

Introduction

We are in the midst of a mini-series on Leadership taken from Philippians 1:1. Healthy and growing churches are always developing leaders. They are committed to the growth and development of their members.

(Philippians 1:1) "Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:"

The first message was on phases of team leadership. Healthy and growing churches are always developing teams.

Our second message was on Servant Leadership. We looked at Jesus' Mindset, Jesus' Message, and Jesus' Mission. Paul tells us in Philippians to have this attitude that was in Christ Jesus. In the text, he tells us that He emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant. We ended by asking some questions about what a church would look like that was full of servants with this kind of attitude..

(Philippians 2:5-7) "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, {6} who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, {7} but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men."

Next, we looked at overseers. We looked at the work of an overseer, the charge to overseers, the calling of overseers, and the qualifications of overseers. The overseers provide a model for the work we do, the way we minister, how we are called, and the way we live our lives.

Today, I want to introduce the office of deacon. I am going to do something a little different for me, I am going to do a historical overview of New Testament leadership, and pull out some tidbits about deacons in the process.

Next week, we will look at the qualifications of deacons. In two more weeks we will look at women in leadership. The Lord spoke to me about doing a message on women in leadership. That is a challenging message to give, because my study and understanding of women in ministry is not complete. I have been studying this topic for many years.

When I planted our first church in 1997, I gave a message about women in leadership to the women. So many of the women had come out of a church background where they were not allowed to have any position of leadership. They were not allowed to lead worship, or to teach or preach. The women needed to be let out of the cage, so I gave a message to them. I have continued to study on my own, and also to read what others have written. Even though I do not feel that I have a full understanding, I believe the Lord would have me to share some things with you.

I. The Choosing of Apostles

In Luke 6, Jesus went off to the mountains to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer. What was so pressing to Him that He went off by Himself and prayed all night? It was the selection of the leaders of the church that was going to be birthed. He had lots of disciples and He wanted to know

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who the Father was calling to be apostles in the church. These twelve men were going to be laying the foundations for the church in Jerusalem, and for the church at large. These men were going to have a tremendous job before them. He needed to be careful about who He chose and laid hands on. The process of choosing leaders is no different today. **We must be very careful about the people that we select and lay hands upon.** Paul tells Timothy not to lay hands on anyone hastily.

(Luke 6:12-13) "And it was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God. {13} And when day came, He called His disciples to Him; and chose twelve of them, whom He also named as apostles:"

(1 Timothy 5:22) "Do not lay hands upon anyone too hastily and thus share responsibility for the sins of others; keep yourself free from sin."

On the time line you will notice that this took place between 27AD and 30 AD. Most historians and theologians agree that the Lord began His public ministry in 27 AD and was crucified in 30 AD. We do not know the exact date that He chose the apostles, but it was during His public ministry. Since the gospel of Luke was written in consecutive order, I believe that this was done toward the early part of His ministry.

In Luke 22, the apostles were having one of their normal conversations about who was going to be the greatest. We see the same things today, that people jockey and maneuver for positions. Jesus tells them that they are not to Lord over people like the kings of the Gentiles do, but they were to become like the youngest and as a servant. **The word for serve is diakoneo, which means to serve, wait upon, or minister to. It comes from the root word diakonos, which means a servant, attendant, minister, or deacon.** Jesus tells us the same message today – that we need to humble ourselves and learn to be servants. **God wants all of us to have the heart of a servant.**

(Luke 22:25-26) "And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who have authority over them are called 'Benefactors.' {26} "But not so with you, but let him who is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as the servant."

G1247. diakoneo, dee-ak-on-eh'-o; from G1249; to be an attendant, i.e. wait upon (mentally or as a host, friend or [fig.] teacher); techn. to act as a Chr. deacon:--(ad-) minister (unto), serve, use the office of a deacon.

G1249. diakonos, dee-ak'-on-os; prob. from an obs. diako (to run on errands; comp. G1377); an attendant, i.e. (gen.) a waiter (at table or in other menial duties); spec. a Chr. teacher and pastor (techn. a deacon or deaconess):--deacon, minister, servant.

