

**Deacons (2)—The Work of the Deacons:
Oversee Earthly Things Needful for the Worship,
Discipleship, and Evangelism of the Church**

2022.04.24 Morning Sermon in **Acts 5:42–6:7**

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Main idea: The Lord has attended, in part, to our earthly needs by giving us Spiritual men to oversee our ministry to one another in those needs. Deacons labor to address these needs so that inconvenience or inconsistency do not become obstacles to spiritual growth.

⁴²And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

⁶¹Now 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. ²Then 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. ³Therefore, 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; ⁴but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

⁵And 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, ⁶whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

⁷Then 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.

Introduction: Serving an ascended, enthroned Christ by proclaiming eternal life in Him can be hindered by inconvenience and inconsistency.

1. The Work of the Deacon (oversee whatever else is needed)

a. **Receive complaints** (v1). Many sinners means many complaints, even when things are going well in the church. Even when the number of disciples is multiplying. Even when the people are full of the Spirit and of generosity from the Spirit. The deacons are the new complaint department of the apostolic church.

i. The ministers must be freed not only from the time that it takes to answer complaint but from the toll that it takes upon them to be pressured to do as pleases the people rather than as pleases God. They are to see that the Word be taught so that all things can be continually formed by the Word and reformed by the Word.

ii. The people must be freed both from the difficulty of their circumstances but especially also from the anxiety or bitterness of heart that can come with difficult circumstances. By having someone to make aware of the situation, the Lord turns the difficult circumstance from obstacle to opportunity.

b. **Make decisions.** But it is not expected that they will merely hear the complaints. They must have liberty and authority to do something about these complaints. They have decision-making power. Here, for instance, they would make new (and adapting) policy for the collection of funds, the procurement of food with those funds, and the distribution of what was collected.

c. **Oversee service in necessities** (v3).

- i. **Necessities.** “This business”—*chreia*, whatever is needed; in this case, serving “tables” (v2). The widows were not the only ones who would have to get their substance in this way. The apostles themselves must come to be dependent upon the distribution, if they were not already so.
- ii. **Receive and administer the collections.** Up to this point, wherever the apostles were, whenever someone knew of a need and had sold something in order to supply that need, the benefactor would come lay the money at the apostles’ feet (cf. 4:34–5:2). Now that will be done with the deacons. The idea of laying at the feet is one of giving up claim and control. This is a highly authoritative administration.
- iii. **Many other things.** They will not always have convenient, public locations. There are many other things that become needed to facilitate readiness for the gatherings of the church and then within the gathering itself.

2. **The Qualifications of the Deacon** (v3)

- a. **Men.** The male specific word. This does not surprise, since we have already determined that it is a position of authority. Women can and must be involved in the labor of the service and even given discretion to an extent that the deacons think wise. But it is male-overseen (cf. 1Tim 2:12).
- b. **Witness** (reputation of fruit). The word “witness” can be used in two ways here. One is that their character testifies of their faith. The other is that others testify of their character. The latter is primarily in view, but it does not exist without the former. The church testifies of their character because their character is a testimony of their faith. So, they must first of all be men of sound doctrine, or otherwise whatever other good is in them is not a testimony of the fruit of saving faith but of the marvelous common grace of God that can give many an unbeliever and heretic a measure of decent conduct. But the next term brings more specificity.
- c. **Full of the Holy Spirit** (source and nature of fruit). This makes it clear that the Lord Himself is choosing the deacons, because He not only describes the qualifications of the deacon, but He is the One who produces those qualifications in the men that He is giving to the church as a diaconate. It also helps us with what the “witness” is of: not only sound doctrine about Jesus as both Lord and Christ, but then also those particular fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, crucified fleshliness of lust or covetousness, humble, not provocative (cf. Gal 5:22–26)—as well as diligence, virtue, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love (2Pet 1:5–7). cf. Ex 18:20, “able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness”
- d. **Wisdom** (track record of application of that fruit). Wisdom is skill in practice; it takes that good doctrine and good character and exercises it in dependence upon the Lord, as directed by the Lord, with outcomes that are blessed of the Lord. In 1Tim 3: 10–13, we learn that this is first shown true in their own house, with their own wives and children and households (v11–12), and then it is separately tested in which test they must be found blameless (v10).

Conclusion: Many things are necessary, and the Lord has given the congregation as a whole the better part. May He give us such ministry by such men as will enable us all to attend well upon that better part.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording referenced above)

Acts five verse 42. Through six verse 7. These are the words of God and daily in the temple. And in every house, They did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. 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.

