

Servants in the Church

By

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Servants in the Church Study Guide

Problem

What are the roles and responsibilities of deacons in the ministry?

Premise

Phil. 2:3 Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.

Philosophy

Luke 17:7-10; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:8-13

Principle

1. The Church
 - a. The word "church" comes from the Greek word ἐκκλησία (ekklesia), which means "assembly" or "called-out ones." In biblical terms, it refers to a group of people who are called out by God for a specific purpose. It is not about the physical building but rather the community of believers.
 - b. The universal church refers to all believers who are united in Christ, regardless of their background or where they are in the world. This collective body is unified by faith in Jesus and His redemptive work, and it spans all times, places, and denominations. It transcends denominational, cultural, and geographical boundaries. All who are truly saved are part of this universal body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).
 - i. The universal church is united in its belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Despite denominational differences or theological distinctions, all who genuinely trust in Christ for salvation are part of this body (Galatians 3:28). This unity is rooted in faith, and all members share a common spiritual bond as the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:4-6).
 - ii. The imagery of the church as the body of Christ is central to understanding the universal church (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18). Christ is the head, and

- believers are His body, meaning each member plays a unique role in fulfilling God's purposes. This metaphor represents the diversity within the body, where different members have different gifts and functions but all work together for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).
- iii. Unlike the local church, which is confined to a particular place or congregation, the universal church transcends all geographical, cultural, racial, and denominational boundaries. It includes believers from every nation, tribe, and tongue (Revelation 7:9). The universal church is a reflection of the Kingdom of God, where all are equal in Christ (Colossians 3:11).
 - iv. The universal church is not only composed of those currently living but also includes all believers throughout history. This means that the church encompasses those who have already passed away and those who will believe in the future. It is eternal, stretching from the past, present, and into eternity, where all believers will be united in the presence of Christ (Hebrews 12:22-24).
 - v. The universal church shares a collective mission of advancing the Kingdom of God and spreading the gospel throughout the world (Matthew 28:19-20). Every believer, regardless of their local context, is part of this global mission, making disciples and proclaiming the good news of Christ.
 - vi. The universal church is the Bride of Christ, symbolizing the deep, covenantal relationship between Christ and His church (Ephesians 5:25-27; Revelation 19:7-9). This imagery points to the church's purity, its sanctification, and its ultimate union with Christ at His second coming.
 - vii. The universal church is the global and timeless community of all believers who are united in Christ. While local churches are expressions of this body, the universal church is the full collective body of Christ's followers across the ages.
- c. The local church serves as a community of believers united in Christ, coming together to worship, support one another, and

grow in faith while fulfilling the mission of spreading the gospel (1 Corinthians 1:2; Acts 2:42; Hebrews 10:25).

- i. Its role extends beyond just gathering for worship and fellowship. The local church plays a vital part in the spiritual growth of its members and in fulfilling the Great Commission
- ii. Worship is central to the life of the church. It involves both personal and corporate expressions of adoration, reverence, and gratitude toward God (Psalm 95:6; John 4:24). The church provides a space where believers collectively acknowledge God's greatness, offer praise, and experience His presence.
- iii. The local church is responsible for the spiritual formation of its members through sound biblical teaching and instruction. This discipleship process involves equipping believers to grow in their knowledge of God, mature in their faith, and live according to the teachings of Scripture (Ephesians 4:11-13; Matthew 28:19-20). It helps believers to apply biblical principles to their daily lives and nurtures their personal relationship with Christ.
- iv. Fellowship within the church strengthens the bonds between believers, creating a supportive and loving community (Acts 2:42). Members encourage, pray for, and support one another in their spiritual journey. This also includes the practice of hospitality and the building of relationships that reflect the love of Christ.
- v. Prayer is foundational to the church's mission and the believer's spiritual life. The local church creates opportunities for corporate prayer, intercession, and seeking God's guidance for individuals, the church, and the world (Acts 1:14; Philippians 4:6-7). Prayer unites the church in dependence on God and opens the door for His power to work in and through them.
- vi. The local church is called to fulfill the Great Commission by spreading the gospel locally and globally (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8). Evangelism involves reaching out to the unsaved, making disciples, and leading people into a

relationship with Christ. The church serves as a beacon of light in the community, reflecting the love and truth of the gospel.

- vii. The local church serves as a hub for ministry and service. Believers are called to use their gifts and talents to serve one another and meet the needs of the community (1 Peter 4:10; Galatians 5:13). This can take the form of helping the poor, supporting those in need, and providing spiritual, emotional, and practical assistance to those inside and outside the church.
- viii. The local church provides spiritual oversight through its leadership, such as pastors, elders, or deacons, who are entrusted with guiding, teaching, and caring for the flock (1 Timothy 3:1-13; Hebrews 13:17). The local Church calls for accountability among its members, helping them to live in obedience to God's Word and maintain a strong witness to the world.
- ix. The local church is not just a physical gathering. It is the visible expression of Christ's body on earth, working together to glorify God and make His name known in the world.
- d. The first believers “continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). “Continuing in the apostles’ doctrine” implies that there was a teaching ministry going on.
- e. God is a God of order and organization. In the early church, the Bible tells us members, were added (Acts 2:41), job descriptions were present (1 Tim. 3), votes were conducted to expel immoral members (1 Cor. 5:4), and votes were taken to elect church officers (Acts 6:5; 14:23).
- f. The church organized a missionary team and sent them out (Acts 13:27). There may even have been some “order of service” in the early church. Paul advised, “Let all things be done decently and in order” (1 Cor. 14:40). To accomplish this task, the Holy Spirit endows certain ones with the gifts of government and leadership (Rom. 12:8; 1 Cor 12:28).
- g. The church was to be a place of fellowship, meaning more than

coffee and cookies after service. Fellowship occurs when Christians involve themselves constructively in the lives of other believers.

- h. Whenever a group of people meet together, there should be an efficient organizational structure to insure that group of people accomplishes its purpose. This requires God anointed and appointed leadership. The need for group leadership exists in the church just as it exists in other organizations.
2. Mission of the Church
- a. The mission of the church is set forth in the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; Acts 1:8).
 - b. The pattern of salvation, education, liberation, dedication, and exaltation was established by the first church (Acts 5:42).
 - c. As those early Christians believed everyone without Christ was lost, they felt the need to present the gospel to everyone.
 - d. Before long their critics accused them of having saturated their town with the gospel (Acts 5:28).
 - e. Later others recognized their influence upon the world (Acts 17:10).
3. GCBCI Mission Statement
- a. The Greater Calvary Bible Church International is founded on the basic biblical principles of Salvation, Education, and Liberation. We believe that people must be saved. Saved people must be taught the truth of God's Word and made free through the application of that truth.
 - b. As an inter-generational ministry, we encourage participation by every member. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we commit to embody the character of Christ, embrace the vision of Christ and empower the people of Christ as we pursue godliness.
 - c. The family is a Kingdom priority. The book of Romans refers to followers of Christ as members of a body. We understand this as a family of families in which we can encourage one another and be accountable to each other.
 - d. We focus attitudes and actions through the lens of salvation, education, liberation, dedication and exaltation. Members are encouraged to pursue godliness as disciples of Christ. Our

expectations are high involving worship, growing, serving, giving, praying, seeking unity, and being sacrificial as a reflection of our commitment to godliness.

- e. Agreeing on doctrine is the starting point. We are clear about what we believe and who we are. Members agree with the GCBCI statement of faith.

4. GCBCI Statement of Faith

- a. The Greater Calvary Bible Church International family believes and upholds eternal truths revealed by God in His Son through His written Word.
 - i. The Greater Calvary Bible Church International family stands firmly on the eternal truths revealed by God through His Son, Jesus Christ, and His written Word, the Holy Scriptures. These truths, rooted in the Bible, guide the church's beliefs, practices, and mission. Jesus, the living Word, and the Scriptures together form the foundation for teaching, faith, and conduct, ensuring that the Church remains faithful to God's unchanging revelation.
 - ii. The Bible is the inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). These eternal truths call believers to live in obedience to God's Word, reflecting Christ's love, grace, and truth in every area of life.
 - iii. The Church affirms the centrality of Jesus Christ as the ultimate revelation of God's truth (John 14:6). Through His life, death, resurrection, and promised return, Jesus reveals the fullness of God's redemptive plan and calls all people to repentance and faith.
- b. There is only one God, the creator, eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
 - i. The doctrine of the Trinity is foundational to Christian belief, affirming that there is only one God who exists eternally in three distinct persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Though each person of the Trinity is fully God, they are not three gods but one God, united in essence and nature. This mystery of the Trinity, while beyond full human comprehension, is clearly revealed in

- Scripture and has been central to the Christian understanding of God throughout history.
- ii. The Bible is emphatic that there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4). This monotheistic declaration is echoed throughout both the Old and New Testaments (Isaiah 45:5). The oneness of God is a fundamental truth of the Christian faith.
 - iii. While God is one, Scripture also reveals that He exists in three persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—each fully divine and co-eternal.
 - iv. God the Father is often referred to as the Creator and sovereign Lord over all (1 Corinthians 8:6). The Father is the source of all creation and the initiator of the plan of salvation.
 - v. God the Son, Jesus Christ, is equally divine (John 1:1-3). Jesus, the Son, took on human flesh and became the mediator between God and humanity. He is worshiped and revered as God and shares fully in the divine nature (Hebrews 1:8).
 - vi. God the Holy Spirit is also fully God and is active in creation, regeneration, and sanctification. Lying to the Holy Spirit is equated with lying to God, showing that the Holy Spirit is divine (Acts 5:3-4). The Spirit indwells believers, empowering them to live according to God's will and plays a vital role in guiding the Church (Romans 8:9-11).
 - vii. The three persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—are distinct in their roles but are united in their essence. They are co-equal, co-eternal, and co-existent. The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father, yet all three are one God. This perfect unity is reflected in Jesus' command to baptize "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). The singular "name" emphasizes the oneness of God, while the three persons show the relational dynamic within the Godhead.
 - viii. There is only one God who eternally exists in three

persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Each person is fully and equally God, yet there is only one divine essence. This truth lies at the heart of Christian theology and affirms both the unity and diversity within the Godhead.

- ix. As believers, we worship the triune God, recognizing that He is the creator, redeemer, and sustainer of all things.
- c. Jesus Christ is God.
 - i. He was manifest in the flesh, died on the cross of Calvary, was buried in a borrowed grave, was resurrected three days later, ascended back to Heaven, and is soon to return for His Church in power and glory.
 - ii. The doctrine that Jesus Christ is God is the core of Christian belief about His divine nature and the work He accomplished through His life, death, resurrection, and promised return. The Bible affirms the divinity of Jesus and the events of His life that are central to the Christian faith.
 - iii. Scripture affirms the divinity of Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14). Jesus, the eternal Word, is fully God who became fully man. Jesus possesses the fullness of divinity while in human form (Colossians 2:9).
 - iv. The incarnation of Jesus is the manifestation of God in human form (Philippians 2:6-7). Jesus, while remaining fully God, took on human nature to live among us and fulfill God's redemptive plan.
 - v. Jesus' death on the cross at Calvary is central to the Christian understanding of salvation (1 Peter 2:24). His crucifixion was not an ordinary death but a sacrificial atonement for the sins of humanity, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies (Isaiah 53:5). After His death, Jesus was buried in a borrowed tomb, fulfilling another prophecy that He would be buried with the rich in His death (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:59-60).
 - vi. Three days after His burial, Jesus was resurrected from the dead, conquering sin and death. The resurrection is the cornerstone of Christian hope and faith (1 Corinthians

- 15:4). Jesus' resurrection demonstrates His victory over death and guarantees eternal life for all who believe in Him (1 Corinthians 15:20-22).
- vii. After His resurrection, Jesus ascended back to Heaven. (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9). His ascension marked the completion of His earthly mission and the beginning of His intercessory role for believers (Hebrews 7:25).
 - viii. The promise of Jesus' return is a key aspect of Christian eschatology. The angels declare to the apostles, "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back" (Acts 1:11). Jesus will return in power and glory to judge the living and the dead, and to gather His Church (Matthew 24:30). His return is anticipated by Christians as the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan for redemption and the establishment of His eternal kingdom.
- d. Jesus became man without ceasing to be God.
- i. The doctrine that Jesus became man without ceasing to be God is known as the Incarnation. This doctrine teaches that in Jesus Christ, God took on human flesh while maintaining His divine nature. This mystery is foundational to understanding the person of Jesus and His role in salvation.
 - ii. Jesus is the eternal Word (Logos) who became human without losing His divine nature (John 1:14). Jesus is both fully God and fully man, a concept known as the hypostatic union—the union of two natures, divine and human, in one person.
 - iii. Jesus did not cease to be God; rather, He humbled Himself by taking on human nature, limiting His divine privileges, and becoming fully human while remaining fully divine (Philippians 2:6-7).
 - iv. Throughout His life and ministry, Jesus demonstrated both His divinity and humanity. As God, Jesus performed miracles, forgave sins and had authority over nature, sickness, and death (Mark 2:5-7). As man, He experienced hunger, thirst, fatigue, and even death (Matthew 4:2; John 4:6; 19:28; Philippians 2:8). Yet in all

- these human experiences, He never ceased to be God.
- v. The importance of Jesus being both fully God and fully man is central to the understanding of salvation. As God, Jesus was able to live a sinless life and offer a perfect sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 4:15). As man, He could represent humanity, making His death on the cross a substitutionary atonement for human sin.
 - vi. Jesus Christ, fully God and fully man, became human without ceasing to be divine. This union of two natures in one person is what allows Jesus to be the perfect mediator between God and man, offering salvation through His life, death, and resurrection (1 Timothy 2:5). His divinity guarantees His power to save, and His humanity ensures His ability to sympathize with our weaknesses and represent us before God.
- e. The Holy Spirit is God.
- i. When Christ ascended, He descended from the Father and the Son to indwell believers and enable them to live holy lives.
 - ii. The Holy Spirit is God, co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son within the Holy Trinity. Scripture consistently affirms the divinity of the Holy Spirit, showing that He possesses all the attributes of God, omnipresence (Psalm 139:7-8), omniscience (1 Corinthians 2:10-11), and omnipotence (Luke 1:35). The Holy Spirit is not a force or an impersonal power but a divine person who plays a crucial role in the lives of believers and in the unfolding of God's redemptive plan.
 - iii. When Christ ascended to heaven, He promised to send the Holy Spirit to His followers (John 16:7). This Helper, the Holy Spirit, came to indwell believers, fulfilling Jesus' promise and empowering the Church to live out their faith in holiness and obedience.
 - iv. At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples, marking the beginning of His indwelling presence in all who believe in Christ (Acts 2). This indwelling is permanent, as the Holy Spirit now lives

- within each believer as a seal of their salvation and a guarantee of their inheritance in Christ (Ephesians 1:13-14).
- v. The Holy Spirit enables believers to live holy lives by empowering them to resist sin and grow in righteousness (Galatians 5:16). The Holy Spirit provides the strength and guidance necessary to live according to God's will. The Spirit produces the fruit of righteousness in the believer's life, which are evidence of the Holy Spirit's transformative work (Galatians 5:22-23).
 - vi. The Holy Spirit convicts believers of sin (John 16:8), guides them into all truth (John 16:13), teaches them (John 14:26), and comforts them (John 14:16-17). Through the Holy Spirit, believers are sanctified and progressively transformed into the likeness of Christ, enabling them to live holy lives that honor God.
 - vii. The Holy Spirit is fully God, sent by the Father and the Son to indwell believers and empower them for holy living. His presence is essential for spiritual growth, and through His work, Christians are able to live in accordance with God's will, bearing fruit that reflects the character of Christ.
- f. We are saved by grace through faith in Christ Jesus, not by our efforts or works.
 - i. Salvation is found in Jesus Christ alone for all who come to Him by faith and repent of their sins through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 16:15-16; Acts 4:12; Ephesians 2:4-10; 2 Corinthians 5:21).
 - g. Christ-centered believers are to be unified in the Spirit with an evangelistic mission dedicated to developing Christ-centered Families, redemptively upgrading the community, and promoting the highest ethics of all who claim to love the Church.
 - i. Christ-centered believers are called to live in unity, empowered by the Holy Spirit, with a mission to spread the gospel and develop communities that reflect Christ's love and truth. This unity in the Spirit is not just a matter

- of shared beliefs but of shared purpose of evangelism, the development of Christ-centered families, and the transformation of the community for the glory of God.
- ii. Believers are called to maintain the unity of the Spirit as a fundamental aspect of their witness to the world (Ephesians 4:3-4). This unity reflects the oneness that Jesus prayed for (John 17:21). Through the Spirit, Christ-centered believers are united in purpose and love, working together for the Kingdom of God.
 - iii. The mission of the Church is grounded in the call to evangelize the lost, a mission rooted in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). Christ-centered believers are tasked with sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, calling people to repentance and faith, and bringing them into a relationship with God. Evangelism extends beyond individual salvation and aims to develop environments where Christ-centered families can flourish and become the foundation for a redeemed and transformed community.
 - iv. A core focus of the mission is the development of Christ-centered families. Families are foundational to society and play a key role in shaping future generations. Believers are to teach God's commandments diligently to their children, embedding Christ-centered values within the family structure (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). By focusing on building strong, God-centered homes, believers raise up a generation rooted in faith, love, and obedience to God's Word. These families then serve as living testimonies of Christ's transforming power, both in the Church and in the wider community.
 - v. The redemptive transformation of the community is an outworking of the gospel lived out through the Church. Believers are not only called to share the message of salvation but to reflect Christ in their actions, thereby promoting justice, mercy, and compassion in their local communities (Jeremiah 29:7). Redemptive transformation is part of the Christian witness. As the Church influences

- the surrounding culture, it becomes a beacon of hope, redemption, and restoration, improving the moral and spiritual fabric of the community.
- vi. Believers are called to uphold the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and righteousness in every aspect of life. The Christ-centered Church models these values, not only within its own community but in its interactions with the wider world (Matthew 5:16). By promoting and practicing the highest ethical standards, believers demonstrate the power of the gospel, building trust and credibility, and glorifying God through their conduct.
 - vii. Christ-centered believers are unified in the Spirit, bound together by their shared faith and purpose. Their mission is evangelistic, focused on developing strong, Christ-centered families. As they work together in unity, empowered by the Holy Spirit, they become a powerful witness to the world, glorifying God and advancing His Kingdom on earth.
 - h. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is the body of Christ-centered believers on a mission to call the lost to Christ and make disciples.
 - i. The Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, the body of Christ, are the believers united in their faith and devotion to Jesus. It exists for worship, fellowship, the mission of calling the lost to salvation, and making disciples of all nations. This mission is rooted in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).
 - ii. As the body of Christ, the Church functions as an extension of Jesus' presence on earth (1 Corinthians 12:27). Each believer has a role to play in fulfilling the Church's mission, empowered by the Holy Spirit to share the gospel and make disciples. This body is not confined to a specific location or denomination but consists of all who have put their faith in Christ and are committed to His cause.
 - iii. The primary task of the Church is Salvation, proclaiming the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ to a world in

- need (Romans 10:14). The Church serves as God's instrument for spreading the gospel, bringing people from spiritual death to life in Christ.
- iv. Beyond evangelism, the Church is tasked with Education, discipling those who come to faith, teaching them to obey Christ's commands and grow in maturity (Ephesians 4:11-13). The goal is to help every believer grow into spiritual maturity, becoming more like Christ in character and purpose.
 - v. This mission reflects the heart of Jesus (Luke 19:10; 1 Timothy 2:4). As the Church faithfully carries out this mission, it glorifies God, expands His kingdom, and fulfills its role as the body of Christ in the world.
- i. The believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of the Church.
- i. Believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two key ordinances of the Church, both instituted by Jesus Christ and practiced by His followers as acts of obedience, worship, and remembrance.
 - ii. Baptism is an outward expression of an inward change, symbolizing a believer's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a public declaration of faith and new life in Christ. Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize new believers in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19).
 - iii. Baptism illustrates the believer's unity with Christ in His death and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). This symbolic act signifies the washing away of sins and the believer's entry into the community of faith (Acts 22:16). Baptism is reserved for those who have made a conscious decision to follow Christ, referred to as "believer's baptism."
 - iv. The Lord's Supper, Holy Communion, is the ordinance given by Christ, intended as a continual practice of remembrance and fellowship. Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper during the Last Supper with His disciples (Luke 22:19). The Lord's Supper commemorates Christ's sacrificial death on the cross and serves as a time for

- believers to reflect on His atoning work.
- v. Paul teaches the significance of the Lord's Supper, reminding the Church to partake of the bread and the cup in remembrance of Christ's body broken and blood shed for the forgiveness of sins (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). The ordinance points forward to the return of Christ.
 - vi. These ordinances are not just symbolic but deeply spiritual practices. Baptism signifies a believer's new birth and initiation into the Christian life, while the Lord's Supper is a regular reminder of Christ's sacrifice and an anticipation of His return. Both ordinances unite believers in their shared faith, reminding them of their relationship with Christ and with one another.
 - vii. Believer's baptism and the Lord's Supper are central to the life and worship of the Church. They are visible signs of the Gospel, obedience, remembrance, and spiritual growth as believers live out their faith.
- j. The local Church is autonomous, under the control and authority of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.
- i. The autonomy of the local church is a principle rooted in the understanding that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church, and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, each congregation is empowered to govern itself under His authority affirming that the ultimate authority over the Church belongs to Christ alone, not to any human institution (Colossians 1:18). This means that every local church operates independently, accountable to Jesus as its sovereign leader.
 - ii. The autonomy of the local church emphasizes that it is self-governing, responsible for its own decisions, and directly led by Christ through the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28). Church leaders are appointed and guided by the Holy Spirit to shepherd their local congregations.
 - iii. The autonomy of the local church allows each congregation to determine its doctrine, leadership structure, and practices as they align with the Word of God. The New Testament model shows Christ addressing

each local church individually, commending or correcting them based on their faithfulness to His Word (Revelation 2-3). This autonomy ensures that each church can focus on the specific needs, mission, and context of its community while remaining faithful to Christ's leadership. Although autonomous, local churches are not isolated. They are part of the larger body of Christ, cooperating with other churches in fellowship and mission. Each local congregation remains ultimately responsible to Christ, operating under the authority of His Word and the direction of the Holy Spirit. The autonomy of the local church is a reflection of the Lordship of Christ and the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit's guidance in all matters of faith and practice.

- k. The saved and the lost will be resurrected, those saved unto life and those lost unto damnation.
 - i. The doctrine of resurrection for both the saved and the lost is a central teaching of Scripture, every human being will experience resurrection, though with drastically different outcomes based on their relationship with God.
 - ii. For the saved, resurrection is unto eternal life (John 5:28-29). The saved, those who have put their faith in Christ, will be resurrected to eternal life in the presence of God. Paul describes the resurrection of the saved (1 Corinthians 15:52).
 - iii. The resurrection of the saved leads to eternal life where believers will experience perfect communion with God, free from sin, death, and suffering (Revelation 21:4). This is the ultimate hope and promise for believers.
 - iv. In contrast, the lost, those who have rejected God's offer of salvation through Jesus Christ, will be resurrected, but unto eternal damnation. The final judgment, where the dead, both great and small, will stand before God and be judged according to their deeds (Revelation 20:12-15). Those whose names are not found in the Book of Life will be cast into the lake of fire, which is described as the "second death." Jesus warns about this (Matthew 25:46).

- v. Our choices in this life have eternal consequences. For those who are saved through faith in Christ, resurrection brings everlasting joy and life in God's presence. For those who reject God's gift of salvation, the resurrection results in eternal separation from God and judgment.
 - vi. The resurrection of the saved and the lost calls for faith in Jesus Christ, as He alone is the way to eternal life (John 14:6). This truth calls all people to repentance and faith in Christ, so that they may be raised to eternal life rather than eternal damnation.
- I. The Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament are originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, and entirely trustworthy.
- i. The Word of God is the only supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct and is the standard by which we are to order our lives, express our faith, build the family, and function as a community (2 Timothy 3:16-17). God has spoken, and there are no revisions.
 - ii. The Holy Scriptures, comprising the Old and New Testaments, are divinely inspired and serve as the ultimate and infallible authority for all matters of faith and conduct (2 Timothy 3:16-17). The Bible is not just a collection of human writings but is divinely given by God, perfect and trustworthy in all its teachings.
 - iii. The infallibility of Scripture means that God's Word does not fail in its purpose or accuracy (Psalm 119:160). This enduring truth is what guides believers in their faith, life, and community. Since the Bible is entirely trustworthy, it is the standard by which all human thoughts, actions, and decisions should be measured.
 - iv. As the only supreme authority, the Word of God is central to ordering our lives. It provides wisdom for personal faith, shapes how families should be built, and instructs communities on how to function in love, justice, and holiness. Jesus Himself affirmed the authority of Scripture (Matthew 4:4).
 - v. God's revelation in the Scriptures is final and complete

- (Hebrews 1:1-2). There are no new revelations or revisions to what God has spoken in His Word. The Bible remains the unchanging foundation for all faith and conduct, providing believers with the solid ground to build their lives and communities upon.
- vi. In a world where cultural norms and values constantly shift, the unchangeable nature of Scripture serves as a beacon of truth and stability. There are no revisions or amendments to God's Word, it is complete, perfect, and sufficient for all time. Therefore, we must hold fast to the Scriptures, allowing them to guide every aspect of our faith, family, and community.
 - m. We are committed to the sanctity of marriage as ordained by God in the Holy Scripture, one biological man from birth and one biological woman from birth.
 - i. A commitment to the sanctity of marriage as ordained by God is grounded in the belief that marriage is a sacred institution established by God in the Holy Scriptures (Genesis 2:24). Marriage is the union of one biological man and one biological woman, and it reflects God's original design for human relationships.
 - ii. Jesus reaffirms this definition of marriage (Matthew 19:4-6).
 - iii. Marriage is not only a relational union but also a reflection of the relationship between Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:31-32). Paul compares the union of husband and wife to Christ's sacrificial love for the Church, marriage is intended to be a living symbol of God's covenant love and faithfulness.
 - iv. Marriage is more than a cultural institution, it is a divine ordinance meant to uphold God's plan for family, procreation, and mutual support between a husband and wife. The commitment to marriage being between one biological man and one biological woman from birth is an adherence to God's clear design as laid out in Scripture.
 - v. This doctrine opposes any redefinition of marriage that departs from the biblical model, as contrary to God's will.

