

Deacons Defined

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Date: 24 November 2019

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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

So we're walking through Acts and you guys know that. Last week we dove into Acts 6, talking about elders and deacons.

And this week we're jumping over to 1 Timothy 3 to take another look. At deacons and look at what the scriptures say about their qualifications and what these men are to be like.

So if you look down with me, 1 Timothy 3 verse 8. I'm going to read through verse 15. So 1 Timothy 3 verse 8 says, Deacons, likewise, must be dignified.

Not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

[1 : 04] And let them also be tested first. Then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Verse 11 says, Their wives, likewise, must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.

Verse 12, Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Verse 14, I hope to come to you soon. This is the Apostle Paul writing to Timothy. But I am writing these things so that if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of truth.

It's God's authoritative and sufficient word. Now, graduation speeches, as you probably know, are famous for telling you, listen to your inner voice, be true to yourself, follow your heart, and all sorts of nonsense like that.

But several years ago, there was one speech that just stood out to me. U.S. Navy Admiral William McRaven offered some surprising and helpful advice to graduates.

[2 : 35] He said, It was a simple task, he continues, mundane at best.

But every morning, we were required to make our bed to perfection. It seemed ridiculous at the time. Particularly in light of the fact that we were aspiring to be real warriors, tough, battle-hardened seals.

But the wisdom of this simple act has proved to me many times over. If you make your bed, you will have accomplished the first task of the day.

It will give you a small sense of pride, he says, and it will encourage you to do another task. And another. And another. And by the end of the day, that one task completed will have turned into many tasks completed.

He continues, making your bed will also reinforce the fact that little things, in fact, matter. If you can't do the little things right, you'll never do the big things right.

[4 : 06] And if by chance, he says, you have had a miserable day, you will come home to a bed that is made. A bed you made. And a bed made, or a made bed, gives you encouragement for the next day that tomorrow could be better.

So if you want to change the world, he says, start off by making your bed. So maybe mom is right. Make your bed.

That's not the advice you would expect at a graduation when you're ready to go conquer the world. In our text today, Paul offers some surprising advice to the church in Ephesus, as he writes to Timothy.

And Timothy, he's unpacking the way the church is to look. Look, we saw that. Look in verse 15. He says, I'm teaching you. I'm writing so that you might know how to behave in the church of God, in the household of God, the church of Jesus Christ.

He's writing to give some final directions, some closing instructions, some household rules. You know, everybody's got a household rules, whether you take your shoes off or not, or whether you're able to climb on the furniture.

[5 : 19] And that's kind of what he's doing here. He's given some household rules, some final instructions for how the church is to be a pillar and buttress of the truth. That just means how to uphold and maintain the truth.

And what are the few final things you might say if you're put in that scenario? What few final things must the church hold on to in order to hold on to the truth?

Perhaps it's get a good worship leader, thankful for Gil and Ben who serve us well. Or maybe in this culture, you need a good vision statement. Like you need to know what you're about.

You need to know how to say it to people. Or maybe you need to learn to defend your faith. You know, we're in a hostile culture, so we need to defend our faith. Or maybe we need a good children's ministry, which we have.

Or maybe you need a building, which we don't have and need one day. But, you know, when Paul writes to Timothy, he says, in effect, Timothy, if you want to build the church, if you want to maintain the church to the next generation, find men to serve as deacons.

[6 : 25] Find servants and deploy them. You want to hold up the truth. Find these servants and let them loose.

I just love that. Not what we'd expect. And that's what we're going to unpack. This second week in Deacons, we're just unpacking what they're like. You know, and this, if you are a guest today, this is a little bit of a household type message.

It's a little bit of, you know, the two by four type message. We're talking about construction a little bit, but I think God has you here for a reason to hear what goes on and what is vital to the church. So in a way, where we're going is, deacons are vital gifts of God for building the local church. That's very simple. Deacons are vital gifts from God for building the local church. I'm going to unpack that in three verses or three points.

Deacons are noble, mature men. First point, deacons are noble and mature men. You know, similar to the opening verses of this chapter about elders, when Paul begins to talk about deacons, which I'm going to define as we go, he talks about character.

[7 : 34] He lists out character qualities. I mean, you notice, we just went through a lot of character qualities. And the idea is that deacon's not some super Christian. All of these qualities are commanded of all Christians.