Then the 12 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 and the saying pleased the whole multitude and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit and Philip procurus nick, and or to maan parmina's, and Nicholas.

A prosely light from Antioch him, they set before the apostles. And when they had prayed, they laid hands on them, Then the word of God spread and the number of the disciples multiplied, greatly in Jerusalem and a great many of the priests world. Obedient to the faith. Oh man, Once you have just heard read of the words of God, We looked to him.

Now, to add his blessing also to the preaching of it, Please be seated.

Last work. When we last week when we began to hear about deacons from this passage and we heard about the purpose of the deacons. Why was this office? And the appointing of these men to this office necessary. We saw that the apostles needed to give themselves entirely and continually to something else, both in their public and evangelistic ministry and in their every house ministry and the necessity of their giving themselves continually, then to prayer and to the ministry of the word.

Because there is an ascended enthroned, Redeemer, the Lord. Jesus Christ, who has poured out his Holy Spirit. Now, and who by that spirit, is granting repentance, and forgiveness of sins, through the preaching of His Word and the core ministry of the apostles, and the core ministry of the church, is the prayer to this Lord, for the work of the Spirit.

And then the teaching and preaching, by which the Lord does this work by which the Spirit does? This work.

Now it is wonderful and glorious that the Lord Jesus is coming again. When his elect had been brought to faith, when the work of gathering in his church has been done and wonderful and glorious. That in that day, When he returns with his saints, we will all be blameless in holiness, as the apostle was rejoicing over, even in our reading in first Thessalonians 3.

But we are not there and that is not yet and there are things that are necessary. Now things that if we don't attend well to them, then it hinders the primary work that continues from the resurrection or really from Pentecost to the return and in order to navigate those obstacles.

God now gives his church deacons and in order to navigate those obstacles for us, we look to God that He would, according to his word, give us Deacons that. They would be ones who do the work for which deacons are set apart because they have been recognized as the men Him.

God has set apart for that work and we will seek in our remaining time today to consider those two things. What is this work of the deacon that was being handed off from the apostles and what men has God appointed for that work? How are we to recognize then?

Since he does not make, you know some kind of deaconal colored aura to shine around them. How are we to know which ones to choose for the work? Because it's all his. Isn't it? The ones whom he chooses for the work of leading in prayer and the preaching, and the teaching We need to have the ones that he has, chosen do the work that he has set apart them for because they are the ones whom he has redeemed and gift it and graced in order for that work.

Well, the same for the deacons, So we see in the first place today, that the work of the deacon is to oversee. Everything that is needed in order. That that worship evangelism and discipleship. Ministry of the word and prayer in order that that would proceed. Unhinder The very first thing we see deacons are supposed to do is to receive complaints verse 1 now and those days when the number of disciples was multiplying there arose, a complaint against the Hebrews by the Helleness because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

We're in Jerusalem, still, and that first stage of Jerusalem, Judea Samaria. And to the ends of the earth We're still in Jerusalem. These are all Jews that are being described here but the Jews were basically divided into two different cultures. Those who had grown up in Hebraic culture, Those who are called here, the Hebrews and those who had grown up, perhaps in other places.

Although there was a synagogue for them here, as we'll hear in the subsequent passage when we come to that. And what leads to Steven being martyred? There were those who grew up with Greek culture. Either their families were descended from, or they had traveled from other places in the Roman Empire.

And so they spoke primarily Greek language and they followed primarily Greek custom. And so there was a cultural difference between the two And in the Jerusalem church even under the apostles, remember people, when they knew of a need they would sell what they had and they would bring the proceeds and they would lay them where children at the apostles' feet, right?

And then there would be distribution. But even under the apostles themselves. The distribution had not gone exactly correctly. The number of the disciples was multiplying and since sinners are the only kinds of people this side of glory out of whom, you can make a church, there aren't any non-sinners from whom to make a church more.

Sinners means more sin and more complaints, even when things generally speaking are going well. Even and in this case, because when the number of disciples was multiplying, even when the church itself is full of the Holy Spirit, The teaching and preaching, is according to the Holy Spirit, he himself is displaying miracles and signs by the hands of the apostles to show that what's being preached.

And what's being taught is the words of the Holy Spirit and he's actually redeeming people and conforming them to Christ. So, that Well, not in every case, right? Remember Ananias and Sapphira. But generally speaking, this was a church of spirits. Transformed people who out of love for others, didn't consider the property that they had their own, but everything that they are and everything that they had now for the service of Jesus Christ.