Upholding the sanctity of marriage is essential to preserving the moral fabric of society and honoring God's intentions for human relationships.

- n. We are committed to the sanctity of life from God at conception.
 - i. A commitment to the sanctity of life from conception is a deep belief in the inherent value and dignity of every human being, as life is a sacred gift from God. The Bible teaches that life begins at conception, and God is intimately involved in the creation and formation of every human being (Psalm 139:13-16).
 - ii. God knows and cares for each person from the very moment of conception (Jeremiah 1:5). God has a divine purpose and plan for each human life, even before birth.
 - iii. The sanctity of life at conception is rooted in the understanding that every human being is created in the image of God, which grants intrinsic value and worth to each person (Genesis 1:26-27). All human life, regardless of age, ability, or circumstance, must be protected and respected. Therefore, believers are called to uphold the dignity of life, especially for the most vulnerable, the unborn.
 - iv. This commitment leads to a stance that opposes practices that threaten life at any stage, particularly abortion. Christians who hold to the sanctity of life affirm that protecting the unborn reflects obedience to God's Word and the moral responsibility to care for His creation. The sanctity of life, from conception to natural death, is central to upholding God's design for humanity.
- o. The family is the institution of God lying at the foundation of all human society.
 - i. The family, is foundational in God's plan for humanity. God ordained the union of a man and a woman in marriage (Genesis 2:24). This union forms the basis for the family, which serves as the building block for society.
 - ii. The family was the first human institution created by God. The marriage of Adam and Eve set the pattern for future

- generations, not only as a model of companionship and love but as a means of raising and nurturing children. God's command reveals God's intention for families to grow, multiply, and carry out His purposes on earth (Genesis 1:28). Families serve as the primary context in which human beings learn about relationships, responsibility, and the worship of God.
- iii. Families are the context where children are to be raised in the knowledge and fear of the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). It is the responsibility of families, particularly parents, to pass on spiritual truths to the next generation. The family, therefore, becomes the training ground for character, faith, and values that will shape both individuals and society at large.
 - iv. The family is not only central to spiritual formation but also to the stability of society. Strong families contribute to a strong community. As members of families learn to love, respect, and care for one another, they develop the qualities necessary for a healthy and functioning society. Family members are to interact with one another in a way that reflects God's design for order, love, and mutual respect (Ephesians 5:22-6:4). When families fulfill their God-given roles, they contribute to the well-being of the larger community.
 - v. In modern society, shifting cultural values and attacks on traditional family structures, have weakened the institution of the family. The Bible presents the family as a resilient institution, grounded in God's design, capable of withstanding external pressures when centered on biblical principles. Upholding the sanctity of marriage, the role of parents, and the responsibility of raising godly children is critical for both the Church and society to flourish.
- p. We focus our attention and resources on discipleship, developing Christ-centered Family values, and defending the family as a Kingdom priority (Gen. 1; 2; Matt. 19:5; Mark 10:6-7; 1 Tim. 5:8; Exod. 12:26-27; Deut. 6:6-7; Ephes. 6:4).
 - q. Believers worship in Spirit and truth through the power of the

- Holy Spirit (John 4:23-24; 1 Cor. 11:23-26; Acts 17:22-24).
- r. The Church is committed to equipping, empowering, and enabling the family to pursue and practice holiness and godliness and use its spiritual gifts to glorify God and build up the Body of Christ (1 Tim.4; Matt. 6; 1 Cor. 12-13).
 - s. Disciples are generous with their gifts, skills, talent, time, and money as we share with those in need and support the work of the Church in the cause of Christ (1 John 3:17-18; Ezra 2:68-69; Acts 2:44-47).
 - t. The Church is committed to identifying and training Christ-centered leaders who will pursue godliness and strengthen the family as a Kingdom priority through the local Church (Luke 22:27; Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12-13).
 - u. Personal and corporate prayer is effective both in crisis and in tranquility. Prayer is critical and powerful in our work (John 14:15-31; Luke 11:1-13).
 - v. Man was created in the image of God, and the sin of Adam (the first man) marred that image, making an eternal divide between God and man, resulting in every person being born in sin.
 - i. Man was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). This image of God, or "imago Dei," reflects humanity's capacity for reason, morality, relationality, and dominion over creation, distinguishing humankind from all other creatures. It signifies that man was created to live in perfect relationship with God.
 - ii. When Adam sinned, the image of God in humanity was marred but not destroyed. Adam and Eve's disobedience brought sin and death into the world, creating an eternal divide between a holy God and sinful man (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12). This original sin means that every person born after Adam inherits a sinful nature and as a result, all are separated from God (Psalm 51:5).
 - iii. The consequences of Adam's sin are severe (Romans 3:23). This falling short creates an eternal divide between God and man, as God's holiness cannot tolerate sin. The penalty for sin is death, not only physical death but also eternal separation from God (Romans 6:23). Every

- human being is born in sin, bound to this fallen nature, and in desperate need of reconciliation with God.
- iv. The good news is that God did not leave humanity in this broken state. In His mercy, God sent Jesus Christ, the second Adam, to redeem mankind and restore the relationship that was broken by sin. Through Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection, the image of God can be renewed in those who believe and the divide between God and man can be healed (Colossians 3:10). This restoration offers eternal life to all who put their trust in Jesus, restoring the fellowship between God and humanity that was intended from the beginning.
 - w. We help people become more like Christ in their words, thoughts, actions, feelings, relationships, motives, and attitudes.
 - i. This process begins when the person is born again and continues throughout the rest of the Saint's life.
 - ii. Helping people become more like Christ in every aspect of their lives is at the heart of discipleship. This process, known as sanctification, begins at the moment of being "born again," when a person accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior (John 3:3). From that point forward, the believer embarks on a lifelong journey of spiritual growth and renewal.
 - iii. Sanctification is the work of the Holy Spirit, who transforms the believer into the likeness of Christ (Romans 12:2). As believers grow in their knowledge of God's Word and allow the Holy Spirit to shape them, their thoughts begin to align with God's will (Philippians 2:5). Paul reminds us that Christlikeness starts with a renewed way of thinking.
 - iv. The process of becoming like Christ affects our actions and relationships (Colossians 3:17). Our words and actions should reflect His character. As we grow in Christ, our attitudes, motives, and emotions begin to reflect His love, humility, and compassion (Galatians 5:22-23).
 - v. Though sanctification is a lifelong process, it is sustained

- by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit (Philippians 1:6). The process of becoming more like Christ is continuous and culminates in the believer's ultimate glorification when Christ returns.
- vi. Discipleship is key to this transformation, as it involves teaching, guiding, and modeling Christlikeness to others, ensuring that every believer is nurtured to grow in holiness, love, and obedience to God.
 - x. Our primary adversary is Satan. Our secondary adversary is our flesh, including secular and carnal belief systems.
 - i. The primary adversary of believers is Satan, who is the "accuser" and "deceiver." Satan's ultimate goal is to disrupt God's plan, tempt believers into sin, and deceive people away from the truth of Christ (1 Peter 5:8). He is constantly working to undermine the faith, unity, and testimony of the Church.
 - ii. The secondary adversary is our own flesh, which represents our sinful nature and inclinations (Galatians 5:17). The flesh is not just our physical body but includes our worldly desires, thoughts, and behaviors that stand opposed to God's will (Romans 7:18-19).
 - iii. Secular and carnal belief systems are expressions of your fleshly nature. The world promotes ideas and values that contradict God's Word, drawing believers away from holiness (Romans 12:2). Stand against the pull of secular ideologies that are based on human wisdom rather than divine truth.
 - iv. Both Satan and the flesh work in tandem to oppose the spiritual life of believers. While Satan is the external tempter, the flesh is the internal struggle. Together, they create challenges that Christians must confront by relying on the power of the Holy Spirit and God's Word.
 - v. Victory is found in the truth that, in Christ, we are more than conquerors (Romans 8:37).
 - y. In the Church of Jesus Christ, there is a place for everyone to use their gifts, skills, talents, time, and treasure for the cause of Jesus Christ.

- i. In the Church of Jesus Christ, every believer has a unique and essential role to play in advancing the Kingdom of God. The Church is like a body with many parts, each fulfilling a different function, yet all working together in unity. Paul teaches that just as a body has many members, each believer in the Church has distinct gifts, skills, talents, and resources, all given for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).
 - ii. Believers are encouraged to use their gifts, whether prophecy, teaching, serving, giving, or leadership, in humility and according to the grace given to them (Romans 12:4-8). The diversity of gifts within the Church is intentional and purposeful, as no one individual possesses all the skills necessary for the functioning of the body of Christ.
 - iii. Believers are called to be good stewards of the varied grace of God by serving one another with their gifts (1 Peter 4:10-11). This stewardship includes not only talents and skills but also time, treasure, and any other resources entrusted by God. Whether one is called to preach, serve behind the scenes, lead in worship, teach, or give financially, all contributions are valuable and necessary for the growth of the Church and the fulfillment of its mission.
 - iv. God has given apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers to equip the saints for the work of ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:11-13). In this way, everyone's participation in the life of the Church, regardless of their role, strengthens the community and advances the cause of Christ.
 - v. In the Church, there is a place for everyone, and all are called to use their gifts, skills, talents, time, and treasure to glorify God and serve His purposes.
5. Beliefs Inform and Direct Behavior
- a. Our beliefs shape our worldview, influence our decisions, and ultimately guide our actions, which in turn produce outcomes—positive or negative.

- b. What we believe internally governs how we act externally (Proverbs 23:7). When a person's beliefs are aligned with truth, particularly the eternal truths found in God's Word, those beliefs will guide them toward wise, righteous, and beneficial behavior.
 - c. Beliefs rooted in biblical truth lead to behaviors that produce blessings (James 1:25). When individuals or communities base their actions on beliefs that reflect God's Word they experience personal growth, stronger relationships, and spiritual fulfillment.
 - d. When beliefs are misguided or false, they lead to harmful behaviors and negative consequences (Proverbs 14:12). Believing in things contrary to God's truth results in destructive behaviors that can bring conflict, broken relationships, and spiritual emptiness.
 - e. The Bible teaches that right beliefs, informed by Scripture and faith in Jesus Christ, transform behavior (Romans 12:2). This renewal of belief leads to a life that reflects Christ and results in godly behaviors that bear fruit for the kingdom of God (Galatians 5:22-23).
 - f. Beliefs are powerful motivators of behavior, and they determine whether a person experiences benefits or challenges in life. When beliefs are aligned with God's eternal truth, they direct behavior toward righteousness, resulting in blessings.
 - g. Conversely, false or misguided beliefs lead to harmful behaviors with negative consequences. Therefore, it is crucial for individuals and communities to ground their beliefs in the unchanging truths of God's Word to ensure a life that reflects His goodness and purpose.
6. God Blesses
- a. The contrast between God's blessings and Satan's tests is an important aspect of understanding spiritual dynamics. God blesses with what is truly good to bring Him glory, while Satan tempts or tests with what appears good to ultimately lead people away from God and toward destruction.
 - b. When God blesses His people, the blessings are genuinely good, rooted in His character and purposes (James 1:17). God's blessings align with His will and are intended for our

well-being, spiritual growth, and for His glory. They draw us closer to Him, increase our faith, and enable us to serve others and reflect His goodness.

- c. For example, God's blessings may come in the form of spiritual gifts, opportunities for growth, or provision in times of need. These blessings reveal His faithfulness and love, and when we receive them with gratitude and use them according to His will, we glorify Him (1 Corinthians 10:31).
 - d. Satan seeks to test and tempt believers with things that appear good but are ultimately harmful. He disguises his temptations to make them seem appealing, just as he did in the Garden of Eden, where he tempted Eve by making the forbidden fruit appear desirable (Genesis 3:1-6). Jesus describes Satan as "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44).
 - e. Satan's ultimate goal is to lead believers away from God's truth and into sin, often by using things that seem beneficial but are not in line with God's will. For instance, a person may be tempted with worldly success, power, or pleasure, thinking these things will bring happiness, but if pursued outside of God's guidance, they can lead to spiritual ruin.
 - f. Believers are called to discern between God's true blessings and Satan's deceptive tests (Philippians 1:9-10). Through the Holy Spirit, we are empowered to distinguish between what is genuinely good and what merely appears good.
 - g. Jesus faced such a test when Satan tempted Him in the wilderness with power and dominion (Matthew 4:1-11). Although these things looked desirable, Jesus knew they were contrary to God's will, and He resisted by standing on the truth of Scripture.
 - h. God blesses His people with what is truly good to bring Him glory, leading to joy, spiritual growth, and a deeper relationship with Him. Satan tests and tempts with what appears good but is ultimately deceptive, aiming to lead people away from God's will and toward destruction.
7. Discerning Through Prayer
- a. Discerning through prayer, the Word of God, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit is essential for believers to distinguish

- between what is truly good and glorifies God, and what only appears beneficial but ultimately leads away from God's will.
- b. Prayer is an intimate communication with God, through which believers can seek His wisdom and guidance in every aspect of life (James 1:5). By humbly asking God for insight, believers can gain clarity about whether something is truly good or a temptation disguised as good.
 - c. Through prayer, God aligns our hearts with His will, enabling us to desire what is right and reject what is harmful. It is through prayer that we seek strength to resist temptation and submit our plans to God's authority.
 - d. The Bible, as the inspired Word of God, is the ultimate standard for discerning truth from falsehood (Hebrews 4:12). The Scriptures provide the wisdom and principles needed to evaluate whether something aligns with God's will or if it is a subtle trap laid by the enemy.
 - e. The Word illuminates the path of righteousness, helping believers identify the good that glorifies God and avoid the snares that lead to spiritual harm (Psalm 119:105).
 - f. The Holy Spirit plays a vital role in guiding believers into all truth (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit helps us discern the things of God and convict us when we encounter deception.
 - g. As we walk in step with the Spirit, He produces in us spiritual fruit that reflects God's character, empowering us to choose what is good and resist what just appears good but is contrary to God's plan. The Holy Spirit equips believers with discernment to recognize the subtle ways in which Satan tries to twist the truth (Galatians 5:16).
8. Milk vs Meat
- a. Spiritual growth and the need for believers to move beyond basic teachings toward deeper maturity in their faith is extremely crucial in one's spiritual maturity (Hebrews 5:13-14). The imagery of milk versus solid food represents different levels of spiritual understanding and discernment.
 - b. Those who rely only on "milk," basic teachings of the faith, are spiritually immature. They are "unskilled in the word of righteousness." They have not yet fully grasped or practiced

the deeper truths of Scripture that lead to spiritual maturity. In this context, "milk" refers to elementary teachings that, while essential, are meant to be the foundation on which believers build.

- c. Just as a child drinks milk to grow but eventually needs solid food for full development, so too should believers grow in their understanding and application of God's Word, moving beyond foundational principles to a deeper grasp of righteousness.
 - d. In contrast to those who are still spiritual "children," mature believers are compared to those who eat "solid food." This solid food represents deeper, more complex truths of Scripture and the Christian life. Maturity is not just about knowledge but about the development of discernment, being able to distinguish good from evil.
 - e. Mature believers have trained their discernment through constant practice of applying God's Word in everyday life. This training allows them to make wise choices, recognizing what aligns with God's will and what does not.
 - f. Discernment is a skill that grows as believers continually study and live out the truth of Scripture, learning through experience to distinguish between righteousness and sin, truth and deception.
 - g. Believers are encouraged to pursue spiritual growth and maturity. While foundational teachings are important, they are not the endpoint. Christians are called to deepen their understanding and practice of their faith, developing the ability to discern right from wrong through a committed and active relationship with God's Word. Through this, they grow in wisdom, holiness, and the ability to navigate the complexities of life with godly insight.
9. Our Duty Is to Serve God
- a. Jesus teaches that our service to God and others should be rooted in humility. We are not to expect recognition, praise, or special treatment for simply doing what is required of us as God's servants. Our duty is to serve God wholeheartedly without seeking personal gain or accolades (Luke 17:7-10).
 - i. In the cultural setting of Jesus' time, a servant was

- expected to fulfill his master's commands without expecting thanks or reward. Jesus uses this cultural understanding to emphasize that our obedience to God is our natural response to His authority.
- ii. As believers, we should serve with the mindset that God owes us nothing for our service. Rather than seeking recognition or reward, we should focus on fulfilling our duty with humility and gratitude, knowing that everything we do is out of love for God.
 - iii. Romans 12:1: "Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."
 - iv. Philippians 2:3: "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."
 - v. Moses was called to serve without seeking personal recognition, often feeling unworthy (Exodus 3-4).
 - vi. Paul saw his life as dedicated to God's work, not seeking personal gain or fame (Acts 20:24).
- b. Jesus challenges the natural human desire for recognition by teaching that we are merely fulfilling our duty to God. Service in His kingdom is not a means to earn merit or personal reward, but a response to His grace (Luke 17:10).
- i. In Jewish society, religious leaders often sought public recognition for their good deeds (Matthew 6:1-2). Jesus directly opposes this attitude by calling for humility and an attitude of unworthiness in service.
 - ii. As followers of Christ, we must resist the temptation to seek earthly praise or reward for our work in the kingdom. Our motivation must be love and faithfulness to God, trusting that He sees our service even when others do not.
 - iii. Jesus teaches to give and serve in secret, not for the approval of others (Matthew 6:1-4).
 - iv. Colossians 3:23-24 - "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward."

- c. Jesus emphasizes that our standing before God is one of humble service. We do not earn God's favor through our works; instead, our relationship with God should be marked by submission and recognition of our dependence on His grace (Luke 17:10).
 - i. In contrast to the Pharisees who often boasted of their righteousness, Jesus calls His followers to approach God in humility, acknowledging that they are unworthy of anything other than His mercy.
 - ii. Humility is the foundation of a right relationship with God. We should approach our service to Him with a heart that understands our unworthiness and acknowledges that everything we have is due to His grace.
 - iii. James 4:6: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
 - iv. 1 Peter 5:5-6: "Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"
- d. Jesus teaches that leadership in His kingdom is marked by servanthood. True leaders are not those who seek power or position but those who humbly serve others (Luke 22:26).
 - i. In the context of Jesus' teaching, leadership was often seen as a position of authority and privilege. Jesus turns this idea upside down, showing that spiritual leadership is about serving others.
 - ii. Church leaders should model Christlike servanthood, prioritizing the needs of others over personal ambition or recognition. Leadership is not about authority but about humble service.
 - iii. Mark 10:45: "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."
 - iv. Philippians 2:5-7: Christ humbled Himself and took on the role of a servant.
- e. A dispute arose in the early church over the fair distribution of food to widows, particularly between the Greek-speaking (Hellenistic) Jews and the Hebrew-speaking Jews. This issue

- of inequality required immediate attention (Acts 6:1).
- i. The early church was rapidly growing, and temporal needs, such as caring for widows, required organized attention. The neglect of some widows was an unintended result of this growth.
 - ii. This passage highlights the need for temporal solutions in church life to address the needs of the congregation, especially those who are vulnerable.
 - iii. James 1:27: "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God... is to visit orphans and widows in their affliction."
- f. The apostles set clear qualifications, good reputation, filled with the Holy Spirit, and wisdom.
- i. These qualities were essential because the men chosen would need spiritual discernment and temporal wisdom to handle the responsibilities of distributing aid fairly (Acts 6:3).
 - ii. Church leaders must prioritize character and spiritual maturity over skills alone. These criteria ensure that leaders act with integrity and wisdom, reflecting Christ in their service.
 - iii. 1 Timothy 3:8-10: Lists the qualifications of deacons, which include dignity, faithfulness, and proven character.
- g. The apostles recognized the need to delegate temporal tasks so that they could focus on their primary calling—prayer and teaching. This division of labor ensured that all the needs of the church were met (Acts 6:4).
- i. As the church grew, it became impossible for the apostles to manage both spiritual and temporal needs alone. Delegation allowed them to focus on their primary mission while ensuring the congregation was cared for.
 - ii. Effective church leadership requires shared responsibility. Leaders must focus on their core calling and delegate other tasks to qualified individuals to ensure the church functions well.
 - iii. Exodus 18:17-23: Jethro advises Moses to delegate leadership to capable men to ease his burden.
- h. Temporal needs (the distribution of food) were considered

alongside the apostles' spiritual responsibilities (prayer and teaching).

- i. This passage shows that both spiritual and temporal needs are essential in the church. The apostles did not neglect either but ensured that temporal matters were handled by qualified individuals so they could focus on spiritual leadership (Acts 6:1-4).
 - ii. A healthy church addresses both spiritual and physical needs. Leaders must ensure that temporal matters are not overlooked, and members of the congregation must serve in areas where they are gifted.
 - iii. There are different kinds of service, but all are necessary for the body of Christ to function properly (1 Corinthians 12:4-7).
- i. The qualifications for deacons focus on personal character, honesty, self-control, and integrity.
 - i. These qualities are essential because deacons represent the church in both temporal and spiritual matters (1 Timothy 3:8-9).
 - ii. Deacons must be spiritually mature, as their work reflects on the integrity of the church as a whole. Their personal lives must align with their public ministry.
 - iii. The seven men chosen were required to have a good reputation and be filled with the Spirit and wisdom (Acts 6:3).
 - j. Paul emphasizes that potential deacons should be tested before being appointed to ensure they are blameless in character and faith.
 - i. This testing process helps maintain the integrity of church leadership (1 Timothy 3:10).
 - ii. Churches should have clear processes for evaluating leaders to ensure that those in leadership positions are qualified, both in character and ability. This protects the church's integrity and ensures effective ministry.
 - iii. Similar qualifications are listed for elders in Paul's letter to Titus, emphasizing the importance of character in church leadership (Titus 1:6-9).

- k. The apostles set up a balance by dividing responsibilities.
 - i. While they focused on pastoral responsibilities, the seven appointed men took care of the temporal needs.
 - ii. This ensured that the church community's physical and spiritual needs were met (Acts 6:3-4).
 - iii. The early church was growing at an accelerated rate, and neglecting either spiritual or temporal matters could harm its unity and witness. This model of leadership showed that both areas were vital for a healthy church.
 - iv. In the church today, spiritual leaders can ensure that they are not overwhelmed by temporal matters by delegating. Delegating tasks to trustworthy individuals allows them to focus on their primary calling while ensuring that other important aspects of church life are handled effectively.
 - v. Moses' father-in-law advised him to delegate authority to capable leaders, allowing him to focus on leading the people (Exodus 18:17-23).
 - vi. The distribution of various gifts enabling different roles within the church is for the edification of the body (1 Corinthians 12:4-11).
- l. The seven men chosen to address the issue were from the Hellenistic Jewish community, showing that the church sought to address the needs of all its members fairly (Acts 6:5).
 - i. There was a potential division between the Greek-speaking and Hebrew-speaking believers. By appointing men from the group that felt neglected, the apostles ensured that their concerns were addressed, promoting unity in the church.
 - ii. In modern church leadership, addressing the needs and concerns of all groups within the congregation is vital to maintaining unity.
 - iii. The church is one body with many members, all of whom are essential and must be treated with equal care (1 Corinthians 12:12-13).
 - iv. Maintaining unity in the body of Christ through the bond of peace is our responsibility (Ephesians 4:3-4).
- m. The selection of the seven men was based on their reputation,

- spiritual maturity, and wisdom.
- i. These qualities were crucial because they would be responsible for addressing a sensitive issue in the church.
 - ii. The fact that they were chosen for their spiritual character shows the importance of godly leadership in handling temporal matters (Acts 6:3).
 - iii. Even though the task was temporal (distributing food), the apostles recognized that it required leaders with spiritual discernment and integrity to manage it well and avoid further divisions within the church.
 - iv. In any leadership role within the church, character and spiritual maturity are foundational.
 - v. Church leaders must be chosen not only for their skills but for their godliness, wisdom, and ability to handle sensitive issues in a Christlike manner.
 - vi. Paul outlines the qualifications for overseers, emphasizing the importance of character and spiritual maturity (1 Timothy 3:2-7).
 - vii. The value of wisdom and discernment for those in leadership can not be overstated (Proverbs 2:6-7).
- n. Paul's instruction to test deacons filters such that only those who have proven their faithfulness and character are entrusted with leadership.
- i. This process of evaluation helps prevent individuals with questionable motives or inadequate spiritual maturity from assuming leadership positions (1 Timothy 3:10).
 - ii. In the early church, as in today's church, leadership had to be approached with caution to maintain the church's purity and effectiveness.
 - iii. Testing potential deacons ensures that the church remains led by godly individuals who can be trusted with responsibility.
 - iv. Churches today should follow similar practices by carefully evaluating leaders before appointing them. This safeguards the church from moral failures and helps provide leaders that are well-equipped for their roles.

