

Tips and Tricks:

The sermon notes are designed to be used as a guide for discussion. Don't feel like you have to use every question. Some questions will take a while to work through and others will be over in a few seconds.

1. Don't teach the lesson. The sermon was just preached. Just ask the questions and let everyone else talk.
2. Let other people ask questions. It's OK to go "off topic" for a while. Sometimes those conversations are more interesting anyway!
3. Have fun. Don't forget to laugh and crack up. Relationships, not curriculum, are the heartbeat of our ministry. Remember: We have to build a relational bridge strong enough to hold the truth!

Agenda for Group Time

1. Ice Breaker - Lighthearted ice breaker question (10 minutes)
2. Discussion - Bible study, sharing and application. (25 Minutes)
3. Prayer - Pray together (5 minutes)
4. Planning - Remember to talk about what's coming up.

Ice Breaker!

Question: What responsibility at home would you like to give up? Is there anything you'd never give up?

- Dishes
- Dusting
- Cleaning floors
- Updating the Netflix account
- Making sure the television is working
- Other: _____

The Character of Deacons

1 Timothy 3:8-13

[8] Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. [9] They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. [10] And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. [11] Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. [12] Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. [13] 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. (ESV)

For Discussion:

The list of qualifications is all about character. Why is there nothing about a deacon's skill, personality, or gifting?

How would you summarize the list of qualifications for a deacon?

The Ministry of Deacons

Read Acts 6:1-7

[1] Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. [2] And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. [3] Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. [4] But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." [5] And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. [6] These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

[7] And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Question: What were the qualifications for the help they were looking for in this passage? How is it similar to 1 Timothy? How is it different?

Question: What was the task they were looking for? Why such high qualifications for this task?

- There was a great opportunity for conflict
- There might have been an exchange in money to get the food.
- Peter didn't get along with one of the guys and he wanted to make sure they couldn't be in the group.
- Other: _____

In your opinion, do you think the apostles made a good decision? What was the result of the apostles decision?

The Model of Deacons

....that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.

2 Corinthians 8:9 (ESV)

Deacons are the leaders, or initiators, of mercy ministry in the church. They are our models because all of us are to hear the cries of the poor and all of us are to respond.

Question: Why is mercy ministry (ministry to the poor, the downtrodden, the helpless) important in the life of the church?

- Because we were all poor, and Christ cared for us.
- Because God love show mercy and so should His people.
- Mercy ministry shows that we have received mercy.
- Mercy
- Other: _____

Question: What are the little things in our church that would be like serving tables?

What would life at Providence be without these things being done?

How would you describe your attitude towards the small things?

Work It Out!

One thing I'll do differently because of this sermon:
