

Biblical Leadership Selected Scriptures

Introduction

In 1530 Melanchthon drew up the Augsburg Confession, which in Article VII stated that “this Church is the congregation of the saints in which the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered. And for that true unity of the Church it is enough to have unity of belief concerning the teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.

In 1553 Thomas Cranmer produced the Forty-two Articles of the church of England in which he wrote that “The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached and the sacraments be duly administered.”

John Calvin writes in his Institutes that “Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ’s institution, there, it is not to be doubted, a church of God exists.”

The Belgic Confession (1561), Article 29, said, “The marks by which the true Church is known are these: If the pure doctrine of the gospel is preached therein; if she maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ; if church discipline is exercised in punishing of sin;

in short, if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God, all things contrary thereto rejected, and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only Head of the Church.”

The church is generated by the right preaching of the Word; the church is contained and distinguished by the right administration of baptism and the Lord’s Supper and Discipline

It is clear from the Word of God and church History that nothing can be more important to a local church than getting the preaching of the Gospel and the administering of the sacraments and church discipline right, The World is full of churches that have deviated from these important truths and have reaped the results of a spiritually dead yet secularly successful ministry.

But it needs to be noted, **that right at the top** along with the priority of the gospel and the sacraments is **church Leadership.**

The leadership of a church can make or break any ministry.

Today we have to be very careful to distinguish between the leadership the world desires in the church and the leadership that Christ desires in Church.

The World desire Chief Executive Officers
The Lord desires Humble Servants

The World desires Leaders that get Results no matter what

The Lord desire Leaders that Love Christ no matter what

The World desires Leaders that produce large numbers

The Lord desires Leaders that produce disciples of Christ

The World desires Leaders that produce large Cash flows

The Lord desires Leaders that believe in giving it all away

The World desires Leaders that are self motivated

The Lord desires Leaders that learn to die to self

The World desires Leaders that are Successful

Thee Lord desires Leaders that are Faithful

Much of what is being taught in church and seminaries regarding church leadership is foreign to the New Testament. It is a completely secularized view of leadership that has a few bible verses sprinkled in to make is look spiritual.

If fact to call the church back to Biblical, Godly Male leadership, if looked as with scorn and as outdated, not up with the times.

More and more, the qualifications and responsibilities of Biblical Leadership are being set aside, redefined or avoided altogether for the sake of

unity, political correctness, liberal feminism, or the purpose driven success orient ecclesiastical philosophy of the modern seeker driven church,

So with that said

Let me say that some of the best times I have had in the ministry has been with my brothers in leadership, through the good and the bad. So of my fondest memories are times I had with my deacons
And.... some of the worst times I have had have been with some deacons,

That reminds me of a story

Deacon Jones had a Baptist horse named Son-of-Deacon. Well, a new pastor had come to lead the church, but had no transportation. So Deacon Jones agreed to sell So-of-Deacon to the Pastor.

As they were talking, the Deacon told pastor, that to get him going you had to say "Praise the Lord" and to get him to stop, you had to say "Amen!"

So the pastor tried it. "Praise the Lord" and the horse started, once again Pastor said "Praise the Lord" and the horse went even faster! Finally, after one more strong "Praise the Lord" Son-of-Deacon was at a full gallop. Soon the pastor was coming to a cliff. "Whoa, whoa, whoa,

whoa" , but the horse would not stop! Finally, Pastor Mitchell remembers "Amen" and the horse stop on a dime just inches from the 500 foot cliff. Relieved that he was now safe from harm, Pastor Mitchell took off his hat, wiped his brow, look up to Heaven and said "Praise the Lord"

So...

What is Biblical Leadership???

I. The Clarification

There are 2 offices in the church, or 2 groups of leaders

Elders and Deacons

no more, no less. nothing else

Deacons are not elders, and elders are not deacons.

Elders may have been deacons in the past but they are 2 separate offices in the church

Many churches, particularly Southern Baptist have unnecessarily blurred the distinction between elders and deacons, often making deacons act as elders in the church.

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Phil 1:1

Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

I Tim 3

We have mentioned first the office of Bishop/Elder/
Pastor **v. 1**

then we have mentioned the office of Deacon in
verse 8

clearly a distinction

So there are 2 types of leaders in the Church.

Elder and Deacon.