Christians, there's nothing on this list that's out there. They're all commanded of this. But Paul is listing them out here so that we would know exactly what a deacon looks like.

He's filling in the lines of the picture with color. It reminds me of that, you know, you're walking around Gatlinburg, and those guys are, you pay to have yourself, I guess, cartooned out.

You know what I'm talking about. They draw a big head at first, and then gradually all the lines come in. That big head at first does not look like you, but gradually these lines come in. Well, that's kind of what he's doing here.

Paul's coloring the lines of a deacon so that we might spot them, say there's one. And all these qualities point to a mature, respectable life.

[8 : 36] He starts dignified. Deacons, likewise, must be dignified. You know, they must be noble in esteem. There's this idea that there's a weightiness and a rightness to their character and life.

Throughout Scripture, it's God who possesses dignity. All he says and does is true and right and good. And so the natural response to a dignified person like that, a dignified God, is praise and honor and worship.

That's why the psalmist says, those who know your name trust in you. It's the reflexive response to a dignified, right, and true and good God.

And the same thing's supposed to go on with deacons. There's this idea that there should be a dignified air and aroma to their life. Much like the smell of sizzling bacon, the dignity of their life is to be noticeable.

Now, that's funny because that's an immediate smell. You can almost breathe it. And it's immediately noticeable. It's sniffable. The character of their life has an obvious effect when they enter a room.

[9 : 53] Now, you guys all know that. If President Trump walked in the room right now, the dignity he possesses by virtue of that office would immediately change this room. He'd have to sit down and listen to the message.

But now we would. But it would change the room. It would linger after he left. That's the idea. There's a dignity to their life that precedes their entrance and lingers after their exit. It gives rise to honor, respect, trust. And when God sets forth the order of a church, he commands it to be led by these types of men.

He continues, dignified, not double-tongued. Now, that's a vivid translation. What it means, not two-worded.

Not saying two different things. Not speaking out of both sides of their mouth, which we're so good at in the South. Not insincere. Not a flatterer. Not one way in public and another way in private.

[11 : 02] Our culture applauds us for saying whatever we feel. But a deacon's word, positively, are careful, sincere, truthful. He continues, not addicted to much wine.

Not a drunkard. Not a slave to drinking or to any other craving. You remember, we saw Acts 6, Stephen and the other seven were filled with the Spirit.

The idea there is they were under the control of the Spirit. Now, they were quite obviously filled in the moment, but their life was dominated by the Spirit's control.

Not greedy for dishonest gain. He continues in verse 8. This is similar to what's required of elders. They're not to be living for money. Not a lover of money.

Not tight-fisted on money, of money, and things. Right? Verse 9, they must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

[12 : 10] They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. That's the first one that's not super obvious as you read it through. Now, I don't know about you, but I love a good mystery.

I've been hooked on them since a young age. And all of you kids of the 80s, I'm sure you remember unsolved mysteries are America's most wanted. Every Saturday night was spent with those for me. And so when we hear mystery, we think something unsolved, unknown, something puzzling. Right? But that's not what he's talking about here. The mystery of the faith refers to what was formerly hidden.

That Christ Jesus died to save sinners by grace. That's the mystery. That all through the Old Testament, it was hidden. It wasn't seen fully until it was seen in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And so the idea that a deacon is not somebody who's comfortable with things he doesn't understand. But a deacon is someone who's firm in what he does understand about the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[13 : 13] And he holds it with a clear conscience. The idea is that what he believes, he lives. What he lives, he believes. And he holds it with a clear conscience.

There ought not be, in our lives or in his life, a big difference between Sunday face and Wednesday face. Or Sunday tone of voice and Wednesday tone of voice.

Or Thursday tone of voice. Or any other day tone of voice. The idea is that the Christianity of this deacon is not compartmentalized into an hour a week, but dominates their life as it should ours.

He holds the mystery of a faith with a clear conscience. He continues, blameless. Blameless.

If you look down there with me, I seem to have lost blameless. Yeah, prove themselves blameless, verse 10. Tested first, then prove themselves blameless. The word here is the same word used for metal that's tested by fire.

[14 : 14] Gold is a precious metal. Now, it's precious because of its value, right? But what that means when you say gold is a precious metal is that when you put it through fire, it might soften or melt, but it will not light on fire and turn to ash.

