

## Deacons as Faith-Multipliers

2024.11.10 Morning Sermon in **Acts 5:42–6:7**

<sup>5:42</sup> And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

<sup>6:1</sup> Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. <sup>2</sup> Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; <sup>4</sup> but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

<sup>5</sup> And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, <sup>6</sup> whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

<sup>7</sup> Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

**Main idea:** deacons are prescribed by Christ to support the ministry of the Word, by which He works powerfully in His church

**Introduction:** the context of Acts; the ongoing work of Christ in His exaltation. 2:41, 4:4, 5:14, 6:1

### 1. Christ's Priorities

1. Teaching and preaching in public and from house to house (cf. Ac 20:20, 27)
2. Prayer and the ministry of the Word
3. Ministry among the brethren in material things

### 2. Christ's Prescription

1. The apostles (cf. 1:8)
2. Now the deacons
3. The Spirit (and particularly His prominence in ordination)
  1. The Spirit's establishing of the office (the apostles teaching/leading by the Spirit) as one of authority to which men are called.
  2. The Spirit working graces in believers (e.g. “full of the Holy Spirit”)
  3. The Spirit enabling skill in follow-through in the life (e.g. “and wisdom”)
  4. The Spirit giving unity in glad submission to the Word (e.g. “And the saying pleased the whole multitude.”)

5. The laying on of hands an indicator of the Spirit's specific call to specific men (acknowledged and commended to God first, and then the hands laid).
6. The laying on of hands an indicator that it will be the Spirit Who comes upon the men to help them in the work. (cf. 8:17, 9:17, 13:2-3, 19:5-7; 1Tim 4:14; 2Tim 1:6; Heb 6:2)

### 3. Christ's Power

1. Spread of the Word
2. Great multiplication of disciples
3. Persecutors become believers

**Conclusion:** look to Christ alone, and join yourself to a church that does so. Establish His priorities as your own priorities. Submit to His officers and make Spirit-given use of them for your attending upon the means of grace and for your living out your faith in non-trivial ways. And recognize and expect His almighty work in you, through you, and especially in His church.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

Acts 5 verse 42-6. Verse 7. These are God's words. And daily in the temple. And in every house. They did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ. Now, in those days, When the number of the disciples was multiplying, There are always a complaint against the Hebrews by the hellenists.

Because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the 12 summoned, the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore Brethren. Seek out from among you seven, men of good reputation. Full of the Holy.

And wisdom. Whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually. To prayer. And to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased, the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen. A Man full of faith. And the Holy And Philip. Progress. Nicknor. Team on. Permanence. And Nicholas a prosolite from Antioch.

Whom they set before the apostles. And when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread and the number of the disciples multiplied. Greatly In Jerusalem, and a great, many of the priests. Were obedient. To the faith. Amen. Let's ends this reading of God's inspired.

And an errant word Rejoice, to know that he adds his Blessing especially to the preaching of it. And his worship, please be seated.

It's been a couple of years since we. Heard preaching through. The book of Acts. And so it probably helps us a little bit to set some context. For the book of Acts. One of the things that you who have memorized, your shorter catechisms, Probably. Recognize or remember. Are the

offices that Christ holds as mediators he is Prophet priest and King, both in his estate of humiliation and his estate of exaltation.

And, This pattern of humiliation and exaltation. Not just something that we see taught more generally in the Bible that the Lord Jesus being the Eternal Son of God with, for whom equality, with God was not something. That needed to be grasped, but Being very God, a very God was inherent to himself yet, he added to himself a human nature and by the addition of the human nature, not the Divine person, but the Divine person in accordance with that human nature was humiliated, he made himself low, he humbled himself to take the form of the bond slave, he put himself under the law.

Found in appearance as a man or in the shape, the form. Of. A man. He was humbled even to death and not just any death, but the cursed death. Of the Cross. And he continued in the grave. Uh, for three days. And this is what we refer to. As our Lord's humiliation.

Well, one of the reasons why. One of many reasons why we think especially of the ministry of Christ as Prophet priest and King in his humiliation but then also the ministry of Christ as Prophet priest and King in his exaltation is that as the Holy Spirit carried Luke along to write his Work.