Notice that diakonos means servant, but that it also means deacon. **The word deacon is a transliteration.** What that means is that the translators simply made up an English word out of the Greek word, rather than simply translating the word. **The dictionary defines transliterate this way: *to change (letters, words, etc.) into corresponding characters of another alphabet or language: to transliterate the Greek letter x as ch.*** If the various translators had just translated diakonos, we would not have the word deacon. They would have generally used the word servant.

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There are other words that are transliterated. For example, bapto is translated as baptism. Bapto means to immerse or dip. It was used in the clothing industry at the time. People would bapto or immerse their fabrics into a dye. They would make sure that the fabric was fully immersed and soaked so that there was a consistency in the dye. When the early church baptized new converts, they were immersed in water. They chose places where there was much water so that they could immerse the converts.

Because of the transliteration, there is confusion about the practice of baptism. Many churches sprinkle believers rather than immerse. If the word had been translated instead of transliterated, there would have been less confusion about the doctrine of baptism.

In the same way, there is much confusion about deacons because of the transliteration. Some churches have confused the method or process of ordaining elders with the process of appointing deacons in the church. Throughout the New Testament, leaders are referred to as diakonos or servants. For example, in Romans 15:8, and Galatians 2:17, Christ is called a diakonos or servant. **Sometimes diakonos refers to being a servant and sometimes it refers to the office of servant or deacon.**

Christ – (Romans 15:8) "For I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises given to the fathers,"

Christ – (Galatians 2:17) ""But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!"

Apollos and Paul were called servants or diakonos in 1 Corinthians 3:5. Neither Paul nor Apollos were deacons in the church. They were apostles in the church. But according to Christ's instructions, all leaders are to be servants or diakonos in the church. Jesus taught and modeled servant leadership.

(1 Corinthians 3:5) "What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one."

Paul was called a minister in Ephesians 3:7, Colossians 1:23, and Colossians 1:25. Because he was called a minister, many churches have the deacons as the rulers in the church. In many Baptist churches, it is the deacons who run the church. Many Baptist churches have recognized that this is bad theology and have moved towards elder-led churches. All this confusion has come out of the translation of diakonos.

(Ephesians 3:7) "of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power."

(Colossians 1:23) "if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister."

(Colossians 1:25) "Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God,"

II. The Apostles and Elders

The next point on my time line is the death and resurrection of Christ. Most theologians consider the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the starting point of the church. It was at this time that Matthias was added to the other eleven apostles, taking the place of Judas Iscariot, who abandoned his place. This account is given to us in Acts 1:14-26.

(Acts 1:14-26) "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. {15} And at this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, {16} "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. {17} "For he was counted among us, and received his portion in this ministry." {18} (Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. {19} And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) {20} "For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'LET HIS HOMESTEAD BE MADE DESOLATE, AND LET NO MAN DWELL IN IT'; and, 'HIS OFFICE LET ANOTHER MAN TAKE.' {21} "It is therefore necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us-- {22} beginning with the baptism of John, until the day that He was taken up from us-- one of these should become a witness with us of His resurrection." {23} And they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias. {24} And they prayed, and said, "Thou, Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which one of these two Thou hast chosen {25} to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." {26} And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."

I mention this passage because some qualifications for an apostle of the Lamb are given in the text. Many churches use this passage as the proof that there are not apostles today. It says that it was necessary for them to choose someone who accompanied Jesus during His earthly ministry. That was a requirement for an apostle of the Lamb, not all the other apostles. Paul, Barnabas, Apollos, Sylanus, Junia, Silas, James, Timothy, Junias and other people that are named as apostles in the New Testament would not have qualified under this set of requirements. Therefore, we know that this set of requirements was only given for the replacement of Judas Iscariot. **We must be diligent to be good workmen who handle accurately the word of God.**

(2 Timothy 2:15) "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth."

