

CHAPTER SEVEN

TODAY'S DEACONS IN SUMMARY

This study has revealed the potential of deacon ministry in today's world by answering questions such as:

- (1) Who are deacons?
- (2) How did the deacon ministry originate in the church?
- (3) What are the Scriptural qualifications of the deacon?
- (4) What are their duties?
- (5) Are deacons needed today?

These and other questions have been thoroughly researched from biblical sources, magazines, resource books, commentaries, and personal life experiences. These sources reveal much about the deacon as a servant and minister.

One can quickly discern the fact that deacons have a place in today's world of ministry. Although the pastor as the overall leader of the church congregation has a distinctive equipping ministry, deacons are in a unique position to model an enabling style of servant ministry.¹

¹ Henry Webb, Deacons: Servant Models in the Church (Nashville: Convention Press, 1980), 115

The Challenge Continues

Charles W. Deweese has stated the concept very well by saying:

Because the servant concept saturates every biblical thought about deacons, certain qualities are specified for them. The clear implication is that deacon ministry and qualifications cannot be separated. One without adequate credentials weaken their influence. Those who claim the qualifications but fail to minister have little substance to their calling. Those, however, who combine biblical qualifications with opportunities for ministry into positive relationships are living out the purpose of their ordination.¹

In the words of Henry Webb:

God will use deacons who model Christian leadership to accomplish his purposes in individual lives and in churches; in organizations such as schools, businesses, and civic clubs; in government; and in society in general. To be partners with God in such efforts, deacons will need the same qualifications they demonstrated when they were first elected deacons: growth toward mature faith, Christian family life, personal and public morality, and ministry to persons. The church and the world need servant models who will care for families, proclaim the gospel, and provide Christian leadership. Such servant models will be accepted by God, the church, and the world.²

1

Charles W. Deweese, The Emerging Role of the Deacon (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), 77.

2

Henry Webb, Deacons: Servant Models in the Church (Nashville: Convention Press, 1980), 118.

Conclusion

From the very inception of the original seven men chosen by the early church, deacons have faithfully answered the call of God to work within the confines of a religious organization doing a thankless job of serving others in the name of Jesus Christ. Today's deacons are expected to follow their predecessors in faithful surrender and service. The deacon is one man who must wear many different hats, and wear them effectively in order to be able to lift up his Lord in every circumstance of life.

Through this study, one has been able to discern the degree of difficulty involved in the life of a deacon, for he must become many different things to many different people and yet maintain a lifestyle "Holy acceptable unto God." For today's deacon, the outlook for ministry has never been brighter. There are ministering opportunities that were never available to those original seven men. Today's deacons face unlimited possibilities of service in the name of the Master.

With the hastening of the "end-time," trouble will increase and God has called men who have been ordained in the power of the Holy Spirit, baptized into the body of Christ, to stand in the gap. Deacons have and will continue to accept that particular call, not as owners of a

church, but rather as God's spiritual servants who, through the power of His Spirit will lead, guide, and direct the needs of people and the church toward His ultimate objective in Jesus Christ.