He divides. Uh, the ministry of Christ in these two different ways. He refers at the beginning of the book of Acts to what we call the Gospel of Luke as what Jesus began to do and to teach Now this teaches us, of course, to remember that the Lord Jesus is not finished doing and teaching The Lord Jesus.

Is still in his exaltation at the right hand of the Majesty on high from which he poured out his holy spirit. He is still executing the office of a prophet and teaching us through his word and his Spirit's use of that word and interceding for us and applying to us all of the benefits.

Of his life and his death. As our priest constantly. Uh, consecrating Unto God. And and Praying for us, interceding for us and ruling us, subduing us to himself making our hearts tender taking us to be his subjects and his joyous and joyful and willing subjects at that defending us from every evil so that if you're a Believer, you know, that it is a function of your resurrected ascended enthroned, savior's kingship that he Only in his divine nature rules and overrules all things.

But as the one who has ultimate Authority, all authority in heaven and on Earth. He is. Uh, he is. Making sure that everything works out for your good. So that you may know that God, who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for you. Is surely certainly together with Jesus freely.

Giving you all things. And it is, especially then this Resurrection power of the Lord Jesus Christ by his spirit that is at work, not just in Acts 1 through 28. But in his church to this day, And until he comes. He says in chapter 1 and verse 8. To his Apostles, you will receive power When the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my Witnesses and that has been something that as we come.

To chapter six. Uh, today not in a series through the book of Acts. But coming into the book of Acts at chapter six today, that is something that has punctuated the book of Acts up until this point So act 2 and verse 41. Than those who gladly received his word were baptized and that day.

About 3 000 Souls were added to them. And then chapter four and verse 4. However, many of those who heard the word believed and the number of the men, the males The grown males came to be about 5 000 and so they go from 3, 000 Souls. And we don't know how many

households that was, but now to five thousand, not just Souls, but households chapter four and verse 4.

Uh, households chapter 5, verse 14. And Believers were increasingly added to the Lord multitudes of both men. And women and then, Uh, These multitudes of men and women that are being added to these 5 000 households. And many of these. And those were 5 000 male-led households. But we know also that there were a number of households as We have a couple in our own congregation.

That. Led by widows. And, Do we have a continuing multiplication? Even after that chapter six and verse 1 in our text for this morning. Now, in those days when the number of the disciples was Multiplying. Number of the disciples was multiplying. So this is the age. Of the Resurrection power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Applying his salvation. To those for whom he has accomplished it. The Lord Jesus didn't. Didn't stop. Working. He said it is finished. He accomplished our Redemption that work was done in his life and death. Resurrection. But he is continuing to apply his Redemption and to gather for himself that church that innumerable multitude of those whom God had known in his son whom God had loved with adopting love and therefore whom God determined to conform the to the image of his son whom God determined to make holy and blameless that we would walk before him for unending, ages in all of the Holiness and all of the love of our Lord, Jesus Christ for God himself.

Another. This is what the Lord is carrying out in his church. We must all desire. We must all desire. To be in. A congregation of Christ's church, that is full of the Holy Spirit in which the power of the Resurrection of the Lord. Jesus Christ is known and displayed in the worship and discipleship and evangelism of the church where the power the life of the Resurrection of the Lord.

Jesus Christ is known and displayed in the households of the church and the members of the church. It felt power of Christ's life and Resurrection. If the power of His holy spirit, Is not seen is not perceived is not experienced in the transformation of that corporate body and the transformation of those households and the transformation of each heart.

It is missing that Mark of the That is the life, the resurrection the ongoing doing and teaching. Of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so we come to this passage Desiring to be such a church. We We have been needing deacons for some time. The duties of the diaconate have Devolved upon.

I've been taken up by. The Elders of the church for a And yet we have not rushed quickly. Into this. Because we must operate in the church according to Christ's word and Christ's command. Independence upon Christ's. Seeking that the result, the fruit would be accomplished not by the efforts of men or the faithfulness of But by the power, Of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so, as we come, To lay hands upon and ordain and install. Into the ministry of the diaconate. The men whom we have. Uh, this morning or this afternoon. We hope to see three things in this passage first, Christ's priorities. Christ's priorities as a result of the diaconal Ministry.