If you put it through fire, all the impurities in the gold will be fired out, and the gold will remain genuine.

That's what's going on here. The idea with the blameless, this deacon is being blameless, not because his life is perfect in any shape or form, but because his life has been tested. His faith has been tested.

It's sincere. It's the real thing. It's the real deal. That's what's going on. The maturity of this deacon's life is reflected in his home.

We see down there in verse 12, let deacons be the husband of one wife. That just means kind of literally it's one woman man, you know, managing their children and households well.

[15:15] How can he manage the church of Jesus Christ if he can't manage his own home? While addressing a deacon's home, verse 11 addresses a deacon's wife.

Now, admittedly, this is a tricky verse. A lot of ink's been spilled. That's what people say, talking about scholars. A lot of books have been written about how to craft this verse.

The same word here can mean, and now I don't normally get into details like this, but we've got to get into it for this detail. But, you know, it can mean wife or it can mean woman.

So people ask, so does this refer to a deacon's wife or does this refer to a female deacon? Is deacon an office reserved for men and thus refers to a deacon's wife or is this deacon an office that includes women?

So does this refer to women? Now, godly scholars fall on both sides, which makes it more tricky for the exposer, the preacher.

[16:23] You know, I think the ESV, which is the translation I'm reading from, translates it right as wives. I'll tell you why, and I've thought about this.

If you have more questions, don't ask now, but we can talk, you know? You know where I stay at. We can get some coffee or something. First, contextually, it would be odd for the apostle Paul to introduce female deacons in verse 11 and then immediately return in verse 12 to qualifications for a male deacon.

You get that? So it would be odd based on the context. Second, verse 11 flows into verse 12, in my opinion.

A deacon's home life and his relationship with his wife and children, they all are together. I think those would be read contextually together.

I think if Paul were introducing female deacons, thirdly, we would expect more qualifications, similar to that of a male deacon, not a short list, not a single verse with a few attributes.

[17:29] Fourthly, the word for woman and wife occurs in verse 12 and clearly refers to a deacon's wife there. It would seem likely that both of those words, so the same word is in 11 and 12.

It would seem that both of those words refer to the same person. Does that make sense? Same deacon's wife. So I would argue, and I will argue, we will argue, that certain men, not all, are called to serve as deacons.

Now, I realize that's a lot, so you can just let me know. But the idea is as noble, mature men, deacons are vital gifts of God to the church for building up the church.

Point two, deacons serve the church's physical needs. We've seen what a deacon must look like, but what are they called to do? They're called to serve.

We talked about that last week. They're lead servants. We see this in the text. The Greek word for deacon, diakonos, literally means servant, and it occurs four times in this text.

[18:36] I'm not going to go through all those, but it's just loaded down in this passage. I think it's trying to say something to us that this idea of a servant that is this title is what they're called to do.

But this word servant is used throughout the New Testament. We refer to all sorts of people. To Timothy, to Apollos, to Tychus, to Phoebe in Romans 16, to apostles, to angels, even to government leaders in Romans 13.

They are the Lord's servants to do what the Lord wants, but not all those people are deacons, as I understand it. But something very fascinating is happening in our text.

You know, the same word for servant here is used in a unique way to refer to an office. And this is kind of nerdy stuff, and I'm not going to make any more disclaimers about it, but I think it's very interesting.

It's obvious from the context that Paul's introducing something distinct. He's saying, I'm teaching you how to behave, and so I say, you know, if anyone aspires to an overseer, he desires a noble task, and then he walks through what an overseer or an elder looks like.

[19:40] And then he says, likewise deacons, in verse 8, trying to say, there's another office that goes along with elder in the church of Jesus Christ, and it's so fascinating that this has occurred. If you remember last week, we were diving into Acts 6, and we were studying about these widows that had a complaint, and they didn't want to be missed in the daily distribution.

And so this disagreement, this disunity that resulted from a physical thing brought spiritual disunity, and so the apostles tried to rectify the situation.

And then they do, they do. They put these men in place to serve in this way. And then 20 years later, when Paul's writing to the church in Ephesus, he assumes there's deacons in place. Now think about that.

What happened in Acts 6 continues to dominate and mark the churches that are created all around the Mediterranean. As the gospel's going forward, it goes forward, and elders are appointed in each church, but also deacons alongside them.