One of the doctrines commonly taught is that Paul was the 12th apostle. They say this because they do not want to open the door to having any other apostles. The problem with this view is two-fold. First, it disagrees with what Luke writes in Acts 1. You have to disregard this Scripture. Second, **there are many other apostles mentioned in the N.T. who do not meet this set of qualifications.**

In Acts 13, Barnabas and Paul were sent out as apostles. Apostle means sent one and they were sent out in Acts 13. From there on, Barnabas is no longer just referred to as a prophet; he is an apostle. Paul is no longer referred to as just a teacher or preacher, but he is identified as an apostle. We find

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the first mention of this in Acts 14:14. There are lots of other apostles mentioned in the New Testament.

(Acts 13:2-4) "And while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." {3} Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. {4} So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia and from there they sailed to Cyprus."

(Acts 14:14) "But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out"

At this point, there are no elders mentioned. The money that was given to the church was laid at the apostles feet. The preaching and teaching was being done by the apostles. When we get to Acts 11, Paul and Barnabas took an offering from Antioch to Jerusalem and they delivered it to the elders. Somewhere between Acts 1 and Acts 11, the church in Jerusalem appointed elders.

The first elders in the N.T. are mentioned in Jerusalem.

(Acts 11:26-30) "and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came about that for an entire year they met with the church, and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. {27} Now at this time some prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. {28} And one of them named Agabus stood up and began to indicate by the Spirit that there would certainly be a great famine all over the world. And this took place in the reign of Claudius. {29} And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the relief of the brethren living in Judea. {30} And this they did, sending it in charge of Barnabas and Saul to the elders."

In Acts 15, Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to clear up some doctrinal matters regarding having to be circumcised and to follow the Law in order to be saved. They met with the apostles and the elders. It is clear that these were two different groups. The overseers or elders have responsibility over the matters and concerns of the local church. The apostles had responsibility for the matters and concerns of the church at large. In this case, this matter affected the church in Jerusalem and also all the other churches, so the Jerusalem elders and the apostles were all involved in these discussions. The decisions reached at this meeting were then communicated and followed by all the churches.

(Acts 15:2-6) "And when Paul and Barnabas had great dissension and debate with them, the brethren determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders concerning this issue. {3} Therefore, being sent on their way by the church, they were passing through both Phoenicia and Samaria, describing in detail the conversion of the Gentiles, and were bringing great joy to all the brethren. {4} And when they arrived at Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders, and they reported all that God had done with them. {5} But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed, stood up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses." {6} And the apostles and the elders came together to look into this matter."

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We also find in this passage that James is now the leader of the church in Jerusalem. At the end of their discussion, he gives the final decision, which was agreed upon by all parties, and the congregation. Paul tells us in Galatians that he had not seen any other of the apostles, except James, the Lord's brother. Between Acts 1 and Acts 15, James had taken over the leadership of the church in Jerusalem from Peter. He also became an apostle, and we do not have exact dates on when these things occurred.

(Acts 15:13) "And after they had stopped speaking, James answered, saying, "Brethren, listen to me."

(Galatians 1:19) "But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother."

One last thought about the apostles and elders is that **apostles were sometimes identified as elders**. When an apostle starts a church, he is generally the elder in that church until other elders are raised up. When Peter and John write their letters, they mention that they are elders. Even though they did apostolic work, they were based out of a local church, and obviously had input into the affairs of their own local church.

(1 Peter 5:1) "Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,"

(2 John 1:1) "The elder to the chosen lady and her children, whom I love in truth; and not only I, but also all who know the truth,"

III. The First Deacons

The next place on the time line that I want to discuss is found in Acts 6:1-7. There was a growing complaint that some of the Greek widows were being overlooked in the serving of food. The church had a benevolent ministry and took care of widows. The apostles were wearing themselves out serving spiritual meals and physical meals. And, the job was not being done with a spirit of excellence, resulting in a complaint. The twelve apostles gathered the congregation and communicated the problem to them. Like good leaders, they had given some forethought and also gave them a solution. They said, it is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, select seven men from among you that we can put in charge of this task. And, the apostles gave some qualifications for the church to use in selecting these seven men.

(Acts 6:1-7) "Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. {2} And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. {3} "But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. {4} "But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." {5} And the statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. {6} And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying,

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they laid their hands on them. {7} And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith."