Elders Identification and Resposibilitiies

Acts 20

Acts 20:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the **elders of the church.**

Acts 20:28–31 (NKJV)

²⁸ Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you

overseers, to **shepherd** the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

1 Peter 5:1–3 (NKJV)

5 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:
² **Shepherd** the flock of God which is among you, serving as **overseers**, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; ³ nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock;

Elders refer to spiritual Maturity

Overseer refers to his Office

Shepherd refers to his function

1.Their Plurality

2.Their Authority

3.Their Priority

1.Their Plurality

Titus 1:5 (NKJV)

⁵ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you—

Acts 14:23 (NKJV)

²³ So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

James 5:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

2.Their Authority

Acts 15:4–6 (NKJV)

⁴ And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.

⁵ But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.”

⁶ Now the apostles and elders came together to consider this matter.

1 Timothy 5:17(NKJV)

¹⁷ Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine.

1 Thessalonians 5:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³ and to esteem them very highly in love for their work’s sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

Hebrews 13:7 (NKJV)

⁷ Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of *their* conduct.

Hebrews 13:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.

3.Their Priority

Ephesians 4:11–15 (NKJV)

¹¹ And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some **pastors and teachers,** ¹² **for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,** ¹³ **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; ¹⁴ **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, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

Acts 20:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, **to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.**

1 Peter 5:2 (NKJV)

2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you,
 serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly,
 not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

Simply put, Elders deal more with the teaching of the Word of God and the application of that Word to the Body of Christ whereas

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Deacons are servants, and Biblically have been given the task of the physical necessities of the church.

Deacons do not carry authority in the church, except that which the church and or elders have deemed it necessary to carry out the ministry.

To see this distinction lets turn to Acts 6

II.The Concern

Acts 6:1

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.

⁴ but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

A. **The Problem Of Multiplication** – The Spirit had stopped adding to the church, **Acts 2:47**, and He had started multiplying. 3,000 men had been saved at Pentecost; another 5,000 men had been saved shortly thereafter. Add to this their wives, children and other family, and you can see that the church growing by leaps and bounds. It is estimated that the church in Jerusalem numbered between 20,000 and 50,000 at this time. (Ill. As a church grows larger so does its potential for problems. As a church grows larger so does its need for strong, godly leadership.)

B. **The Problem Of Murmuring** – There were two classes of people in the early church. There were the Aramaic speaking Jews who were native to Israel, and there were the Greek speaking, Hellenistic Jews that had come back from various parts of the world. The Hellenists were Jews that lived in Greek speaking countries. They were loyal Jews, but they had absorbed some of the Greek culture where they lived. They were different from their native Jewish brothers and there was a little friction between them.

Hellenist

This was not a dissension between races as many have inferred. It was not a case of Greek set against Hebrew; both groups were Hebrews. Those who complained were Grecian Jews or Hellenists. The Hellenists were Jews who were reared in a country where the Greek language was spoken and who had learned to speak Greek. They held to the Hebrew religion and were really Hebrews. Those within Palestine, particularly in Jerusalem, spoke Hebrew or Aramaic and held more closely to the Hebrew customs and traditions. The antagonism between these two parties had arisen during the days of the Maccabees.

The Bible tells us that they were “*murmuring*”. This word refers to “*secret debate; whispering*”. People were talking about others in a negative manner behind their backs. That is always a problem!

Satan had already attacked the young church in two ways. He tried persecution, **Acts 4:1-31; 5:17-41**; and he had tried introducing sin into the church, **Acts 5:1-11**. Both attacks failed and only caused the church to grow faster. Now, he tries a new tactic. If he cannot defeat the church from without, he will attack it from within! If he can divide the people, he will be able to cripple the church!

The same is still true today! If the devil cannot infiltrate us and attack us from without, you can rest assured that he will try to do it from within. He will do everything he can to divide us and cause us to attack one another. There is no place for anger, unforgiveness, division and trouble in the church! That kind of thing is deadly to a congregation, **Matt. 12:25**. What the church needs to thrive is unity, **Phil. 1:27; 1 Cor. 1:10; Phil. 2:1-4; Eph. 4:31-32**. If there are divisive people in the church that refuse to walk in unity with the brethren, here is the Lord’s counsel regarding them, **Rom. 16:17; Phil. 3:17**.

C. **The Problem Of Ministry** – The Greek speaking widows were not getting their share of the daily food supply. The early church was committed to meeting the needs of its members.

In those days the people sold their goods and pooled their resources to see that every member had what they needed, **Acts 2:44-45**. Some of the more affluent people in the church, like Barnabas, sold houses and lands and gave the money to meet the needs of others, **Acts 4:34-37**.

