

INTRODUCTION: THE GOSPEL HARMONY (see Mk.1:39; 2:10f; Jms.2:17,26)

A. OUR CALLING: EXCELLENCE (see Mk.2:23f; 3:1f; see 1Th.4:1,10(1-12); see Phil.3:14)

B. OUR FOCUS: THE DIACONATE (Acts 6:1f; see Ezra 10:4)

C. HISTORICAL SKETCH

1. *historical theology: the maturing development of Biblical doctrine and practice*
2. *Deaconesses: same office, different function, sphere* (i.e., women & children; 1Tm.3:11; see Tt.2:3-5)
3. *further: principles & practices of relationship between Deacons and Deaconesses*

I. THE WORKS OF THE GOSPEL

A. OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST (Mk.1:21f,39f; 2:23f; 3:1f; see Jn.5:17f; 10:25,37f; 14:10f; Acts 10:38)

B. THE INDIVIDUAL IN CHRIST (see Rom.6:3f; 1Cor.10:2; 12:13)

1. *the great commandment* (Lk.10:25f,29f)
2. *doing good well* (Eph.2:10; Gal.6:9; Col.1:10; 2Th.3:13; 1Tm.2:10; 5:10; 6:18; 2Tm.2:21; 3:17; Tt.1:16; 2:7,14; 3:8,14; Heb.10:24; 3; Jms.2:14f; 3:13; 1Pt.2:12)
3. *generous alms* (Acts 10:2,4,31; 24:17; 2Cor.8:1f; 9:8)

C. THE CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST

1. *individuals in Christ* (B. above)
2. *a body...* for good works (1Cor.12:4f; Eph.(2:10);4:11f; Gal.6:10)
3. *Elders & Deacons: words & works* (Acts 6:1f; Phil.1:1; 1Tm.3:1f,8f; see 1Pt.4:10,11; 2Th.2:17; see Gen.2:7)
 - a. Elders: teaching words & ruling words (1Tm.5:17; *The Session*)
 - b. Deacons: men works & women works (1Tm.3:8f,11; see Rom.16:1f; *The Diaconate*)
4. *Words: Deacon, Deaconess* (Deaconry, Deaconship, Deacon Seat); *Diaconate, Diaconal*; (Consistory)

II. THE DIACONATE

A. HISTORICAL UNDERSTANDINGS OF 1 TIMOTHY 3:11

1. *Deacons wives: no office; similar, supportive or no function*
2. *Women Deacons: same office, same function*
3. *Deaconesses: same office, different function* (see 1Tm.5:17; see Tt.2:3f; see WCF/T, chp.25, para.8)

B. EXPOSITION OF 1 TIMOTHY 3:11

1. *Semantics or content:* women (1Tm.3:11; 2,8; see 5:17; 14-16; Tt.2:3f; Acts 9:36,39; Prov.31:10f; Rom.16:1)
2. *Structure or context*
 - a. parallelism: official work (1Tm.3:2,8,11)
 - b. *inclusio*: incorporated work (1Tm.3:8-(11)-13; see Gen.2:21,23)
 3. summary: analogous to parenting (1Tm.3:15,5; see 5:2; Gen.2:20f)

C. CONCLUSIONS: COMPLEMENTARY PERSONS (as in marriage and family)

1. *same office, different function*, fully integrated (1Tm.3:2f,8f,11; see 8-(11)-13; see Gen.2:21f; see Prov.6:20; Eph.6:1f; see Ex.38:8; cf. Lk.8:1f)
2. order *among equals* (see 1Tm.2:12,13; (3:8-13); yet 3:1f; 5:17; see Eph.5:21f; 1Pt.3:1f and yet Tt.2:4; 1Pt.3:7)
 - a. equality: same office (1Tm.3:2,8,11; see Gen.2:18f)
 - b. order: natural relationship applies (see 1Tm.3:12-14; see 1f; 5:17)
 - c. model: parental complementation applies (see Eph.5:21f; 6:1f; 1Pt.3:1-7)
3. *the Diaconate is a whole* (Deacons + Deaconesses = Diaconate; see 1Tm.3:8-(11)-13; Gen.2:7,24)

D. APPLICATIONS: COMPLEMENTARY WORKS (as in marriage & family)

1. *gifts & callings* (body, one flesh; 1Tm.3:8-(11)-13; Gen.2:7,21f; 1Cor.12:4f; Eph.4:11f,16)
2. common *sphere* of communication & consensus (Acts 15:25; Rom.15:5; see Phil.2:2f)
 - a. illustration: wise women (2Sam.14:2; 20:16; Prov.14:1; see Prov.31:16)
 - b. method: consensus (Eph.5:22f; Jms.3:17/ Jdg.19:3; 2Sam.19:7; **vote within / consensus between**; rarely, **defer, refer**)
3. distinct *spheres* of execution (Prov.31:11; Tt.2:3f; and 1Cor.12:4f)
4. *meetings: common and distinct* (4,5 above)
5. *illustration: one mind, two hands* (integrated *planning*, differentiated *execution*)

III. LESSONS

A. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MINISTRY OF MERCY (1Tm.3:13; Mk.2:10f; see 1:21f,39,40f; 2:23f; 3:1f; see Gen. 2:7; Jms.2:26)

B. THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE (1Th.4:1,10; see Phil.3:14; Heb.12:1f)

C. OUR FOCUS: THE DIACONATE (Acts 6:1f; see Ezra 10:4)

D. OUR SUPPORT OF THE MINISTRY OF MERCY (1Cor.8:1f; 9:8)

1. *generous gifts of time, talent & treasure* (Eph.4:11-16; 1Cor.12:4f; 1Cor.8:1f; 9:8; survey!)
2. *budget, calendar: parity between ministries of word and works* (see Mk.1:39; 2Th.2:17; Jms.2:26)
3. *a wise innocence* (Mt.10:16; see Rom.16:19)

E. THE R.P. CHURCH: A PLACE TO GET HELP (Mt.4:23,24; 5:14; 11:28f; 12:1f; see 1Pt.4:10,11)

F. THE LORD'S SUPPER: FORGIVENESS & STRENGTH (Mt.26:26f; Lk.22:19f; see 1Th.4:1,10)