- v. Stewards must be faithful (1 Corinthians 4:2).
 - vi. The character traits of church leaders and the requirement to be above reproach are critical to church growth.
 - o. Stephen's role began with the temporal task of distributing food, but his faithfulness in this role led to him being used mightily by God in performing miracles and preaching the gospel.
 - i. This demonstrates the principle that when we are faithful in small things, God entrusts us with greater responsibilities (Acts 6:8).
 - ii. Stephen's appointment as one of the seven shows that temporal service is not a lesser role in the church. God uses such roles to prepare His people for greater works.
 - iii. In church leadership, serving in temporal roles with faithfulness is a door to greater influence. The church should encourage all members to serve where needed, trusting that God will use them as they grow in faithfulness.
 - iv. A servant who is faithful in details can be trusted larger operations (Matthew 25:21; Luke 16:10).
 - p. The parable of the unworthy servant in Luke 17:7-10, alongside the appointment of the seven men in Acts 6:1-6, addresses the nature of service, humility, and leadership within the church.
 - i. These passages challenge the common expectation of recognition for service, urging believers to serve God and others with humility and faithfulness.
 - ii. The biblical principles of delegation, shared responsibility, and the evaluation of character emphasize the importance of both spiritual and temporal leadership in the church.
 - iii. By maintaining integrity, humility, and faithfulness in our service, we reflect Christ's example and contribute to the health and unity of the church body.
10. Deacon Qualifications
- a. "grave" (1 Tim. 3:8) is the Greek word *semnos*, which means "venerable, honorable, respectable" It "combines the thoughts

- both of gravity and dignity” (Vine).
- i. It speaks of “both seriousness of purpose and self-respect in conduct” (Moule).
 - ii. It refers to a person who is respected for their Christian testimony, who is serious about the things of Christ, who loves the truth, not a flippant, carefree person.
- b. “not double tongued” (1 Tim. 3:8) speaks of honesty, integrity, trustworthiness.
- i. The qualified deacon has an authentic word. He or she isn’t a liar.
 - ii. He or she doesn’t say one thing but mean another.
 - iii. He or she does not say one thing to one person and a different thing to another person.
 - iv. He or she is able to keep confidence and not spread things that should be private.
- c. Two people who participated in a church’s weekly leadership meetings and heard things about various members in the context of pastoral ministry and deciding on disciplinary matters. Unknown to the pastor at the time, they went directly to the people involved and told them what the pastor had said. They did this to hurt his ministry and to poison the people’s minds against him, and it worked very well and would have destroyed the ministry had God not intervened.
- d. “A man who earns the reputation of being conversationally unreliable is rendered useless in his office, for no one really wants to confide in a loose-tongued deacon” (John Phillips).
- e. “Not double tongued” speaks of candor and courage.
- i. It means not telling people what they want to hear, not being “all things to all people” because you are afraid to speak, afraid to take your stand. It is a Nathaniel “in whom is no guile” (John. 1:45-47).
 - ii. “Not double tongued” speaks of Christian love (Pr. 26:28).
 - iii. The double tongued are selfish, caring only about themselves and their agendas.
 - iv. An example is David’s wife, Michal. She helped David escape from Saul, but fearing her father, she lied about the matter, claiming that David had threatened to kill her

- (1 Sam 19:10-17). This double tongued statement was a slander against the good character of her own husband, but she cared only about her own well being.
- v. Satan is the chief of the double tongued and those who practice this sin are following his wicked example (Gen 3:1-4; John 8:44).
 - vi. The double tongued are extremely destructive to churches, and this is even more so if they are in a ministry position.
- f. “not given to much wine” means that the deacon must not be under the influence of alcoholic beverages (1 Tim 3:8; 1 Pet 5:8).
- i. “given to” is the Greek prosecho, often translated “give heed to” (1 Tim 1:4; 4:1, 13).
 - ii. “Not holding the mind on much wine” (Robertson’s Word Pictures).
 - iii. “The words ‘not given to’ mean not only not paying attention to but not giving assent to” (Everyman’s Bible Commentary).
- g. “not greedy of filthy lucre” (1 Tim 3:8).
- i. “Greedy of filthy lucre” is the Greek aischrokerdes, which is a compound of three Greek terms--a (not) aischros (filthy) kerdos (lucre or gain).
 - ii. It means one who is greedy of improper gain.
 - iii. “Greedy of filthy lucre” refers first of all to a love of money and personal gain.
 - iv. It is the person who is not content with godliness but who seeks to be rich (1 Tim 6:6-10).
 - v. He or she puts money and personal gain before Christ.
 - vi. He or she does not seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matt 6:33).
 - vii. The deacons often receive tithes and offerings from the congregation and care for church property, and as such it is doubly imperative that they not be greedy.
- h. “holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience” (1 Tim 3:9) means the deacon is a genuine believer and not a hypocrite.

- i. To “hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience” refers to having genuine faith in Christ.
 - ii. The opposite of this is the “faith” of Judas, which was a hypocritical faith.
 - iii. He pretended to be like the other disciples, but in reality he was a deceiver and a thief.
 - iv. There are multitudes like Judas who profess to believe the gospel, but they do not hold this profession with a pure conscience.
 - v. Profession is not necessarily possession (Titus 1:16).
 - i. This means the deacon is sound in doctrine.
 - i. The “mystery of the faith” refers to the doctrines of the New Testament. Jude 3, where “the faith” describes the doctrines of the faith.
 - ii. The term “mystery” refers to those things that were hidden in the Old Testament but revealed in the New (Col 1:26-27).
 - j. While it isn’t required that a deacon be trained in doctrine to the level of a pastor or that he be apt to teach, he must have a good understanding of fundamental Bible doctrines.
11. Fundamental Bible Doctrines
- a. In the Bible, the "Law" refers to the rules and commandments given by God, especially in the Old Testament.
 - i. These laws were meant to show people how to live a good and holy life.
 - ii. However, because everyone makes mistakes and sins, no one can perfectly keep the law.
 - iii. "Grace" is the kindness and love that God shows us even though we don’t deserve it.
 - iv. Through Jesus, God offers us forgiveness and a relationship with Him not because we’ve perfectly followed the Law, but because He loves us and wants to save us.
 - v. Example: Think of the law as a set of rules in a game. Grace is like the referee giving you a second chance even when you mess up.
 - b. Repentance means realizing that you’ve done something

wrong, feeling sorry about it, and deciding to turn away from that wrong behavior.

- i. It's like making a U-turn in your life to follow God instead of your own way.
 - ii. Faith is trusting in God and believing in His promises, even though you can't see them with your eyes.
 - iii. It's like believing that a chair will hold you up when you sit in it, even before you sit down.
 - iv. Example: Repentance is like turning around when you realize you're going in the wrong direction, and faith is trusting that God will guide you the right way.
- c. Justification means being declared "not guilty" in God's eyes.
- i. Because Jesus took the punishment for our sins when He died on the cross, God sees us as innocent if we trust in Jesus.
 - ii. It's like being in a courtroom where you're guilty, but someone steps in and takes your punishment, so you're set free.
 - iii. Example: Imagine you broke the rules at school, but your friend takes the blame for you, and the teacher lets you go free. That's like justification.
- d. Propitiation is a big word that means Jesus took God's anger for our sins upon Himself.
- i. By doing this, He made it possible for us to be friends with God again.
 - ii. It's like when someone stands in between two people who are angry and helps them make peace.
 - iii. Example: If someone was about to get in trouble, and you took their place and the punishment instead, that's like what Jesus did for us.
- e. Redemption means to "buy back" or "rescue."
- i. In the Bible, it means that Jesus paid the price to free us from being slaves to sin.
 - ii. He bought our freedom with His own life.
 - iii. Example: Imagine if you were stuck in a bad situation and someone paid a lot of money to set you free. That's what Jesus did when He redeemed us.

- f. Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Jesus.
 - i. It's a journey where God helps us to grow and become better in how we live and love others.
 - ii. It's like being on a team where the coach helps you improve every day.
 - iii. Example: Just like practicing helps you get better at sports or playing an instrument, sanctification is God helping you grow in your faith and character over time.
 - g. Law and Grace. The Law reveals sin, and Grace offers salvation through faith in Christ (Romans 3:20; Ephesians 2:8-9).
 - h. Repentance. Turning away from sin and turning toward God with a changed heart (Acts 3:19; Luke 13:3).
 - i. Faith. Trusting in God's promises and believing in Christ for salvation (Hebrews 11:1; Romans 10:9).
 - j. Justification. Being declared righteous by God through faith in Jesus Christ, not by works or human effort (Romans 5:1; Galatians 2:16).
 - k. Propitiation. Christ's sacrificial death satisfies God's wrath and reconciles us to Him (1 John 2:2; Romans 3:25).
 - l. Redemption. Being bought back from sin's bondage through the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19).
 - m. Sanctification. The process of becoming holy and set apart for God through the work of the Holy Spirit (1 Thessalonians 4:3; Hebrews 10:10).
 - n. Regeneration. The new birth, or being spiritually renewed and made alive in Christ (Titus 3:5; John 3:3).
 - o. Atonement. Christ's sacrifice that covers and removes the guilt of sin (Leviticus 17:11; Romans 5:11).
 - p. Resurrection. Christ's rising from the dead, ensuring eternal life for believers (1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Romans 6:5).
 - q. Adoption. Believers are brought into God's family as His children through faith in Christ (Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:5).
 - r. Glorification. The final transformation of believers into the likeness of Christ at His return (Romans 8:30; 1 Corinthians 15:43).
8. Deacon Qualifications Continued

- a. “And let these also first be proved” (1 Tim 3:10).
 - i. Before a deacon is ordained to hold office, it must be shown that he or she is the type of person described in these standards and that he or she has the faithfulness and the commitment to Jesus Christ and to the ministry that is required.
 - ii. This qualification is an important principle for appointing people to any position of church ministry.
 - iii. They should first demonstrate that they have the Christian character and ability to do that particular job.
 - iv. When churches are careful to abide by this principle and not be hasty, they are protected to a large degree from hypocrites.
- b. “being found blameless” (1 Tim 3:10) means having no just cause for reproach, having no handle for blame, in the areas of qualification that are laid out in Scripture.
- c. “honest report” (Ac. 6:3) speaks of his or her reputation in the ministry and the community.
 - i. A person who steals or lies or does not pay his or her debts in a timely fashion or is not faithful to his or her employee (e.g., stealing time), and does not otherwise have an honest reputation, is not qualified to be a deacon.
- d. “full of the Holy Ghost” (Ac. 6:3) means he or she is controlled by the Spirit not the flesh.
 - i. He or she is Christ centered. He or she walks with Christ.
 - ii. His or her affection are set on things above (Col. 3:1-4).
- e. “wisdom” (Acts 6:3).
 - i. The deacon must be wise.
 - ii. The deacon must be a person not only of Bible knowledge but of temporal wisdom in the good use of knowledge.
 - iii. Such wisdom comes by being controlled by the Holy Spirit.
 - iv. The deacon is a person of wisdom.
 - v. The deacon knows how to solve problems (Acts 6:1-6).
 - vi. Wise deacons can help counsel the pastors, and wise

- pastors will want their counsel.
- vii. It is the pastors who make the final decisions, but they need all of the help they can get.
 - f. “full of faith” (Ac. 6:5).
 - i. The deacons must have both godly wisdom and faith.
 - ii. Many financial decisions and other temporal matters handled by the deacons must be made before God through much prayer and by faith rather than sight.
 - iii. The deacons, then, must be more than good business people.
 - iv. They must have faith in God and understand the spiritual aspects of God’s business and church program.
 - v. Churches have been hindered from doing things God was directing them to do simply because some deacons involved were not people of faith.
 - g. “Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things” (1 Tim. 3:11).
 - i. The same qualifications are given for the wives of both pastors and deacons.
 - ii. The man’s wife is a very important part of his life and ministry, and her spiritual condition will greatly affect the man and his work.
 - h. “Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well” (1 Tim. 3:12).
 - i. Some believe that this means that if the man is married, he should be the husband of one wife.
 - ii. The deacon cannot be a polygamist.
 - iii. The husband of one wife refers to a man who is content with his wife and doesn’t have a roving eye.
 - iv. The “husband of one wife” means “a one-woman man” (Wuest).
 - v. Notice that God requires that the deacon be a man who rules his household “well.”
 - vi. He must be a godly father and husband with a good family life.
 - vii. He must be doing a good job in his home.
 - viii. Any serious problems in the home should be worked out

- before a man is considered for a church office.
- ix. It is not uncommon for a man to have problems in his life and family which must be worked out by the Spirit of God before he can be the kind of church officer God describes in the Scriptures.
 - x. In Christ any spiritual and moral problem can be healed (2 Pe. 1:3).
 - xi. There is always the possibility of working out problems in the home and developing the kind of family life demanded by God.
 - xii. The Bible makes it plain, though, that until the man has the right home he is not qualified for church office.
 - xiii. He must rule his family “well.”
 - i. The Deacon’s Reward (1 Tim. 3:13) is for those who “use the office of a deacon well.”
 - i. It is not for the lukewarm, the half-hearted, the lazy, the undependable, the mediocre.
 - ii. The rewards is for the deacon who serves his God and his church and his leaders with integrity, enthusiasm, cheerfulness, faithfulness, and persistence.
 - iii. God loves to reward.
 - iv. The redeemed sinner has been “bought with a price” and therefore owes all he is and has to his Redeemer, but God rewards His faithful servants (1 Co. 15:58; Acts 20:28).
 - v. The deacon “purchases to himself” these things.
 - vi. This is the Greek peripoieo, meaning to purchase, to acquire for oneself.
 - vii. Christ purchase the our salvation by His blood.
 - viii. The believer has “coin” that he can invest in making spiritual progress and in laying up treasures in heaven, and that “coin” is his faithful service to God in this present life (1 Tim. 6:17-19).
 - ix. By being rich in good works and by giving, they lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come.
 - j. “a good degree” Degree is the Greek bathmos, meaning “to go,

to step.”

- i. It refers to a standing, a rank.
- ii. It means “an advance in dignity, in respectability, or in influence” (Barnes).
- iii. It refers to a good standing before others in this life.
- iv. A deacon who serves God well gains godly respect, and advances in that respect.
- v. It refers to God’s blessing upon the faithful deacon in this life.
- vi. God rewards faithful service in His churches.
- vii. It refers to reward at the judgment seat of Christ.
- viii. Though many deacons have been troublesome to the ministry, many others have also been a great blessing.
- k. The deacons should pray for the pastor. A good deacon makes progress in spiritual growth, power, and zeal.
- l. We think of Stephen, who was ordained a deacon by the ministry at Jerusalem (Ac. 6:5). He became the first martyr of the Christian era because of his great boldness (Acts. 6:8 - 7:60).
- m. Integrity and uprightness will give a deacon great boldness in the faith, whereas a lack of integrity and uprightness will make a deacon timorous, and ready to tremble at shadows (Pr. 28:1).
- n. 1 Timothy 3 and Acts 6 expound the qualifications for the office of deacons; the latter contains what could fairly be called the "core qualifications" (Acts 6:3, 5).
- o. Often, when someone is discussed as a possible deacon one hears a remark such as, "He attends regularly and is a good giver." But God is looking at individuals with an internal dynamic, which cannot be determined by outside measurement.
- p. The original seven deacons were people who were able to serve the Lord in ways which were more spiritual in nature than serving food.
 - i. Stephen was a man of spiritual power (Acts 6:8).
 - ii. Philip was not only a deacon, but also was gifted in evangelism (Acts 8:5-7).
- q. A church is content oriented. It is a doctrinally driven

community, built upon truth. Every Church member should be doctrinally sound; leaders such as deacons, not less but, more so (Acts 6:9).

- i. When the Apostles laid out the plan for the creation of this office, it pleased the members (Acts 6:5). The complaints about the benevolence ministry stopped.
- ii. Any time a church has deacons who are properly doing their jobs, the ministry is more likely to be at unity. The immediate impact of the creation of the office of deacon was to eliminate the controversy in the ministry and to get the ministry back on course in fulfilling its mission (Acts 6:8). When a church has deacons who are in God's will, the mission of the ministry will advance.
- r. In the second through fifth centuries, deacons were the real agents of the charity provided through the ministry, providing for widows and orphans. They visited the sick and, as early as the third century, had deacon family ministry plans. They visited the martyrs in prison. Deacons helped to train new converts.
- s. They kept watch over the ministry members, reporting to the bishop any who seemed about to fall away. They attempted to restore the excommunicated.
 - i. Deacons carried out temporal assignments given them by their bishops and met daily to receive instructions from him.
 - ii. Failure to carry out their assignments was cause for removal.
 - iii. If they had the authority from a bishop and a presbyter or bishop were present, they could baptize.
 - iv. They also assisted with the Lord's Supper.
- t. Later, medieval deacons assumed an increasingly ecclesiastical role, and their tendency to become candidates for the priesthood became more pronounced than ever. Almost no one was ordained to the diaconate unless he intended to advance to the priesthood." (Deweese, Page 18).
- u. During the reformation the return to scripture resulted in a return to the biblical role of deacons.
 - i. "The diaconate is the ministry, not of reading the Gospel

or the Epistle, as is the present practice, but of distributing the ministry's aid to the poor" Martin Luther.

- ii. "Scripture specifically designates as deacons those whom the ministry has appointed to distribute alms and take care of the poor, and serve as stewards of the common chest for the poor" John Calvin.
- iii. "Here, then, is the kind of deacons the apostolic church had, and which we, after their example should have" John Calvin. Timothy George summarizes Calvin's view of the biblical role of deacons. "Calvin did in fact hold the office of deacon in high esteem.
- iv. Deacons were public officers in the ministry entrusted with the care of the poor.
- v. He urged that they be skilled in the Christian faith since, in the course of their ministry, 'they will often have to give advice and comfort.'
- vi. The deacons in Calvin's Geneva should have experts in what we call today social work as well as pastoral care." (Theology of the Reformers, Broadman Press, 1988, page 241)

9. Deacon Appointment

- a. Acts 6:1-6: "Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven individuals of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ... These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them."
- b. 1 Timothy 3:8-13: "Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ... Let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless."
- c. Deacons are appointed to serve in temporal matters within the church. The appointment of deacons involves identifying individuals with good character, spiritual maturity, and a willingness to serve.
- d. In the early church the apostles (who served in a pastoral role) appointed deacons to address the temporal needs of the community. This practice was rooted in the understanding that

church leadership involves both spiritual and temporal responsibilities.

- e. In modern church settings, pastors appoint deacons, following the biblical criteria outlined in 1 Timothy 3. This involves a communal recognition of the individual's qualifications and a formal process of laying on hands, symbolizing the church's affirmation of their role.
- f. God instructs Moses to gather seventy elders to help him lead the people, providing a model of shared leadership that involves divine calling and human appointment (Numbers 11:16-17).
- g. Paul mentors and appoints Timothy to lead the church in Ephesus, presenting the pattern of pastoral leadership and the appointment of church workers (1 Timothy 1:2).
- h. Deacons are vetted according to Scripture before appointment (1 Timothy 3:10). Deacons are appointed by pastors to assist in the temporal work of the church. This biblical model ensures that both spiritual oversight and temporal matters are covered within the church community, reflecting a balance between divine calling and human responsibility.
- i. Paul addressed the church at Philippi along with the overseers and deacons, indicating the established roles of leadership and service within the early Church (Philippians 1:1).
- j. The apostles instruct the early church to select individuals "full of the Spirit and of wisdom." Spiritual maturity and integrity are essential qualifications for deacons (Acts 6:3).
- k. God promises a spiritual reward and recognition that comes with faithful service as a deacon (1 Timothy 3:13).
- l. Churches use a process of prayer, mentorship, and congregational affirmation to discern and confirm the calling of individuals to pastoral ministry. This involves theological training, pastoral internships, and ordination ceremonies that reflect the recognition of God's calling.
- m. Deacons are appointed after a period of testing and examination, ensuring that they meet the biblical qualifications. This process includes interviews, assessments, and approval by the Pastor and Congregation.

- n. The biblical model of shared leadership, seen in the partnership between pastors and deacons, is reflected in church governance structures that call for collaboration and mutual support among various church leaders.
 - o. Pastors provide oversight, direction, preaching, and teaching. Deacons support the work of the pastor and handle the temporal needs of the church. This division of labor allows the church to function effectively and holistically.
10. Primary Role of Deacons
- a. In the early 1600's early pastors such as John Smyth and Thomas Helwys, saw the primary role of deacons as that of carrying out the benevolence ministry of the ministry.
 - b. In 1654, in what would become an often repeated description, Thomas Collier pictured the work of deacons as that of serving tables - the table of the Lord, the table of the minister, and the table of the poor (Deweese, page 20). Later Church leaders would utilize this description to describe the work of the deacon.
 - c. Southwestern Seminary founding president B.H. Carroll recalled hearing a sermon delivered by S. S. Lattimore with this very outline and stated that he "thought it a very ingenious division of the table question" (Commentary on the English Bible, Volume IV, page 135).
11. Ministry
- a. No longer refer to the deacons as a "board," but as a "body or ministry."
 - b. All churches have had individuals who have performed the functions of elders even if they were called by another name.
 - c. In the NT, they were called elders or overseers, and there was always more than one (a plurality) being talked about.
 - d. They were needed in the NT and they are needed now.
 - e. Merely changing the terminology or giving lip-service to biblical roles is insufficient. The Lord's work must actually be done in the Lord's way.
 - f. If a church wants to choose to use its deacons as a board of ruling elders, then those deacons (now ruling elders mislabeled) must do the work of elders and meet the

- qualifications for elders, as enumerated in Scripture. Otherwise, they lack the necessary Biblical call and mindset to guide the ministry. Churches which do this often drift from their God-given mission.
- g. Ultimately, a congregation has to decide if they are a church under the authority of God's Word - in practice - or not. If so, they will have to structure their government in a biblical way using biblical terminology.
 - h. Deacons serve the Lord by conducting the caring ministry of the Church - doing the work of benevolence, visiting the sick, being alert to the needs of the congregation - and by promoting unity within the Church.
 - i. It may be necessary for deacons to assume additional responsibilities to meet the needs of the people as directed by the pastor, but it is never acceptable to delete the original, Biblical functions of the office.
 - j. These churches select elders to oversee the pastoral care of the Church and return the office of deacon to the matters of the New Testament Church.
 - k. The Pastoral Ministry includes the senior pastor, ministry lead pastors, perhaps other ministerial staff members, and lay members of the ministry.
 - l. This approach requires that members of The Pastoral Ministry meet the qualifications in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, including being apt to teach the Word of God.
 - m. Some may ask, "Why not have the deacons function as elders, just not change the name?"
 - n. If Deacons were to act as elders, who would carry out the role the Bible assigns to the deacons?
 - o. The Pastoral Ministry fulfills the Biblical assignment for elders; not simply being church business leaders, but spiritual leaders in the truest sense.
 - p. In the later half of the eighteenth century, a new concept of deacons emerged and continues to exist in many churches today. This was the flawed view of deacons as church business managers. The drift started as a proposed strategy to relieve the pastor from the secular concerns of the ministry.

- q. But by 1846, there was a more specific strategy and tactic whereby the deacons are the board of directors with an executive board, and have charge of the all the secular and temporal affairs in the ministry.
 - r. This is when and how deacons came to be called a board in many Protestant Churches. This concept has no biblical root in word or concept. Deacons are not ruling elders. Scripture never indicates that deacons are to act as a ruling presbytery.
 - i. A Church is in trouble when all major or minor recommendations from church operations and church committees are screened by the deacons to determine whether they should go to the congregation.
 - ii. A Church is in trouble when the pastor and staff members are directly responsible to the deacons rather than to the ministry.
 - iii. A Church is in trouble when the use or expenditure of major church resources, such as facilities and finances, must first be approved by the deacons.
 - s. There are churches where deacons have assumed roles and authority which are contrary to New Testament teaching.
 - t. Deacons such as this are not needed in churches in that they are a direct contradiction to Scripture.
 - u. The unfortunate term, 'board of deacons' is foreign to the way the ministry should work together under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
 - v. The board of deacons and business manager concept was not and is not a viable New Testament model.
 - w. The ministry must return to the biblical model of deaconship.
 - x. The first responsibility of the Acts 6 deacons was to assist the pastors in caring for the flock and to free the pastors for pastoral matters.
 - y. The biblical framework for the roles of pastors and deacons provides a clear guide for how church leadership should be structured and practiced.
12. Temporal Tasks and Responsibilities
- a. Deacons are tasked with managing the temporal affairs of the church, ensuring that resources are effectively utilized, and

- attending to the physical and logistical needs of the congregation. This includes maintaining church facilities, organizing events, and preparations for worship services.
- b. Common responsibilities include preparing the elements for communion, assisting with baptisms, coordinating volunteer efforts, and ensuring that the physical facility are well kept and operate smoothly.
 - c. While elders teach biblical theology and see to the spiritual needs of the congregation, deacons take care of the temporal issues.
 - d. The first deacons were selected by the church and appointed by the apostles to do ministry and restore harmony in the church (Acts 6:1-6). The apostles could have quickly become bogged down in church administration; it's hard to teach when you know people in the congregation are going hungry. Instead, they designated a group of godly individuals to take care of temporal needs so that they could concentrate on teaching and seeking God's guidance through prayer.
 - e. Deacons may prepare and serve communion, set up rooms for events, take care of the facilities and grounds, pray with shut-ins, and provide for members who need financial aid. In short, they do whatever the ministry needs under the direction of the Pastor.
 - f. Deacons support the pastor by taking care of temporal matters under the supervision and management of the pastor. This could include administrative or organizational tasks, ushering, being responsible for building maintenance, or volunteering to be the ministry treasurer.
 - g. Qualifications for a deacon's character are clearly outlined in Scripture (1 Timothy 3:8-13). According to the Word, the office of deacon is an honor and a blessing.
 - h. New Testament Deacons serve the Lord by conducting the caring ministry of the ministry, doing the benevolence work, visiting the sick, being alert to the spiritual needs of the congregation, for the purposes of freeing the pastoral staff to focus on the ministry of the Word.
 - i. As a result of their faithful ministry, "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” (Acts 6:7).