Evidently, the Apostles were responsible for seeing to it that the people, but especially the widows, had the food and essentials they needed to live. As the church grew, the task became too large for the Apostles and some people were inevitably missed in the daily food allotments.

The Greek speaking element of the church apparently felt like this oversight was deliberate and they spoke up about it. The problem

was this: there was too much to do and not enough hours to do it in. As a result, some things were left undone and it caused problems in the church.

(Note: The church still faces the problem of ministry. In our day the sole burden for ministry in the church, in most cases, has been placed on the shoulders of the Pastor. In a small church this is a barely possible task. If everything is left up to the Pastor, some people are going to be neglected and they are going to be offended. Problems will come and the church will suffer..)

III. The Call

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.”

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.

Out of Necessity , the call was made for men to be selected and appointed over the physical matters of the church so that the Elders could give there attention to the spiritual matters. Prayer and the Word.

IV. The Character

I Tim 3: 8

Likewise deacons *must be* reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, ⁹ holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. ¹⁰ But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless. ¹¹ Likewise, *their wives must be* reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. ¹² Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well. ¹³ For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

You'll notice from these verses that God is far more interested in the spiritual maturity and moral character of the deacon than He is in the exact role a deacon fills within the local body of believers.

Church conflicts happen for pretty unusual reasons. In the 1890s there was a small Baptist church in Mayfield County, Kentucky. The church had just two deacons,

and those two men seemed to be constantly arguing and bickering with each other. On a particular Sunday, one deacon put up a small wooden peg in the back wall so the pastor could hang up his hat. When the other deacon discovered the peg, he was outraged. "How dare someone put a peg in the wall without first consulting me!" The people in the church took sides and the congregation eventually split. Over a hundred years later, residents of Mayfield County still refer to the two churches as Peg Baptist and Anti-Peg Baptist.

With that in mind, let's examine what God expects from these deacons.

v.8 Likewise deacons *must be* reverent,

1) The first requirement is that deacons be reverent.

- This is an older word that we have lost a sense of in this generation.
- It speaks to a life that is marked by personal dignity, a seriousness of purpose and self-respect in conduct.
- The reverent person is one who carries himself in such a way that they earn the respect of other people.

2) The second requirement is to not be double-tongued.

v. 8 not double-tongued,

- To be double-tongued is to talk out both sides of your mouth. You tell one person one thing, and the next person something else.

- But Jesus says in Matthew 5:37, “But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’”

- It’s bad enough when Christians don’t speak straight, but it can be disastrous

when deacons are caught being duplicitous.

- It can lead to dissension, accusations and worse.

Proverbs 6:16-19 deals with

this. The deacon who spreads innuendo, gossip and lies through an insincere

tongue can do major damage to the church.

3) Third, the deacon is not to be given to much wine.

v. 8 not given to much wine,

- The man called to be a deacon must be self-controlled. This is part of the reverence we saw earlier.

- He is also a model for not only those in the church, but for those outside.

- Romans 14:21 says, “It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.”
- This goes for all believers, but the deacons and elders are called specifically to mind how they think and act toward wine.
- To be “given” toward wine means that it has a hold on one’s mind...that it draws away one’s attention. It’s the same word that Paul uses in the next chapter of 1 Timothy, 4:13, when he says, “Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.”
- For the deacon, alcohol should not gain his attention.

4) The fourth directive concerns a deacon’s attitude toward money.

v. 8 not greedy for money,

- Paul writes that the deacon should not be “greedy for money”.
- It should never be the case that a deacon has such a love for money that it negatively impacts his integrity.
- And this isn’t just in the church, this is in all aspects of his life.
- Jesus says in Luke 16:13, “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will

hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise

the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

- It's an impossibility to be an effective deacon, called to a high level of spiritual service, and have divided loyalties because of materialism and the love of money.

5) **The fifth requirement for deacons is a real faith.**

v. 9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

- Paul uses the word “mystery” often in his epistles. But the mystery he speaks of is not like being in some cult or secret society where only a few know the true beliefs of the group.
- For Paul, the mystery is the revealed revelation of Jesus Christ in the form of the gospel, “which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints” (Colossians 1:26).
- The deacon is to hold this mystery of the faith, the gospel of Jesus Christ with a pure conscience.
- Scholar H. C. Hahn writes this about how Paul and the early church viewed the conscience: “The Greeks saw conscience as something bad operating retrospectively.

Christians came to see conscience as being made clean through trust. Its purity lay in the believer's knowledge of his standing in Christ."