And here, there's another office that's established. Now I find that really cool. Just to think about how all this unfolded. And when they're looking for a title for this office, they look no further than the word servant.

[20 : 53] They are capital S servant. That's what a deacon is. That's what it means. They are capital S servant. That's what they're called to do.

And so how are these deacons to serve? In a word, they're called to serve the church's physical needs. Now you saw those qualifications.

They must handle their finances well. And so often deacons historically have been involved in managing money. Crunching the numbers. Not all of us are good at that.

I'm not good at that. And managing the finances of the church. They're called to manage their households well. Administrate their households well. And so they're often involved in administration and planning. But that's not all.

I think the idea is that they're to serve and ensure that all the church's physical needs are met. Whatever it might be. Budget or sound or children's ministry or widow care or outreach or many other things.

[21 : 49] The idea is that they're there to focus on any physical need that might threaten the spiritual unity of the church. And they're not all fixed.

Right? We see widows here. That's going to keep happening. But some needs are there for a season and some aren't.

I remember our church. We used to have a bustling tape ministry. Needless to say, we've discontinued that ministry. The same thing goes on with deacons.

It does things for a season. They do things for a season. So that whereas the elders are called to be released to prayer and the preaching of the word, the deacons are called to chase these physical needs and to care for the church in that way.

And it's vital. And it's vital. Even though deacons devote themselves to physical needs, their work is not somehow unspiritual.

[22 : 51] You know, I think we can kind of have that tendency to view some things as spiritual. Oh, that's spiritual. And some things as unspiritual. Now, clearly, there are unspiritual things and there's ungodly things.

But we think it's really spiritual what happens on Sunday morning. You know, I'm not going to cuss on Sunday, you know, because it's a special day or something like that. Now, we might not say that out loud, but we kind of do that. But the rest of the week, that's unspiritual and or something like that.

Or sharing the gospel is really spiritual. Or being a pastor or a missionary, really spiritual. While being a mom or a doctor or a video editor or a line worker is somehow unimportant and unspiritual. Well, that's baloney.

But I think we can bring that mindset when we think about deacons. We can think these guys are just doing the physical things. I'm not after that, you know. I'm after the spiritual stuff.

Well, that's not the way the Bible views it all. Listen to this quote from Mark Dever. He says, deacons serve to care for the physical and financial needs of the church. And they do so in a way that heals divisions.

[23 : 52] Brings unity under the word. And supports the leadership of the elders. Without this practical service of the deacons, the elders would not be free to devote themselves to praying and serving the people. Serving the word to people.

Elders need deacons to serve practically. And deacons need elders to lead spiritually. It's a wonderfully complementing thing. It's not unspiritual or unimportant in any way.

It heals divisions. That's what happened in Acts 6. It was a physical need, but it was a spiritual problem. With the disunity, it preserves the witness of the gospel.

One author said deacons are shock absorbers. It's a little community like this. And, you know, you see, you see, we drop things every Sunday, right? Little things, you know, deacons help iron things out.

People don't leave a church because the doctrine's bad. Not usually. They leave because the coffee's cold or something like that. They leave because, because something is not the way they like it, you know? And, and if the coffee's cold and you're leaving because of it, I'm sorry.

[24 : 55] We'll work on that. But obviously they leave for secondary thing. That's my point. And deacons are shock absorbers so that the disunity doesn't happen to help the church.

The role of a deacon is not unspiritual or unimportant. It's a vital privilege position. You know, I was raised in South Carolina. My dad went to school at Wake Forest University.

If you know anything about it, it's a Baptist university. And their mascot was the deacon. The deacon. Now, I don't know who put that together, but they should be fired, you know?

And then after a big win over Duke in the 20s, an author wrote up about him and he called them, that night he called them the demon deacons, you know, because the Duke is the blue devils.

That devil fits with them completely. And so they beat the blue devils. And so they called them the demon deacons. Now, we just thought this is great. Deacon was a household word in our family.

[26 : 00] We always talked about deacons and went to deacon games and things like that. Even their mascot is the deacon, I guess. But my dad had this bumper sticker and he was a deacon in the church.

He had this bumper sticker that said, proud to be a demon deacon. And the story goes that I guess after we've been elected again or something, the kid in the church said, man, Mr. Alexander is really into that deacon thing.