Into which these men are being installed. And which we hope as a congregation to make good use of under the Lord Jesus. What do we hope? The congregation will especially be enabled to do. Christ's priorities. In the second place, Christ's prescription. Christ's prescription seeing

the offices. First. The apostles and especially that, which Uh, be handed down to the elders, although that is not the subject of this.

Uh this particular passage but the offices of Elder and Deacon and what we see about the the doctrine, the biblical teaching about ordination. In this passage. In the afternoon. Preaching during that church, family worship time. Uh, we hope to hear. From the end of Hebrews 5. Uh, into the beginning of Hebrews chapter 6.

About the, the laying on of hands. As one of the foundational doctrines of the church, as the scripture calls it there. But the doctrine of ordination the biblical truth about why ordination is and what ordination is what ordination does Uh, is not I think commonly known. And understood and held to and appreciated in the church.

That which even the milk drinking meat, intolerant babies. To which the book of Hebrews was written. That which they didn't need to hear, but was a foundation. That didn't need to be laid again for then. And yet we are in such a season of weakness. That it is a foundation that we need to lie again.

And so, Christ's prescription. And then the third Third place, we hope to see Christ's power that, of course, which we've already referred to, in establishing the context. Coming into Acts chapter 6, Christ's power has been on display giving his servants boldness. Making them glad to be worthy to suffer, shame, giving Believers and unselfishness a gladness to have all that they have as Earmarked for the service of Christ, not by by Communism.

But By each one himself being that which belongs to Christ and therefore, considering all of his possessions to be enjoyed as from the Lord Jesus and to be employed in the service of the Lord Jesus, for which reason they were taking care. Of their the widows. We have seen the power of Christ already throughout the book of Acts before we get to this portion.

But then there is a special display of the power of Christ, as a conclusion, as God's benediction, his Blessing. Upon the ministry of these new deacons in verse 7. And so seeking to see the same power. The same blessing upon the ministry of the deacons. This place. First. Christ's priorities.

Uh, we could go back into chapter two and chapter 4 and see similar things but the reason we took the running start is because you can see those priorities already in place in verse 42, this summary How Christ's mission in his church, could not be stopped by the priests and the, the party of the Sadducees.

Who Were along with the priests and the Party of. Pharisees who made up more of the Elders of Of the church, and they had bound together and opposed The ministry of the Apostles, but you remember? They could not stop it. The angel came and he brought the apostles. Out and they were preaching again and the council didn't know what to do and gamaliel.

Who was a Pharisee, who was actually, Paul's Mentor, Saul of Tarsus's Mentor. And had advised them to. Um to not too strongly too, zealously resist because other men who had died when they died, their disciples were dispersed but when this Jesus had died, his disciples went from Uh, fearful unimpressive men to courageous convicted.

Men and the numbers were not dispersed but had multiplied greatly any gamalio implies, doesn't he? It turns out, this thing could end up being from God. And so be careful not to resist them. And so they beat the apostles in verse 40 of chapter 5 and forbade them to speak in the name of Jesus.

Even though the apostles had just told them, doesn't matter what men. Say, we've been commanded to preach this life, we've been commanded to preach in his name. They went out and so there was power already. Which, which we see in these priorities. In this priority, the summary in verse 42.

How do we know that the mission of Christ has not been defeated? Because this is his priority in the church verse 42. Daily in the temple. And in every house. They did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus. As the Christ. Christ's priority in the church. Is the ministry of his word in public and from house to house.

You see this picked up again, in Acts chapter 20, you remember, Paul was hurrying back to Jerusalem and he couldn't even go inland all the way to Ephesus. And so, the Ephesian Elders, come out and they meet him at Miletus and he's kind of giving them a final charge of how they are to function as Elders in the church and he reminds them that he held back from them, nothing profitable.

Declared it preached it. Publicly. And from house to house and then a few verses later Acts, 20 verse 20 and then a few verses later Acts, 20 and verse 27. He declares that he is innocent of the blood of all of them. For he has not refrained from declaring to them.

The whole Council of God, of course, implying to those Elders and all Elders in all of Christ's congregations. That if the whole Council of God, is not preached and applied. In the public Ministry of the church, as well as also family by family throughout the church. Family worship that family discipleship, Ministry to, which the heads of the household are especially called but for the help of which and the direction and accountability of which Christ has especially ordained, first Apostles, And as we see here in chapter 5 and verse 42, but then, as the ministry of the Apostles is handed down to the elders.

