



Rockwood Church of Christ

The Proclaimer

May 28, 2017

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Dana Carter
Kenneth Carter
Don Chandler

Deacons:

Kendall Bear
Larry Brackett
Roger Carter
Steve McCreary

Minister:

Todd Houston

Secretary:

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Service Times:

Sunday

Bible Study 10 am
Worship Service 10:45 am
Worship Service 6 pm

Wednesday

Bible Study 7:30 pm

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THE PRIVILEGE OF SERVING IN THE KINGDOM

By **Gary Knuckles**

Occasionally, I see bulletins with an order of service for the Sunday worship period. They will include the phrase, “Those privileged to serve” and follow with a list of the men who will be leading the services. I like that phrase, “Those privileged to serve.” The word “privilege” refers to “a right...granted as a peculiar benefit, advantage, or favor...” (Webster’s Dictionary). When I see that phrase, “Those privileged to serve...” it tells me that those leading in the services should consider it an honor to serve in the kingdom of God, regardless of the job to be done.

It seems to me that a lot of people have the reverse idea. They think they are doing God a favor by being at Bible Study, worship services or by participating in the work of the church. For them, service is something done to benefit God, not any great honor for them. In that way, it reminds me of the two men in **Luke 18:9-14**. The Pharisee extolled his personal virtues and self-righteousness as if God were privileged to have him on His side. We think of that man as being arrogant and out of step with God. Are we any better when we “volunteer” to do service for God thinking that we are benefiting Him to some great degree?

Our attitude ought to be, “What a privilege it is to serve in the kingdom!” When we believe and think that way, we will do all we can to serve God. But, we will do it from the perspective of humility and not arrogance. We will serve because there is work to be done and feel that we ought to do something in the service of our King. Paul’s words say it best: “*And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry...*” (**I Timothy 1:12**).

You are “privileged to serve.” God has a place for you in His kingdom and He wants you to be busily engaged in the work that needs to be done. The question is not, “What are you willing to do?” The question is, “What will you do?” The answer should be, “Whatever God wants me to do. It is a privilege to serve in the kingdom.”

MINISTRY OF DEACONS

In **Philippians 1:1**, among those Paul addressed were “deacons.” Deacons comprise a unique office and function in the local church. God organized the church to have deacons – special servants to carry out certain tasks within the work and organization of the local church.

Humanity has craved power. Jesus observed this as a problem of the Gentiles: *“But Jesus called them unto Him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many”* **Matthew 20:25-28**. Yet, Jesus recognized servant hood as greatness. Therefore, deacons are special because of their ministry in the kingdom.

While some deacons in the brotherhood have a title, but no job assignments, others have job assignments but are not carrying out their duties. In each extreme case, deacons and the congregation must cooperate to fulfill each role in the congregation.

The term deacon simply means “servant” or “minister.” Their role pertaining to leadership is unique in that on one hand, they are not leaders. While they must have certain characteristics to serve in a particular function (**cf. I Timothy 3:8-13**), they are simply servants with responsibilities. On the other hand, they are leaders, because their responsibility (and the leadership inherent within such responsibility) makes them leaders. For example, in **Acts 6**, the apostles encouraged the congregation in Jerusalem to select seven “servants” to be responsible for the daily ministry to the widows, solving the problem that had arisen in the process. Did they serve? Of course they did. Yet, did they lead? The position in which the apostles placed them inherently carried with it responsibility, and with such, an amount of leadership. Such is also true concerning elders and deacons in the local church setting.

To show such is true, deacons are to involve the congregation in their work, not simply do the work themselves. Proper delegation is very important in not only fulfilling the work of the church, but also executing proper organization in the entire body of Christ working as a single unit. When Paul described the church as a body in **I Corinthians 12**, he did so recognizing the importance of every single individual member. Therefore, elders, deacons and ministers are not to do all the work of the church. Deacons especially must involve the members in their work.

Deacons must exercise responsibility. One cannot be a deacon without understanding responsibility and dependability. The church will greatly benefit when congregations appoint deacons who understand this and exercise them in fulfilling their appointed roles.

Therefore, while the seven men of **Acts 6** were not necessarily deacons, they do serve as a model for such an office. When the church properly utilizes deacons and they work diligently under the supervision of the elders, great things will happen! *“And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith”* (**Acts 6:7**).

Sam Willcut