I would like to draw out a few points from this passage. First, the word that is used for "serve tables" is the word diakoneo. The apostles wanted the congregation to select seven men of good character to put in charge of this task. They wanted the church to pick seven diakonos or servants to serve or diakoneo the widows. The word diakonos or servant is not used in the text; it is implied. These seven men were the first deacons in the church.

All of us are to be servants or diakonos. But these seven had hands laid on them and were set in to the office of servant. They were put into the office of a deacon, which is different than just being a servant. We do not need the elders to lay hands on someone to work in the nursery. However, if we put someone in charge of the nursery in the office of servant or deacon, we should lay hands on them.

Some churches have the congregation choose their ministers because of the example in this passage. There is a difference in the selection process of deacons and elders. We saw that there were five fingers that point to the calling of an elder or overseer. When Paul and Barnabas set in elders in the various churches, they prayed and fasted to hear from the Lord. They did not consult the congregation. **The process of ordaining elders is very different from that of deacons.**

(Acts 14:23) "And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed."

Having said that, I believe that the congregation is a good indicator or finger that points to the calling of an elder. If the congregation does not follow a man, it is a pretty good indication that he is not their shepherd.

Another thing that I would like to point out about this passage is that these deacons were put into office to meet a need. **The need for deacons is need-based.** People were not put into the office just to occupy an office. Deacons are put into an office to do a particular work. In this case, the church had grown so large and there were so many widows that needed to be served that it required seven men to be in charge of this work. As the East Mountain Church grows, we will find that we may have some needs in the body that require some needed work and attention. We may need to put a deacon over that ministry or work.

Notice that there is a contrast between serving widows and the work of the apostles, which was to pray and minister in the word of God. Next week we will get more into the qualifications of deacons, but I do want to make a comment about the chief difference between the qualifications of an elder and a deacon. Paul writes in 1 Timothy that **both elders and deacons must be men of character and must be able to rule or manage. However, deacons are not required to be able to teach.** We find that this account in Acts 6 bears that principle out.

Having said that, the men that were selected in Acts 6 to be the first deacons were quite qualified to minister the word of God. Stephen was full of grace and power, and was performing great wonders and signs. Stephen is martyred in Acts 8 for preaching to the Jews. From his message, it

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is very obvious that he knew the Scriptures very well.

(Acts 6:8) "And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people."

Philip was another of the seven men. Luke tells us that Philip went about preaching the good news and people were being saved and baptized. It was also Philip who joined the Ethiopian eunuch and explained the passage in Isaiah that he was reading. Again, he knew the Scriptures very well. Many deacons will know the word and will be able to preach, but it is not required of them in order to be a deacon.

(Acts 8:12) "But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike."

The qualifications of a deacon are slightly different because the work of a deacon is different than the work of an elder. Let's take a look at the work of a deacon. In this passage the deacons were waiting on tables, serving the widows. Historically, deacons were allowed to help serve widows, serve communion, receive offerings, and to baptize believers. There were so many people coming to Christ in the early church that they needed some deacons to help out with the baptisms. I pray that this would be a need that arises in our church.

I have a different take on baptism. I do not think that an elder or a deacon needs to baptize someone. I like to see fathers baptize their children. I like to see those who lead someone to the Lord baptize the person. I am not opposed to baptizing anyone, but I want people to do the ministry whenever possible. There is nothing in the Scriptures that indicate that a pastor or deacon must baptize new believers.

IV. The first Deaconess

There is another job that we find a deacon doing, and we find that in Romans 16. In this passage, Paul is writing his concluding remarks to the church in Rome. He is in Corinth and theologians believe that it is Phoebe who is delivering the letter for him.

Notice what Paul says about Phoebe, that she is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea. **Phoebe is the first servant, diakonos, or deaconess mentioned in Scripture.** In this case, the translators are not giving or crediting Phoebe with her position in the church. Since the translators did not accept women in leadership, they translated diakonos literally here, as a servant, rather than as the office of deacon. Notice that she is a servant of the church; this indicates an office in the church, not just a servant.

(Romans 16:1-2) "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; {2} that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well."