As we see in Acts chapter 20, this is Christ's great priority in the So someone wonders, you know, well why don't you have a women's ministry? You say, well, we do have a women's ministry. With Christ's women's ministry. We have Christ's Ministry of the word in public week by week in the Lord's day.

And here also in the midweek, meetings and we have Christ's women's ministry in the home. Husbands and fathers. And Elders who oversee them and where there is not a husband or father, then even greater Duty lies upon the Elder to help the Widow who would be as it were the head.

Of that home. God making it a part of pure and unspotted religion. He says in James chapter 1, not just to keep oneself undefiled by the world. But to help widows and orphans in their distress. And their distress is much more than that. There is not someone who would put bread on the table.

But that they are missing that one, who, in God's ordinary way of working is the one who breaks the bread of life. To that family. That is a much greater distress. If we are understanding things rightly of the orphan and the Widow. So here is Christ's priority. The teaching and preaching in public, and in every house.

They had their hands full, didn't they? Overseeing all of these. Over 5 000 now. Households and the spiritual life. The. Attending upon the word. And of course the word. Not only as that which comes to dwell in us, the Lord says, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, he says, John 15 ask what you wish, and it will be given to you.

That we are to seek to apply everything from the word of God, in the life of our household and in my own personal life. There's nothing that you read in the Bible that isn't supposed to make a difference in how your home operates, and how your own personal life operates, but the way the Lord Jesus says, not just that.

The the when the by when his words abide in us, they form our new wishes. Ask of him, what we wish and it will be given to you. So that that text is not for ministers, who own private jets to ask poor people to To give them money because they're telling them that he has the secret magical prayer that will allow them all to have the house and the vehicle and That they wish.

No, it's it's teaching us that The word and the application of the word must, especially be combined with a Ministry of prayer. Isn't that what we saw of the Apostles themselves? They were told to preach the words of this life, the angel had said and yet they pray when they're persecuted, not that they would be relieved from the persecution.

But that they would be enabled to preach the word boldly. Well, which was But is it something that they had a duty to do to preach the world word boldly? Or was it something that they desperately needed from God? And were to call upon him to give them in prayer that they would teach the word boldly and the answer?

All the mathematicians and theologians said, yes. Ministry of the word goes with the ministry of prayer. The apostles. We? This care that they know that is supposed to be given. To the widows. And you say, well, how could they leave off ministering to widows in order to give themselves continually to prayer?

And to the ministry of the word, you say, chapter verse 4, giving themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word was Ministry to widows. Who needed it more. Than the one who did not have the husband and father in the house who needed the public Ministry, more and would not more earnestly.

Want to bring herself and her children, whenever there was public Ministry of the word and public prayer, where they would be led in prayer by. Whom God had given in every place to lift up holy hands without wrath and without doubting First, Timothy 2 says, and a widow says, but in this place in my house, there is not a man to lift up his hands.

Holy hands that have been consecrated to God and the work that they do all day long, and then he comes home from the work, and he lifts up the same consecrated hands and he leads our household in prayer and the spirit working in him has made him a man of gentleness without wrath and a man of Faith without doubting.

She's I have no such man But in the household of God and that place especially on the Sabbath day, Isaiah 56 where there are not eunuchs on the Sabbath and there are not widows as it were on the Sabbath. But there is a name that is better than Sons and Daughters because to those who keep the Sabbath, they have the household of God.

Lord's Day by Lord's day. There, I have. Men who lead us in prayer. There, I have. Men who break the bread of life to us in the preaching and teaching of the word verse 4 is, especially For the widows but it is the priority of Christ. And the congregation as a whole.

Is the feeding of widows necessary? Absolutely. Is it a priority of Christ? Absolutely. If the if the individual household, that does, if the man of an individual household that doesn't care, for those of his own house, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. Then what does it say about a spiritual family and a congregation that does not take care of those widows that

are truly widows in that particular household, as it were, would such a congregation not be denying the faith, and being worse than unbelievers.

Distribution of the material goods for the care of the widows was very important was very urgent. Was very necessary. But still. Secondary. Because, Christ's priority. That, which was the first thing. Was prayer. And the ministry of the word. Just like you dear children's, catechism people. You were asked today about The fifth petition.

