



Acts

Amplifying Hope | September 17, 2023

Topic: Dutiful Deacons in the Daily Distribution

Scripture: Acts 6:1-7

Summary: Deacons have served the church for centuries. Congregations select those to serve based on scriptural qualifications and imminent needs. Luke documents in clear detail the first such appointment of church servants. Acts 6 documents the problem, the solution and the results. May our church continue to grow with the addition of new deacons in 2023! May those selected serve with distinction, honor, wisdom and effectiveness for the glory of God and the needs of our congregation.

1. Growing Churches Have Growing Needs (Acts 6:1)

Acts 6:1

[1] Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint (grumbling) by the Hellenists (Greek speaking Jews) arose against the Hebrews (Aramaic speaking Jews) because their widows were being neglected (overlooked) in the daily distribution (ministrations, domestic service, especially in the serving of a meal).

Ministration (as opposed to "administration" and with a connection to "ministry") -

The kitchen was made spotless by the ministrations of a cleaning lady.

The chairs were properly arranged in preparation for Sunday Worship by the ministrations of the deacons.

PROBLEM: Ministry was planned and scheduled but was not working properly.

Daily Distribution of food - Ministration

What would be required to bring resolution to the situation?

2. Growing Churches Have a Growing Number of People Who Can Meet the Growing Needs (Acts 6:2-3)

SOLUTION: There must always be a balance in the church between those who are leading and those who are serving. The Apostles continued to focus on the ministry of prayer and the Word. The spiritual needs of the congregation. The Deacons were to focus on the more physical needs of the congregation.

Acts 6:2

[2] And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right (pleasing, a good thing, satisfactory) that we should give up (abandon) preaching the word of God to serve (wait) tables.

3. What do the deacons of First Baptist Gulfport Actually Do? What are their Assignments?

- Be a Disciple who Makes Disciples
- Serve Where Gifted ~ Serve Where Needed
- To Be An Extension of the Pastoral Ministry
- Visit the Membership ~ Reach the Lost
- Work to Keep the Unity of The Church

4. Who Are We to Choose? (Acts 6:3)

Men of good reputation who have proven by their lives they are worthy to serve. Respected!
Men who are full of the Spirit.
Men who are wise.
Men willing to do the work of serving others.

Acts 6:3

[3] Therefore, brothers, pick out (inspect, visit, look out, choose) from among you seven men of good repute (of proved worth, respected), full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.

5. RESULTS: When Growing Churches Put a Growing Number of People to Work, the Word of God Continues to Grow and the Number of Disciples Grows and Even the Most Unlikely People Get Saved (Acts 6:4-7)

Acts 6:4-7

[4] But we will devote (continue faithfully) ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." [5] And what they said pleased the whole gathering (find favor with, agreeable to), and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. [6] These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. (Ordination) [7] And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Life Application Questions

1. Name the best Deacon you have ever known. What makes that Deacon stand out to you?
2. Are there any unmet needs in the congregation of First Baptist Gulfport? Is there someone who can meet the needs? Is it a minister? A staff member? A deacon? Is it you?
3. Who is the first person to consider meeting a perceived need in someone else's life? (Answer: The person who saw and identified the need first!) Agree or disagree?
4. How important is it for the ministers to spend time in prayer and the ministry (preaching and teaching) of the word? Why or why not?
5. Pastors are administrators. Members are ministers. Every believer who is a member of a church is a minister to other members and to the community. How have you been involved in ministry to others? In the church? In the community? Currently?
6. Were you involved in selecting those to serve as deacon at FBG for the next three years? What criteria did you use in making your selections?
7. PRAY: Thank the Lord that FBG is a growing church! Thank the Lord for the men and women who serve faithfully week after week. Ask the Lord to continue to send the resources we need in people and finances to meet the needs of our growing church. Ask the Lord to continue to save people in our church and community and to use us in saving them!