IDENTITY CRISIS Pastor Rick Baker

#8 How is the Church Governed? March 14 2021

The Office of **Serving** Specialist

# The diaconate

Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:8-13

OT/NT leadership structural continuity (origin of structural leadership)

* Patriarchal “priesthood” (Melchizedek, Abrahamic) 🡪 Moses (Sinaitic)
* Old Covenant--High Priest (Divine rep), Priests (functional sacrifices), Levites (functional assisting), Kingdom of Priests (Ex. 19:6—obedience to the Sinaitic Covenant) 🡪 Post 70-165 AD Synagogue (Rabbis [Pharisees])
* New Covenant--High Priest (Christ), “Priests” (functional Pastors/ Elders), “Levites” (functional Deacons), Kingdom of Priests (1 Pet 2:4,9—obedient to the New Covenant—living sacrifices)

“And He gave some as…pastor teachers for the equipping of the saints for the work of **diakonia** (service/ministry), to the building up of the body of Christ; …” Eph.4:11-12

* Deacons (diakonia) show the way.

The church appoints two categories of officers in the local church, one category specializes in SHEPHERDING, (elders) and the other specializes in SERVING, (deaconing deacons).

**1. NT evidence for the office of Deacon?**

Diakonos—when a **function** (+100x) it is translated SERVE; when an **office** (2x) it is transliterated DEACON

Acts 6—“table waiters” deacon proto-type

**2. Why men?**

“man of one wife (woman)”

“manager of children and household”

**3. What about 1 Tim. 3:11? Deaconesses or a further qualification of a deacon (leaders)?**

Gynaikas—can mean woman or wife. Which here?

* Surrounding context – wife—(3:2,12)
* If Paul wished to intend “deaconess”, he had a precise word to use diakonon (Rom. 16:1; Phoebe)

“In the same way, wives (women)” **of leaders** must also qualify! (3:11) If there is female deaconing, it should be done by the officer’s wives. It is not a separate office.

**4. What men?**

Men entirely dissimilar to the man of the culture (drunken, womanizer, partier), but entirely similar to elders, except for teaching and overseeing. Examples of spiritual excellence.

**5. What do these men do?** (no NT description of deacons, deaconing)

**Service** specialization (supporting, property, finances, the needy, crisis and risk administration) rather than Eldership (shepherding, leadership, or oversight)

The deacon office exists to assist the leadership of the church by relieving the elders of distractions and pressures that would divert them from the ministry of the word and prayer and the general, visionary oversight of the church. (Piper, Rethinking the Governance)

Caring primarily for the material, physical, temporal (and recently legal) needs of the ministry—important things that Elder priorities can’t get to.

**6. What should the church (YOU) do?**

* Men, make yourself ready and available
* Appoint biblically (DSC)—tested
* Support their spiritual influence
* Pray for
* Serve with the specialists