Forgive us our debts. As we forgive our debtors. The first three petitions were these great big petitions. About prayer and the ministry of the word. That by the preaching of Christ, God, the Father would be hallowed. And by the preaching of Christ, the kingdom would come. And by God's blessing upon the preaching of Christ, his will would be done.

And then in our own individual lives petitions, 5 and petition six. That we would be forgiven of our sins, that would be enabled to forgive others of their sins, that we would be kept out of situations in which, our remaining sin would take advantage, and we would be led into temptation, not that God tempts.

But that we have that remaining sin, that, that tempts us and And that in every situation we would be delivered from the evil. The greatest evil of which the worst thing that can happen to you. In any situation is that you would sin against God. But what was the fourth petition?

Give us this day. Our daily. And so, yes. The Lord Jesus commands. In his congregation Ministry, in material things. And there was A daily distribution. We read in verse 1 of our text and The widows were being taken care of. It's not the first thing, it's not the first priority but it is one of Christ's priorities in his church.

That those who are needy in the congregation would be taken care of a Ministry among the Brethren in material things. And because We are sinners. We need help. We need oversight. We were not left each one of us just me and my Bible just me and the spirit you say.

Well, I'm a Christian. So I have the Holy Spirit. Isn't that enough? Well. The holy spirit is enough but you are not enough. You have remaining sin. The Lord Jesus has instituted his church, and he's instituted Apostles and Elders for helping you. And for overseeing, you and for leading you, and for Gathering his This is Christ's prescription.

How do we come to uh, to follow Christ's priorities in his church? Well, we follow Christ's priorities by following by filling that prescription as a, as it were to use that word, a different way by doing what Jesus says in his church. And we're Sinners, which makes us needy.

Not just in the ministry. Uh, in the word and prayer. But also in the ministry and material things, The number of the disciples was multiplying. This was The. The quintessential, the great example ever of a Spirit-filled church and yet there were believers of a hebraic background and Believers still largely in this case, Jewish Believers but Jewish Believers with a Hellenistic with a Greek background From places, like Antioch from which, this Nicholas who gets ordained to the first diac in it, in verse five.

Uh, and Whether it was. Sin on the one hand in which there actually was neglect in the daily distribution or whether there was sin, as it were on the other hand, Where there wasn't neglect, but people felt neglected. You say well, which one was it? And the answer is almost certainly both.

This is this is how it is in the church on this side of Glory, where we are not the souls of the just made perfect. We are Still embodied. Souls of the just still imperfect. And so we're Sinners.



And one of the things that the Lord Jesus gives us to mitigate to reduce the harmful effects of our ongoing sin is, he gives us leadership.

He gives us Authority The apostles recognized that this was a duty by the leadership of the But they also recognized that they were finite and by the Holy They understood from Christ that Christ's prescription for the following of his priorities in the church. Was not just the ministry that Ministry of the Apostles, which would be handed off to the elders.

But now that Ministry of the Apostles, which would be handed off to the deacons Up until this point. Uh, if you remember your early chapters of the book of Acts, those who wanted to participate in giving would sell something, and they would take, the whatever it was, that they The proceeds that they had from it and they would lay it at the apostles feet.

And you remember, Ananias and Sapphira and ananias coming and laying it at the apostles feet. At one point and his wife wasn't there, and Sapphira comes in and they ask him. And great fear. Uh comes upon all as a result of that. A very stunning display of church discipline by the Holy Spirit himself.

And so there was Um, there was already this This office of leadership and Authority in ministering in material things. But Christ here by his Spirit, by his appointed preachers and teachers establishes that his prescription is not just the ministry of the elders in the church, but the ministry of the deacons in the church, Notice then how prominently the Holy Spirit features?

A properly. A properly, Pentecostal Church if we can use that word. Is not a church in which One holds to ongoing revelatory gifts, that's anti-pentecostal That's anti-holy Spirit. Jesus had promised in John 16 that the Holy Spirit would come and give the words that remained the things that he had left to say to his disciples that they couldn't bear at that time.

To claim. That new revelation continues because new words from the Holy Spirit still need to be given is anti-pentecostal. But to be genuinely truly biblically, Pentecostal to be, he truly Holy, Spirit-filled. You follow the scripture. And you find that the ministry of the Holy Spirit, whom now is poured out by Christ, even Um, even as Our mediator and he ascends to Heaven the resurrected and ascended.