- j. By effectively managing the temporal needs of the church, deacons play a crucial role in promoting unity within the congregation. Their service helps to create an environment where members can focus on worship and spiritual growth without being distracted by logistical concerns.
 - k. Deacons often take the lead in caring for the needy within the church community, such as distributing food, organizing charity drives, or providing financial assistance. This service embodies the love and compassion of Christ and helps to unify the church around a common mission.
 - l. Deacons may be involved in tasks such as setting up for services, managing church finances, coordinating with volunteers, and addressing any immediate needs that arise within the congregation.
 - m. Deacons often take on special roles during significant church events, such as funerals, weddings, and baptisms. They may also lead specific ministries, such as those focused on outreach, hospitality, or discipleship, further contributing to the church’s overall mission.
 - n. Deacons can promote unity by ensuring that the temporal needs of the church are met in a way that reflects the church's values and mission. This requires clear communication, collaboration with other church leaders, and a servant-hearted approach that prioritizes the well-being of the congregation.
 - o. Deacons can engage the broader congregation in service opportunities, encouraging members to participate in meeting the church's needs. This not only lightens the load for the deacons but also promotes a sense of shared responsibility and community.
13. Theocracy
- a. The church is a theocracy under the Lordship of Christ. When Christians meet to make church decisions, they should be guided by the Word of God.
 - b. Jesus promised He would build His church (Matt. 16:18).

- c. When we become fully involved in the life of the church, we are working with Christ in doing what He is doing (1 Cor. 3:9).
 - d. We should be motivated to become as fully involved as possible in the ministry the church.
14. Distinctions
- a. Deacons and pastors are the two distinct offices in a New Testament Church.
 - b. Pastors “preach the word...reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching” (2 Timothy 4:2).
 - c. The two New Testament offices are mentioned together (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3).
 - i. In 1 Timothy 3 the qualifications are spelled out for the two offices, bishops in verses 1-7, and deacons in verse 8-13.
 - ii. The qualifications are similar, but not identical.
 - iii. For example, the bishop is required to be “able to teach” whereas the deacon does not have that expectation.
 - iv. The differences in title and qualifications mean that the offices are distinct.
 - d. The term “bishop” is translated overseer in some translations.
 - i. It is the word from which we get our word “episcopal” which means, “to look upon, inspect, oversee, look after, care for” and refers to “the care of the ministry which rested upon The Pastoral Ministry.”
 - ii. The term is used interchangeably with “elder” and “shepherd” (Acts 20; 1 Peter 5).
 - iii. There is no question about the authority of the office (1 Timothy 5:17)
 - e. Pastors are not deacons.
 - f. Deacons are not pastors.
 - g. The terms, Elder, Pastor (shepherd), and Overseer (bishop) are used synonymously in the New Testament.
 - h. In the New Testament, elders had the role of the general oversight of the ministry.
15. Deacon means Servant
- a. In the Bible, words have meanings and the word "deacon" means servant.

- b. The title itself is descriptive as a job description.
- c. In the New Testament, the word usually translated "serve" is the Greek word diakoneo, which literally means "through the dirt."
 - i. It refers to an attendant, a waiter, or one who ministers to another.
 - ii. From this word we get the English word "deacon."
- d. We first see the word "deacon" used this way in the Acts (Acts 6:2).
 - i. The individuals who were giving themselves to feeding the flock by preaching and teaching realized that it wasn't right for them to leave those activities to wait tables, so they found some other individuals who were willing to serve, and put them in place to minister to the ministry's physical needs while The Pastoral Ministry ministered to their spiritual needs.
- e. It was a better use of the resources they were given, and a better use of everyone's gifts. It also got more people involved in serving and helping one another.
- f. "Diakoneo and its derivatives, as their etymology suggests, are used mainly for personal help to others."
- g. "Diakonia is found 34 times in the NT. It means service at the table (Lk. 10:40; Acts 6:1).
- h. "Diakanos is found 29 times in the NT. Its primary meaning is one who serves at tables."
- i. Because of the natural connotations of the word diakonos, most interpreters believe that deacons, from the beginning, served as assistants of church leaders (Phil.1:1).
- j. The Apostles, in dealing with the benevolence ministry conflict at the Jerusalem church, told the congregation to select some from among them to take care of the table (Acts 6:1-4).
- k. Some have understood that it is the role of deacons to oversee the business of the ministry. The text says, "this business," not "the business," and the business being referred to is the business of benevolence.
- l. The Greek word for business here is chreia and basically means 'need.'

- m. It is so translated twenty-five times.
- n. This is the only place it is translated business.
- o. Church decisions must remain church decisions under the direction of the pastor.

16. Review

- a. Jesus redefines leadership by linking greatness to service, urging His followers to become slaves to all. This term "slave" reflects total selflessness, a life devoted to the needs of others. True leaders serve with humility, without seeking personal gain (Mark 10:44-45). This teaching came when the disciples were vying for positions of authority. Jesus rebuked their worldly ambitions, showing that leadership in His kingdom is defined by selfless service, not status. In church leadership, pastors, elders, and deacons should model Christ's servant heart. They must prioritize the spiritual and temporal needs of their congregation, leading with humility rather than seeking authority or recognition (Matthew 20:26-28; Philippians 2:5-7). Moses led Israel with humility, interceding for the people (Exodus 32:30-32). Paul described himself as a servant of Christ and the church, laboring tirelessly for their spiritual well-being (1 Corinthians 9:19).
- b. As the church grew, temporal issues emerged, particularly concerning the distribution of resources. Hellenistic (Greek-speaking) Jews felt their widows were being overlooked in favor of Hebraic Jews. This led to complaints about fairness and justice within the community (Acts 6:1-6). This issue threatened to create division within the early church, particularly along cultural lines, and needed immediate attention to maintain unity. This demonstrates the importance of addressing temporal needs in the church to prevent disunity. Leaders today must ensure equitable care for all members of the congregation, particularly the vulnerable (James 1:27; Galatians 6:10).
- c. The apostles set specific criteria: good reputation, full of the Spirit, and wisdom. These qualifications were essential to ensure that those chosen would handle the responsibilities with integrity and discernment, reflecting the unity and holiness of

- the church (Acts 6:3). Though the task was primarily temporal, it required spiritual maturity because these men would be managing resources and serving a diverse community. Leaders in the church, whether handling spiritual or temporal tasks, must possess integrity, spiritual discernment, and wisdom to handle their responsibilities effectively and represent Christ well (1 Timothy 3:8-10; Proverbs 2:6-7).
- d. The apostles recognized their primary calling to focus on spiritual leadership, specifically prayer and teaching. By appointing deacons, they ensured that temporal needs were met while allowing them to fulfill their spiritual duties (Acts 6:4). The church was rapidly growing, and it became impossible for the apostles to manage both the spiritual and temporal needs alone. Delegation allowed them to concentrate on their core mission. Effective church leadership requires delegation and shared responsibility. Leaders must prioritize their spiritual calling but empower others to handle administrative and temporal tasks to ensure the church functions well (Exodus 18:17-22; 1 Corinthians 12:4-70).
 - e. Jesus teaches that service in His kingdom is not about receiving recognition or reward but fulfilling one's duty to God. We are unworthy servants who owe everything to God and should not expect praise for merely doing what we are called to do (Luke 17:10). In a culture where social status and recognition were highly valued, Jesus challenges His followers to adopt a mindset of humility and obedience without seeking personal reward. In church leadership, the focus should be on serving God and others faithfully, without the expectation of human recognition. Leaders should be content in knowing they are fulfilling their calling before God (Matthew 6:1-4; Colossians 3:23-24).
 - f. Jesus, though having all authority, chose to serve others and sacrifice Himself for their benefit. This model of leadership stands in stark contrast to worldly views of power, where leaders often seek control and dominance. Jesus teaches that true authority is exercised through humble service (Mark 10:45). Jesus was addressing His disciples, who were

competing for positions of power in His kingdom. He corrects their understanding by showing that His kingdom operates on the principles of selflessness and sacrifice. Church leaders should follow Christ's example by using their authority to serve, not to control or dominate. Leadership is a responsibility to care for others, even to the point of personal sacrifice (John 13:14-15; Philippians 2:5-7).

- g. Paul teaches that humility is key to Christian living and leadership. Leaders should place others' needs and interests above their own, reflecting Christ's attitude of selfless service (Philippians 2:3). Paul wrote this to encourage unity and humility within the Philippian church, pointing to Christ's own example of servanthood as the model for all believers to follow. In leadership roles, believers should prioritize the needs of others and lead with humility, serving the church community without seeking personal gain or recognition (Romans 12:10; Ephesians 4:20).
- h. Humility involves a conscious effort to put God and others first. By humbling ourselves before God, we submit to His will, acknowledging our dependence on Him, and we serve others without seeking personal honor (James 4:10). James emphasizes that humility is essential for living in submission to God. Humbling ourselves ensures that we remain dependent on God rather than exalting ourselves. Leaders can practice humility by actively serving in lowly tasks, listening to others, and encouraging their congregation to take the spotlight. True humility recognizes that all service is for the glory of God, not personal elevation (Matthew 23:12; 1 Peter 5:6).
- i. Paul teaches that spiritual gifts are diverse, but all come from the same Holy Spirit and are meant to serve the common good of the church. Each believer is given unique gifts to contribute to the growth and unity of the body (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). The Corinthian church was struggling with divisions and rivalries, particularly over spiritual gifts. Paul emphasizes that all gifts, no matter how different, are meant to work together for the benefit of the whole church. In the church, leaders should encourage every believer to use their gifts for the edification of the body.

Diversity of gifts, when exercised in unity, strengthens the church and promotes spiritual growth (Romans 12:4-6; Ephesians 4:11-12).

- j. Deacons are called to serve the church in temporal matters with integrity, spiritual maturity, and faithfulness. Their role ensures that the physical and logistical needs of the church are met, contributing to the smooth functioning of the church and allowing the elders to focus on spiritual oversight (1 Timothy 3:8-10). The early church recognized the need for leaders who could handle temporal matters so that the apostles could concentrate on prayer and teaching. Deacons serve to meet these temporal needs, but they must still meet spiritual qualifications. In today's church, deacons ensure that temporal needs (such as administration, financial management, and caring for the congregation) are met in a way that honors God. This allows the church to operate efficiently and effectively (Acts 6:3; Romans 16:1-2).
 - k. Deacons, like all leaders in the church, are called to serve with humility. They must put the needs of the congregation above their own, being willing to do whatever is necessary to ensure that the church body is cared for and functions well. Jesus' teaching on being the servant of all is foundational for church leadership. Deacons must embody this principle, serving selflessly and with a heart of humility (Mark 9:35). Deacons should approach their roles with a servant's heart, recognizing that their work, whether seen or unseen, contributes to the health of the church. They should seek to glorify God through their service, knowing that true greatness in God's kingdom comes from humble service (1 Peter 4:10; Galatians 5:13).
17. The standards for church leaders and officers show the character of a true New Testament church (1 Timothy 3:8-13). It is a church that can produce this type of man, this type of woman, this type of family.
- a. This is not the work of a Bible college or any parachurch organization; it is the work of a church.
 - b. It is the work of a church that is the serious Bible training, discipling institution that God intends for it to be.
 - c. Every church should be a Bible School to educate and disciple

- all of the members, and every church should have a special Bible School training program for preachers and deacons.
- d. The appointment of deacons allowed the apostles to focus on prayer and teaching, which led to spiritual growth and numerical increase in the early church. By addressing temporal needs efficiently, the church maintained unity and was able to fulfill its mission more effectively (Acts 6:7). The early church was facing a potential division over the care of widows. By appointing deacons to handle these matters, the church leaders were able to ensure that both temporal and spiritual needs were met, preventing discord and promoting growth. Delegation of responsibilities is crucial for church health. When leaders share the load, it allows the church to function smoothly and focus on its primary mission of spreading the gospel and building up believers. The body of Christ grows when each part is working properly (Ephesians 4:16). The church functions like a body, where every member has a unique and important role (1 Corinthians 12:12-27).
 - e. By delegating temporal tasks to the deacons, the apostles were able to focus fully on prayer and teaching, which is the primary way the Word of God spreads. This division of labor ensured that both the spiritual and temporal needs of the church were met, allowing the gospel to advance (Acts 6:4). The apostles understood that they could not manage every aspect of church life without neglecting their primary calling to preach and pray. By delegating temporal duties to deacons, they ensured that their time and energy were devoted to spreading the Word. In modern church leadership, pastors and elders must ensure that they are not overwhelmed by administrative tasks. Delegating these responsibilities to capable deacons or other leaders allows the church's spiritual mission to move forward more effectively. Moses delegated responsibilities to capable men so he could focus on leading the people (Exodus 18:17-22). Spiritual leaders are to equip the saints for the work of ministry, enabling the church to grow (Ephesians 4:11-13).
 - f. The biblically qualified deacon is a Christian with high Christ centered character and an excellent reputation.

- i. One who is blameless in personal life and in family life.
 - ii. One who has a spouse of high Christ centered character .
 - iii. This is not a job for someone who is just hanging around with nothing else to do.
 - iv. It is not the job of a person who happens to be good with finances.
- g. The office of a deacon should be filled by Christians who are pursuing and practicing holiness and godliness.
 - h. The qualified deacon is a servant, but not a lackey.
 - i. Godly deacons were a great benefit to the first church (Acts 6), and they were gifted Christians.
 - j. Stephen was a powerful preacher who knew the Word of God and became the first Christian martyr because of his boldness for the gospel (Acts 6:8 - 7:60).
 - k. If a church will honor God's standards in the appointment of elders and deacons, this will go a long way in making the ministry what God intends it to be.
 - l. The Greek word for deacon (diakonos) means "servant." Diakonos is translated "servant" (Col. 4:12).
 - m. W.E. Vine defines it as "Diakonos ... primarily denotes a servant, whether as doing servile work, or as an attendant rendering free service, without particular reference to its character.
 - n. The word is probably connected with the verb 'dioko,' to hasten after, pursue (perhaps originally said of a runner)."
 - o. Deacon refers to Christian workers in general.
 - i. Diakonos is translated "minister."
 - ii. In this sense, the apostle Paul, Timothy, Epaphras, and other preachers were called "deacons."
 - iii. Every Christian is to be a deacon, a servant, in this general sense, a servant of Christ, a minister of the gospel, a humble worker in the ministry (1 Co. 3:5; 1 Th. 3:2; 1 Tim. 4:6).
 - p. Deacon also refers to a specific office in the ministry, an office with definite and high standards, and an office which only properly qualified and chosen Christians are to hold (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:13). It is in this sense that the word "deacon" is most

- commonly used in churches today.
- q. The office of a deacon is reserved for individuals who become servants of the ministry and of the pastors in a special sense beyond that which is expected of every Christian.
 - r. Though the actual term “deacon” is not used in Acts 6:1-4, this is clearly the biblical pattern for the work of deacons.
 - s. Notice that certain qualified individuals were chosen when a definite need arose, and their primary function was to allow the pastors to be free to carry on the spiritual ministry of the Word of God and prayer.
 - t. The deacons can do any work assigned by the pastor and the ministry, but they should especially look after things like finances, property, and social projects (such as care for widows, fundraising, etc.).
 - u. The main work of the deacon is to free the pastor to dedicate his entire attention to the pastoral ministry—oversight of the ministry, study, teaching, preaching, visitation, counseling, prayer.
 - v. Let us remember that the first deacons were waiters on tables (Acts 6:2). Biblical deacons are humble waiters!
 - w. The deacon might or might not be a teacher and/or a preacher.
 - i. “Apt to teach” is not one of his qualifications.
 - ii. But we see that Stephen, one of the first “table waiters” in the ministry in Jerusalem, was also a mighty disputer for the truth and a preacher (Ac. 6:8-10; 7:1-53).
 - iii. Another of the first deacons was Philip, the evangelist (Ac. 6:5; 8:5-6, 26-27).
18. Team Work
- a. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was a wise man in his generation. He observed Moses trying to do everything in the administration of the affairs of a nation, and fortunately for succeeding administrations freed his mind, saying in substance: ‘This is not a wise thing you do. You weary yourself and the people who have to wait for attention. You attend to things Godward, and appoint others to attend to secular matters.’
 - b. The good advice for a division of labor resulted in the

appointment of graded judges, to the great dispatch of business and the relief of the overburdened Moses and the weary people (Ex. 18:13-26). Certainly the judicious division of labor is one of the greatest elements of success in the administration of the world's affairs.

- c. It is evident that this was the ruling idea in the institution of the deacon's office (Acts 6:1-6). The ministerial office was overtaxed in giving attention to the distribution of the charity fund, to the detriment of its spiritual work. This was bad policy in economics and unreasonable.
- d. "People to be interested in any enterprise must have something to do. ... the office of the deacon is supplemental to the preaching office. It was designed to free the preacher's mind and heart from unnecessary cares with a view to the concentration of his powers in spiritual matters" (B.H. Carroll).
- e. Jesus teaches that we are to serve God and others without expecting special recognition or reward. Our service is a natural response to God's grace, not something that earns us favor. We should adopt a humble attitude in our service, understanding that our duty is to serve faithfully, knowing that God's grace is sufficient. We are called to serve out of love and gratitude, not for accolades or rewards (Luke 17:7-10; Romans 12:1; Philippians 2:5-7).
- f. Jesus challenges the idea that we should expect praise for doing what is expected of us. Jesus emphasizes that we are "unworthy servants" who are simply doing our duty. In serving God and others, we should focus on obedience and faithfulness rather than seeking recognition. Our reward comes from God, not from human acknowledgment (Matthew 6:1-4; Luke 17:10; Colossians 3:23-24).
- g. Jesus emphasizes that we should consider ourselves as servants who have merely done what was our duty. This teaching calls for humility, recognizing that any good we do is by God's grace, not our merit. We should approach our relationship with God with humility, acknowledging that we are dependent on His grace. Our service should be marked by a humble acknowledgment that we are fulfilling our basic

- responsibilities as His servants (Luke 17:10; James 4:6-10; 1 Peter 5:5-6).
- h. Leadership in the church should be characterized by a servant's heart. Leaders should see their roles as fulfilling their duty to God, not as a means to gain honor or power. Church leaders and members alike should adopt a servant-leader mindset, focusing on serving others without expecting anything in return. This approach promotes a community of humility and service (Mark 10:42-45; Luke 17:7-10; John 13:12-17).
 - i. The problem in Acts 6 arose because the Hellenistic Jews felt their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. This issue highlighted the need for more structured care within the church. This passage reminds us of the importance of addressing temporal needs within the church community. Ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all members is essential to maintaining unity and love within the body of Christ (Acts 6:1; Galatians 6:2; James 1:27).
 - j. The apostles chose men who were "full of the Spirit and wisdom," emphasizing spiritual maturity and temporal wisdom. These qualities were important to ensure that those serving in this role would handle responsibilities faithfully and justly. When appointing leaders in the church, it is crucial to consider their spiritual maturity and wisdom. These attributes are essential for maintaining integrity and effectiveness in ministry (Exodus 18:21; Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-13).
 - k. The apostles delegated the responsibility of food distribution to the seven men so that they could focus on prayer and ministry of the Word. This reflects the wisdom of shared responsibility and delegation in leadership. Effective church leadership requires delegation, allowing leaders to focus on their primary calling while empowering others to take on specific tasks. This promotes a healthy distribution of responsibilities within the church (Exodus 18:17-23; Acts 6:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:2).
 - l. Both spiritual and temporal needs are important in the church. The apostles prioritized the ministry of the Word and prayer, but they also ensured that the physical needs of the community were met by appointing capable leaders. Churches should

strive to balance meeting the spiritual and temporal needs of their members. Both aspects are vital to the health and growth of the church community (Matthew 25:35-40; Acts 6:2-4; James 2:14-17).

- m. The qualifications for deacons include being dignified, sincere, temperate, not greedy, faithful, and good managers of their households. These qualities are significant because they ensure that deacons lead by example and uphold the church's integrity. The church should carefully select deacons based on these qualifications to ensure they are spiritually and morally equipped to serve. This leads to a healthy and effective church leadership structure (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 3:8-12; Titus 1:7-9).
 - n. Paul's instruction to test deacons before appointing them ensures that only those who have proven themselves blameless in character and conduct are given leadership roles. This process safeguards the church from potential harm and maintains its witness. The church should implement careful evaluation processes for all leadership roles. By doing so, the church can protect its integrity and ensure that its leaders are faithful, reliable, and capable of fulfilling their duties (1 Timothy 3:10; 5:22, 1 Thessalonians 5:21).
19. The Deacon as a Servant-Leader
- a. Deacons are primarily responsible for supporting the pastor and caring for the physical needs of the congregation. The appointment of the first deacons allowed the apostles to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word, while the deacons managed the daily distribution of food, ensuring that all needs within the community were met. Pastors and deacons work together to ensure the church functions smoothly. The deacons are committed to enabling pastors to devote themselves to shepherding the flock (Acts 6:1-6).
 - b. Collaborative Leadership: Pastors and deacons form a team that oversees the church's operations. While pastors provide oversight, vision, and spiritual direction, deacons support, implement, and manage the temporal aspects of that vision. This collaboration promotes a balanced approach to meeting the needs of the Church. When pastors and deacons work

- together effectively, the church benefits from leadership that attends to the spiritual well-being and temporal needs of its members. This leadership structure enhances the church's growth and mission.
- c. Deacons embody the principle of servant leadership by putting the needs of others before their own and serving the church community with humility and dedication. Their role is not about seeking power or recognition but about meeting the needs of the congregation. Jesus taught that true greatness lies in serving others. Deacons follow this model by serving the church with a heart of humility and selflessness (Mark 10:42-45).
 - d. Deacons are called to serve with humility, recognizing that their role is to support the church and its leadership. They are to serve without seeking personal gain or recognition, focusing on the well-being of the church. Paul instructs believers to do nothing out of selfish ambition but to consider others more significant than themselves. This teaching is central to the deacon's role, as they prioritize the needs of the congregation over their own (Philippians 2:3-4).
 - e. The biblical model of servant leadership, as seen in Jesus' life and teachings, emphasizes humility, service, and putting others first. This model is foundational for deacons, who are called to lead by serving. Deacons apply these principles by serving in various capacities within the church, ensuring that the temporal needs of the congregation are met while also setting an example of humble service for others to follow.
 - f. Jesus redefines greatness as serving others, rather than being served. In contrast to worldly views where leadership is often about power, prestige, and authority, Jesus teaches that true greatness is found in humility and self-sacrifice (Mark 10:43-45). Jesus spoke this to His disciples after they were arguing about who would be the greatest in the kingdom (Mark 10:35-41). His response turns worldly ideas of leadership upside down, emphasizing that in God's kingdom, leaders are those who serve. In the church, leaders must view their role as one of service to others, not a position of superiority.

Leadership is about humble, sacrificial service, just as Christ exemplified through His life and death. Matthew 23:11: "The greatest among you shall be your servant." Philippians 2:5-7: Jesus humbled Himself, taking the form of a servant, and became obedient even to death. Moses led the people of Israel with humility (Numbers 12:3). Jesus washed the feet of His disciples to show servant leadership (John 13:1-17).

- g. To be a servant or slave of all means putting others' needs before your own and being willing to serve them with humility. This type of leadership requires self-sacrifice, empathy, and a genuine desire to uplift others (Mark 10:44). Jesus uses the term "slave" to emphasize the depth of self-denial required in kingdom leadership. In Roman culture, a slave had no rights and existed solely to serve others. Jesus applies this extreme example to demonstrate how leaders should give themselves for the good of others. Church leaders are called to serve their congregations with humility, sacrificing personal ambitions for the good of others. Pastors, elders, and deacons must prioritize the needs of the church body and lead by example in serving (Matthew 20:28; 1 Peter 5:3). Paul describes himself as a servant of Christ and the church, working tirelessly for the gospel (1 Corinthians 9:19). David often showed humility and sought to serve God's people (1 Samuel 24:5-7).
- h. Jesus, though He had all authority as the Son of God, chose to exercise that authority by serving others and sacrificing Himself. This challenges church leaders to view their authority not as a means of control but as an opportunity to serve and care for others (Mark 10:45). At a time when religious leaders sought power and control, Jesus offers a radically different model (Matthew 23:1-7). His willingness to die for others set a standard for leaders to follow. Leaders must use their authority to serve the church, not to seek personal gain or control. True authority in the church is about selfless service and sacrificial love, modeled after Christ (Philippians 2:5-8; 1 Peter 5:2).
- i. Paul's instruction emphasizes humility and selflessness, foundational principles of servant leadership. Leaders are called to prioritize the needs and interests of others above their

own (Philippians 2:3). Paul wrote to the Philippians to encourage unity and humility within the church, warning against pride and self-centeredness. He points to Jesus as the ultimate example of humility and service. Leaders must approach their roles with a mindset of humility, always considering how they can serve and elevate others. This attitude promotes unity and love within the church. Romans 12:10: "Outdo one another in showing honor." Ephesians 4:2: "With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love." Barnabas supported Paul's ministry without seeking personal recognition (Acts 9:26-27). Jonathan loved David and put his friend's welfare above his own ambitions for the throne (1 Samuel 18:1-4).