And his church, we say, if only we could have preaching and teaching that was full of the spirit and hearing that was helped by the Spirit and lives that were transformed by the Spirit. Then we would have a church in which sinners complain, against one, another in that starts to hinder, the ministry of the word in prayer.

Well, that would not necessarily be what we would have but that's what they had here. The existence of complaints difficulties in in anything. But here, in this case, in the distribution or management of material things, There's something that will happen in the church and there has to be a mechanism for making the complaint.

If those who could not help their grandmother or the widow next door to them who was of Greek cultural origin. If they didn't have a place to go to let someone know of what was happening, then the whole church would be under the center of the apostle. And first Timothy 5, which those who do not take care of their own have denied, the faith and are worse than an unbeliever.

There has to be a place for people to say. There's a problem and the complaint department of the church is not the elders, It's the deacons.

The apostles needed to be able to give themselves to the work of the Word of God, to serve in the Word of God. Now that word that's that from which we get the words deacon, this table service word. At the end of verse 2, it can be a specific word for this office, but it can also be a word for any kind of service.

And it's often used of apostles or elders referring to their spiritual ministry. This is not apostles over elders. Over congregation both offices are offices of authority, but both offices are also offices of service. God is the one. Who provides both the spiritual bread from heaven? That comes in the Lord, Jesus Christ.

By the ordinary means of grace and there is a sense in which the elders now and the apostles, then were table. Waiters not the ones, who establish the menu, not the ones, who prepare the food servants, who bring the food to the table. So that Christ is the one who is over the church and Christ is the one who is the life of the church, and he has appointed to give his life, not just that he has given his life for the church, and the cross and his continual mediation for us now.

But that he gives his life to the church by these ministries for which Apostles, then and elders. Now have been set apart But the churches to have another group of servants who are table. Waiters because the Lord has provided for us materially too. And not just spiritually. He is not like the wicked man who says be warm and well fed and does nothing about it.

And so in the complaint arises against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, the apostles do not give a sermon on how these Israelites. Sure sound a lot. Like, those other Israelites who came out of Egypt and who should just take their complaints and so their lips shut, and be grateful that they get an apostolic ministry.

Because God has attended to our earthly needs. Not just our eternal needs, and it's actually essential to attend to earthly needs in order to facilitate eternal and spiritual ministry by the elders ministers must be freed. Not only from the time that it takes to answer a complaint. But from the toll that it takes upon them to be pressured to do as pleases.

The people rather than as pleases God, It's a constant battle for elders. For those who minister the Word that we resist the temptation to preach and teach to you to rule over you in the Lord it's another word for the

office is overseers or rulers to shepherd and pastor you It's a constant temptation to do all those things in the way that we think you will like best.

But you don't want it to be the way that you like best. That would be the judgment on Rhea. Bone. Wouldn't it that we just pleaded with God not to have to come upon us and our children

They need to see that the word is taught, so that all things can be continually formed by the scripture and reformed by the Scripture because we're looking to God, the Holy Spirit to do it. And although we depend immediately on his power, He gives us means by which to depend upon his power.

Let me look to the Holy Spirit, not to accomplish what we want, but what he wants. And those who preach and teach in shepherd, and rule in the church, need to be able to give themselves to the Word of God, to be servants of the work. The people also.

However, need to be freed. Both from the difficulty of your circumstances and the challenge that that difficulty presents to, you're still sinful hearts. Because when you hear a glorious gospel of how Jesus has not only atoned for sinners. So that their sin is forgiven but delivered them from its power so that they can be cleansed from sin's presence and on the last day be sinless and blameless.

And holy Then not only do does the inconvenience of lacking in material things or poorly managed material things. Not only does that inconvenience hinder us. It's hard to listen to the Word when you're starving. It's hard to gather for worship when you can't afford to get there. So there's an hindrance by inconvenience but there's also an hindrance by inconsistency, isn't there?

It's hard to come and hear a gospel of how Jesus delivers people from living to glorify themselves and enjoy themselves forever. And they are forgiven by the atonement of Jesus. And now they're supposed to be transformed by the life of Jesus living to glorify God and enjoy God forever.

But you're not on the receiving end of loving God, with all the heart, soul, mind and strength. You're not on the receiving end of others. Loving you as Christ. First loved us.

And so the inconsistency becomes a hindrance and we are in danger of being embittered in spirit and anxious about earthly things, Deacons serve the church and administer over the use of earthly things and the distribution of charitable giving. But they serve the church not just for spiritual purpose for the minister, but a spiritual purpose for the congregation that these obstacles.