One is the one who has poured out. This the Apostle Peter says, In chapter 2 note, how involved he is? In the establishing of the diaconate and in the calling of men to the diaconate and the hope that they have in the ongoing Ministry of the Holy spirit. This is what the doctrine of ordination is about.

The doctrine of ordination is in some ways, not just a subset of the doctrine of the church. It is a subset of the doctrine of the Holy It is the Spirit by whom the apostles are preaching and teaching the Spirit by whom. Now we have Apostolic preaching and teaching recorded for us in the scripture that the office of the Deacon is established.

Therefore, we are not free to monkey around. With who may be a deacon. When the apostles say in verse 3, therefore Brethren seek out from among you seven, men of good reputation. It means men. In Greek, there is a generic word that may apply indiscriminately to men and women.

And there is a word for men that specifies males And that's the word that's used here, why? Because it is an office of authority. You say well it's an office of service too. It's deaconing tables. They say we will not That is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and Deacon tables.

Well, the office of the Apostle or the Elder was also in office of service. It was an office of ministry. Jesus is called a servant, he uses the word, he uses the word Deacon of himself, but there is the service in the spiritual things. The ways in which the church acts upon God by his word and acts upon God by prayer and acts upon God by the sacraments.

And then there is the service in material things, the ways in which the church acts upon material things the creature. The those things that God has given us to enjoy, as from him and to employ in his service. And the office of Deacon. Is an office of authority. They are.

Set apart over this business. And I know that the, the preposition there that is used. Uh, that is translated over has a broad range. And uh, the idea of over is just is one of the many things that it means, but the reason it's translated that way here is because contextually, this is the part of the range of the meaning of the preposition.

As we heard from First, Timothy 3, 8-13 a deacon Part of the demonstration of whom the Holy Spirit has called to the diaconate is that he rules his own household. Well. And I know that that's not the same ruling word is from which we get the word overseer or Bishop.

But it is an administrative word. That means governing or administering. Uh, organizing there is an overseeing ruling. Aspect to it. The Holy Christ by his Has established the office of Deacon. As one of authority to which men are called, Is the Holy Spirit who works Graces in Believers. So not only did the Holy Spirit, establish the office generally, but he's the one who is working in all of these thousands of households of Believers.

There are seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit ones in whom that work that the Holy Spirit does when he brings you to Faith in Christ and dear children who have such a hard time, obeying mom and dad and you know you're supposed to not just obey but honor.

So it's supposed to be not just right away and with eagerness but cheerfulness gladness to obey. And and you think to yourself uh it's easy to Sil with my face. It's hard to smile with my heart and I have such a hard time fighting against my sin and and it seems impossible that I can actually obey God from the heart, you're right.

The life of Jesus in you is impossible. That's why he says to you in his word children obey your parents in the Lord. Without the Holy Spirit producing and applying the life of Jesus in you is impossible. And so there's this wonderful thing that happens. This is why you so need to hate your sin and turn from it and trust in the Lord Jesus, not just that trusting in him, you would be forgiven for all of your sin, but the trusting in him, you would have a life United to him and his holy spirit, would start taking who Jesus, is what Jesus is like and making you to be like he is oh what a blessing.

This is something you grow in your whole life long from the time that you become a Believer to the time, the Lord takes you out of this world. You get more and more like Christ, the Holy Spirit produces his fruit in you more and more. So you're more full of love and joy and peace, and patience and kindness and goodness and faithfulness and gentleness and self-control and you more and more obey.

Not just the fifth commandment from the heart, but the first through fourth Commandments in the sixth through tenth commandments from the heart, more and more, you love God with more of your heart and more of your soul and more of your mind and more of your strength. Being in a congregation.

Of Christ's. Is that there are people who are ahead of you in Grace. People who are not what yet, what they will be in glory But they are very much, not what they were. Outside of Christ. And they are being filled. More and more. And so he says seven men of good reputation or they say seven men of good reputation full of the Holy Spirit.

It's the Holy Spirit who works Grace as in Believers. It's the Holy Spirit who produces Christ likeness in Believers. We Taste of the Heavenly gift and the work of the Holy Spirit. Like Hebrews 6 says it means you're in a congregation. Where God? The holy spirit is actually making people more like Jesus.