- j. Believers are called to regularly practice humility, recognizing their dependence on God and valuing others above themselves. This is not only an inward attitude but is demonstrated through acts of service and self-sacrifice (James 4:10). James teaches that humility is central to Christian living. True humility involves submission to God and a conscious effort to serve others rather than seeking personal honor. Temporal steps include listening more than speaking, serving others without expecting anything in return, and being willing to take on tasks that are unnoticed or unappreciated. Leaders in particular should model these behaviors for others to follow (Matthew 23:12; Romans 12:16).
- k. Elders are called to shepherd and care for the congregation, leading by example rather than through force or domination. Their leadership should be motivated by a genuine desire to serve and care for the spiritual well-being of the church (1 Peter 5:2-3). Peter exhorts the elders to follow Christ's model of leadership, which is not about status or control but about serving others with humility and love. Elders today should focus on caring for the spiritual needs of their congregation, leading through their actions, and promoting a culture of servanthood within the church (Acts 20:28; Hebrews 13:17). Leaders are responsible for watching over the souls of the flock, and they will give an account to God for how they lead.

- I. Elders are warned against leading with a domineering attitude, which reflects worldly authority. Instead, they are to lead by example, showing humility, integrity, and selflessness in their actions (1 Peter 5:3). Peter, as an elder himself, instructs leaders to follow Christ's model of humility and service, contrasting this with the authoritarian leadership often seen in secular contexts. Church elders must be careful not to abuse their power or authority. Instead, they should seek to model Christlike behavior, leading by example and promoting a spirit of humility and service within the church (Matthew 20:25-26; Luke 22:26).
- m. Faithful leaders are promised eternal rewards, symbolized by the "unfading crown of glory." This reward is not a temporal, earthly reward but an eternal recognition from God for serving faithfully (1 Peter 5:4). Peter addresses elders and encourages them to lead with humility and diligence, reminding them that their ultimate reward comes from Christ, not from human praise or recognition. Church leaders should be motivated not by earthly success or recognition but by the promise of eternal reward from Christ. This eternal perspective encourages leaders to serve faithfully, even when their work goes unnoticed or unappreciated by others (1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 4:8). Paul speaks of the "crown of righteousness" that awaits those who serve faithfully until the end.
- n. Paul's greeting to both overseers and deacons, along with the rest of the church, highlights the collaborative nature of church leadership. Overseers and deacons, though having different roles, work together for the unity and health of the church (Philippians 1:1). Paul often addressed the whole church in his letters, showing that leadership functions within the broader context of the church community. By greeting both overseers and deacons, Paul emphasizes that all members of church leadership are equally important for the functioning of the body. Church leadership should operate with unity and cooperation. Overseers (elders) and deacons should work together, understanding that while their roles differ, their purpose is the same—to build up and serve the body of Christ (Ephesians

- 4:3-4; Romans 12:4-5).
- o. The inclusion of both overseers and deacons characterizes spiritual leadership (overseers) and temporal leadership (deacons) are both essential for the health of the church. Overseers primarily focus on teaching, shepherding, and spiritual oversight, while deacons handle temporal matters such as administration and caring for physical needs (Philippians 1:1). In the early church, overseers (also called elders) were responsible for the spiritual direction and pastoral care of the church, while deacons served the church in temporal ways, ensuring that the day-to-day needs of the congregation were met. This balance of spiritual and temporal leadership is still vital in today's church. Both roles must work in harmony, understanding that one cannot function effectively without the other. Spiritual needs and temporal needs are interconnected in a healthy church (Acts 6:1-4; 1 Timothy 3:1-13). The apostles focused on prayer and the ministry of the word, while deacons were appointed to handle temporal tasks, ensuring both spiritual and temporal needs were met. Paul outlines the qualifications for both overseers and deacons, showing the importance of both roles in the church.
20. The Deacon's Accountability and Integrity
- a. Deacons are called to a high standard of integrity, characterized by honesty, sobriety, and financial responsibility. They must hold to the faith with a clear conscience, which reflects both doctrinal integrity and personal morality (1 Timothy 3:8-9). Paul's instructions to Timothy outline the qualifications for church leaders, highlighting the importance of personal character. Deacons serve in roles that require trust, and their actions should reflect their commitment to Christ. Deacons must cultivate personal accountability, ensuring that their conduct is above reproach. This includes being transparent in handling finances, speaking truthfully, and living according to biblical principles. Church leaders must be above reproach and not greedy for gain (2 Corinthians 8:21; Titus 1:7).
 - b. Deacons can initiate and support community outreach by caring for the most vulnerable in society, such as widows and

orphans. True religion is demonstrated through acts of service and compassion for those in need (James 1:27). James emphasizes that practical acts of love and service are integral to the Christian faith. Deacons, as servants of the church, are in a unique position to lead and organize outreach efforts that reflect Christ's compassion. Practical ways deacons can support outreach include organizing food drives, visiting the sick or elderly, supporting local shelters, and leading efforts to provide for families in need. These acts of service are a reflection of the church's mission to love others as Christ loved us. Jesus commends those who feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and visit the sick (Matthew 25:35-36). The deacons were appointed to ensure the fair distribution of resources, reflecting their role in practical ministry (Acts 6:1-3).

- c. Integrity is foundational for deacons, guiding their actions and decisions. When deacons uphold high standards of honesty, they build trust within the congregation and community. Failure in this area leads to destruction and disunity (Proverbs 11:3). The wisdom literature of the Old Testament often contrasts the consequences of integrity versus dishonesty. Deacons, as servant leaders, must ensure that their actions reflect the righteousness of Christ in every aspect of their lives. Deacons should implement systems of accountability, such as financial transparency, regular reporting, and peer accountability within the leadership team. These safeguards help maintain the integrity of their service and ensure that their conduct remains above reproach. Leaders who persist in sin should be publicly rebuked to maintain accountability (2 Corinthians 4:2; 1 Timothy 5:20).
- d. Jesus outlines a clear process for resolving conflicts, beginning with private discussion and escalating to involving church leaders if necessary. The goal is reconciliation and restoration, not punishment (Matthew 18:15-17). This teaching is part of Jesus' broader instruction on maintaining unity within the church. The process begins privately to avoid unnecessary public shame and encourages personal responsibility in resolving disputes. Deacons can facilitate this process by

- encouraging members to address conflicts privately before involving others. They can also serve as mediators in cases where resolution is not achieved, helping to maintain peace and unity within the church (Galatians 6:1; Ephesians 4:3).
- e. Addressing conflicts privately allows for resolution without creating unnecessary division or public embarrassment. Deacons, as leaders in the church, can encourage this practice by teaching the biblical process for conflict resolution and modeling it in their own lives (Proverbs 25:9). Scripture encourages discretion in resolving disputes, recognizing that public exposure of conflicts can harm relationships and the church's witness. Deacons should promote private reconciliation by providing guidance to church members on how to address issues one-on-one. They can also provide support for those struggling with unresolved conflicts, offering biblical counsel and encouragement toward unity (Proverbs 17:9; James 5:19-20).
 - f. James describes godly wisdom as being pure, peaceable, gentle, merciful, and impartial. These characteristics should guide deacons in how they handle conflicts, promoting peace and fairness within the church. James contrasts earthly, selfish wisdom with wisdom from above. Deacons, as leaders in the church, must rely on godly wisdom to guide their actions, particularly in situations requiring conflict resolution (James 3:17). Deacons should approach conflicts with a gentle and peaceable spirit, seeking to resolve issues impartially and with mercy. By embodying these characteristics, they help build unity within the church (Proverbs 2:6; Colossians 3:12-13).
 - g. Deacons must pursue peace and purity in their relationships and leadership. Impartiality is key to ensuring that decisions are made fairly, without favoritism, and with the goal of maintaining unity in the church (Hebrews 12:14). The writer of Hebrews exhorts believers to pursue peace and holiness, recognizing that these qualities are essential for maintaining a healthy and unified body of Christ. Deacons, as church leaders, are responsible for promoting these values within the congregation. Deacons should ensure that their actions and decisions reflect

a commitment to peace, purity, and impartiality. This may involve mediating disputes, ensuring fairness in church matters, and promoting a culture of holiness and unity (Romans 12:18; Proverbs 3:17).

- h. Jesus teaches that serving the vulnerable and needy is equivalent to serving Him. Deacons, in their role of service, are called to minister to those who are marginalized, reflecting Christ's compassion and love for all people (Matthew 25:40). Jesus identifies Himself with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned. Deacons, as leaders in practical ministry, are tasked with ensuring that the needs of these groups are met. Deacons should take the initiative in organizing community outreach programs that address the needs of the poor, homeless, and marginalized. By doing so, they fulfill Christ's call to serve "the least of these" and demonstrate the gospel in action (Luke 4:18-19; Galatians 6:10).
- i. Deacons in the early church were appointed to serve the practical needs of the congregation, such as distributing food to widows. Today, deacons can live out this call by organizing and leading efforts to meet the material and spiritual needs of those in their communities (Acts 6:1-3). The early church recognized the need for dedicated leaders to oversee practical ministries, ensuring that no one was neglected. Deacons were chosen for their wisdom and spiritual maturity to handle these responsibilities. Practical ways deacons can serve include organizing food distribution, visiting the sick and elderly, offering financial assistance to those in need, and coordinating volunteer efforts for community service projects (James 2:15-16; Proverbs 19:17).
- j. Tabitha was known for her generosity and service to those in need, making clothes and caring for the poor. Her example shows that dedicated service can have a lasting impact on the community, bringing glory to God and meeting the needs of others (Acts 9:36). Tabitha's life was marked by selfless service, and her death was deeply mourned by those she helped. When Peter raised her from the dead, it became a

powerful testimony to the community of God's compassion and the value of service. Deacons can emulate Tabitha by being known for their acts of charity and service. Whether through organizing outreach efforts or personally ministering to the needy, their work should reflect the love of Christ and meet tangible needs (Proverbs 31:20; Galatians 6:9).

- k. The qualifications for deacons emphasize the importance of integrity, self-control, honesty, and a firm grasp of the faith. These qualities ensure that deacons can be trusted with their responsibilities and serve as role models for the congregation (1 Timothy 3:8-9). Paul outlines these qualifications to ensure that those who serve in the church are trustworthy, mature, and capable of leading by example. Without these qualities, deacons would be unable to serve effectively or maintain the trust of the church. Deacons must consistently live out these qualifications in their personal and public lives. Accountability measures, such as peer oversight and transparent practices, should be implemented to ensure that deacons maintain their integrity (Titus 1:7; Proverbs 10:9).
- l. Paul's instruction emphasizes that church leaders, including deacons, should model good works and demonstrate integrity in their speech and actions. Their behavior should be beyond reproach, serving as an example to the congregation (Titus 2:7-8). Paul writes to Titus, a church leader, instructing him to set an example in both word and deed. This principle applies to all leaders, including deacons, who must lead with integrity and demonstrate the gospel through their actions. Deacons should focus on living out their faith through good works, maintaining integrity in their speech and conduct. Their lives should be a testimony to the transforming power of Christ, encouraging others to follow their example (Ephesians 4:29; Matthew 5:16).
- m. Paul calls the church to imitate him as he imitates Christ. Deacons, like all church leaders, should follow Christ's example in every area of life, striving for holiness and accountability in their ministry (1 Corinthians 11:1). Paul's statement highlights the importance of modeling Christlike behavior for others to follow. Deacons, in their service and leadership, must be

intentional about setting a good example in everything they do. Deacons should be transparent in their actions, accountable to other leaders and the congregation, and committed to following Christ's example. Regular self-reflection, accountability partnerships, and a focus on personal holiness will help them maintain integrity in their ministry (1 Timothy 4:12; Hebrews 13:7).

- n. Deacons ensure that church operations run smoothly and that resources are used effectively and ethically.
- o. Deacons help implement policies and manage the day-to-day temporal affairs of the church, allowing the pastor to focus on spiritual leadership. Good leadership is crucial for maintaining the church's credibility and effectiveness in its mission.
- p. Deacons work closely with the pastor and play a key role in supporting the pastor by handling temporal tasks. This collaboration is essential for the overall health and growth of the church.
- q. Deacons contribute to the efficient operation of the church, helps maintain order, and supports the church's mission.
- r. Deacons must be transparent in dealing with Church resources and provide regular reports of actions taken and actions required to the pastor. This builds trust and ensures that the church operates with integrity.
- s. A godly life is essential for deacons to fulfill their responsibilities effectively. Their service must be rooted in a deep relationship with God, which empowers them to lead with wisdom, understanding, compassion, and integrity.
- t. Deacons are expected to model a godly life for the congregation, demonstrating the importance of prayer, Bible study, and personal holiness in their daily lives.
- u. Regular prayer is crucial for maintaining a close relationship with God and seeking His guidance in decision-making and service. Deacons should be committed to personal and corporate prayer.
- v. Consistent study of Scripture equips deacons with the knowledge, understanding, and wisdom needed to lead effectively and provide spiritual support to others.

- w. Deacons must live lives of integrity, reflecting the character of Christ in their actions and decisions. This includes being truthful, ethical, and fair in all dealings.
 - x. Deacons will face spiritual challenges such as burnout, pride, or discouragement. These challenges will hinder their effectiveness in ministry if not addressed.
 - y. Deacons can overcome these challenges by maintaining a godly foundation, seeking support from fellow believers, and staying focused on serving the Body of Christ. Regular accountability and spiritual mentoring are also valuable in navigating these challenges (Ephesians 6:10-18; Colossians 3:23-24; 1 Corinthians 12:28; and Acts 20:28).
21. The Spiritual Life of a Deacon
- a. Good governance in the church is important. Paul instructs Titus to establish good governance by appointing elders and putting things in order (Titus 1:5). Good governance ensures that the church operates in an organized, faithful, and efficient manner, aligning with God's will and purpose for His people. In the early church, structure and leadership were necessary to ensure doctrinal purity, maintain unity, and guide the church through temporal and spiritual matters. Without governance, chaos and division could easily disrupt the body. Good governance in the church today includes leadership accountability, sound doctrine, and effective management of resources. It helps prevent division, maintain order, and allows the church to focus on its mission of glorifying God and serving others (1 Corinthians 14:40; 1 Timothy 3:15).
 - b. Deacons must effectively steward church resources. Deacons are entrusted with managing temporal matters, such as the distribution of resources, requiring wisdom, integrity, and spiritual maturity. Effective management ensures that the church's material needs are met while allowing other leaders to focus on spiritual responsibilities (Acts 6:3). The early church faced logistical challenges with resource distribution, and deacons were appointed to ensure fairness and efficiency, reflecting the church's commitment to both spiritual and temporal care. Deacons today should manage church

resources with integrity, ensuring that funds, materials, and other assets are used wisely and in ways that glorify God. Transparency and accountability in administration are essential for developing trust and unity in the congregation (1 Timothy 3:8-9; 1 Peter 4:10).

- c. Deacons face spiritual challenges. Deacons may face challenges related to personal integrity, discouragement, or spiritual attacks due to their leadership role. Testing and preparation are essential to ensure they are spiritually mature and ready to face these challenges (1 Timothy 3:10). Paul emphasizes the need for deacons to be tested, as leadership positions come with trials that can expose weaknesses. Spiritual challenges like pride, fatigue, or temptation can arise and must be overcome through faith and accountability. Deacons should seek spiritual growth through prayer, Scripture, and accountability within the church. Regular self-examination and a reliance on God's strength will help them remain steadfast in their duties (James 1:12; Ephesians 6:10-11).
- d. The armor of God—truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God—equips deacons to resist spiritual attacks and stand firm in their calling. These elements strengthen them against discouragement, temptation, and spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:13). Paul wrote to the Ephesians about the reality of spiritual warfare, reminding them that spiritual leaders, like deacons, must be prepared to defend their faith and the church against the enemy's schemes. Deacons should daily "put on" the armor of God through prayer, faith, and the Word. This equips them to face spiritual opposition, maintain personal holiness, and lead the church with confidence in God's protection (2 Corinthians 10:4; Romans 13:12).
- e. Prayer is vital for deacons as it allows them to bring their concerns, challenges, and needs before God, who provides peace and guidance. Through prayer, they gain spiritual strength and wisdom for their responsibilities (Philippians 4:6-7). Paul encourages believers to rely on prayer in all

circumstances, particularly in leadership roles, where challenges can create anxiety or doubt. Prayer helps leaders stay grounded in their faith and focused on God's will. Deacons should cultivate a consistent prayer life, asking for God's strength, wisdom, and guidance as they manage their duties. Prayer not only strengthens them spiritually but also sets an example for the congregation (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Colossians 4:2).

- f. Deacons must recognize that their battles are spiritual, not merely physical or administrative. Spiritual warfare involves standing firm in truth, resisting temptation, and leading with integrity, knowing that they are engaged in a spiritual struggle against forces of evil (Ephesians 6:12). Paul reminds the church that their struggles are not just against human problems but against spiritual powers. Deacons, as church leaders, face attacks on their character, leadership, and effectiveness, which must be countered with spiritual weapons. Deacons should stay vigilant and prepared by continually immersing themselves in Scripture, prayer, and godly counsel. They should approach challenges with a spiritual mindset, understanding that every task or difficulty has spiritual implications (2 Timothy 2:3-4; 1 Peter 5:8).
- g. Deacons should approach their duties with dedication and enthusiasm, knowing that they are ultimately serving Christ. God's approval is more important than human recognition. Excellence and faithfulness in their work is their only standard (Colossians 3:23). Paul encourages all believers to work with diligence and integrity, understanding that their work is an act of worship and service to God. This applies especially to church leaders like deacons, whose responsibilities impact the spiritual and temporal life of the church. Deacons should carry out their responsibilities—whether managing resources, serving the congregation, or leading ministries—with an attitude of worship, working to please God rather than seeking human praise (1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 6:7).
- h. Faithful service in ministry is rewarded by Christ, who promises an eternal reward for those who serve Him diligently. This

"unfading crown of glory" symbolizes the eternal honor and joy that faithful deacons will receive from their Savior (1 Peter 5:4). Peter addresses church leaders, reminding them that while their work is demanding, it will be rewarded by Christ Himself when He returns. This eternal perspective motivates leaders to serve with faithfulness and perseverance. Deacons should remain motivated by the eternal rewards promised by Christ, knowing that their service, though challenging at times, is not in vain. This promise encourages them to serve with joy and perseverance (2 Timothy 4:8; Hebrews 6:10).

- i. Paul describes the various roles and gifts within the church, all aimed at equipping the saints and building up the body of Christ. Deacons, though not explicitly mentioned in this passage, serve in a complementary role by handling temporal matters and supporting the ministry of the Word (Ephesians 4:11-12). Paul's teaching emphasizes that every role in the church, whether spiritual or temporal, contributes to the overall mission of building up the church. Deacons are essential in managing resources and caring for the congregation, allowing spiritual leaders to focus on teaching and prayer. Deacons should recognize that their work is integral to the church's mission, even if it focuses more on temporal needs. By using their gifts to serve, they contribute to the unity and effectiveness of the church (1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Acts 6:1-6). Deacons were appointed to handle temporal matters, freeing up the apostles for spiritual leadership.
- j. Deacons, like all members of the body, have specific gifts that contribute to the overall health and unity of the church. When they use their gifts for the common good, they promote harmony and help the church function as a unified whole (1 Corinthians 12:12). Paul explains that the church is like a body, with different members performing different functions. Deacons serve a crucial role in caring for the physical and temporal needs of the church, ensuring that no part of the body is neglected. Deacons should seek to use their gifts in ways that build up the church, working alongside pastors, elders, and other leaders to maintain unity and address the needs of the

- congregation (Ephesians 4:16; Romans 12:6-8).
- k. Church leaders, including elders and pastors, are called to shepherd the flock of God with care, humility, and integrity. They are responsible for spiritual oversight and setting a Christlike example. Deacons support these leaders by handling temporal needs and relieving them of administrative burdens, allowing them to focus on spiritual leadership (1 Peter 5:2-3). Peter writes to the elders of the church, encouraging them to lead with humility and diligence. Deacons, while not tasked with spiritual oversight, play a critical role in supporting the mission by ensuring the church's temporal needs are met. Deacons should actively support church leaders by ensuring that the logistical and administrative aspects of church life are handled efficiently. This frees up pastors and elders to devote their time to prayer, preaching, and pastoral care (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 6:4).
 - l. Church leaders are called to be vigilant and attentive to both spiritual and temporal matters within the congregation. Deacons can apply this principle by being diligent in their administrative responsibilities, ensuring that no part of the church's life is neglected and that all resources are used wisely (Acts 20:28). Paul exhorts the Ephesian elders to care for the flock with vigilance, understanding the sacred trust they hold in leading the people of God. While elders focus on spiritual oversight, deacons ensure that temporal care and attention are given to the congregation's physical needs. Deacons should be thorough and conscientious in their duties, ensuring that all resources are properly managed, finances are transparent, and the physical needs of the congregation are met. This vigilance helps prevent disorder and maintains the church's overall health (Proverbs 27:23; 1 Corinthians 4:2).
 - m. Deacons are called to exemplify integrity and responsibility, helping to protect the church from financial mismanagement, dishonesty, and other temporal dangers. By maintaining a high standard of moral character and transparency, they safeguard the church's resources and reputation (1 Timothy 3:8-9). Paul's instructions to Timothy highlight the importance of character in

church leadership. Deacons are entrusted with temporal responsibilities, and their personal integrity is essential for ensuring that the church operates in a manner that is above reproach. Deacons should implement systems of accountability, transparency, and careful management of resources to protect the church from financial or administrative failures. This includes budgeting, proper stewardship, and reporting on the use of church resources (Titus 1:7; Proverbs 11:3).

- n. By handling temporal and administrative duties, deacons enable church leaders, such as elders and pastors, to focus on the ministry of the Word and prayer. Their role supports the preaching and teaching of the gospel by ensuring that the church's logistical needs are met (Acts 6:4). In the early church, as the number of disciples grew, temporal tasks, such as distributing food, threatened to detract from the apostles' primary focus on teaching and prayer. The appointment of deacons addressed this issue, allowing the church's mission to continue unhindered. Deacons play a vital role in supporting the church's mission by freeing up spiritual leaders to focus on teaching, discipling, and evangelizing. Their service in managing the church's temporal needs ensures that the ministry of the Word can flourish without distraction (1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:7).
- o. Deacons contribute to the effective functioning of the church by supporting the temporal needs of the congregation, which frees pastors and elders to focus on their spiritual responsibilities. Their role helps maintain unity by ensuring that the church's logistical and physical needs are met, preventing conflict or neglect (Ephesians 4:11-12). Paul describes the various roles within the church that work together to equip and build up the body of Christ. Deacons, though not explicitly mentioned in this passage, play a key role by handling temporal matters, allowing the church's spiritual leaders to focus on equipping the saints. Deacons should view their work as integral to the overall unity of the church. By serving in areas like administration, resource management, and helping with physical needs, they allow the

- church to operate smoothly, preventing disruptions that could harm the church's witness (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Corinthians 12:25).
- p. Deacons, by working heartily for the Lord, ensure that the temporal needs of the church are met without becoming distracted by seeking personal recognition or power. Their focus on serving God in everything they do helps the church stay centered on its mission of glorifying God and spreading the gospel (Colossians 3:23-24). Paul encourages believers to work diligently, reminding them that their ultimate reward comes from the Lord. For deacons, this means faithfully serving in their responsibilities, whether it's managing resources or helping others, always keeping the church's mission in view. Deacons can help the church stay focused on its mission by being diligent and responsible in their duties. By maintaining a God-centered approach to their work, they contribute to a church culture that prioritizes service, worship, and gospel proclamation (Matthew 25:21; Hebrews 6:10).
 - q. Paul teaches that deacons must manage their personal lives—especially their families—with integrity and care. This ensures that they are spiritually and emotionally stable, enabling them to lead and serve effectively in the church (1 Timothy 3:12). The requirement for deacons to manage their households well reflects the principle that personal character and responsibility in private life impact one's ability to serve in public ministry. If a deacon cannot manage their own household, they will likely struggle with the responsibilities of serving the church. Deacons should prioritize their family life, making sure they lead with godliness and wisdom at home. This sets an example for others in the church and helps ensure they are spiritually prepared to serve in the church's leadership (1 Timothy 3:5; Titus 1:6).
 - r. Deacons are called to set an example for the rest of the congregation in their speech, behavior, love, faith, and purity. As role models, they demonstrate what it means to live a Christlike life, inspiring others to follow their example (1 Timothy 4:12). Paul's exhortation to Timothy applies to all church leaders, including deacons. By living lives of integrity

and faithfulness, deacons serve as visible examples of Christian maturity, encouraging others in the church to grow in their walk with Christ. Deacons should strive to be exemplary in every area of their lives, both inside and outside the church. Their behavior, speech, and relationships should reflect their commitment to Christ, serving as a witness to the congregation and the wider community (Philippians 3:17; Titus 2:7-8).

