

INTRODUCTION

I find myself rejoicing inside, and thanking our Lord Jesus, every time I think of the state of blessedness this church is enjoying. So blessed are we that we have been able to go through a simple process of choosing deacons, and are now arrived at the day they are to be appointed, set in office, to do their work. Praise the Lord with me for His goodness toward us!

By God's grace toward us, we have considered what the bible says to us about deacons: about the need for them, about the nature of their work, about how to choose them. Now that they are chosen, and it is time to appoint them, to ordain them, to set them in their office, we are considering what the Bible tells us about that, so that we may do it Biblically, and so we all may understand it rightly.

Last week we considered how the deacons serve as those appointed over the church's business, appointed to the church's duty, in light of how our Lord Jesus Christ has been appointed over the household of God, and always serves faithfully, providing for the needs of those in His household. As deacons are appointed, they are to look to our Lord Jesus Christ as their Master whose example they follow.

Today we consider how the deacons serve as stewards appointed over the church's business, appointed to the church's duty, in light of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is coming back at any moment, and His servants long for Him to find them faithful when He comes. As deacons are appointed, they are to look to our Lord Jesus Christ as their Master, who will be coming back at any time.

TEXT

Luke 12:40-46

BODY

Deacons serve as stewards appointed over the church's business, appointed to the church's duty, in light of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is coming back at any moment, and His servants long for Him to find them faithful when He comes. As deacons are appointed, they are to look to our Lord Jesus Christ as their Master, who will be coming back at any time.

- I. Luke 12:42-44 Our Lord Jesus Told a Parable Urging Those Appointed to Be Faithful Until He Comes
 - A. There is a physical need: the members of the household need food; they need to eat
 - B. The meeting of that need is a business that must be done, a duty that must be performed: people's physical needs must be met; the members of the household must have their food given to them
 - C. Someone must do that business, must perform that duty
 - D. There is a faithful and wise steward or manager in the household
 - E. The lord of the household makes the faithful and wise steward or manager ruler over the household, sets him over the household, appoints him over the household to meet that need
 - F. Because he is appointed over this, it is now his business, his duty
 - G. The servant may be tempted to neglect his duty; but knowing His Lord will be coming back when he least expects Him, the servant performs his duty faithfully until His Lord returns
 - H. Blessing is promised from the Lord of the household to the servant who does this duty faithfully, the blessing of a high standing in the household
- II. Acts 6:1-7 That Parable Helps Us Understand the Appointment of Deacons in Acts 6
 - A. There is a physical need: the members of the household (specifically the poor widows) need food
 - B. The meeting of that need is a business that must be done, a duty that must be performed; people's physical needs must be met; the members of the household must have their food given to them
 - C. Someone must do that business, must perform that duty

- D. There are men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom in the household; some of these are chosen by the congregation
- E. The apostles appoint the faithful servants, the wise stewards over this business; they appoint them to this duty
 - 1. with prayer
 - 2. by laying on of their hands
- F. Blessing is promised to the servants who serve well: a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus

III. Consider How We Can Now Understand the Appointment of Deacons in This Church Today

- A. There are physical needs, which have traditionally been organized into three categories; you know there is a homely old tradition of remembering these categories as three kinds of tables to be served
 - 1. the table of the poor: any who are in want of basic necessities, and who cannot help themselves, and who do not have family to help them, must be cared for by the church
 - 2. the Lord's Supper table: the church must meet, and so must have a suitable place to meet, and provisions made for observance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper
 - 3. the pastor's table:
 - a) the pastor's salary must be set, then adjusted up or down according to circumstances
 - b) the money for it must be collected
 - c) it must be paid to him on time
- B. The meeting of those needs is business that must be done, duty that must be performed
 - 1. it must be done properly
 - 2. it must be done legally
- C. Someone must do that business, must perform that duty
- D. There are wise and faithful men in this church, men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom; two of these have been chosen by the congregation

- E. In a few minutes, I will appoint them over this business, will appoint them to this duty; see Acts 6:6 how this is done
1. with prayer
 2. by laying on of my hands
 3. this is not one thing, but two
 - a) when they had prayed
 - b) they laid hands on them
- F. By their appointment they will be over this business
1. they are servants
 2. but the kind of servants they are is stewards, managers
 3. so they have authority that extends to things necessary for doing their assigned duty
- G. Blessings are described for the church that has deacons who serve well
1. the church will be blessed - possible conflict will be averted
 - a) Acts 6:1 a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews
 - b) Acts 6:5 pleased the whole multitude
 2. sinners who have not yet come to Christ will be blessed - Acts 6:7
 - a) the word of God will increase
 - b) the number of the disciples will multiply
 - c) some religious people not yet believing in Christ will believe
 3. you yourselves will be blessed - 1 Timothy 3:13
 - a) you will have a good degree, a good standing
 - (1) there is some temporal good in having such a standing as being a master tradesman; some worldly good in having the bachelor's or the master's or the doctorate degree
 - (2) but those who serve well as deacons will be regarded in Christ's church as those deserving a level of respect that none of those worldly degrees can equal
 - b) you will enjoy liberty or confidence or boldness in the faith
 - (1) over against timidity or fear or reluctance
 - (2) as you serve well, our Lord will grant by His Holy Spirit that you leave behind such things as timidity or fear or reluctance or inhibition, and will be able to speak and act with greater liberty or confidence or boldness in the faith