One kid said to his father, I think that's right. That's not why he stuck that sticker on there. It's a privileged position. What an honor to stand behind the great servant to serve the people for whom he died.

What a privilege. My prayer is that deacons won't just address physical needs in our church, but embrace the privileged position of serving God's people.

What an honor. They're gifts. Point three, deacons receive confidence and honor.

[27 : 10] Verse 13, and you can look down there with me, it concludes with a promise. For those, for those, I said that's a big promise word in our Bibles, for, that's underlining a reason, underlining a purpose, or underlining a reward.

For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus. They gain confidence in the faith.

Now, serving others helps others, right? We've all been the recipient of that. Somebody come in and blessing us in some way. I mean, it refreshes us. One of my friends likes to say, it fills your tank, you know?

Like, sometimes you walk into the day or you walk into the afternoon or whatever it is, and you run into somebody who encouraged you in some way, and it fills up the tank, so to speak.

It encourages you. But this verse says, serving also encourages those who are serving. Like, it helps others, but it also helps us.

[28 : 19] It helps us be more confident in the faith, become bolder, more courageous, more deeply grounded and confident in Christ. That's the promise for deacon.

If you serve well, your faith will be strengthened. But it's a promise for us as well. Now, I'm a naturally introverted person. I enjoy time alone, time with my family.

That's the way I rest and recharge, you know? I like my books. I like my shows, as I pointed out. I like my boo a lot. And those things are good, but I always want serving to be held in tension in my heart.

I have little trouble pursuing those things. No hindrances coming up in my heart to another night of reading a book. But I want serving to be a deep, committed habit that helps me trust God and trust my time to others.

I think that's what's going on here. I want to be a mainstay at community group. I want to be a faithful servant. I want to be regularly opening my home for others. Why? Because I'm selfish.

[29 : 27] I want help. I want my faith to be strengthened. I want to change. That's the promise. God loves to serve those who serve others.

And God will not be out-served. I think that's what it's saying. And they gain a good standing in the body. So the promise is that deacons gain great confidence and they gain a good standing. Here the word standing is just a word used to refer to rank in an army or battalion. Rank or status in the army, obviously, is gained through climbing the chain of command.

Step by step, taking the courses required for the next officership or the next step. Deacons here, though, gain status by climbing down.

The deacon who serves well gains a standing of respect and honor in the church of Jesus Christ, not because he climbed up to a position or an office or a title or a corner office or any of these things, but because he climbed down to follow the suffering servant, the one who washes feet to serve.

[30 : 52] In 1997, 23-year-old Leonardo DiCaprio starred in the blockbuster movie The Titanic. It's my wife's favorite movie when we got married.

I think I made it through it one time. It was grueling. It's not the type of flicks I go after. The movie tells the story, though, of the singing.

Well, it's not really about the story of the singing of The Titanic, you know. It does tell that story, but it revolves around the love story, right, between the young boy Jack Leo and the first-class passenger Rose.

While the ship is sinking, he's trying to capture his love or something like that. It swept the awards. It also captured the hearts of teenage girls all throughout the country.

But in several important details, the movie's plot changed the true story. When the ship begins to sink, the movie shows countless men in first class fighting for their spots in the lifeboats while there were still women and children behind.

[32 : 04] In fact, the true story is just the opposite. In first class, every child was saved. Every child was saved. All but five women of 144 were saved, but 70% of men died.

In the second class, 80% of women saved, but 90% of men died. The men in first class included many of the richest men in the world, and they were no exception. John Jacob Astor, the richest man in his day, is said to have fought his way to the lifeboat, put his wife in it, then stepped back to waver goodbye.

Benjamin Guggenheim, who the museum is named after, simply refused to take his seat. He said, Tell my wife I played the game out straight and to the end. No woman shall be left aboard this ship but because Ben Guggenheim was a coward.

It's incredible, isn't it? There was an unwritten code of honor in that day for men to live and even to die serving others. It's no wonder the movie was changed to suit our culture.

We're encouraged to show no restraint in serving ourselves. But it must not be in the church of Jesus Christ. The Lord upholds deacons, not to like say these men are great or something like that, but to uphold another servant to look to in the church so that respect and honor might flow not to the wealthiest or the prettiest or the fittest or the most powerful or most successful or any of these things so that respect and honor might flow to those who serve.