That's what Hebrews 6 is. Describing. So it's not just a spirit, who establishes the office, it's a spirit who works Graces in all of the Believers and who gives wisdom The this. Skillful. Now following through, in our in our life of Christianity, And so it's full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom.

You see it's it's the spirit. Who worked in Stephen and Philip and progress, and niconor and Timmon, and Parminus, and Nicholas. And it's the Holy Spirit who has worked. And Phil and Russ and Jordan and Ben and Justin. Just as is the Holy Spirit who's working in all of you.

Who believe? The Christ who is our only hope and the spirit by whom he works by his power. In his church, is the one who has not only established, the office of Deacon generally Works in each of us and it's he who has worked in the specific men produced in them.

The Graces, the qualifications that when we were going through the study and then when we were asking for, Uh, for recommendations and then we're nominated by the elders that we're not being recognized by their spiritual accomplishments. They are being recognized by the fruit of the Holy spirit's accomplishments. And, This is what gives any of us hope either for ourselves, or for others in the church.

And you notice, This wonderful work of the Holy Spirit in the beginning of verse 5, and the saying pleased, the whole multitude. Now, whom do you think? Could give that kind of unity. Um, among a group of many thousands of households That arose from. A point of contention. It starts with contention, it starts with, uh, with difficulty in relationships, a problem in the church and complaining in the church in verse one.

When you see or hear of a situation like that in a congregation. Do you think? Well, that's a recipe for, uh, for Unity in the whole church. Being glad to submit to what the word of God says. No, it's the Holy. Who produces that. Pleasure that Unity in verse 5?

And now this ministry of the spirit is, especially evident in the laying on of Of hands. When they? Uh, when they have put the Uh, before the apostles noted notice the apostles pray. They're asking.

Recognize and own and use these men in this office. And only when they had prayed for six, do they go ahead and lay hands? They lay hands on them as a recognition and an indication that it is the spirit, not only who has now generally established the office of Deacon, Holy Spirit personally and individually has called these men to this office in this congregation.

Now we in a few minutes are going to pray. And ask God. To establish and use and bless the ministry of the diaconate in this church. And then Christ's Elders are going to lay their hands. On those men. And there will be a declaration in Christ's name. That it is, the Lord.

Who has called them that the holy spirit is the one. Who has specifically called specific men. But the laying on of hands isn't just for that because we see in many other passages that the

laying on of hands is also associated with the giving of the Holy spirit for that which needs to be done.

So, chapter 8, Verse 17. They laid hands on them. And they received the Holy Spirit. Chapter 9, verse 17. And an ice went his way and entering the entered. The house and laying his hands on him. He said, brother Saul The Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight.

And be filled with the Holy, Chapter 13 verse 2. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted the Holy Spirit said. Now separate to me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. Than having fasted and prayed. They laid hands on them. And laid hands on them.

They sent them away. Chapter 19. Verse 5 through 7. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. First Timothy chapter 4.

Verse 14. Paul telling Timothy do not neglect. The gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Second, Timothy 1 verse 6, Now, referring not just to the hands of the The eldership generally. But but his own hand specifically.

Therefore, I remind you to stir up the gift of God, which is in you through the laying one of my hands. And then Hebrews 6 verse 2, which we hope By God's help. Uh, to hear this afternoon. Of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands. One of these Elementary principles of Christ, which is one of the foundations.

Of the And so, you see, In multiple passages, those two things both The laying on of hands indicating that we recognize that the Holy Spirit has called specific men. These specific men to this specific Ministry and secondly Looking to God, the Holy Spirit to be the one who helps and carries the men.

In their specific Ministry. Christ's prescription. And lastly, Christ's power. Christ's powers, he has priorities. But yes, the care and material things is a priority, but the ministry of prayer and the word is the first priority. You see his prescription, these two offices, this doctrine of ordination in which it is, God, the Holy Spirit who has established this office and defined it who works Grace as in men, and who calls the specific men to the specific office and upon whom they must depend for carrying out their duties in the office.

And then Christ's power. Then verse 7 says, Then can connecting the ordination and installation of these deacons, then the word of God spread. And the number of the disciples multiplied. Greatly In Jerusalem. And a great, many of the priests. We're obedient to the faith. Christ's power and the spread of the word.