Cenchrea is one of the two ports in the city of Corinth. Paul is writing this letter in 58 AD, which is about 25-28 years after the first deacons are mentioned. In Acts 6, only men were allowed to

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serve as deacons. We do not know when the church began allowing women to serve as deacons, but it was sometime in this 25-28 year period. When Paul gives his qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 for deacons, he also gives qualifications for deaconesses. Paul wrote the book of 1 Timothy around 64-65 AD, which is about seven years after he had mentioned that Phoebe was a deaconess.

Paul tells the Romans to help her in whatever matter she has need of. She was there on official church business, and they were to give her assistance in those matters. We do not know what those exact matters were, only that they were important. Again, this points to the fact that she was in the office of a deaconess.

There is one more word that is used here that gives us an indication that she is a deaconess. Paul writes that **Phoebe has been a helper of many, including himself**. The Greek word for helper is prostatis. The root word is proistemi, which means to stand over, preside, or rule. Both elders and deacons are required to proistemi, or to manage or rule. Anyone can serve in the church, but deacons and deaconesses are required to manage, not just serve. There are lots of leadership skills involved in managing and ruling, and we looked at some of those last week. **Phoebe was able to manage, lead, or rule over business matters in the church.**

G4368. prostatis, pros-tat'-is; fem. of a der. of G4291; a patroness, i.e. assistant:--succourer. [G4291. proistemi, pro-is'-tay-mee; from G4253 and G2476; to stand before, i.e. (in rank) to preside, or (by impl.) to practise:--maintain, be over, rule.]

As we look at areas in our church that need to be managed, we need to determine if this is an area that needs pastoral management or to be managed by deacons. When I look at Life Groups, the Life Group leader is doing pastoral work. He is caring for souls. He is teaching, leading and caring for people. This is not deacon work; it is pastoral. If a person is leading a life group, is the person called to the office of overseer or is the person merely doing what all of us are called to do? These are important questions that have to be addressed. In my opinion, there should be a pastor over all the Life Groups. He/she should be meeting with the Life Group leaders and pastoring them. As the church grows and there are fifty Life Groups, we do not need fifty elders. By the way, some churches are being built on having an elder over each Life Group.

When I think of the sound team, it is a helps ministry. It does not require pastoral oversight. Therefore, a deacon could be in charge of the sound team. This person would have to manage this area. He/she would have to put together a team of people to do all the work. This would include recording the messages, burning CDs, making CD labels, providing sign-up sheets, and distributing CDs. It would also include making sure someone was at worship practice and at all services. It would include making sure that everyone was properly trained on how to operate everything. It would include having someone prepare the overheads on Pro Presenter for all services, and then someone to run Pro Presenter in every service. There are a lot of responsibilities to manage the sound team and sound system. This requires management, not just serving. In my opinion, there is a clear cut need for a deacon over the sound team.

One of the clearest needs of a deacon or deaconess in the church is church administrator or church secretary. There is so much confidential information that passes through this person, that he or she needs to be a person of strong character. The person must be able to handle all the

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administrative tasks, but more importantly, the person needs to have maturity in his/her walk and a character that is above reproach. The church secretary or administrative assistant must meet the qualifications of a deacon or deaconess.

Here are some examples of areas that could be more deacon-managed in the church:

- Administration (Brochures, Bulletins, Calendars, Church Directories, Website, etc.)
- Benevolence Ministry (where there is not any pastoral care, teaching, or counseling)
- Facility (Maintenance, Cleaning, Construction, etc.)
- Nursery
- Sound Team

The elders or overseers need to make decisions about the structure of the church, and which ministries need pastoral oversight, and which need to be managed by deacons. There are some areas that may require both. In the area of finances, the collection, counting, deposits, and tracking of finances can easily be done by someone in admin. However, the determination of how the funds are spent is governmental. The finances are to support the vision of the church. This lies in the responsibility of the elders. The elder in charge of the finances needs to work with all the other deacons, elders, and leaders in the church to determine what their needs are and to see to it that they have their needs included in the budget.

