the neglect of the Grecian widows, who murmured against this incorrect treatment.
 - 1. The Grecians murmured to the apostles because their widows were neglected in the “daily ministrations.”
 - 2. The neglect was not deliberate racial partiality (not likely by the apostles) but the great growth of the church (1a).
 - B. The apostles called the congregation together to find a solution.
 - 1. The main calling of the apostles was to be busy with prayer and the proclamation of the gospel (2).
 - 2. To solve the problem, the apostles instructed the congregation to elect men whom the apostles would appoint (3).
 - 3. That a distinct office was established is evident.
 - C. Note that the historical circumstances which occasioned the institution of this office were of the Lord Jesus (cf. Acts 1:1).
- II. The calling of the deacons.
 - A. They are not in charge of the General Fund, nor is the office of deacon a training school for the office of elder.
 - B. They are to minister mercy - the expression of the love of God earnestly to bless one in miserable condition.
 - 1. God, who is rich in mercy (Eph. 2:4), centrally reveals His mercy in Christ and His cross.
 - 2. God’s constant mercy to His people lays on them the responsibility always to reflect His mercy (Ex. 22:22-24; 23:10,11).
 - C. The deacons reflect Christ’s rule of his church as a benevolent king.
 - 1. He is not the kind of king who makes laws and demands obedience and service of Himself.
 - 2. The deacons reveal this King by teaching about Him and by demonstrating His merciful compassion.
 - 3. They are to “collect alms and other contributions of charity,” and to “visit and comfort the distressed” (Art. 25 of C.O.).
 - 4. Though not a business, they must be faithful and diligent to distribute with wisdom.
 - D. Two dangers.
 - 1. On one hand, some are insulted to be judged poor and refuse or hesitate to seek Christ’s mercies.
 - 2. On the other hand, some look at Christ’s mercies as their right and expect to receive whatever they ask for.
 - 3. Both attitudes arise out of pride and do not understand correctly that mercy is needed always and is always undeserved.