

Acts 6:1-6

Setting Priorities

Introduction:

Luke gives us the origin of the first deacons of the New Testament Church. Deacons were called by God under the direction of the Apostles to serve tables for the welfare of those in need. The Apostles on the other hand knew the administrative work of caring for the widows and orphans was outside their jurisdiction. The Apostle Peter summarizes for us these two vital offices of the Church (Elders and Deacons) 1 Peter 4:11

I. THE MINISTRY OF MERCY

A. Growing Pains

1. A problem of administration
2. Aramaic and Greek speaking Jews
3. Care for widows and orphans – Isa. 1:17; Jer. 22:3; Zech. 7:10; Mal. 3:5; Psa. 146:9; Jam. 1:27

B. The proposal by the Apostles

1. There needs to be a ministry of mercy – v.2-4
2. General observation – Our Lord Jesus' ministry

C. Three Characteristics:

1. Good Reputation – (I Tim. 3:1-3; Tit. 1:5-9)
2. Full of the Holy Spirit – Acts 6:5; 7, ; 11:24
3. Full of Wisdom – Turn To: Acts 10:34-43

II. THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND PRAYER

A. Priority of the church's mission

1. These apostles and later Pastors and Elders were to be witnesses of the Gospel of Grace – Acts 1:8
2. The primary business of the Church is to preach the gospel in season and out – II Tim. 4:2
3. The church has been guilty of reversing the two great commandments – Matt. 22:36-39

B. We cannot serve tables:

1. Man has greater needs than his body – Mark 8:36-37; Eccl.3:11
2. What's worse than being without food, clothing and shelter? Amos 8:11,12
3. The apostles will not desert their calling and mission – (Martin Lloyd- Jones) Matt. 11:28-29