- s. Jesus teaches that faithfulness in small responsibilities demonstrates a person's trustworthiness for larger roles. In church leadership, including the role of deacons, serving faithfully in smaller, often unnoticed tasks leads to greater opportunities to serve in more significant capacities (Luke 16:10). Jesus often emphasized that leadership in His kingdom is marked by humility and faithfulness, not by seeking positions of power or prestige. Faithfulness in managing smaller duties prepares a person for greater responsibilities in the church. Deacons should take their responsibilities seriously, no matter how small they may seem. Whether managing church finances, organizing ministries, or caring for the needs of others, faithfulness in these tasks will open the door to greater opportunities for service (Matthew 25:21; 1 Corinthians 4:2).
 - t. Jesus redefines leadership as servanthood. Deacons, like all leaders in the church, are called to serve others rather than seek personal recognition. The model for this is Christ, who gave His life in service to others (Mark 10:43-45). This teaching was given in response to the disciples' desire for positions of prominence. Jesus corrected their understanding by showing that true greatness in His kingdom comes through humble service, not authority or power. Deacons should approach their responsibilities with a heart of servanthood, looking at the needs of others rather than seeking personal gain. This brings about a spirit of unity and humility within the church (Philippians 2:5-7; John 13:14-15).
30. Conflict Resolution, Outreach, and Accountability
- a. Following Matthew 18:15-20, conflict resolution should begin privately between the individuals involved. If unresolved, it should involve one or two witnesses, and if necessary, the

matter should be brought before the church. This approach emphasizes direct, compassionate communication and the pursuit of reconciliation.

- b. Deacons act as mediators, helping to facilitate these steps. Their role is to ensure that conflicts are addressed biblically and that peace and unity are maintained within the congregation.
- c. Deacons can help prevent conflicts from escalating by being approachable, listening to concerns, and promoting dialogue. They can also provide counsel based on biblical principles to encourage reconciliation and forgiveness.
- d. By focusing on the common goal of serving the church and community, deacons can help unify the congregation around shared values and mission.
- e. Matthew 18:15-20 provides a step-by-step process for addressing sin and conflict within the church. Deacons can use this framework to guide the church in resolving disputes in a manner that honors God and promotes peace.
- f. James 3:17-18 points to the qualities of wisdom from above, such as purity, peace-loving, and impartiality. Deacons can model and encourage these virtues in conflict resolution efforts.
- g. Deacons are at the forefront of the church's outreach efforts, leading initiatives that serve the needs of the community. This can include organizing food drives, providing clothing for the needy, and offering other forms of temporal assistance.
- h. Effective outreach should align with the church's mission and values, reflecting the love of Christ in tangible ways. Deacons play a crucial role in ensuring that outreach programs are impactful and aligned with the church's spiritual goals.
- i. Deacons lead efforts to engage with the local community by identifying needs, building relationships, and partnering with other organizations. This can include conducting surveys, holding community events, and collaborating with local charities.
- j. Deacons initiate projects like after-school programs, health clinics, or mentoring initiatives, which address specific community needs and demonstrate the church's commitment to

- service.
- k. Deacons organize and lead outreach teams, delegating responsibilities and ensuring that the church's resources are effectively used to meet the community's needs.
 - l. By focusing on the most vulnerable and marginalized, deacons ensure that the church's outreach efforts make a meaningful difference in the lives of those served.
 - m. Integrity and accountability are essential for deacons, as they are entrusted with significant responsibilities within the church. Their conduct should reflect the highest ethical standards, as outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Titus 2:7-8.
 - n. A deacon's integrity builds trust within the church and the community. Accountability ensures that deacons manage church affairs transparently and ethically, avoiding any appearance of impropriety.
 - o. Deacons must live lives of honesty, reliability, and consistency, modeling Christian virtues in their personal and public lives. This includes maintaining moral purity, financial integrity, and ethical decision-making.
 - p. Deacons should be transparent in their management of church resources, providing regular reports and being open to pastoral directions. This accountability helps prevent misuse of resources and ensures that the church's operations align with its mission.
 - q. Faithful service as a deacon can lead to spiritual growth, as it involves constant reliance on God, engagement with His Word, and the practice of spiritual disciplines. Deacons grow spiritually as they serve others, handle responsibilities with integrity, and navigate challenges with faith (Matthew 18:15-20; James 3:17-18; Matthew 25:31-46; Acts 9:36-43; 1 Timothy 3:8-13; Titus 2:7-8).
31. "The Deacon's Ministry" by C. H. Spurgeon
- a. Spurgeon emphasizes that deacons are fundamentally servants in the church, embodying the model of servant leadership exemplified by Christ. The deacon's role is not about power or authority but about serving the congregation, especially in meeting temporal needs. Spurgeon advocates for

humility and dedication, stressing that a true leader in the church is one who puts the needs of others before their own, serving with a heart of compassion and selflessness.

- b. Spurgeon highlights the necessity of spiritual maturity for deacons. He argues that deacons must be men of strong faith, sound doctrine, and unwavering character. Their spiritual life should be marked by a deep relationship with God, evident through their prayer life, knowledge of Scripture, and consistent Christian living. This maturity is essential for deacons to fulfill their responsibilities effectively and to be a godly example to the congregation.
 - c. In Spurgeon's view, one of the primary roles of deacons is to support the pastor and church leaders. This support allows pastors to focus on their spiritual duties, such as preaching and teaching, while deacons handle temporal matters. Spurgeon emphasizes that a healthy relationship between pastors and deacons is crucial for the smooth functioning of the church, with deacons acting as a bridge between the Pastoral Ministry and the congregation.
 - d. Spurgeon stresses the deacon's role in promoting and maintaining unity within the church. He notes that deacons must be peacemakers, working to resolve conflicts and prevent divisions within the congregation. Their commitment to unity reflects their dedication to the health and harmony of the church, ensuring that it remains focused on its mission and witness to the world.
 - e. Spurgeon addresses the importance of deacons being actively involved in temporal matters, such as caring for the poor, managing church resources, and attending to the physical needs of the congregation. This hands-on ministry is seen as a tangible expression of the church's love and care for its members and community. Spurgeon believes that through these acts of service, deacons fulfill a vital role in the life of the church, embodying the love of Christ in temporal ways.
32. "Biblical Church Leadership" by Mark Dever
- a. Dever argues that all church leadership should be rooted in Scripture, with clear guidelines for the roles and responsibilities

of leaders, including deacons. He emphasizes that the Bible provides a blueprint for how church leadership should function, with deacons playing a vital role in supporting the spiritual and temporal needs of the church. Dever insists that adhering to biblical principles ensures the church remains faithful to its mission and purpose.

- b. Dever advocates for a plurality of leadership within the church, where deacons work alongside pastors and elders in a team-oriented approach. This model distributes responsibilities and prevents the concentration of power in a single individual. By having multiple leaders, including deacons, the church benefits from diverse gifts and perspectives, leading to more balanced and effective ministry.
- c. Dever emphasizes that deacons play a critical role in the overall health of the church. They are tasked with responsibilities that ensure the church functions smoothly, such as managing finances, caring for the needy, and overseeing logistical operations. By faithfully carrying out these duties, deacons contribute significantly to the church's ability to fulfill its mission and serve its members.
- d. Dever stresses the importance of accountability and integrity among church leaders, particularly deacons. He argues that deacons must be individuals of high moral character, known for their honesty and trustworthiness. This integrity is essential for maintaining the trust of the congregation and ensuring that the church's resources and ministries are managed responsibly.
- e. Dever highlights the role of church leaders, including deacons, in equipping and discipling other members of the congregation. He believes that part of the deacon's ministry is to mentor and train others for service, helping to raise up future leaders within the church. This focus on discipleship ensures that the church continues to grow spiritually and that leadership is continually renewed.
- f. Comparison and Contrast
 - i. Both Spurgeon and Dever emphasize the importance of servant leadership as the core of the deacon's role. They agree that deacons are primarily servants who model

- Christ-like humility and service within the church.
- ii. Spurgeon focuses more on the personal character and humility of the deacon, emphasizing a deep, self-sacrificial approach to serving the congregation. Dever, while also valuing humility, integrates servant leadership into a broader framework of shared leadership, where deacons work in tandem with pastors and elders, emphasizing the collective responsibility of church leaders.
 - iii. Both authors insist that the role of deacons must be rooted in Scripture. They stress that any understanding of the deaconate should be based on biblical teachings, particularly those found in the New Testament.
 - iv. Spurgeon's approach is more focused on the spiritual and moral qualifications outlined in the Bible, emphasizing the deacon's personal holiness and character. Dever, on the other hand, expands the discussion to include the structure of church leadership, advocating for a biblical model of leadership plurality that includes deacons as part of a broader team, ensuring that all leadership roles align with biblical directives.
 - v. Both Spurgeon and Dever see deacons as crucial supporters of pastoral leadership, ensuring that pastors can focus on spiritual duties like preaching and teaching.
 - vi. Spurgeon views deacons primarily as aides to pastors, handling the church's temporal needs so pastors can concentrate on spiritual matters. Dever, while agreeing with this support role, places more emphasis on the deacon's role within a leadership team that shares responsibilities, advocating for a more integrated approach to church governance where deacons have a distinct but collaborative role alongside pastors and elders.
 - vii. Both authors address the importance of accountability and integrity for deacons. They agree that deacons must be individuals of high moral character and integrity, trusted by the congregation.

- viii. Spurgeon's discussion of integrity is more personal, focusing on the individual deacon's character and relationship with God. He highlights spiritual maturity as crucial for fulfilling the deacon's duties. Dever, while also valuing personal integrity, frames it within the context of a structured leadership model that includes checks and balances among leaders, emphasizing the role of accountability in maintaining the overall health of church governance.
- ix. Both Spurgeon and Dever recognize the deacon's role in maintaining the health and unity of the church. They agree that deacons contribute significantly to the church's ability to fulfill its mission by addressing temporal needs and promoting harmony.
- x. Spurgeon places a strong emphasis on the deacon's role as a peacemaker and unifier within the congregation, focusing on their ability to resolve conflicts and promote unity. Dever, however, sees the deacon's role as part of a larger system of leadership that ensures the church's health through proper governance and accountability, where unity is achieved through the collaborative efforts of all leaders, including deacons.
- xi. C. H. Spurgeon and Mark Dever share many views on the role and responsibilities of deacons, particularly regarding servant leadership, biblical foundation, support for pastoral leadership, accountability, and church unity. However, they differ in their emphasis and approach. Spurgeon focuses more on the personal character and spiritual maturity of individual deacons, viewing them as essential supports to pastoral leadership and unifiers within the church. Dever, while agreeing with these points, places greater emphasis on the structural and collective aspects of church leadership, advocating for a model where deacons work within a broader leadership team that shares responsibilities and ensures the church's overall health and mission fulfillment.

g. Conflicting Views

- i. C. H. Spurgeon and Mark Dever, both influential Christian thinkers, offer perspectives on the role of deacons that share common ground but also present some key differences.
- ii. Spurgeon sees deacons primarily as servants who handle the temporal needs of the church, allowing pastors to focus on spiritual duties. He emphasizes that deacons are not to be seen as leaders in the sense of holding authority over church decisions or the congregation. Their role is more about temporal matters than governance.
- iii. Dever agrees that deacons are servants, but he places them within a broader framework of church leadership. He argues for a plurality of leadership where deacons work alongside pastors and elders in a more integrated and collaborative way. While they are not the primary leaders, deacons in Dever's model have a more active role in the church's governance and operational decision-making.
- iv. Spurgeon emphasizes a clear distinction between the roles of pastors and deacons. He views deacons as supporters of pastors, ensuring that the pastors can devote themselves to prayer, preaching, and spiritual leadership. The relationship is one of service to the pastor rather than partnership in leadership.
- v. Dever, while acknowledging the supportive role of deacons, envisions a more collaborative relationship between pastors and deacons. He sees deacons as part of a leadership team that shares responsibility for the church's health and functioning. In this model, deacons are more involved in leadership decisions and have a closer partnership with pastors.
- vi. Spurgeon's view is more narrowly focused on deacons handling the temporal, physical needs of the church, such as caring for the poor, managing resources, and maintaining the church's operations. He emphasizes that their role should not extend into areas of spiritual oversight or decision-making, which he reserves for

- pastors.
- vii. Dever expands the scope of deacon responsibilities to include more involvement in the overall governance and administration of the church. He argues that deacons should have a role in ensuring that the church operates smoothly, which may include participating in broader leadership discussions and decisions, albeit still under the guidance of pastors and elders.
 - viii. Spurgeon places strong emphasis on the personal spirituality and moral character of deacons, viewing their role primarily as a ministry of service grounded in humility and godliness. He focuses on the spiritual qualifications of deacons as outlined in Scripture and their role in setting a moral example for the congregation.
 - ix. While Dever also values the spiritual and moral character of deacons, his emphasis is more on their functional role within the church's leadership structure. He focuses on how deacons can contribute to the church's mission and governance, integrating their service into the larger framework of church leadership.
 - x. Spurgeon's approach to church governance is more hierarchical, with a clear distinction between the spiritual authority of pastors and the supportive role of deacons. He emphasizes that deacons should not encroach on the spiritual leadership reserved for pastors.
 - xi. Dever advocates for a more pluralistic approach to church governance, where deacons, pastors, and elders all play significant roles in leading the church. He supports a model that allows for shared leadership responsibilities, with deacons being involved in both temporal and, to some extent, governance-related matters.
 - xii. Spurgeon sees deacons as primarily focused on service, with limited involvement in leadership, while Dever includes them as part of a broader leadership team with shared responsibilities.
 - xiii. Spurgeon emphasizes a service-based relationship with

- pastors, whereas Dever advocates for a more collaborative partnership.
- xiv. Spurgeon limits deacon responsibilities to temporal matters, while Dever includes them in governance and broader church leadership.
 - xv. Spurgeon focuses on the personal spirituality and moral example of deacons, while Dever emphasizes their role within the church's leadership structure.
 - xvi. Spurgeon supports a more hierarchical model, while Dever promotes a pluralistic approach with shared leadership roles.
- h. Scriptural Alignment
- i. Spurgeon's emphasis on deacons as primarily servants rather than leaders is rooted in passages like Acts 6:1-6, where the first deacons were appointed to "serve tables" and address the temporal needs of the church so that the apostles could focus on prayer and ministry of the Word. This aligns closely with the idea that deacons are meant to handle temporal matters rather than exercise authority or leadership over the church.
 - ii. Dever's broader view of deacons as part of a church leadership team is less directly supported by specific passages but can be inferred from the broader New Testament teaching on church leadership. Dever argues for a more collaborative leadership model, which could be seen as aligning with passages like Philippians 1:1, where Paul addresses both overseers (bishops/pastors) and deacons, implying that deacons have an important role in the church's overall governance.
 - iii. Spurgeon's view is more directly supported by the specific role of deacons as outlined in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3, where their responsibilities are primarily service-oriented. Dever's broader interpretation, while plausible, extends beyond the specific duties mentioned in these texts.
 - iv. The relationship Spurgeon describes, where deacons support pastors by handling temporal matters, is clearly

- aligned with Acts 6:2-4. The apostles (functioning as pastors) delegated temporal tasks to the deacons so they could focus on spiritual leadership. This model reflects a clear division of labor, with pastors focusing on spiritual oversight and deacons on temporal matters.
- v. Dever's model of a closer partnership and shared responsibility between pastors and deacons is more inferred than explicitly stated in Scripture. However, the concept of teamwork in leadership can be supported by broader New Testament principles of mutual submission and cooperation within the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-31).
 - vi. Spurgeon's view is more explicitly supported by Scripture, particularly in Acts 6. Dever's model is more interpretive, drawing on broader principles of teamwork in church leadership but not directly spelled out in the New Testament descriptions of deacon responsibilities.
 - vii. The focus on temporal matters aligns with the tasks given to the first deacons in Acts 6, who were appointed to ensure the fair distribution of food to widows. 1 Timothy 3:8-13 also emphasizes the character qualifications of deacons, with no mention of governance or teaching responsibilities.
 - viii. Dever's inclusion of deacons in broader church governance is not directly stated in Scripture but could be inferred from the New Testament's emphasis on the interconnectedness of various roles within the church. However, the specific scriptural passages about deacons do not assign them governance roles.
 - ix. Spurgeon's narrower view of deacon responsibilities as primarily temporal is more closely aligned with the specific tasks described in Scripture. Dever's broader interpretation is less directly supported by the relevant biblical texts.
 - x. Spurgeon's emphasis on the spiritual and moral character of deacons aligns with 1 Timothy 3:8-13, which lists the qualifications for deacons, focusing on their character

- and faithfulness rather than on specific leadership skills.
- xi. Dever also emphasizes the importance of character but extends the discussion to include the functional role of deacons within church leadership. This extension, while reasonable, goes beyond what is explicitly stated in Scripture.
- xii. Both views emphasize the importance of character, but Spurgeon's focus on moral qualifications is more directly aligned with the scriptural qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3.
- xiii. The hierarchical model Spurgeon supports, with a clear distinction between the spiritual leadership of pastors and the temporal matters of deacons, is consistent with the roles outlined in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3.
- xiv. Dever's pluralistic approach to church governance, which includes deacons as part of a broader leadership team, is more interpretive and aligns with the general New Testament principle of shared leadership but is not specifically supported by the passages that describe the role of deacons.
- xv. Spurgeon's hierarchical model, with a clear division of roles between pastors and deacons, is more closely aligned with the specific descriptions found in Scripture.
- i. While both Spurgeon and Dever provide biblically grounded perspectives on the role of deacons, C. H. Spurgeon's view appears to be more directly aligned with the specific passages of Scripture that describe the duties and qualifications of deacons, particularly in Acts 6 and 1 Timothy 3.
 - i. Spurgeon's emphasis on the deacon's role as a servant focused on temporal needs, supporting pastors, and maintaining church unity is well-supported by the biblical text.
 - ii. Mark Dever's view offers a broader interpretation that includes deacons in a more integrated leadership role, which, while valuable and plausible, extends beyond the explicit biblical descriptions of the deacon's role.

33. Women Deacons

- a. Women played significant roles in the early church, and there is evidence that some served as deacons. The inclusion of women in the diaconate reflects the early church's recognition of their contributions to ministry and service.
- b. Phoebe (Romans 16:1-2), is the most direct example of a woman serving as a deacon in the New Testament.
- c. Paul commends Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, highlighting her role and service within the church. This passage is often cited as evidence that women served as deacons in the early Christian community.
- d. 1 Timothy 3:11 which refers to women (often translated as "wives" or "women"), is interpreted by some scholars as referring to female deacons. The qualifications listed—being dignified, not slanderers, sober-minded, and faithful—mirror those given for male deacons, suggesting that women held similar roles.
- e. Phoebe is described as a "servant" (or "deacon") of the church, and Paul entrusts her with delivering his letter to the Romans. Her role as a deaconess and the trust Paul places in her demonstrates the significant leadership responsibilities women could hold in the early church.
- f. Phoebe's example provides a strong biblical precedent for women serving in leadership roles within the church, particularly in the diaconate. It challenges traditional views that restrict women from such roles and supports selecting women in church leadership today.
- g. While 1 Timothy 3:11 is often interpreted as referring to the wives of deacons, the Greek word used can also mean "women." This has led some scholars to interpret this passage as providing qualifications for female deacons, suggesting that Paul recognized and regulated their role in church leadership. If understood as referring to female deacons, 1 Timothy 3:11 emphasizes the same virtues—dignity, integrity, self-control, and faithfulness—that are required of male deacons, underscoring the importance of these qualities in all church leaders, regardless of gender.
- h. The Greek word translated as "servant" in this verse is

διάκονος (diakonos), which is the same word used elsewhere in the New Testament to refer to the office of a deacon (1 Timothy 3:8-13).

- i. The term "diakonos" could refer to both a general servant or minister and to the specific office of a deacon. The fact that Paul refers to Phoebe as a "servant" or "deacon" of the church at Cenchreae, and not just as a general helper, indicates Phoebe held an official position within the church. Phoebe was a deacon, the early church recognized women in the diaconate.
- j. Phoebe was recognized for her leadership and service, demonstrating that the diaconate was not limited to men (Romans 16:1-2). Phoebe's role as a deaconess challenges traditional views that women cannot hold leadership positions. In the early church, women like Phoebe played significant roles in service and leadership. Women were entrusted with responsibilities and were valued for their contributions to the church. The role of women in church leadership, particularly in service-oriented positions like deacon, should be recognized and respected. Women who serve faithfully contribute significantly to the health and growth of the church. Some interpretations suggest that women (either deaconesses or wives of deacons) must also be dignified, faithful, and self-controlled (1 Timothy 3:11).
- k. Some interpret Paul's statement as referring to the wives of deacons, while others argue it refers to female deacons (1 Timothy 3:11). The latter interpretation is supported by the fact that the term used is not the Greek word for "wife" (γυνή, gynē), but rather is interpreted as "women" or "female deacons."
- l. All believers in Christ are equal, which some argue extends to roles in church leadership, including the role of deacon (Galatians 3:28).
- m. Deborah served as a judge and prophetess in Israel, exercising leadership and spiritual authority over the nation (Judges 4-5). While not a deacon, her role as a leader provides a precedent for women in significant positions of authority.
- n. Priscilla along with her husband Aquila, are mentioned as teaching Apollos, a learned man, in the way of God (Acts

18:26). Though not called a deacon, she played a crucial role in the early church's teaching ministry.

- o. While the exact nature of these roles can be debated, the evidence from Scripture supports the view that women can serve as deacons. This practice aligns with principles in the New Testament.

34. Church Leadership

- a. The leader of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself.
- b. He is “the head of the body, the church” and the One who alone holds preeminence in the church (Col. 1:18). The Bible records the case of one church leader named Diotrephes and is critical of his desire “to have the preeminence among them” (3 John 9). That position belongs to Christ alone.
- c. While Christ is the leader of the church, He has appointed pastors to provide leadership in the church through the pastoral office
- d. Paul reminded the Ephesian elders of their pastoral responsibilities “to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers” (Acts 20:28).
- e. Likewise Peter encouraged pastors to willingly be overseers of the church for the right motives (1 Peter 5:2).
- f. Pastors have this responsibility because God holds them accountable for the spiritual well being of those under their leadership (Heb. 13:17).
- g. As church members, it is our responsibility to pray for, support, and follow our pastors as they lead.

35. Understanding the Calling of Pastors

- a. Jeremiah 3:15: "And I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding."
- b. Ephesians 4:11-12: "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."
- c. Pastors are called by God to shepherd His people.
- d. Pastors are overseers appointed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28).
- e. Jeremiah's prophetic calling illustrates the principle of God's

- divine appointment of leaders (Jeremiah 1:5).
 - f. The Spirit of the Lord God anoints and appoints those chosen to minister to His people (Isaiah 61:1; Luke 4:18-19).
 - g. The pastor is responsible for caring for God's people (1 Peter 5:2-4).
 - h. Jesus is the "Good Shepherd" and sets the ultimate example for pastoral care. Pastors must model their leadership after Christ, demonstrating sacrificial love and protection for the flock (John 10:11-14).
 - i. Pastors (or shepherds) are a divine gift to the Church, appointed by God to guide, teach, and equip believers. The role of a pastor is often understood as a calling from God, implying that it is God who chooses and prepares individuals for this ministry.
 - j. In both the Old and New Testaments, God is portrayed as the one who appoints leaders to shepherd His people. In the Old Testament, shepherds were literal and symbolic figures of guidance and care. In the New Testament, pastors are seen as spiritual shepherds who lead the flock of God, the Church.
 - k. Churches today often recognize pastors through a process of discernment, prayer, and confirmation by the congregation, acknowledging that the calling comes from God. There is a need for spiritual maturity, biblical knowledge, and a heart aligned with God's purposes.
36. Distinction Between Deacons and Elders
- a. Elders are primarily responsible for the spiritual oversight, teaching, and governance of the church. They provide pastoral care, preach, teach, and lead the congregation in spiritual matters.
 - b. The qualifications for elders are outlined in passages like 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Elders must be able to teach, manage their households well, and be spiritually mature.
 - c. Elders hold authority in oversight, doctrinal teaching, church discipline, and pastoral care. They are the shepherds of the flock, guiding the church in spiritual growth and maintaining sound doctrine.
 - d. Deacons are responsible for the temporal needs of the church.