[33 : 46] Respect and honor might flow to those who follow Jesus Christ. I mean, Jesus came, he came to reverse all our ideas of greatness and honor and he did so with his words, right?

We saw last week, whoever would be great among you must be your servant. He's saying greatness is redefined, honor is reassigned to those who serve. They are who is truly great. You want to be great?

You want to be great? Young man, you want to be great? Serve. Serve. Serve. Get down low.

Do something you don't want to do. Work for no pay. Do what your mom says. And we have to look past our culture that says true greatness is those who can throw a touchdown pass or those who can make a bunch of money or something like that.

We have to look past that and that's why he's put this position in the church so that we might see that this is who is great. Those who serve. And Jesus reverses the ideas of greatness and rank not merely through his words but through his death.

[34 : 59] Mark 10, 45 says, even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom. For many, William Lane famously says, the reversal of all human ideas of greatness and rank was achieved when Jesus came.

Not to be served but to serve. The reversal. I just love that. Of all human ideas of greatness and rank was achieved when Jesus Christ, the perfect one, the crown of heaven, the king of kings, the Lord of lords, the one who's going to come back and set his throne over all so that all might see that he is the king stooped to serve.

And he didn't stop there. He stooped to die. He didn't just show us how to serve. He came to change our lives.

He came to make us new. He came to set us free. He came to give us true joy, joy that is found not in accumulating things for ourselves but in emptying ourselves to make much of Jesus Christ.

That's what Jesus came to do. And that's what we're all about. We're all about the gospel of Jesus Christ. That Jesus Christ came, the perfect one, to stand in a place for guilty ones so that the guilty ones might be set free and given life and given life in his presence.

[36 : 23] He is the way, the truth, and life. No one comes to the Father except through him. And in his presence, Psalm 16 says, is fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore. Jesus came to overturn the human ideas of greatness and rank and to do so with his words and through his death so that we might be set free and so that the church might be a totally unique place where the one with the most toys is not the one exalted.

The one with the most money is not the one exalted. The one with the most earthly power which is just going to flee away in days like that. But the one who serves.

That's what the church is. A place where we love one another, where we honor one another and give our lives away and serve one another. And you guys are just killing it.

You love this stuff. You love following Christ and I love you for it. Deacons are vital gifts of God to the church. We need them. I need them.

You need them. Today, I'm going to put forward four candidates to serve our church as deacons. I did that in conjunction with the elders, provisional elders which you heard about last week.

[37 : 53] I asked these men I had time to pray about serving this way and I want you to pray. We're going to have a season of time. We want to hear your feedback. We have 45 days that we want you to pray for these men.

Pray for wisdom from God. Wisdom that matters comes from God. It's what James 1 5 says. And bring any questions or concerns. So maybe you had some questions as I was walking through this. Bring any questions or concerns to me or to these men and we can talk through them. The four men I would like to put forward that I think model these attributes and can lead us and serve us well in this way are Gil Balch.

Daniel McGraw, Tim Smith and Dustin Tinsman. There's so many men that could serve in this way. It's hard to knock down a list but these men I think are gifts and right now they're candidates and so please pray for them would you?

Pray for wisdom. Pray for God's leading and come to me if you have any questions. So we'll do that until January 12th. So it's just about 47 days or something like that.

[39 : 12] But deacons are a gift. We need them. Let me pray for us. Father in heaven we thank you for any moment where we can open your word without hostility and fear of persecution to hear from you.

We thank you for this word. Lord it does address the two by fours in the constructions of a church but Lord we pray that you would give us wisdom from above as this little church begins to add another office to it.

We pray for it. We thank you for Trinity Grace Church. It is not our church. Not my church. Not our church. It's the church of Jesus Christ. These are the people for whom you died and we just hold all this very humbly.

We pray God. We pray for wisdom. We lack wisdom. Therefore we ask you who gives wisdom to all without reproach. Give us wisdom.

Counsel us. Direct us. Pray for these men. God if these are the men that are called to serve in this way I pray for affirmation from this congregation. I pray for faith for them for their spouses for their families.

[40 : 31] I pray God you would use them and build this church for the glory of Jesus Christ. We thank you. We praise you. In Jesus name. Amen.

You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee. For more information about Trinity Grace please visit us at

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