Conclusion

Today, I have tried to give a time line or perspective on church leadership in the New Testament. I have tried to lay a foundation and give understanding about the office of deacon. We have seen that all of us are called to serve, but not all are called to the office of deacon. The office of deacon is there to serve a need; it is need-based. The office of deacon was first limited to men, but over time was expanded to include women, like Phoebe. When Paul gives the qualifications, which we will cover next week, he included instructions for women deacons or deaconesses.

Finally, we have looked at the work of deacons and how it compares with the work of a pastor or overseer. It is generally a helps or support ministry, and does not require pastoral or word ministry. We looked at some possible areas that a deacon would be needed at our church as we move forward.

The church in Philippi had both overseers and deacons. We want to be a church that has empowered leaders. We want empowered overseers to manage the affairs of the church and to care for people. We want empowered deacons to manage the affairs of certain, non-pastoral type ministries within the church. All leaders in the church, whether in the office of overseer or the office of deacon, must have the heart of a servant. In fact, everyone in the church needs to have the heart of a servant. The church will not grow and mature until every joint supplies and we have the proper working of each individual part.

This morning, if you need prayer for anything, we want to pray for you. It may be prayer for a relationship, prayer for direction, prayer for healing, or prayer for provision. It could be prayer for any area. James tells us that we do not have because we do not ask. We do not want you to be in need simply because we did not ask. We want to take every opportunity to see God move and

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work in our lives.

We are going to be having a prayer meeting that starts at 11:00 and will end at 12:00. Some of the men will be rearranging our auditorium while we pray up front. We would like to invite you to stay and pray with us afterwards. If you need to leave, feel free to leave. Thank you for coming and being part of our service today. Next week, we will be having our monthly fellowship luncheon following the service. We hope that you will join us for the service and luncheon.

Father, I ask Your blessing on Your people. I ask You to fill them with wisdom, knowledge, and understanding of Your word, and Your ways. I ask You to fill them with Your Spirit. I ask You to bless their businesses. I ask You to bless their marriages and their families. I ask You Father to bless their coming in and their going out. I ask these things in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Introduction (Phil 1:1, 2:5-7)**I. The Choosing of Apostles** (Luke 6:12-13, 1 Tim 5:22)

- We must be very _____ about the people that we select and lay hands upon.
- The word for _____ is diakoneo.
- The word for _____ or _____ is diakonos.
- God wants _____ of us to have the heart of a _____ . (Luke 22:25-26)
- The word deacon is a _____ .
- The dictionary defines transliterate as to change (letters, words, etc.) into corresponding characters of another _____ or _____ .
- Sometimes diakonos refers to being a servant and sometimes it refers to the office of _____ or _____ . (Rom 15:8, Gal 2:17, 1 Cor 3:5, Eph 3:7, Col 1:23, 1:25)

II. The Apostles and Elders (Acts 1:14-26, 13:2-4, 14:14, 11:26-30, 15:2-6, 15:13, Gal 1:19, 2 Tim 2:15, 1 Pet 5:1, 2 John 1:1)

- The qualifications for the apostles of the Lamb are frequently misapplied to all apostles.
- We must be diligent to be good workmen who handle _____ the word of God.
- There are lots of other _____ mentioned in the New Testament who do not meet this set of qualifications.
- The first _____ in the N.T. are mentioned in Jerusalem.
- Apostles were sometimes identified as _____ .

Introduction (Phil 1:1, 2:5-7)**I. The Choosing of Apostles** (Luke 6:12-13, 1 Tim 5:22)

- We must be very _____ about the people that we select and lay hands upon.
- The word for _____ is diakoneo.
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III. The First Deacons (Acts 6:1-7, 14:23, 6:8, 8:12)

- All of us are to be _____ or diakonos.
- These seven men had hands laid on them and were set in to the _____ of servant.
- The _____ of ordaining elders is very different from that of deacons.
- The need for deacons is _____ - _____.
- Both elders and deacons must be men of _____ and must be able to rule or manage. However, deacons are not required to be _____ to _____.

IV. The first Deaconess (Rom 16:1-2)

- Phoebe was the first servant of the church or _____ mentioned.
- Phoebe was a _____ (prostatis) of many. She was able to stand over, preside, or rule (proistemi).
- Phoebe was able to _____, lead, or rule over business matters in the church.

Conclusion

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