- They serve by managing resources, caring for the physical needs of the congregation, and supporting the elders by handling tasks that allow elders to focus on spiritual leadership.
- e. The qualifications for deacons are found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Deacons must be dignified, sincere, temperate, and faithful, with a good reputation both within and outside the church.
 - f. Deacons are the hands and feet of the church, addressing temporal matters like facility management, financial stewardship, and charitable work, which supports the church's overall mission.
 - g. While elders focus on spiritual leadership, deacons support the church's functioning by managing the logistical and temporal aspects. This allows elders to devote themselves to teaching, prayer, and pastoral care without being overburdened by administrative tasks.
 - h. Deacons and elders work together to ensure that both the spiritual and temporal needs of the church are met. Their collaboration promotes a balanced approach to church leadership, with each role complementing the other.
 - i. The Apostle Paul addresses the elders of the church of Ephesus during his journey to Jerusalem. Paul had called these church leaders to meet him in Miletus, and he reflects on his ministry among them, warns them of future challenges, and encourages them to be vigilant and faithful in shepherding the church. He reminds them of how he served the Lord with humility, tears, and trials, preaching repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Paul speaks of his journey to Jerusalem, knowing that hardships await him, but expressing his dedication to finishing the task God has given him. Paul warns the elders to keep watch over themselves and the flock (the church), and reminds them that the Holy Spirit has made them overseers to shepherd the church of God. Paul is deeply concerned for the welfare of the church and his sense of responsibility as a servant of the gospel comes through. Elders are charged with teaching sound doctrine and protecting the church from false teachings (Acts 20:17-28).
 - j. The Apostle Peter addresses the elders of the church in his

letter. Peter offers guidance and encouragement to the church leaders on how to shepherd and care for the flock (the church of God). Peter identifies himself as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings, and one who will share in the glory to be revealed. He exhorts the elders to shepherd God's flock willingly and eagerly, not for personal gain or under compulsion, and to be examples to the people rather than lording authority over them. Peter encourages the elders by reminding them that when the Chief Shepherd (Jesus Christ) appears, they will receive the unfading crown of glory. Peter's pastoral concern for the well-being of the church is strong and he offers instructions on leading with humility and integrity (1 Peter 5:1-4).

- k. The seven men chosen to serve were tasked with managing the distribution of food to the widows, allowing the apostles to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:1-6).
 - l. Elders are responsible for the theological direction of the church, pastoral care, and ensuring that the church remains faithful to its mission and doctrine. They lead in oversight, preaching, teaching, and counseling.
 - m. Deacons provide vital support by addressing the temporal needs of the church, such as facility maintenance, financial oversight, and caring for those in need. Their role is crucial in ensuring that the church facility is maintained and functions smoothly and effectively.
 - n. Deacons and elders serve different functions within the church, both roles are crucial for maintaining the health and unity of the congregation. Deacons focus on temporal matters. Pastors focus on pastoral matters. Together, they ensure that the church fulfills its mission of salvation, education, liberation, dedication, and exaltation.
37. Pastoral Vision and Direction
- a. The Pastoral Ministry is responsible for providing the vision, leadership, and direction to the ministry.
 - b. They are responsible for the government of the ministry as representatives of the people and God.
 - c. They shall pastor the people by providing spiritual guidance,

teaching, and by equipping the people for the work of the ministry.

- d. The Pastoral Ministry, supported by the deacons, shall make provision for each member to receive watch care.
- e. The main function of The Pastoral Ministry is to provide the leadership, direction, atmosphere, structure, and instruction to enable individuals to pursue and practice holiness and godliness.
- f. Deacons who are unable or unwilling to submit to the pastoral leadership of the pastor should remove themselves or be removed from the office of deacon.
- g. This action is rooted in the biblical principles of unity, order, and mutual submission within the church.
- h. Paul teaches the importance of maintaining unity within the church, which includes the relationship between pastors and deacons. Unity is essential for the church to function effectively and fulfill its mission (Ephesians 4:3).
- i. Church members, including deacons, are called to submit to their leaders, recognizing that pastors have a God-given responsibility to shepherd the congregation. This submission promotes a harmonious working relationship and enables pastors to lead effectively (Hebrews 13:17).
- j. The appointment of the first deacons was to assist the apostles (who served in a pastoral role) by handling temporal matters, allowing the apostles to focus on prayer and the ministry of the Word. Deacons were expected to work in harmony with the pastoral leadership to ensure the well-being of the church (Acts 6:1-6).
- k. The qualifications for deacons include qualities like being "blameless," "faithful," and "sober-minded." These qualities imply that deacons should work in a manner that supports and aligns with the leadership of the pastor (1 Timothy 3:8-13).
- l. Disunity within the leadership of the church, including between deacons and pastors, can lead to division within the congregation. To prevent this, it is crucial for all leaders to be united in purpose and submission to God's order (1 Corinthians 1:10).

- m. Jesus outlines a process for addressing conflicts within the church, which includes privately discussing the issue, bringing in witnesses if necessary, and finally involving the church if the matter is unresolved. If a deacon is unwilling or unable to submit to the pastor's leadership, this process could be followed to resolve the issue. If resolution is not possible, removal from office may be necessary to protect the unity and health of the church (Matthew 18:15-17).
 - n. For the church to function effectively, there must be mutual submission and respect between pastors and deacons. Deacons are expected to support the pastor's leadership, just as pastors are called to shepherd the flock with humility and care.
 - o. If a deacon cannot or will not submit to pastoral leadership, it may be necessary for them to step down or be removed from their position. This action, though difficult, is sometimes necessary to maintain the church's unity, health, and effectiveness in ministry.
38. **Shepherding, Instructing, and Overseeing**
- a. The terms "pastor," "elder," and "bishop" are used interchangeably in the New Testament and refer to the same office in the assembly. The different words are used to describe the major aspects of his office shepherding, instructing, and overseeing.
 - b. Deacons are never referred to as overseers, rulers, or leaders. A church must not set up overseers over the overseer!
 - c. In the New Testament we read about elders ruling well (1 Tim. 5:17), but there is no reference to deacons ruling well.
 - d. Anytime a committee of deacons set themselves up over the pastors in authority, or try to be equal in authority, the deacons involved are sinning against the Word of God.
 - e. If a pastor is living in unrepentant sin or is teaching doctrinal error, the other pastors are to exercise biblical discipline to whatever extent the situation requires.
 - f. If there are no other pastors, the ministry should ask for help from pastors in Christ centered Bible churches.
39. **God's Word is forever**

- a. God's Word is eternal, indicating that it is unchanging and will remain true and relevant forever (Psalm 119:89).
- b. While everything else may fade away, God's Word will remain (Isaiah 40:8).
- c. Jesus speaks of the permanence of His words, affirming that even though the physical world may change or disappear, His teachings and truth will never be obsolete or irrelevant (Matthew 24:35).
- d. Peter echoes the words of Isaiah, reaffirming the eternal nature of God's Word and its lasting impact and authority (1 Peter 1:24-25).
- e. God's Word continues to be effective and authoritative throughout all time (Hebrews 4:12).
- f. Unlike human words or institutions that may change or fade, God's Word remains constant and trustworthy for all generations.
- g. God's Word is immutable, reliable, and consistent across all generations.
- h. God's Word, as an expression of His will and character, is unchanging (Malachi 3:6).
- i. God's Word is not only eternal but also unchanging, standing firm and reliable through all time (Psalm 119:89-90).
- j. Jesus Christ is consistent and immutable, which extends to His teachings and the Word of God (Hebrews 13:8).
- k. While the world may change, God's Word remains constant and unaltered (Isaiah 40:8).
- l. God's Word, as a reflection of His character, does not change (James 1:17).
- m. Jesus affirms that even the smallest part of God's Word will not change or disappear (Matthew 5:18).
- n. God Himself is unchanging. Since God's Word is an expression of His will, character, and truth, it too is unchanging, reliable, and eternal.

Practice

Servants in the Church

1. Conversion.
 - a. Are you converted? Can you give evidence of your conversion?
 - b. Yes.
 - c. I have been born again (John 1:12-13; 3:1-15; 6:47; Titus 3:5).
 - d. I ask for and received Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God as my personal Savior and Lord (Rom. 10:9-10; 8:16; Gal. 4:6; 1 Thes. 1:5; 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 John 2:3; 3:18-19; 3:24; 4:13; 5:6).
 - e. I know that I have passed from death to life because I love the brethren.
 - f. I am a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17).
2. Evidence of Conversion.
 - a. Are you a New Testament Saint?
 - b. Can you tell in your own words why you are a New Testament Church member?
 - c. Yes.
 - d. I believe the New Testament Church follows the Word of God and it is the authentic pattern after the first New Testament Church.
 - e. The New Testament Church is a body of believers who have received the Word of God (Acts 2:41).
 - f. The New Testament Church steadfastly in doctrine, in fellowship, in prayer, and celebrated the Lord's Supper (Acts 2:42).
 - g. The New Testament Church were a people who stirred souls with a godly fear. (Luke 1:50; Acts 2:43; 10:35; Psa. 25:12; 31:19; Isa. 50:10).
3. Ordinances.
 - a. How many ordinances do we have in the New Testament Church?
 - b. There are two ordinances in the New Testament Church, Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Matt. 28:19-20).
4. Tables.
 - a. How many tables are there in the New Testament church?
 - b. There are three tables in the New Testament Church.

- i. A table for the poor (Deut. 15:7-8; 26:12-14; Lev. 19:9-10; Prov. 31:8; Isa. 1:16-17; 58:6; Jer. 22:3, 13-17; Matt. 5:42; Luke 3:11; 12:33-34; 2 Cor. 9:6-9; 1 Tim. 6:18; James 1:27; 2:5-10).
- ii. A table for the pastor (Gal. 6:6; Heb. 13:17; 1 Thess. 5:12-14; 1 Cor. 9:9; 1 Tim. 5:17-18).
- iii. A table for the Church to help sustain temporal affairs (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:12; 9:7; 11:8; Deut. 23:18; Luke 12:33; Mark 12:42 - 42; Matt. 6:4; Rom. 12:8; Mark 12:17; Prov. 11:24).

5. Deacon Duties.

- a. What are some of the duties of the deacon?
- b. To assist the pastor in the program of the Church.
- c. To help sustain and maintain temporal affairs.
- d. The word deacon (Diakonous) means servant, minister. The first reference to deacons is in Acts.
- e. Deacons were appointed to help in the ministerial and administrative duties of the church.
- f. Their function was to relieve ministers so that ministers could give themselves "continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word".
- g. In particular they were chosen to minister to the day-to-day needs of believers and to the needs of widows and widowers and the poor and sick of a church.
- h. They were to relieve ministers so the ministers could concentrate on prayer and preaching (Acts 6:1-7; 1 Tim. 3:8-13).
- i. The word diakonein is used of ministers throughout the New Testament, both preachers of the Word and deacons who serve as ministers in meeting the day to day needs of the flock (Acts 6:2-4; 12:25; 21:19; Rom. 11:13).
- j. The deacons were being chosen to minister as much as the apostles, but in a different area of concentration.
- k. Both apostles and deacons served in both areas, but each concentrated upon their primary call and mission.
- l. Preachers were sometimes called deacons, that is, servants (1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6).

- m. The first deacons preached as well as ministered to the needy of the church (Acts 6:8; Acts 8:5).
 - n. Deacons are closely linked to bishops (Phil. 1:1).
 - o. Deacons are to be spiritually equipped for their task (Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:8-13).
 - p. The office of the deacon was an early development in the church.
6. Scriptural Officers.
- a. How many Scriptural officers are there in the New Testament Church?
 - b. There are two Scriptural officers in the New Testament Church (1 Tim. 3:1-13).
 - c. The Pastor as overseer.
 - d. The Deacon as support to the Pastor.
7. The Lord's Supper.
- a. Why do we observe the Lord's Supper?
 - b. To show forth His death and suffering until He returns.
 - c. The Lord's Supper was given as a permanent ordinance. He was replacing the Passover with the Lord's Supper.
 - d. The Lord's Supper is the new ordinance of God to celebrate His deliverance of man from bondage and slavery (Matt. 26:2).
 - e. In God's eternal plan the sacrificial lamb used in the Passover had always been a picture of Christ, the real Lamb of God who was to be sacrificed for man.
 - f. By instituting the Lord's Supper during the Passover meal, Christ was not only tying His Supper to the Passover, He was proclaiming Himself to be the Lamb of God who was to be slain for the sins of mankind (Matt. 26:27-28; 1 Cor. 5:7; Rev. 13:8).
 - g. Christ instituted the Lord's Supper before He died, not after His resurrection. His death was voluntary.
 - h. He had not yet died; He did not have to die. He could have slipped out of town and escaped, but He chose to willingly lay down His life for our sins.
 - i. The Lord's Supper is the great celebration of the voluntary sacrifice of God's Son for mankind.
 - j. The broken bread and poured wine picture the willingness of God's Son to lay down His life for man's sins.

- k. Christ took the bread, His body, and He gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to the disciples (Matthew 26:26).
 - l. His destiny was in His hands (John 10:15 -18; Isa.53:5; Acts 2:42, 46; 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:24).
 - m. The moment of redemption is to be remembered in this ordinance (Matthew 26:26; John 6:50-51).
 - n. Christ took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to the disciples (Matthew 26:27; John 10:11, 17-18).
 - o. Under the Old Testament, the blood of Christ was symbolized in the blood of animals.
 - p. Under the New Testament, the blood of Christ is symbolized in the wine of the Lord's Supper.
 - q. Christ gave the cup once for all .
 - r. He died only once, and believers partake of His death once (Romans 6:6, 10).
 - s. Christ instituted a new covenant: forgiveness (Matthew 26:28).
 - t. His blood was to become the sign and symbol of the new covenant.
 - u. His blood, the sacrifice of His life, established a New Testament, a new covenant between God and man (Heb. 9:11-22; Ephes. 1:7; 1 John 2:1-2).
 - v. Your sins are forgiven and you become acceptable to God by believing that Christ's blood was shed for you (1 John 1:7; Rom. 4:22; 5:1; John 6:54-58).
 - w. Christ promised to celebrate the Supper with His followers in the future (Matt. 19:23-24; 22:1-14; 26:29; Rom. 8:16-17; Col. 3:4; 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Pet. 5:1; 2 Pet. 1:11).
 - x. Christ closed the Lord's Supper with a hymn (Psalm 115-118; John 15:11; 2 Cor. 6:10; Phil. 4:4; Col. 3:16).
 - y. The death of Christ was not the end; it was the beginning of eternal life for the believer.
8. Head of the Church.
- a. Who is the head of the New Testament Church?
 - b. Christ is the Head of the New Testament Church which is His Body.
 - c. The head of the church is Jesus Christ (Eph. 5:22–25; Col. 1:17–18).

- d. The church is the body, and Jesus is the head.
 - e. In Colossians 1, Christ is head because He holds all things together.
 - f. In Ephesians 5, Christ is head because He is Savior.
 - g. Church leaders are to surrender ultimate leadership to the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - h. Christ is the One who leads and determines the teachings and practices of the church.
 - i. Church members are to follow Christ first and earthly leaders second, as those leaders emulate Christ (1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Pet. 5:3–4).
 - j. The church is not a building or organization but a group of people who know and worship Jesus (Heb. 10:24–25).
 - k. The ultimate head and leader of the New Testament church is the Lord Jesus (Matt. 16:18).
 - l. Jesus is the head of the body and the only One with the power to adequately lead and love the church.
9. Overseer of the Flock.
- a. Who is the overseer of the New Testament Church Flock?
 - b. The Pastor is the Overseer of the New Testament Church Flock.
 - c. The Pastor serves as under shepherd.
 - d. The church is called “the flock of God” (1 Pet. 5:2), “God’s heritage” (1 Pet. 5:3), and “the church of God” (Acts 20:28).
 - e. Jesus is “the head of the church” (Eph. 5:23) and “the chief Shepherd” (1 Pet. 5:4).
 - f. The church belongs to Christ, and He is the authority over the local church as well as the universal Body of Christ (Matt. 16:18).
 - g. As the under shepherd, the pastor must oversee the church by providing general oversight of the ministry and operation of the church including the handling of finances within the church (Acts 11:30; 1 Timothy 3:1).
 - h. The pastor must rule over or stand before the church.
 - i. Literally the pastor leads or attend to the Church as a diligent caretaker.
 - j. This includes the responsibility to exercise church discipline

and reprove those who err from the faith (Matt. 18:15–17; 1 Cor. 5:11–13; 1 Tim. 5:17).

- k. The pastor must feed the church (1 Peter 5:2).
 - l. The pastor must guard the doctrine of the church and preserve the integrity of the gospel (Titus 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:2).
 - m. The pastor must oversee and delegate at the same time.
 - n. Deacons are appointed to assist the pastor.
 - o. A pastor's official responsibility is to govern the church, edify believers, and equip the saints to do the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:12).
 - p. The pastor's authority is to be an example of truth, love, and godliness for God's flock to follow (1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Pet. 5:3).
 - q. The pastor is "the steward of God" answerable to God for his leadership in the church (Titus 1:7).
10. Salvation Essentials.
- a. What is essential to salvation?
 - b. Receiving salvation is not a process or a multi-step formula.
 - c. Salvation is a finished product.
 - d. What must we do to be saved? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we will be saved.
 - e. During a conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus speaks literally of being born "from above," which means "from God" ("above" was a Jewish circumlocution, or roundabout expression, for God).
 - f. The phrase also means "reborn," which Nicodemus takes literally.
 - g. Ancient writers, including those of the Old Testament (Jer. 1:11-12; Mic. 1:10-15) often used plays on words.
 - h. Because Jewish teachers spoke of Gentile converts to Judaism as starting life anew like "newborn children" (just as adopted sons under Roman law relinquished all legal status in their former family when they became part of a new one), Nicodemus should have understood that Jesus meant conversion; but it never occurs to him that someone Jewish would need to convert to the true faith of Israel (3:3-4).
 - i. Converts to Judaism were said to become "as newborn children" when they were baptized to remove Gentile impurity.

- j. Born of water clarifies for Nicodemus that “born from above” means conversion, not a second physical birth.
 - k. The Greek wording of John 3:5 can mean either “water and the Spirit” or “water, that is, the Spirit” (Ezekiel 36:24-27; John 7:37-39).
 - l. To be saved from the penalty, power and presence of sin, a person must be born again (John 3:3, 6; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 4:7; 5:1, 4, 18).
 - m. God acts supernaturally to make us His children (John 1:12-13).
 - n. The spiritual life He instills in the believer leads to moral transformation (1 John 2:29) and enables us to love God and others (1 John 4:7; 5:1-2).
 - o. As natural birth begins our life on this earth, so spiritual birth brings us into the spiritual world and makes us God's born ones (John 3:3; Isa. 44:3-4; Eze. 36:25-27; Matt. 3:11; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Pet. 1:2; 3:21; 1 John 5:6-8).
11. Baptism and Salvation.
- a. Is baptism essential to salvation?
 - b. No.
 - c. The Word of God properly understood and taught declares faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work on Calvary to be the only requirement for salvation (John 3:16; Acts 16:30-31).
 - d. Baptism is the complete immersion of a new believer under water.
 - e. When a new believer is immersed in the water it represents the physical burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ (Rom. 6:1-4).
12. New Testament Church Membership.
- a. In what ways are people received as members of the New Testament Church?
 - b. Upon their confession of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord as a Candidate for baptism.
 - c. By letter from a New Testament Church attesting that they are born again and baptized.
 - d. By certifiable Christian experience as a baptized believer.
 - e. By restoration.

- f. The early believers were a people who received the Word gladly. A church is a body of people who have received the Word of God. God had revealed Himself in Jesus Christ to His disciples. And Peter, the spokesman for the disciples, was proclaiming the Word about Jesus Christ.
 - g. God had spoken to the world through His Son Jesus Christ, and the early believers had received His Word (John 1:1-5).
 - h. The New Testament Church does not just hear and listen to the Word. They receive the Word of God.
 - i. Not everyone present received it. Some were there for the wrong reasons and others were closed-minded and disinterested. Others simply refused to believe and rejected the Word. But they who received God's Word became the first church.
 - j. They were baptized and added to the 120 disciples (Acts 4:4; 6:7; 17:11; Romans 10:18; 1 Thes. 2:13).
13. Motion, Vote, Membership.
- a. Does a motion qualify or disqualify a person from becoming a member of the Body of Christ?
 - b. A motion neither qualify or disqualify membership in the Body of Christ.
 - c. The New Testament Church is comprised of all who are saved in the Blood of Jesus.
14. Motivation.
- a. Why do you desire the office of Deacon or Deaconess?
 - b. I want to be a servant to the Body of Christ as a servant leader.
15. Bible.
- a. What is the Bible?
 - b. The Bible in its original text is the Word of God.
 - c. The Bible is the textbook of life. All doctrine must be formed on the basis of the Bible text.
 - d. All life teaching must ultimately rest on Scripture.
 - e. All biblical teaching will lead people to salvation and sanctification through faith in Jesus Christ (Luke 24:27; 2 Tim. 3:16).
 - f. The accuracy and dependability of Scripture is seen when one studies what Scripture has to say about itself (1 Thes. 2:13; 2

- Peter 1:19-21).
- g. The origin of Scripture is found in the Word of the Holy Spirit who reveals truth to man (John 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; 2 Peter 1:19-21).
 - h. The writers of the Old Testament claim that the Bible is the Word of God (2 Sam. 23:1-3; Isa. 8:1, 11; Jer. 1:9; .5:14; 7:27; .13:12; 23:29; Eze. 3:4-11; Micah 3:8; Hab. 2:2; Zech. 4:8; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 119:1).
 - i. The writers of the New Testament confirm the claims of the Old Testament writers (Heb. 1:1; .Matt. 1:22; .2:15; Acts 1:16; 28:25; Eph. 4:8; 1 Tim. 1:18-20).
 - j. The writers of the New Testament claim that the Bible is the Word of God (Acts 15:28; 1 Cor. 2:13; 1 Cor. 3:1; 1 Cor. 11:23; 1 Cor. 14:37; 1 Cor. 15:1-4; Galatians 1:11-12; 1 Thes. 2:13; 2 Pet. 3:2).
 - k. Paul affirmed in behalf of all the apostles that their words were divinely taught (1 Cor. 2:13).
 - l. Peter asserts the same level of authority for the writings of the apostles as for the Old Testament Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:2).
 - m. The first church council stated that the conclusions of the council were given by the Holy Spirit through the leaders (Acts 15:28).
 - n. Jesus Christ claims that the Bible is the Word of God (Mark 7:6-13; 12:24; John 5:38, 45-47; 10:35; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; 5:18; 22:29, 32, 43; Luke 4:4, 8; 16:17; 22:36-37; Luke 24:25-27; John 16:13).
 - o. The Bible is absolutely trustworthy (Matt. 24:35; John 10:34-35; 1 Thes. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21).
 - p. Scripture is profitable to man (2 Tim. 3:16).
 - q. The Bible is profitable for doctrine (John 5:39; John 7:16-17; John 8:31-32; Romans 15:4).
 - r. The Bible is profitable for reproof (John 16:7-8, 13; Hebrews 4:12; Jeremiah 5:14; 23:29).
 - s. The Bible is profitable for correction (Hebrews 5:8; John 15:3; John 17:17; Ephes. 5:26; 1 Peter 1:22; Psalm 119:9).
 - t. The Bible is profitable for instruction in righteousness (Titus 2:12-13; 2 Tim. 2:14-15; 1 Peter 2:2-3; Deut. 1:18; Psalm

- 119:11).
- u. Scripture perfects you and equips you for every good work.
 - v. No person is complete or mature apart from Scripture.
 - w. We were made for God and we are to live by the Word of God. If we try to live without God and His Word, we fail in life.
 - x. The Word of God, can make a person complete and equip you for every good work (Matthew 28:19-20; John 3:17; 5:39; Acts 17:11-12; Romans 15:1-4; Deut. 17:19).
16. Church Vision.
- a. Do you know and understand the vision that the Lord has given the Pastor for this Church? If so what is it?
 - b. Yes.
 - c. We envision a ministry where Christ-centered families and Christ-centered Family-focused leaders of high integrity, learn the truth, live free, serve one another and worship God.
 - d. Research and list the Scripture that is the foundation for the Church Vision.
 - i. Christ-centered Families. Joshua challenged the people of Israel to choose whom they will serve, declaring that he and his household will serve the Lord. Strong families are centered on Christ and His teachings (Joshua 24:15; Ephesians 5:22-6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6-7).
 - ii. Christ-centered Family-focused Leaders of High Integrity. Paul lists the qualifications for overseers and deacons, illustrating the importance of integrity, faithful management of their household, and being above reproach. Leaders should demonstrate Christ-centered values in their personal and family life (1 Timothy 3:2-5; Titus 1:6-9; Proverbs 11:3).
 - iii. Learn the Truth. Jesus teaches that knowing the truth will set people free, learning and adhering to His teachings, reveals God's truth (John 8:32; 2 Timothy 2:15; Psalm 119:105).
 - iv. Live Free. Paul exhorts believers to stand firm in the freedom Christ has given them, warning against returning to a yoke of slavery, whether to sin or legalism. Living free in Christ involves embracing the liberty that comes

from the Gospel (Galatians 5:1; John 8:36; Romans 8:1-2).

- v. **Serve One Another.** Paul encourages believers to use their freedom to serve one another in love rather than indulging the flesh, reflecting the selfless service modeled by Christ (Galatians 5:13; John 13:14-15; 1 Peter 4:10).
- vi. **Worship God.** Jesus teaches that true worshipers must worship the Father in spirit and truth, emphasizing the importance of sincere and authentic worship that is focused on God (John 4:24; Romans 12:1; Psalm 95:6).