- Having a pure conscience has two practical applications:
- First, the qualified deacon must be a blood washed believer in Jesus Christ, who has followed in believer's baptism.
- Second, his theology and his actions must be in line with one another. He can't be living a lie, spouting Scripture on one hand and living like the devil on the other. His walk and his talk must match up.

6) Requirement number six is that the deacon must be tested.

v ¹⁰ But let these also first be tested;

- The word we translate as "tested" can also mean "proved" or "scrutinized".
- This is the same word Paul uses in 1 Thessalonians 5:21: "Test all things; holdfast what is good."
- The reality is that these men have been in the process of testing for some time. They had to meet the criteria of deacon before they were recommended. We see this same thing in Acts 6:1-6, which gives us the account of the selection of the seven.

- Verse 3 is of special note: these were to be men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.
- The people had to already know this about these men. The examination had been going on for some time.

7) The result of this testing is the seventh requirement...a blameless life.

v. 10 then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless.

- This isn't speaking of sinless perfection. None of us can claim that.
- But blamelessness refers to a life that is not burdened by accusations of impropriety.
- The life of the deacon is marked by freedom from charges, both within the church and in the community as a whole.

8) The lynchpin to the effectiveness of this husband/wife team is the eighth requirement for the deacon, which is that he is the husband of one wife.

v¹² Let deacons be the husbands of one wife,

- He is to be a one woman man. Many have said that this means a divorced man

cannot be a deacon, or that it means that polygamists are disqualified.

- However, the reality is that the standard is much higher. It calls for total devotion, absolute faithfulness and moral integrity in regards to his wife.

- There have been many men who became deacons and had only had one wife, yet they had affairs, were consumed by lust or treated their wives harshly or with disinterest.

- In actuality, all of these men were disqualified to serve as deacons.

- God requires deacons who love their wives and whose marriages, both publicly and privately are exemplary.

10)The last requirement is consistency in their homes.

v. 12 ruling *their* children and their own houses well.

- The qualified deacon who has children still living in his home will bring them up to honor God.

- We can see this in the home of Philip, one of the original seven, in Acts 21:8-9.

Notice that the daughters were pure and that they proclaimed the Word of God.

- Deacons will be entrusted with many responsibilities within the church, and must be counted on to perform well. A man whose home is not in order will not likely do well outside his own home either.

Paul offers two promises in verse 13 to those who serve well as deacons:

1 Timothy 3:13 (NKJV)

¹³ For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

- He first says that **they will obtain a good standing**. This is how they will be viewed by the members of the church. Don't take good deacons for granted, folks, because they are not that easy to find. When a man is faithful as a deacon, he should receive the honor of the church.
- The faithful deacon **will also obtain great boldness in the faith**. This means that they will experience a deepening of their faith and a stronger relationship with Christ as they submit to His leadership.
- You can see this in the lives of both Philip, who we've already mentioned and Steven. Philip became a bold evangelist, and was the first to proclaim the gospel to the Samaritans, as well as to a Gentile, in the person of the Ethiopian eunuch. Steven was the first Christian martyr, and the sermon he preached at his stoning was rife with the power of the Holy Spirit.

- So gentlemen, as you serve Christ well in the office of deacon, we look forward to seeing your boldness in the faith.

As I said earlier, Scripture is more interested in the spiritual qualifications of deacons than it is in the details of their ministry. But at the core of their role is service. The word for deacon is servant. They are not called to control the church, but to lead through service. The passage from Acts 6 portrays men who care for the physical and spiritual needs of the church. The constitution of this church bases its requirements for deacons on this model.

9) Verse 11 extends the requirements to the **wives of elders and deacons** and requires four things from her.

- She is first called to **be reverent**, just as her husband is.

What sense does it

make to have a man who carries himself with dignity, but his wife is generally regarded as a flake?

- Second, she is **not to be a slanderer**.

- The Greek word here is diabolos, which when used as a noun refers to the devil.

- He is also known as the accuser, so the reference here is to someone who goes around making false accusations about others.

- She is also called upon to **be temperate**, which means that she too should abstain from alcohol.

- Last, she should be **faithful in all things**, which means that she is trustworthy and reliable.
- These qualities are in contrast to some of the young widows in Timothy's church, as Paul wrote about later in the book, in 5:13: "And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not."
- The deacon's wife is above all his helpmeet, joined to him in marriage. She can be very effective ministering with him, especially to other women. Her good conduct also is a testimony to his spiritual leadership.

1 Timothy 3:14–15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; ¹⁵ but if I am delayed, *I write* so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