Whether they be in the weakness of our nature, You know, the hunger and comfort, and ability to gather, and right time, and right, temperature and whatever else. But also, the wickedness of our nature. The remaining sin from our original nature that instead of being able to listen to the sermon, you are distracted by all the things with which you are dissatisfied.

You feel that you are not hurt. Now, that doesn't mean it's the deacons fault that you're sinful. That means that you should see that God knows that that's a problem and you should look to him also to help you by His Holy Spirit to produce the fruit of the Spirit in you, that you would not be distracted by your own, bitterness and complaining and anxiety, the God would give you contentment.

Even if you're not hurt because he's just reminded us that the church is full of sinners but he does give you an outlet and he does give you help and you get help from the deacons with the earthly part of it and you come to your shepherds and you let them know that you're you're you're struggling with the spiritual part of it and they lead you in the use of the means of grace in your private life and your family life and in your preparation for and attendance upon and then improvement of after the means of grace and the public worship.

And so you just get flooded by showered by the help of God, the Father, Son and spirit who has given us. All of these means by which to overcome these obstacles. So Deacons are the complaint department because we can be hindered by the inconvenience of earthly needs. And the inconsistency that we see and respond with bitterness to or complaint against murmuring, grumbling against deacons received complaints deacons make decisions, this might go without saying But the deacons are not the first people you hear after the seven minutes of music, you didn't want to listen to where you get the first person and they say that they, you know, how can I help you?

And you tell them whatever your complaint is, and you have to figure out whatever, the magic words are in their process to escalate to the next level, that you're trying to figure out, there's something in the way this customer service works and then I can get to the elders, Then I can get to someone who can make an actual decision, right?

That first guy can never do anything for you. He just repeat to you the company policy over and over again and lead you through the 11 steps that you already did. Or you wouldn't have wasted your time calling and subjecting yourself to that and you got to figure out how to get to the guy who can make a decision.

We laugh, because we've been through it, but the church often makes the same mistakes and it's forgive the term customer service relationships.

You don't need to have a diakonet that every time they want to make a decision are asking the elders. What they want and think because that defeats the purpose of freeing, the elders for the part of the ministry that was supposed to be theirs. The deacons are not just the complaint department.

They're the decision making department. Now, we're sometimes not good at recognizing. What is something? That is an earthly and temporal and material need or issue that needs to be addressed. And sometimes there's a theological principle that's behind things being the way that there are. And so it's good for their to be communication, But there isn't a whole lot.

That's that's theological about making sure the delivery runs on time except that everybody knows a good theology. Says, you should make sure the delivery runs on time and that everybody gets what they need. So it is implied here. When they say it is not desirable that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables.

What we will give ourselves continually to prayer in the ministry of the Word. Not only that they're looking for and that God is giving the church a group of men now, who would receive the complaints, but a group of men who are authorized to make decisions. It's a position of authority And yes, the word means service.

And so when the, the ARP was following, its northern sisters in in departing from what we're taught in this passage, that only men may serve in the office of deacon, one of the things that was necessary, was to redefine a way from the Bible, what the office, what the nature of the office was.

So it's just it's an office of service Office of Minister. An elder as an office of service, But they're both also offices of authority. They have decision making power here. For instance, The deacons would come up with a new policy for the collection of funds. The procurement of food with those funds, the distribution of what was collected and then some kind of quality check to make sure that the Hellenists are no longer being neglected.

There are a lot of decisions that have to be made here in order to handle these complaints, and it's really, it stretches us beyond credulity to come to the text and say, oh well, the deacons were supposed to take the complaints but not make the decisions. No, it was, it was authoritative.

It was authoritative not just in the necessity of how it arises but now in verse 3 because they're not just to receive complaints and make decisions but oversee and all necessary things. 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.

Now, the word translated over is a preposition that when it used with the case of a word that's translated here business in that particular circumstance, it's a spatial relation, type word, generally speaking upon on top of, It is an act of authority. The work is a work of authority and it is a work of authority in necessary things.

The word that's translated. Business is just a word that means needful or necessary. Something that has to be attended to The people can't gather. If they don't know where and they won't gather well, if they don't know when and if they're medical and physical needs are not accommodated, both at home so that they are free to come.

But then also, when they arrive, Then there will be all these things that inhibit us because we live in this world and we are afflicted with these decaying bodies.