17. Church Mission.

- a. Do you know and understand the mission that the Lord has given the Pastor for this Church? If so what is it?
- b. Yes.
- c. Our mission is salvation of the lost, education of the saved, Liberation of Christ-centered families of high integrity living free, dedication to serve one another, and exaltation to worship God.
- d. Research and list the Scripture that is the foundation for the Church Mission.
 - i. **Salvation. Save the Lost.** Jesus declares His purpose to seek and save the lost. He was on the mission of reaching out to those who are separated from God and bringing them into the fold of salvation through the Gospel (Luke 19:10; Matthew 28:19-20; 1 Timothy 1:15).
 - ii. **Education. Educate the Saved.** Paul emphasizes the importance of teaching and admonishing everyone with wisdom so that believers may grow in maturity and become fully equipped in Christ. This underlines the role of discipleship and continuous learning in the life of a believer (Matthew 28:19-20; Colossians 1:28; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Ephesians 4:11-13).
 - iii. **Liberation. Liberate Christ-centered Families of High Integrity Living Free.** Paul encourages believers to stand firm in the freedom given by Christ and not be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. This applies to families who live according to Christ's teachings, embracing integrity

and the freedom found in the Gospel (Romans 6:22; Galatians 5:1; 2 Corinthians 3:17).

- iv. Dedication. Dedicate Ourselves to Serving One Another. Believers are called to use their freedom to serve one another in love, reflecting the example of Christ, who came not to be served but to serve. Dedication to service is a key aspect of living out one's faith (Galatians 5:13; Philippians 2:3-4; 1 Peter 4:10).
- v. Exaltation. Exalt the Lord. The psalmist invites others to magnify the Lord and exalt His name together. This mission component emphasizes the act of lifting up God's name in worship and giving Him the highest honor (Psalm 34:3; Psalm 99:5; Psalm 145:1; John 4:24; Hebrews 13:15). This mission component emphasizes the collective and intentional act of worship, lifting up God's name above all. Cross References:
- vi. The GCBCI mission is to actively reach out to the lost, nurture the saved, promote freedom and integrity in Christ-centered families, commit to mutual service, and prioritize worship, to fulfilling God's call.

18. Church Strategic Objectives.

- a. Do you know and understand the strategic objectives that the Lord has given the Pastor for this Church? If so what is it?
- b. Yes.
- c. Salvation - Win souls to Christ. Matthew 28:19.
- d. Education - Make Disciples and develop Christ-centered families of high integrity. Matthew 28:19, 20.
- e. Liberation - Teach Disciples to live free, walk holy and renew the presence of Christ in the family. Galatians 5.
- f. Dedication - Help strengthen the family. Acts 10:2; 16:33, 34.
- g. Exaltation - Worship God as a family in spirit and truth. John 4:23, 24.

19. Church Required Involvement.

- a. Do you know and understand the Required Involvement of the Officers that the Lord has given the Pastor for this Church? If so what is it?
- b. Yes.

- c. All Ministers, Deacons, Deaconesses, and Trustees are to serve as facilitators and mentors for Greater Calvary Rites of Passage. This involvement is mandatory.
 - d. If a Minister, Deacon, Deaconess, Trustee, or Church Leader cannot serve at his or her own Church developing future leaders, then they are virtually of no service to this ministry.
 - e. We must grow and bear fruit where we are planted.
 - f. All Ministers, Deacons, Deaconesses, Trustees, and Church Leaders are to be active tithers, givers, and active participants in the ministry.
 - g. This requires commitment to give and commitment to attend.
 - h. God told Moses, (Exodus 19:5) Now if you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my own special treasure from among all the peoples on earth; for all the earth belongs to me.
 - i. In the sermon on the mount Jesus said, (Matthew 6:21) Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.
 - j. All Ministers, Deacons, Deaconesses, Trustees, and Church Leaders are to be active in prayer and study of the Word of God.
 - k. To avoid error we submit to the clear scriptural mandates given to all Christians to immerse ourselves in the Word of God wherein God speaks to us, and in prayer, whereby we speak to God.
 - l. No ministry leader or officer is compelled to meet these requirements, however those who choose not to are subject to decommissioning and removal from the respective position.
20. Evidence of Your Call.
- a. What is the evidence of your call to the ministry?
 - b. Give personal experience.
 - c. When did you first have the urge to preach? What were the conditions? Where were you and what were you doing?
 - d. Preaching is not optional (1 Cor. 9:16).
 - e. Sinners have been saved, and backsliders reclaimed through preaching (John 3:14, 15).
 - f. When were you called to preach?
 - g. What are you going to preach?

21. What is the Gospel?
- a. The word gospel literally means “good news” and occurs 93 times in the Bible, exclusively in the New Testament.
 - b. In Greek, it is the word euaggelion, from which we get our English words evangelist, evangel, and evangelical.
 - c. The gospel is, broadly speaking, the whole of Scripture; more narrowly, the gospel is the good news concerning Christ and the way of salvation.
 - d. The Law established the fact that cleansing from sin can only happen through the bloody sacrifice of an innocent life (Hebrews 9:22).
 - e. The gospel involves Jesus’ death on the cross as the sin offering to fulfill the Law’s righteous requirement (Romans 8:3–4; Hebrews 10:5–10).
 - f. The gospel involves Jesus’ resurrection on the third day (Romans 4:25).
 - g. The fact that Jesus conquered sin and death (sin’s penalty) is good news.
 - h. The fact that He offers to share that victory with us is great news (John 14:19).
 - i. The elements of the gospel are stated by Apostle Paul. Paul “received” the gospel and then “passed it on”; this is a divine message, not a man-made invention.
 - j. The gospel is “of first importance.”
 - k. The message of the gospel is accompanied by proofs: Christ died for our sins (proved by His burial), and He rose again the third day (proved by the eyewitnesses) according to the Scriptures.
 - l. The theme of the whole Bible is the salvation of mankind through Christ (Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 15:3–6; Ephesians 2:8–9).
 - m. God loves the world enough to give His only Son to die for our sin (John 3:16).
 - n. Our salvation and eternal life and home in heaven are guaranteed through Christ (John 14:1–4; 1 Peter 1:3–4).
 - o. We understand that we do not (and cannot) earn our salvation; the work of redemption and justification is complete, having

- been finished on the cross (John 19:30; 1 John 2:2).
- p. We were once enemies of God and have been reconciled by the blood of Christ and adopted into the family of God (Romans 5:10; John 1:12; 1 John 3:1; Romans 8:1; John 3:17–18).
22. Who is God?
- God is the Triune Creator of all that is (Gen.1:1).
 - What proof can you give that there is a God?
 - The Bible tells us that God is a living personal Spirit (Psalm 115:3-7).
23. What is the preacher's authority?
- Authority from the Word of God. All Scripture is God-breathed and useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. The preacher's authority comes from faithfully proclaiming the Word of God, which carries divine authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17; Hebrews 4:12; Isaiah 55:11).
 - Authority from the Calling of God. Paul explains that preachers are sent by God to proclaim the Gospel. The authority to preach comes from God's call, appointing individuals to share His message with others (Jeremiah 1:5-10; Romans 10:14-15; 2 Corinthians 5:20).
 - Authority from the Empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Jesus tells His disciples that they will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon them, enabling them to be His witnesses. The preacher's authority is also derived from the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, who guides, convicts, and works through the preaching of the Word. (Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 2:4-5; 1 Thessalonians 1:5).
 - Authority in the Name of Jesus Christ. Jesus, who has been given all authority in heaven and on earth, commissions His followers to go and make disciples. Preachers operate under the authority of Jesus Christ, who has empowered them to preach, teach, and baptize in His name (Matthew 28:18-20; Colossians 3:17; Acts 4:12).
 - Authority to Shepherd and Lead. Elders and leaders are called to shepherd the flock of God willingly, serving as examples to the flock. The preacher's authority includes guiding and caring for the congregation, not through domineering power, but

- through Christlike service and example (1 Peter 5:2-4; Hebrews 13:17; Acts 20:28).
- f. Authority to Rebuke, Correct, and Encourage. Paul instructs Timothy to preach the Word, be prepared in season and out of season, correct, rebuke, and encourage with great patience and careful instruction. The preacher has the authority to confront sin, correct errors, and offer encouragement based on Scriptural truths. (Titus 2:15; 1 Timothy 5:20; 2 Timothy 4:2).
 - g. The preacher's authority is not self-derived but comes from God through His Word, the calling and commission of Christ, the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, and the responsibility to shepherd and lead the Church. This authority must always be exercised with humility, faithfulness to Scripture, and a servant's heart.
24. Upon what day of the week should the Church assemble for worship?
 - a. The New Testament makes it clear that the observance of a particular day was not imposed as a binding obligation (Romans 14:5-6; Colossians 2:16-17; Galatians 4:9-10).
 - b. The records that remain in the New Testament show that the first day of the week soon became a day of worship (1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 20:7).
 25. What do you believe about Heaven and Hell?
 - a. Heaven is real (Matt. 5:18; John 17:24; Psalm 102:26; 103:19; Isa. 34:4; 51:6; 54:10; Jer. 31:35-36; Heb. 1:11-12; 2 Pet. 3:7-12; Rev. 6:14; 20:11).
 - b. We are citizens of Heaven (Col. 1:13; Eccles. 5:2; Psalm 19:1; Psalm 150:1; Ephes. 3:20; Psalm 121:1-8; Phil. 3:20; Psalm 103:19; Luke 10:20; John 14:2; 2 Cor. 5:1; Phil. 3:20; Col. 1:5; Hebrews 11:10; Psalm 33:13-19).
 - c. Hell is real (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14-15; 21:8; John 8:24; James 3:6; Mark 9:43-49; Matthew 3:10; 5:29-30; 7:19; 10:28; 11:23; 13:42, 50; 16:18; 18:8-9; 23:15, 33; 25:41; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 3:9; 10:15; 12:5; 16:23-24).
 26. What do you believe about creation?
 - a. God did it all (Gen. 1:1; John 1:1; Prov. 8:22-31; Ephes. 3:9; Col. 1:17; Hebrews 1:10; 7:3; 13:8; Rev. 1:2; 1:8; 1:11; 21:6; 22:13).

- b. Creation is the work of the Hand of God (Proverbs 8:22-24; 16:4; Mark 13:19; John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:10; Exodus 20:11; 1 Chron. 16:26; Neh. 9:6; Job 26:13; 38:4; Psalm 8:3; 33:6; 33:9; 89:11; 96:5; 102:25; 104:24; 104:30; 115:15; 121:2; 124:8; 134:3; 136:5; 146:6; 148:4-5; Proverbs 3:19; 8:22-30; Eccles. 12:1; Isaiah 37:16; 40:26; 40:28; 42:5; 44:24; 45:18; 51:13; 51:16; 65:17; Jeremiah 10:12; 32:17; 51:15; Zech. 12:1; Matthew 11:25; Acts 4:24; 14:15; 17:24; Romans 1:19-20; 11:36; 1 Cor. 8:6; Ephes. 3:9; Col. 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:2; 3:4; 11:3; 2 Peter 3:5; Rev. 3:14; 4:11; 10:6; 14:7; 21:6; 22:13).
27. How should a minister protect his or her image?
- Modesty in dress and attire (1 Corinthians 12:23; James 1:21; 3:13; 1 Timothy 2:15; Proverbs 11:22).
 - Temperate in speech and language (Eph. 4:29; 5:3-4; Psalm 5:9; 52:2; 73:7-9; Matt. 12:34-37; Rom. 3:13-14; 1 Cor. 15:32-33; Col. 3:8-9; Col. 4:6; James 3:2-8; 2 Peter 2:18; Jude 1:13-16; Rev. 13:5-6)
 - Self control in deportment and behavior (Acts 24:25; 1 Cor. 9:25; Titus 1:8; 2:2).
 - Careful as to one's associates (Exo. 34:16; Lev. 19:19; Deut. 7:2-3; 22:9-11; Ezra 9:1-2; 9:11-12; 10:19; Neh. 13:1-3; 23-26; Psalm 106:35; Prov. 22:24; Mal. 2:11; 2:15; 1 Cor. 5:9; 7:39; 15:33; James 4:4).
28. How may a minister lose his or her witness?
- We fail to lead our children to Christ and fail to teach them the ways of the Lord.
 - We fail to obey God's instructions in rearing our children (Deut. 6:7; Proverbs 22:6; Ephes. 6:4).
 - We fail to teach the ways of the Lord to our family (Genesis 18:19).
 - We choose to actively or passively engage in wickedness (Genesis 19:4, 7; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; Deut. 23:17; Judges 19:23; 1 Samuel 30:23-24; Acts 17:26; Romans 1:24; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Jude 1:7).
29. What does the Bible teach about the nature of God as eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- Matthew 28:19: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,

- baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
- b. God is one, yet exists eternally in three distinct persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This mystery of the Trinity is foundational to the Christian faith.
 - c. Jesus, in His final commission to His disciples, emphasizes the unity and co-equality of the three persons of the Godhead.
 - d. Christians are to worship and serve the Triune God, recognizing the distinct roles of Father, Son, and Spirit in creation, salvation, and sanctification.
 - e. 2 Corinthians 13:14: Paul's benediction includes all three persons.
 - f. Genesis 1:26: "Let Us make man in Our image."
30. How is Jesus both fully God and fully man?
- a. John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth."
 - b. Jesus is the eternal Word of God who became flesh. He is fully God and fully man, making Him the only perfect mediator between God and humanity.
 - c. John emphasizes the divinity of Christ, while also confirming His incarnation, fulfilling God's promise of salvation.
 - d. Believers must uphold the truth of Christ's divinity and humanity, understanding that salvation is only possible because of this dual nature.
 - e. Colossians 2:9: "For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily."
 - f. Philippians 2:6-7: Jesus took on the form of a servant.
31. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers?
- a. John 14:26: "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."
 - b. The Holy Spirit indwells believers, teaching, guiding, and empowering them to live holy lives that reflect Christ.
 - c. Jesus promises the coming of the Holy Spirit as a helper and teacher to believers after His ascension.
 - d. Believers should rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance, strength,

- and understanding in their walk with Christ.
- e. Acts 1:8: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."
 - f. Romans 8:11: The Spirit who raised Jesus will also give life to believers.
32. How are we saved by grace through faith?
- a. Ephesians 2:8-9: "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."
 - b. Salvation is a gift of God's grace, received through faith in Christ alone. It cannot be earned by good works but is freely given to those who repent and believe.
 - c. Paul stresses that salvation is a divine gift, countering the belief that human effort can achieve righteousness.
 - d. Believers must trust entirely in Christ's finished work on the cross for salvation and not in their own efforts or merits.
 - e. Titus 3:5: "He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness."
 - f. Romans 3:28: "For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law."
33. What is the mission of the Church according to Scripture?
- a. Matthew 28:19-20: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you."
 - b. The Church is called to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey Christ's commands.
 - c. This is the Great Commission, where Jesus charges His followers to spread the gospel and establish believers in the faith.
 - d. The Church must prioritize evangelism and discipleship, focusing on spiritual growth and obedience to Christ's teachings.
 - e. Acts 1:8: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."
 - f. 2 Corinthians 5:20: Believers are ambassadors for Christ, sharing the message of reconciliation.
34. What is the significance of baptism and the Lord's Supper in the

Church?

- a. Matthew 28:19: "Baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."
 - b. 1 Corinthians 11:26: "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes."
 - c. Baptism symbolizes the believer's identification with Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, while the Lord's Supper commemorates His sacrifice and anticipates His return.
 - d. These ordinances were instituted by Christ to be practiced by His followers as acts of faith and remembrance.
 - e. Believers should participate in baptism and the Lord's Supper as expressions of faith and obedience, reflecting the gospel in their lives.
 - f. Romans 6:4: "We were buried... by baptism into death, in order that... we too might walk in newness of life."
 - g. Luke 22:19-20: Jesus institutes the Lord's Supper, commanding His disciples to "do this in remembrance of me."
35. What authority does Scripture hold in the life of the believer?
- a. 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."
 - b. The Bible is divinely inspired and holds supreme authority in matters of faith and conduct, guiding believers in righteous living and the knowledge of God.
 - c. Paul affirms the inspiration and sufficiency of Scripture in Timothy's ministry, emphasizing its vital role in equipping believers.
 - d. Believers must view the Bible as the ultimate authority, regularly studying and applying its teachings to their lives.
 - e. Psalm 119:105: "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path."
 - f. Hebrews 4:12: "The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword."
36. Why is the sanctity of marriage important according to Scripture?
- a. Genesis 2:24: "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

- b. Marriage is a sacred union ordained by God, designed to reflect His covenantal relationship with His people. It is intended to be a lifelong, exclusive bond between one man and one woman.
 - c. From the beginning, God established marriage as foundational to human society and as a picture of His relationship with His people.
 - d. Believers must uphold the sanctity of marriage as a divine institution, defending it against cultural redefinitions and honoring its purpose.
 - e. Ephesians 5:31-32: Paul likens marriage to Christ's relationship with the Church.
 - f. Matthew 19:5-6: Jesus affirms the creation ordinance of marriage between one man and one woman.
37. What is the biblical view of the sanctity of life?
- a. Psalm 139:13-14: "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made."
 - b. Life is sacred from conception, as every human being is created by God in His image. This affirms the inherent value and dignity of all human life.
 - c. David reflects on God's intimate involvement in the creation of life, recognizing the sanctity of life from the womb.
 - d. Christians must defend the sanctity of life at all stages, opposing abortion and other practices that devalue human life.
 - e. Jeremiah 1:5: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you."
 - f. Genesis 1:27: "So God created man in his own image."
38. Why is the family foundational to human society?
- a. Genesis 1:28: "And God blessed them. And God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.'"
 - b. The family is God's design for procreation, nurturing, and governance of human society. It is the primary institution for raising children and passing on godly values.
 - c. In the creation mandate, God commands Adam and Eve to multiply and exercise dominion over the earth, establishing the family as central to His plan.
 - d. Believers must prioritize family as the cornerstone of society,

cultivating godly homes that honor Christ and reflect His love (Ephesians 6:4; Deuteronomy 6:6-7).

39. What is the role of personal and corporate prayer in the life of believers?
- a. Prayer is a vital part of the believer's life, both personally and corporately (Philippians 4:6). It brings peace, guidance, and communion with God, and strengthens believers during times of crisis and tranquility.
 - b. Paul encourages the Philippians to approach God with all their needs, trusting in His provision and peace.
 - c. Believers should cultivate a regular prayer life, both individually and in community, relying on God in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Luke 11:9).
40. How does the Church empower and equip families for godliness?
- a. The Church plays a critical role in equipping families to live godly lives, believe biblical truths, grow spiritually, and be accountable (Ephesians 4:11-12).
 - b. Paul explains that church leaders are given to the body of Christ to build up believers, including families, for godly living and service.
 - c. Church leaders should focus on equipping families with the biblical tools and resources they need to cultivate Christ-centered homes and relationships (Colossians 3:16; Deuteronomy 6:7).
41. How are believers called to use their gifts for the edification of the Church?
- a. Every believer has been given spiritual gifts to use for the benefit of the Church and the glory of God. These gifts are to be used to serve others and build up the body of Christ (1 Peter 4:10).
 - b. Peter encourages the early Christians to be faithful stewards of the gifts they have received, using them for the good of the Church.
 - c. Believers should seek to identify and develop their spiritual gifts, using them to serve in the Church and advance God's kingdom (1 Corinthians 12:7; Romans 12:6-8).
42. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

- a. Being created in the image of God means that humans reflect certain aspects of God's character, including the ability to reason, love, and exercise dominion. It also signifies the inherent value of all human life (Genesis 1:27).
 - b. In the creation narrative, God sets humanity apart from the rest of creation by endowing them with His image.
 - c. Believers should treat all people with dignity and respect, recognizing the image of God in every individual and living in a way that reflects God's character (James 3:9; Psalm 8:5).
43. How does the Church fulfill its evangelistic mission?
- a. The Church is empowered by the Holy Spirit to spread the gospel, starting locally and extending globally. Evangelism is central to the mission of the Church, as it calls people to repentance and faith in Christ (Acts 1:8).
 - b. Jesus commissions His disciples to be His witnesses, proclaiming the good news to all people, beginning with their immediate surroundings.
 - c. Believers are called to actively participate in evangelism, sharing the gospel with those around them and supporting global missions (Matthew 28:19; Romans 10:14-15).
44. How does Satan oppose believers, and how can they resist him?
- a. Satan actively seeks to oppose believers and disrupt their walk with God. Christians are called to resist his attacks by standing firm in their faith and relying on God's power (1 Peter 5:8-9).
 - b. Peter warns the early Christians of the real spiritual dangers they face from Satan, urging them to be vigilant and steadfast.
 - c. Believers must be alert to Satan's schemes and stand firm in faith, relying on God's strength and the truth of His Word to overcome spiritual opposition (Ephesians 6:11; James 4:7).
45. What does it mean for the Church to be the body of Christ?
- a. The Church is the body of Christ, with each believer being a member who plays a unique role in fulfilling Christ's mission on earth (1 Corinthians 12:27). The body functions in unity, with each part contributing to the whole.
 - b. Paul emphasizes the diversity and interdependence of believers within the Church, comparing them to different parts of a body, all working together for the common good.

- c. Believers should recognize their unique gifts and roles within the Church, working together in unity to accomplish God's purposes (Romans 12:4-5; Ephesians 4:16).
46. How does God use trials to sanctify believers?
- a. God allows trials to strengthen and sanctify believers, teaching them perseverance and deepening their faith. Through trials, believers grow in holiness and trust in God's provision (James 1:2-3).
 - b. James encourages believers to view trials as opportunities for spiritual growth, reminding them that perseverance in faith leads to maturity.
 - c. Believers should trust God in the midst of trials, knowing that He is using them to refine their faith and make them more like Christ (Romans 5:3-4; 1 Peter 1:6-7).
47. What is the importance of corporate worship?
- a. Corporate worship is essential for the spiritual growth and encouragement of believers. Gathering together allows Christians to worship God collectively, receive instruction, and encourage one another in their faith (Hebrews 10:25).
 - b. The writer of Hebrews stresses the importance of regular fellowship and worship as the early church faced persecution and challenges to their faith.
 - c. Believers should prioritize gathering with other Christians for worship, teaching, and mutual encouragement, recognizing the value of corporate worship in their spiritual lives (Psalm 95:1-2; Acts 2:42).
48. How should believers approach the use of their spiritual gifts in the Church?
- a. Each believer is given unique spiritual gifts by God, which are to be used for the edification of the Church and the advancement of His kingdom. These gifts differ but are equally important in fulfilling the mission of the Church (Romans 12:6).
 - b. Paul encourages the Roman Christians to recognize their diverse spiritual gifts and use them in service to one another, stressing that all gifts come from God's grace.
 - c. Believers should actively use their spiritual gifts to serve others in the Church, recognizing that every gift is essential for the

body of Christ to function properly (1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

49. How does Scripture teach us to view the resurrection of the dead?
- Both the righteous and the wicked will be resurrected at the end of time. The righteous will experience eternal life with Christ, while the wicked will face eternal judgment (John 5:28-29).
 - Jesus teaches about the resurrection of the dead, emphasizing the eternal consequences of one's choices in life.
 - Believers should live in light of the coming resurrection, striving for holiness and proclaiming the gospel to others, knowing that eternal destinies are at stake (1 Corinthians 15:52; Daniel 12:2).
50. How does the Holy Spirit enable believers to live holy lives?
- The Holy Spirit empowers believers to resist sinful desires and live in obedience to God's Word. As believers yield to the Spirit's guidance, they produce the fruit of holiness (Galatians 5:16).
 - Paul contrasts living according to the flesh with walking by the Spirit, showing that it is only through the Spirit's power that believers can live in victory over sin.
 - Believers should depend daily on the Holy Spirit, seeking His guidance and strength to live lives that reflect Christ's holiness and obedience to God (Romans 8:13-14; Ephesians 5:18).
51. What does it mean to live in unity as Christ-centered believers?
- Unity among believers is a reflection of the unity of the Spirit. Christians are called to work diligently to preserve peace and harmony within the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:3).
 - Paul urges the Ephesians to live in a manner worthy of their calling, which includes striving for unity and peace among fellow believers.
 - Believers should prioritize unity in their relationships, avoiding divisive behavior and seeking reconciliation when conflicts arise, all for the sake of Christ's witness (John 17:21; Colossians 3:14).
52. What does it mean to walk in love as Christ-centered families?
- Believers are called to imitate God by walking in sacrificial love,

- especially within their families. This love is modeled after Christ, who gave Himself up for us (Ephesians 5:1-2).
- b. Paul's instruction to the Ephesians emphasizes that walking in love is the hallmark of the Christian life and should be evident in family relationships.
 - c. Families should cultivate an atmosphere of sacrificial love, where each member seeks to serve and care for one another, reflecting Christ's love (John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:19).
53. How does the Church equip believers for spiritual growth?
- a. The Church equips believers for spiritual growth by teaching and applying the Scriptures, which are essential for living a life of godliness and righteousness (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - b. Paul encourages Timothy to use the Scriptures in his ministry to equip believers for every good work, highlighting the authority and sufficiency of God's Word.
 - c. Church leaders must faithfully teach God's Word, helping believers grow in their knowledge of the Scriptures and their application in daily life (Colossians 3:16; Ephesians 4:12).
54. What was the design intent of this study?
- a. This study was designed to deepen Church Leader's understanding of biblical truths, providing a solid foundation on key doctrines of faith, including salvation, the Trinity, the authority of Scripture, the role of the family, and the mission of the Church.
 - b. Each component reflects the eternal truths revealed by God in His Word and aligns with the doctrinal position of the Greater Calvary Bible Church International.

End