H. You deacons, and all of the household of God, will serve with an eye on the sky, remembering always that our Lord Jesus will come back when we least expect it

1. we all are tempted to be neglectful of our duties
2. but let the thought of our Lord's return keep us faithful
3. think with grief of what it would be like for our Lord Jesus to come back and find us unfaithful
 - a) as deacons, not seeing that the physical needs of the church are met
 - b) as Christians, all of us, not seeing that we are doing our duty in our own station
 - c) let the thought of that shame hold you fast to your duty
4. think with joy, oh what joy! of what it will be like for our Lord Jesus to come back and find us faithfully doing what He has assigned us to do
 - a) He Himself will reward us; we won't deserve it, because we will have done only our duty, nothing more; yet He will reward us!
 - b) and whatever rewards they are with which He crowns us, we will ascribe to Him for all eternity

CONCLUSION

Deacons serve as stewards appointed over the church's business, appointed to the church's duty, in light of the fact that our Lord Jesus Christ is coming back at any moment, and His servants long for Him to find them faithful when He comes. As deacons are appointed, they are to look to our Lord Jesus Christ as their Master, who will be coming back at any time.

As a church, we now are blessed with a sufficient understanding of deacons, as told us by our Lord Jesus Christ in the bible. He has helped us to choose the men who are at present ready to serve in that office. Now He has brought us to the moment when we I, as the pastor, can appoint them over this business, ordain them, set them in their office to do this duty.

Dagg

The mode of appointment should conform to the example of the first church. The persons should be chosen by popular vote, and invested with office by ministerial ordination.

If deacons were everywhere active in holding up the hands of the pastors, as Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses, the prosperity of the churches would be greatly advanced, and the success of the gospel far more abundant.

Prelude: Trinity 362 "Let Thy Blood in Mercy Poured" - Anna

Celebration 92 "O How I Love Jesus" - Anna

Trinity 263 "The Heav'ns Declare Thy Glory, Lord" - Rita

Trinity 441 "Thy Works, Not Mine, O Christ" - Allison

Trinity 506 "Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me?" - Anna

Call to Worship: Psalm 95:2-3 - Thad

Scripture Reading: Exodus 17:1-16 - Roel

Congregational Prayer - Dillon

Benediction: 2 Thessalonians 3:3-5

IV. Matthew 24:44-47 Our Lord Jesus Told a Parable Urging Those Appointed to Be Faithful Until He Comes

- A. There is a physical need: the members of the household need food; they need to eat
- B. The meeting of that need is a business that must be done, a duty that must be performed: people's physical needs must be met; the members of the household must have their food given to them
- C. Someone must do that business, must perform that duty
- D. There is a faithful and wise servant in the household
- E. The lord of the household makes the faithful servant ruler over the household, sets him over the household, appoints him over the household to meet that need
- F. Because he is appointed over this, it is now his business, his duty
- G. The servant may be tempted to neglect his duty; but knowing His Lord will be coming back when he least expects Him, the servant performs his duty faithfully until His Lord returns
- H. Blessing is promised from the Lord of the household to the servant who does this duty faithfully, the blessing of a high standing in the household

- I. Note here that Peter's question is included, which is not mentioned in Matthew
 - 1. Luke 12:41 Lord, do You speak this parable only to us, or to all?
 - 2. the answer indicates that it specifically regards those appointed to office in the church
 - 3. yet to each Christian, consider the application it does have for you
 - a) you may not be appointed to an office of responsibility in the church

b) yet you have your business, your duty given to you by our Lord Jesus Christ

- (1) that you work hard for your boss, as unto the Lord
- (2) that you nourish and cherish your wife, as you do your own body
- (3) that you raise your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord
- (4) that you submit to your own husband; that you love your husband and children
- (5) that you honor your father and mother
- (6) that whatever you do, you work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord

	Acts 6:3	Matthew 24:45-47 Lke 12:42-44		
G2525 <i>kathistemi</i>	appoint	made ruler or set		
G1909 <i>epi</i>	over or to	over		
G5532 <i>chreia</i>	business or duty			

- I. There Is a Need
 - A. Translations
 - 1. business
 - 2. duty
 - B. G5532 *chreia* in NT, word almost always refers to need, necessity
- II. It Must Be Done at the Proper Time
 - A. It is ongoing
 - B. It is frequent
- III. The Man In Charge Cannot Do It Himself
 - A. Acts 6:3 - or the spiritual service will be neglected
 - B. Mat 24 - the master will be away