What are our deacons hoping? Will be the result. Of their coming into and Faithfully executing the ministry to, which they have been called, What are we all as a congregation hoping will be the result of our submitting well to our deacons and following their lead and ministering. Well in non-trivial ways to one another in material things There are three things.

That we hope will happen. One that the word will spread. That it will be stickier and have a Uh, one, you know, a 100 percent, uh, effective rate. Um, stickier than covet. The that you would not buy any sort of social or spiritual distancing, be able to escape the spread of the word of God to every household and in every household in our hearts and our lives.

And not just from within our congregation, but spread Beyond our congregation. The number of disciples would multiply Not just that there would be those who find out that there is a

Biblical Church nearby. Which they find out comes with the Uh, the other titles or names, reformed Presbyterian. But that there would be those who have not been disciples at all.

That would be multiplied, would come to Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and not just others generally. But the hardest case is specifically. Remember, it was especially the priests and especially the Sadducees that had the hardest time. With this fledgling church with this infant Church in Jerusalem because where had they, where had, they chosen to set up camp every day, according to verse 42 daily in the temple.

Well, I understand. They had, they had over 5 000 households and they were trying to gather for public worship. There weren't a whole lot of options. For where they could gather but the temple was the home turf of the priests. And so the the Church of Christ and preaching the resurrection, the Sadducees didn't even believe there was a resurrection.

And now not only were they preaching that there is a resurrection, but that Jesus was resurrected and that if you believe in Jesus, you can be forgiven of yours and you'll be resurrected to his resurrection for everybody. The priests were deeply offended. By Christianity. And yet, how does? Pleased to bless.

The ministry of the first diaconate. By bringing those who are the greatest persecutors who are the most difficult to evangelize. And a great, many of the priests were obedient to the faith. We don't have to do it. We began late and we're we're long on time, but you could come up with a list.

Of those who resist, commun Christianity, the hardest, those who are most annoyed by it. Those who persecute it are the Forefront of persecuting it. And the power that the resurrected ascended enthroned Christ, displayed, as a blessing upon the ministry of the first, diaconate was bringing those a great, many of those To obedience to the faith.

And so we not desire from him. That the same power. Would attend in his Blessing upon the same office. And the great, many of the persecutors. And the most difficult cases. Would be brought to the faith. And so, this is This is Christ's Church. That's true of every true congregation.

And Our Hope, whether for yourself or your home, or this congregation, or this community, or this nation, there is no hope other than Christ. So we must look to Christ Alone. Just as we have looked to him alone for our justification for forgiveness of our sins. Look to him alone, to produce the fruit.

To continue his work and join yourself to a church that looks to him alone. Establish his priorities as your own priorities. Make today a day when you renew your commitment. To preaching and the ministry of the words, to the ministry of the word and prayer in public week to week and in your home every day.

Submit to his officers. It is Christ, who has established the offices of Elder and Deacon and make Spirit given use of them to help you. In attending upon his words to help you in praying to help you. Living out your faith in material things. And recognize and expect his Almighty work in you.

When you see that work in yourself or your wife or your children, or your brother and sister in the congregation, especially your brother, who has been recognized by Christ's Church, as as being graced and gifted for the work of that office, recognize it as Christ's work by his Also don't just recognize that which he has done.

Expect his ongoing Almighty work in you. And through you. And especially, In his church. Hey man. Let's pray.

Lord Jesus we praise you whom death could not hold. For you have been declared the Son of God with power by rising from the dead. And it is your spirit. Displays and shows. That you are, God the Who became the son of David, according to the flesh for us and have accomplished our Redemption.

And we pray that you would keep doing that. In this congregation in. And from house to house. We pray that you would give us to follow your priorities. We pray that you would give us to follow and Obey. Your prescriptions. And we pray to see the result, the fruit.

The display of your Almighty and redeeming power unto your glory. And so bless this. Ordination. To which we are coming and bless the ministry. Of these deacons and bless this congregation's Fellowship. The way that we view and employ our material things, And we pray that Christ would be glorified.

In his church and that God would be glorified in his son. By this work of your spirit. For, we ask it in Christ's name. And his people in this place say, Amen.