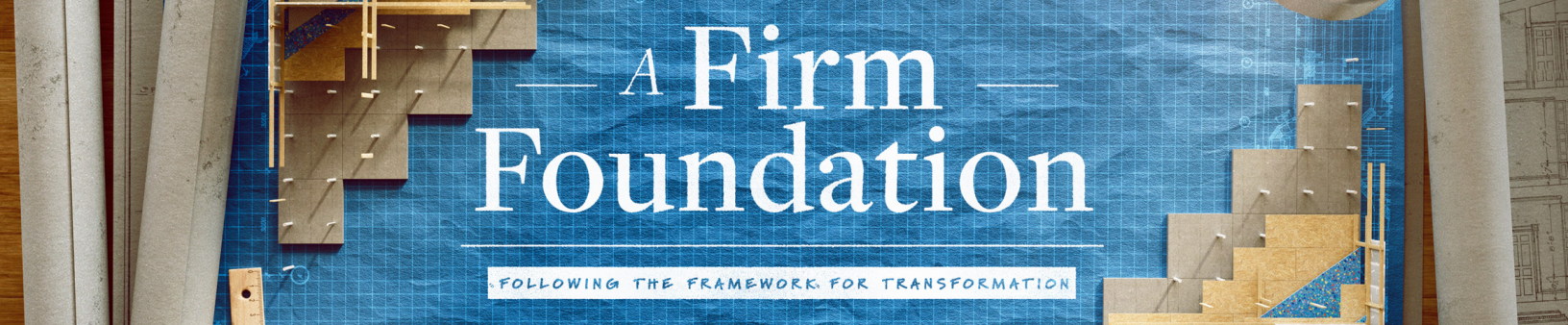




A Firm Foundation

FOLLOWING THE FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFORMATION

Discussion Guide: The Biblical Office of Deacons

Scripture Focus: Acts 6:1–7, 1 Timothy 3:8–13, Psalm 19:7–10

Welcome & Icebreaker

- **The Glacier Effect:** The message shared that the deep electric blue found in dense glaciers happens because the ice absorbs all other colors, reflecting only the blue. If your life right now were a color reflecting how much time you've spent resting in God's presence lately, what color would it be and why?

Part 1: Surface Level vs. Spiritual Level

In the sermon, we looked at a "game show" lineup of potential church leaders: *Fix-it Frank*, *Ed the Executive*, *Set-up Sam*, *Read-it-all Ralph*, *Attractional Al*, *Generous George*, and *Tommy the Teacher*. While all these men have fantastic secular skills or resources, the sermon emphasized that **scripture never uses surface-level skills as the baseline for church office**.

- **Read Psalm 19:7–10.** In the message, it was noted that if we are people who are awed by God's revealed Word and His presence, we will take church decisions very seriously. How does having a high, weighty view of God's Word change the way we look at church leadership decisions?
- **Why is it so tempting for churches to appoint leaders based on worldly success, a pulse, and a skill set rather than spiritual character? What happens to a church when it falls into that trap?**

Part 2: Born in Conflict, Built for Unity

The office of deacon (*diakonos* = servant/messenger) was birthed out of a practical crisis in the early church.

- **Read Acts 6:1–7.** * The "Gong-goos-mos" Warning: The Greek word for the complaint raised by the Hellenists is *gong-goos-mos*—an onomatopoeia meaning whispering, grumbling, or muttering. Why is *gong-goos-mos* so dangerous to a growing church? How does Satan use legitimate physical needs or complaints to try to divide believers?
- **Special Forces Operators:** The message described deacons as spiritual "special forces operators" who willingly walk *into* conflict zones to solve practical problems. How does the deacons' role of handling physical logistics protect the unity of the body and the mission of the leaders?

On Role Clarity:

"When everyone does everything, no one is responsible for anything. But when there is a clear division of labor and role clarity, ministry shifts from a chaotic juggling act to a synchronized symphony."

Part 3: Full of the Spirit and Wisdom

The sermon noted that while all Christians are *indwelt* by the Holy Spirit, not all are *filled* (completely surrendered) to Him.

"The indwelling of the Spirit is the hook that secures us to Christ; walking with/in the Spirit is the sail that catches the wind of His power."

- **Read 1 Timothy 3:8–13. Paul outlines the character traits of a deacon, focusing heavily on self-control. Review the specific requirements using the framework below:**

Requirement	What It Means in Practice	The Danger if Lacking
Dignified (<i>Semnos</i>)	Reflecting God-like qualities; a lifestyle marked by the fruit of the Spirit.	The ministry is viewed as cheap, stuffy, or worldly.
Not Double-Tongued	Controls their speech. Doesn't say one thing to one group and trash leadership or volunteers to another.	Destroys church unity and spreads gossip.
Not Addicted to Wine	Controls their appetites. Does not let anything impair their judgment or impede intimacy with Jesus.	Unfit/unavailable when a spiritual crisis or emergency hits.
Not Greedy / Tithing	Understands money is a tool, not a master. Modeled through radical generosity.	Selfish stewardship; mismanaging church resources.
Holds the Mystery of Faith	Understands and readily shares the good news of Jesus while meeting physical needs.	Becomes a social worker instead of a spiritual minister.

- **Which of these character traits do you think is the hardest to maintain in our current cultural climate? Why?**
- **The Family Mirror: Verse 11 and 12 highlight the deacon's home life and his wife's character ("*dignified, not slanderers, sober-minded*"). Why does a leader's private life at home either validate or completely undermine their public ministry?**

Part 4: What Deacons Are (And Are Not)

To prevent confusion as Tribes Church enters this selection process, we must understand the biblical boundaries of this office:

- **Deacons ARE: Creative problem solvers, administrators of mercy, protectors of unity, and executors of delegated authority.**
- **Deacons ARE NOT: The spiritual vision-casters of the church, the doctrinal decision-makers, the staff directors, or simply "Elders-in-training."**

Moving to Action & Prayer

Tribes Church is currently moving through the deacon affirmation process. The elders are praying, fasting, reviewing nominations, and evaluating candidates.

Group Prayer Focus

Spend the remaining time praying together for Tribes Church:

- **Pray for the Nominees:** Pray that the men stepping into this process will feel the weight and beauty of the calling, and that their families will be protected.
- **Pray for the Elders:** Pray for supernatural wisdom, total unity, and clear discernment as they interview candidates and navigate theological discussions.
- **Pray for the Mission:** Pray that as deacons are installed, *gong-gooos-mos* will be silenced, the leaders will be freed up to focus on the Word and prayer, and—just like Acts 6:7—the word of God will continue to increase and multiply in our community.