

LESSON 15

DEACONS.

AND in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost; and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God increased; and the number of

the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.—*Acts* vi. 1-7.

Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husband of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.—1 *Tim.* iii. 8-13.

CHURCHES.*

I.

THEN they that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.—*Mal.* iii. 16, 17.

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are

*This section is designed for use at the organization, or recognition of churches.

all apostles ? are all prophets ? are all teachers ? are all workers of miracles ? have all the gifts of healing ? do all speak with tongues ? do all interpret ? But covet earnestly the best gifts : and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.—1 *Cor.* xii. 4–7, 28–31.

Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God ; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone ; in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord : in whom ye also are builded together in a habitation of God through the Spirit.—*Eph.* i. 19–22.

Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one, in the spirit of meekness ; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.—*Gal.* vi. 1, 2

A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another ; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.—*John* xiii. 34, 35.

Let not then your good be evil spoken of : for the kingdom of God is not meat and drink ; but

righteousness, and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.—*Rom.* xiv. 16–19.

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.—*1 Tim.* vi. 3–5.

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vain-glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.—*Eph.* ii. 1–5.

Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of

Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith; to God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.—*Rom.* xvi. 25-27.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.—1 *Cor.* xiii. 14.

END LESSON 15