
Sunday, September 17, 2017
Did You Know?

The Importance of Deacons

When we read the account of the early church in the book of Acts, it is non-stop action. The Apostles were preaching their hearts out, the Holy Spirit was pumping through their veins, and sinners were coming to Jesus. The church was going forward, full speed ahead! As the church continued to grow they started hitting a bunch of speed bumps, one after another. From the outside there was persecution. From the inside there was that nasty incident involving Ananias and Sapphira. When we get to chapter 6, the ministry had gotten so big that the Apostles weren't able to keep up with all their responsibilities. One of their concerns was what to do about the feeding of widows. The demands of this feeding ministry prevented them from doing what they should be have giving priority to -- the preaching of the Word and prayer.

So, the Apostles did something so simple, so practical, and so very basic. They selected seven men, full of faith and the Holy Spirit to take over the feeding ministry. Even though the word 'deacon' is not found in this text, many Bible scholars conclude that this was the appointment of the first deacons in the Church of Jesus Christ. As a result of this organizational change, the Apostles were freed to do their primary ministry and the church continued to grow. That's what I envision for our church as well.

Deacons are leaders in the church. They have been appointed by God. They fulfill an incredibly important role, the role of service. Yes, all Christians are called to serve as we learned last week, but deacons, in particular, are to exemplify Christian service. They are to manage the funds of the church. They are to lead by example. They are to care for those in need in the church family. Acts 6 tells us that this is a spiritual position, meaning that it's not merely for a person that has an ability, but rather possesses a quality. He/she is to be a person of faith. 1 Timothy 3:9 says that deacons are to keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. Acts 6 also tells us that the first deacons were full of the Holy Spirit.

I thank God for our current deacons and the eight new deacons being ordained at the North York campus today. I know that our church will be stronger and will be more able to carry on the work of sharing the Gospel near and far, so all peoples can become devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Soli Deo Gloria
Pastor Peter