

The Deacons Are Coming

Introduction

When a church is looking for new deacons, it is time to think through what the Bible says about deacons. The congregation should be in prayer while they decide who should be elected as deacons, but it is equally important for the congregation to know the biblical qualifications deacons should have.

Christian Standards

A deacon should be one who knows the Lord and has full assurance of his salvation. He should be one who meets the standard of basic Christian living.

Supportive of the Church

A deacon should be supportive of what the church is doing and have a good knowledge of the people and ministry of the church, because he needs to be in touch with the congregation and its needs. There are occasions when it may be necessary to be absent, but those occasions should be few. If circumstances make it necessary for him to away often, the proper thing to do is for him to become a deacon only after circumstances change so that he can be in church more often. When the popular pattern of a three-year rotation and at least one deacon elected every year, there will be frequent opportunities for serving as a deacon as his situation improves.

Unwholesome Talk

One who is worthy of respect will be one who lives consistently with the basic expectations of Scripture. One principle of Christian living that is sometimes overlooked is the command of Ephesians 4:29 that a Christian should not engage in unwholesome talk.

[Eph 4:29](#) (NIV 84) Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

To take the Lord's name in vain is one example of unwholesome talk. A believer and especially a leader should never take the Lord's name in vain. Even though using God's name as a swear word is clearly wrong, it is becoming common in some churches. The phrase "oh my God" is one example of using God's name in vain that has become commonplace in some Christian circles, but a deacon should never be one who takes the Lord's name in vain.

Most people do not need the term *unwholesome talk* defined. Even the world can often recognize bad language when they hear it. The kind of talk that makes reference to very private bedroom or bathroom activities as a way to intensify feeling is an example of unwholesome talk that we should avoid.

Today many church leaders are trying to relate to the unsaved world by using such language. They usually claim that to reach the unsaved they must use the language of the unsaved including foul language. We do not reach the unsaved by becoming like the unsaved. We must never violate our Christian standards in order to reach the world. The best way to reach the World is to obey the Lord as you reach out to establish relationships with people who need the Lord.

Maturity and Humility

Deacons should be worthy of respect, which means they should have a certain level of maturity and humility. One mistake that some churches make is to elect someone to the office of deacon to avoid hurting his feelings. The members do not want him to feel rejected. This is a huge mistake. In a sense the members who vote to avoid hurting feelings have already determined that the potential deacon is not a spiritually mature person. Someone who feels so entitled to the office that his feelings would be hurt if he were not elected does not have the proper sense of humility and maturity to be qualified.

Members have a responsibility to keep that man out of office until he develops more maturity and humility. True, his feelings may be hurt, but it is important that he be allowed those hurt feelings and be given the opportunity to work through his feelings with the Lord. Someday when he has the maturity and humility, he may become a fine deacon, but not yet. No one is ready to serve as a deacon who can not handle being passed over for the office. If one who is passed over complains about being passed over, that validates the decision of the church in keeping him out of office. A church overlooks this at its own peril.

Servant Attitude

In many churches today, the word deacon has become a prestige term. In the New Testament it was not a prestige term. In the original language it means servant. A deacon should be someone who is willing to humbly serve other people. He must be a servant of the Lord as well as a servant of the church. His basic duty is to lighten the load of the pastor so that the pastor will have more time to pray and study the Word as well as his other biblical duties.

1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3-4

In 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and Acts 6:3-4 we find the following qualifications for deacons..

1. Worthy of respect
2. Sincere
3. Not indulging in much wine
4. Not a pursuer of dishonest gain
5. Having a clear conscience regarding the deep truths of the faith
6. Must first be tested
7. Husband of only one wife
8. Wife must be worthy of respect
9. Wife must not be a malicious talker
10. Wife must be temperate
11. Wife must be trustworthy in everything.
12. Deacon must be full of the Spirit
13. Deacon must be full of wisdom

Conclusion

If a church wishes to advance the Great Commission, it needs deacons who will be good role models and who have the maturity and humility needed to meet the spiritual qualifications.

Deacons

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