And so in this case, what was needed is referred to as the table service. In verse two, the apostles are not saying that these things are unimportant, The word that's translated. Business has the opposite. Meaning it means something that is necessary.

The widows are not the only ones who are, who have to get their substance in this way. The apostles themselves are going to come to be if they're not already, it doesn't give us that much. Information are going to come to me for their earthly maintenance dependent upon what is given, which is another reason that they shouldn't be in charge of how it's distributed is a good reason why you should never talk to me or ask me about anything with money in the church.

I should have nothing to do with it, except that you should give it. And whenever material things get, in the way of my being able to give myself to the ministry to which I have been called, I should have the humility to let the deacons know or family is struggling in a way.

That's getting becoming an obstacle for me and I care about my family dearly, I would be a bad man if I didn't. It's it's whatever is needed The apostles, themselves are going to come and to the point where they're dependent upon the distribution if if they're not already. So And so one of the main works of the deacons to receive and administer the collections up to this point wherever the apostles were, when someone knew of a need and had sold something in order to be able to supply for that, need the benefactor would come and lay the money where at the apostles' feet?

Now they say, don't do that with us anymore. Do it with the deacons. They're the ones whom we're setting over this business. So without any information as to what they said about the collecting and it's probably something that these seven men now have to come up with the implication is that the people would now come and lay it at the Deacon's feet.

The idea is that the one who lays something that someone else's feet is giving up their right to and authority over it. There's something here. That is at odds with designated giving isn't there. The gift is laid at the feet. And so the the deacons are to receive and administer the the collection.

It's up to them how they do that. It's one of the things, by the way, one of the many things that the, you can see, the collection wasn't in the public worship, the Word and the breaking of bread. And the prayers that was being led by the apostles and the public worship.

The collecting was done by now not laying at the apostles feet but laying at the deacons fee. They were the ones who would administer this. And there are many other things that would fall under the word that is translated business here because they'll not always have convenient public locations to worship.

The church isn't supposed to stay in Jerusalem, which had convenient public locations with the church would spread to other places and very quickly. Everywhere. The gospel went, they wouldn't be allowed to use the synagogue Even when persecution would arise and they have to gather in the catacombs, We hear about that the the tomb tunnels underneath the city of Rome.

And it sounds. So romantic to us, It is not romantic. And the actual work is really going to be necessary then because you're worshiping in a place that nobody else knows how to find. And so, the Christians need to know how to find it. It works area in a place that has no light.

So, they got to make sure that they have enough lighting supplies and the people who use it have

There are necessary things and they are to oversee it. Well, that's the work of the Deacon. What about the qualifications of the deacon Therefore brethren seek out from among you seven? Men, we should stop there. There are a few different words or at least two different words that might could be translated men.

This one is male specific. It's not a general word that could mean men or women. It means that why chromosomes for those who are biologically challenged which is our culture. Now God, have mercy. Y chromosomes are necessary for the Office of the deaconet. Some male specific word, it's not surprising.

We've already determined. It is a position of authority women can and must be involved in the labor of the service, but they don't have authority over the service.

That is male overseen. First Timothy chapter 2 when the apostle is talking about how women should not fulfill the function of elder in the church or even, and we don't have time to go and do all of that. And first Timothy do but authority in the home over their husbands.

He doesn't use the word for elder. He says, he doesn't allow woman to rule, or to teach Why? Because God has established men to be the rulers and teachers in the home and in the church. So, first qualification of the deacon is that he must be a man. This means that we have yet another reason why the discipleship of boys into men is so vital for the life.

Not only of the home and of the state, but of the church because you get yourself if you're not discipling, the boys, if you're not discipling, the men, you get yourself into a situation where people say, but none of the males. Have these other qualities. Then you say, Well God forgive us because our own irresponsibility and negligence has left us with no one qualified and you repent and you cry out for mercy.

You don't say oh well we don't have qualified men but we do have some qualified women. No that's oxymoron. There are no qualified women for the Office of Deacon, and there are no qualified women for the office of elder because there's no such thing as a qualified woman. Men is part of the qualification.

They are men in whom the spirit has produced fruit. Therefore brethren seek out from among you seven. Men of good reputation. The word is witness. The word witness can be used and is probably indicative of two different things. Here One. Is that their character witnesses to their faith? The other is that others testify witness about this character.

The latter is primarily in view When he says seek out from among you seven, men of good witness, It implies. Of course, that what kind of a man they are, is observable. But what is being said, here? Is that others have observed it? If you are called to the office of deacon, You aren't going to be the only one that God tells.

