

Community Group Discussion Questions

“The Calling of Deacon”

Acts 6:1-7

Sermon Series Title: “The Office of Deacon”

Sermon Series Summary: We’ll be taking a couple weeks to look at the heart, call, and qualifications of Deacon as we prepare for Elections.

Setting: In this book, we see Jesus’ ascension (Acts 1), the Pentecost- outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2), and church growth (Acts 3-4). It seemed perfect, but in Acts 5-6, we see brokenness. In Acts 5, we see sin within and from outside the church, and in Acts 6, we see a neglect of Hellenist widows that may lead to church division.

Summary: In our passage, the office of Deacon is established, because the Hellenist widows are being neglected. The apostles desire to serve the marginalized with mercy while not compromising Word and prayer. This shows us the heart of God in service, mercy, truth, and prayer, embodied in the church through Christ.

Main Point: *“May we embody the mercy, service, truth, and love of God in Christ.”*

Sermon Points:

1. The Crisis
2. The Call
3. The Christ

Opening Question

1. Is the church called to show mercy (minister to the needy and least of these) and pursue social justice? Why or why not?

(Answers may vary.)

We are continuing our series, looking at the office of Deacon. In today’s passage, we see the call for the church to embody the heart of God for the Word, prayer, mercy, and service through the offices of Elder and Deacon.

Read Acts 6:1-7

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2. Why was the office of Deacon established? What does this tell us about the office and the heart of God?

(The Deacon office was established because the Hellenist (Greek-speaking) widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. The church was getting too big to fairly account for everyone. The apostles did not want to compromise Word and Prayer (shepherding), so the Lord led them to establish the office of Deacon, whose primary task will be to rightly handle the church's finances/property to serve the least of these (mercy).

This shows us that one of the office's main priorities is to serve for the purposes of mercy. To pursue that goal, they need to handle the church's finances to minister to the needy. This is a spiritual act that requires spiritual maturity. That is why we see mainly spiritual qualifications for this office. The office of Deacon is not a step to become an Elder. It's an entirely different office and calling.

This shows us that the heart of God is a heart of mercy. It's a heart of loving and having compassion on the least of these. It's a heart of stewardship for the church and service for everyone in love.)

3. What does the establishment of the office of Deacon show us about the office of Elder and the heart of God?

(We see that the role of Elder is primarily revolved around Word and prayer, meaning they are focused on shepherding the flock of God (1 Peter 5). They need to prioritize shepherding, studying God's Word, and praying for the church.

This shows us that our God's heart is a shepherding heart. He is the Good Shepherd (John 10), and we are His sheep (Psalm 23). He guides us and leads us by the truth of His word. He wants us to have a relationship with Him in prayer. God in Jesus is the Shepherd who laid down His life for His sheep.)

4. How do we embody this heart in our service, life, and worship?

(We have to come back to Jesus over and over again. He is the One who served us first by being the Suffering Servant, the ultimate Deacon for us on the cross. He is the One who revealed the heart of God to us by speaking and being the Word. He prays for us now as our Most High Priest. He is the One who laid down His life for us as the Good

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Shepherd. We are the least of these, and He served us in our need. He is the embodiment of God's mercy for us. As we come back to Jesus, we experience the heart of God for us. And as we experience the heart of God in Christ, we can embody this heart in our life, service, and worship.)

Final Thoughts: *At the heart of the offices of Deacon and Elder, we find the heart of God for truth, relationship, service, and mercy. And in Jesus, we find the heart of God embodied in His person and work. Jesus is the ultimate Elder, the Shepherd of our souls. He is the ultimate Deacon, the Suffering Servant for our redemption. And in Him, we can live out the heart of God through the offices of the church and through our everyday lives. Pray that it may be so!*