

## **The Installment of Deacons**

### **8-4-13**

The Word of God tells us that there is an order and structure inside the local church (Ephesians 4:11-16). Apostles and Prophets are necessary in the local church; their work, however, is finished, having compiled for us the New Testament. We know that a local church needs evangelists, pastors, teachers, and to this we add deacons from the Word of God.

Once we have finished this structure, according to this passage, we can expect that we will begin to grow. I Corinthians 3:5-10 tells us that with the parts of the local church in place, God provides the increase. Too often we put the cart before the horse by charging forward to growth without the structure in place. We need to consider that both of these passages give us a pattern that indicates that before we grow, we are to have our house in order.

Scriptures provide us the qualifications of each work within the church. Elders in Titus 1 and I Timothy 3; evangelists and teachers in II Timothy 2 and 4. We have spent weeks in examination of ourselves and the qualifications for deacons, and have determined that there are men and women (their wives, who have separate qualifications) here who meet these qualifications. Because these qualifications are given by inspiration, we do not believe that we are appointing these men and their wives, but that the Holy Spirit Himself has called them to this work. Jesus said in John 6:44 that God Himself teaches us; we know this is accomplished by the work of the Holy Spirit in the inspiration of the Bible, particularly I Timothy 3.

In Acts 6 we see men appointed to an office at the direction of the Apostles. While they are not deacons (neither their work nor their qualifications are the same), we understand they are very similar. They are appointed by the laying on of hands. Hebrews 6:1-2 tells us that the laying on of hands is a fundamental doctrine of Christ. When we look for the “laying on of hands” in the Bible, we find a number of examples:

- Jacob laid hands on Joseph’s sons to bless them;
- God laid His hand on Egypt in judgment; the priests laid their hands on the selected sacrifices before slaying them;
- Jesus laid hands on people to heal them;
- the Apostles laid hands on men to pass along the Holy Spirit’s miraculous gifts;
- Paul spoke to Timothy about laying hands on elders.

As you see, there are a variety of “laying on of hands” in the Bible. What do they have in common? They all signify a choice that is made by God. Therefore, when we choose men and women to serve as deacons by the qualifications of the Word of God, we are “laying on hands” by that choice.

We believe today that it is not our choice, but the Holy Spirit’s as to the selection of those put before us for this work.