He will show it to his church by this fruit that he produces in. You the reputation of the fruit is important, The church, testifies of their character because their character is a testimony of their faith. They are full of the Holy Spirit. This is what you're looking for. Since the Spirit produces particular fruit, we are, we are to take those about whom.

There is witness to and of that fruit. So that's the next one. Not just men not just of good reputation and this witness but who are full of the Holy Spirit. Now, one thing that this means is they have right? And proper doctrine. There is no such thing as somebody who has the character of a Christian without the theology of a Christian.

He might be a caricature of a Christian, some surface things that may or may not be exaggerated But he holds to what God the Holy Spirit has been announcing about. Jesus Christ that he is the one who enjoyed

chapter 2 would pour out his spirit from heaven. That he is the one upon whose name everyone who calls will be saved.

This is why the entry into the church is no narrower than the entry into the kingdom, You believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you're saved. And you have a credible profession of faith near welcomed into the church and covenant signs are administered, come to the table. Not. So the offices of the church, The deacon is full of the Holy Spirit.

Well, the first thing he does is believe and hold to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We're going to see in the following chapters that Stephen has really been paying attention to and helped by the Holy Spirit to hold to the doctrine that the apostles had been preaching. About Jesus Christ.

We're going to see that Philip. Another one of the seven men that we are that we are given. Here is the one by whom God actually sends the gospel to Africa.

And so a man who is full of the Holy Spirit is going to be somebody who holds to the truth that the church believes and preaches and teaches someone who is ready to give an answer. Someone, who understands comprehensively. This is one of the reasons why a deacon if they are going to be recognized and installed to the office needs to have theological training.

And if your church confesses that the Westminster Standards summarize, the teaching of the scripture, they ought to pass us an exam Bible knowledge and Westminster Theology which is just Bible knowledge you say well I didn't see the training and examination of the men here. Well, training was what the Apostles were doing that.

They didn't want to give up doing in order to deacon and examination is full of the spirit. But if you have doctrine, but not character, You're not full of the spirit either. Are you your doctrine can be accurate but not good. It may exactly conform in the way you verbalize it.

Write theology. And yet you would not be someone who holds to it in a way that the Spirit has used to reproduce the character of Jesus in you. And so you have both, You have to have both neither the doctrine, nor the character can be missing. Children as you recite your catechisms and learn your catechisms, You need to be praying that God would make those right phrases to be the things that your mind and heart are full of every day as you interact with Him every day.

As you interact with yourself in your own heart Every day. As you interact with others that the Holy Spirit would convince you of the correct doctrine that your brains and lips are learning to repeat. It must be men. They must have good witness. They must be full of the Holy Spirit So they must be full of love and joy.

Peace. We probably lost most of us already. Haven't we peace? Patience. Kindness. Goodness faithfulness should probably stop. The conscience is approaching me because we took so much time that I'm not getting to explain each of these things as intended. So we will stop so we can come back to the character that the right doctrine produces because it's an important and necessary thing.

We want to see God, the Father, who gave his son in the fullness of time and who gave His Spirit to us. We want to see Him produce the spiritual ministry in the word and prayer that we ought to have for which this deacon ministry in material things is necessary so that he will respond with the kind of spiritual life that the attendance to both of those things produces and not be stuck in this Addiction to earthly nests.

But to live in the earth as those who belong to eternity and reflect Christ. In an ungodly age, Many things are necessary. The Lord has given his church. The better part, He's given his church, the Mary part, but somebody's got to do the Martha work and he's given us deacons for that May the Lord.

So work by his spirit in us that we won't say What will we do? There are no men who are qualified, but how can we choose with so many men who are qualified? The Lord grant, that? That would be the question for us. Oh man! Let's pray. Let's ask him to bless his word to us.

Father, we have preached and weakness, and We have heard in weakness, but your grace is sufficient for us. And your strength is made, perfect and weakness. We pray for the ongoing ministry of your spirit, to make us. Meditate upon this and the parts of your word that are more directly connected.

Some of which we have made reverence reference to. We pray. Lord that You would transform us according to the image of Christ and that that would be visible among our congregation. That things that had become obstacles would instead become opportunities for demonstration of your spirits genuine work in us and among us.

And that the end of result, the end result of your word. Multiplying greatly would be something that we get to participate in that you do through us and to us and make us rejoice over that we would be praising you for generations and that they would write history about what happened when we came back and just tried to do it your way and dependence upon your spirit.

And so, keep blessing the preaching and hearing of your word by your spirit. We ask In Jesus name. Amen.