

(1 Timothy) the Deacons

by Brian Brodersen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of the deacon's role in serving the body of Christ in a practical way, while maintaining spiritual integrity.

Duration: 52:56

Scripture: 1 Timothy 3:8

Topics: "Church Growth", "Gods Calling"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the growth and impact of Calvary Chapel affiliated churches. He emphasizes that these churches were not established through a grand plan, but rather through ordinary people who were stirred up by God's call. The speaker encourages the audience to consider their own role in God's plan and to be open to new directions in life. He shares his own personal experience of feeling called to serve the Lord and highlights that God uses ordinary individuals to accomplish His work throughout history. The speaker also expresses a vision for Calvary Chapel to be established in every city in the world, believing that God's call and the spreading of the gospel can create a chain reaction of transformed lives.

Transcript

So we're picking up in the third chapter of 1st Timothy, and tonight we'll actually be looking at verses 8 through 13. In our previous study, we looked at the qualifications for the pastor, and we saw that the pastor's primary responsibility is the spiritual oversight of the people of God. We come now to the deacons, and so Paul says here in verse 8, likewise deacons.

The Greek word is the word diakonos. The word literally means a servant, and so the deacons are also servants. The word is also many times translated minister.

The primary responsibility of the deacon is to serve the body of Christ in a practical way. So in the local church, you have the pastors, and last week you remember I told you that the pastor, the elder, the bishop, the overseer, that's all the same person, just different perspectives on the same person in the same ministry. So in the local church, you have the pastor, the elder, whatever term you want to use, and then you have the deacons.

Now, in the overall church, you have apostles and prophets and evangelists, but when you look at the apostles and prophets and evangelists, it seems like their ministry is sort of a ministry to the entire body of

Christ. You know, you think of Billy Graham, for example, as an evangelist. And of course, next week will be the Billy Graham crusade up in L.A. And, you know, what church does Billy Graham belong to? Well, he belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ, doesn't he? He belongs to every church.

He belongs to every Christian. Hardly anyone would not embrace Billy Graham. He's an evangelist.

And that's the same with those who have a prophetic sort of a ministry, an apostolic sort of a ministry. It goes beyond just the local church, but in the local church, the local congregation, what you have are the pastors and the deacons. The pastors and the ministers, the servants, whatever term you want to you want to use.

But the pastor, the primary task of the pastor is to, as we learned last time, is to shepherd the flock of God, to feed God's people, to tend to God's people and to lead God's people. The deacons are the ones who come alongside and take up the practical aspect of the ministry so that the pastors can be freed up in order to do the spiritual overseeing of the people. The office of the deacon originated in the early days of the church when the apostles realized the need for help so that they could continue to concentrate on taking care of the spiritual needs of the body.

In Acts chapter six, verse two, we read this. Peter is the one who's speaking. He says it is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.

Therefore, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom whom we may appoint over this business. Now, there in Acts chapter six, what we had occurring was there there was a difficulty, there was a struggle that was going on when it came to meeting some of the practical needs of the believers. And there were two sort of culturally distinct groups in the in the church in Jerusalem.

There were the Jews who came from a Hebrew culture that the locals, if you will, they they maintained a strong connection to historical Judaism and all that was connected with it, the language and everything else. But then there were a large number of Jews who had been greatly influenced by the Greek culture and they had come back to Jerusalem for the feast. And evidently, many of them after their conversion, they they decided to stay in Jerusalem.

But you had this this distinction between the cultural groups and the Greek group felt like they were being sort of slighted when it came to being taken care of on a practical level. And so they came to the apostles with the complaint. And that's where Peter responded.

Peter said, you know, it's not the proper thing for us to leave the word of God. And to take up this business of ministering on this practical level, this is something that someone else needs to do. And so this is really where the office of the deacon originated.

Peter said, it's not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. What does that mean? The serving of tables? Well, this practice probably was taken over from the synagogue among the Jews. What they would do is as a community where there would be a synagogue, they would want to try to take care of the less fortunate people in the community.

And so there were a couple of people that were assigned to go throughout the community and throughout during the week they would go throughout the community and they would collect things from the people. They would collect food, they would collect clothing and they would sometimes collect money as well.

They would bring that into the synagogue and on a particular day they would set out these tables and there would be food on the tables, there would be clothing and there would be somebody there occasionally to distribute money as well.

It seems like that practice was taken over into the early experience of the church there in Jerusalem. And so that's what Peter was referring to. It was ministering on this very practical level, supplying food for people who needed food, clothing for people who needed clothing and occasionally supplying money for those who needed money.

So. This is what the deacons originally did. Now, whether or not this exact kind of practice continued to go on in all of the churches, the Gentile churches, we don't know that for sure.

But among the Gentile churches, there were certainly deacons that were appointed as well. When Paul writes to the Philippian church, he addresses himself to the bishops and the deacons of the church. And so there were those that helped out in practical ways.

You know, here at Calvary Chapel, we have the same sort of thing. We have the pastors and that's that the group of men whose primary responsibility is to take care of the spiritual needs of the body here. But then we have a number of people that would also really serve as deacons, although we haven't necessarily given them that title or we don't necessarily, you know, call them by that Deacon Bob or Deacon Joe or, you know, whatever else.

We don't necessarily use the terminology, but for all practical purposes, what they are doing is what the deacons have been doing historically throughout the church. Now, Paul here, like he did with the pastors, he lays out a list of qualifications, and it's interesting that there are some real definite similarities between the qualifications for the deacons as. Qualifications very similar to the pastors, and then there are a couple of things that are distinct and somewhat unique to the deacons.

So let's go ahead and pick up in verse eight and we can read right on through verse 13 and then we'll come back. But let's skip verse 11 because we'll come back to it. So likewise, deacons must be reverent, not double tongued, not given too much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

But let these also first be tested, then let them serve as deacons being found blameless. Verse 12. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well for those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness or confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

So here Paul goes through a list of qualifications right at the top of the list. The deacons are to be reverent. The word is translated in another version, men worthy of respect.

Another version translates it, men of dignity. Remember what Peter said. He said, look out from among you.

First of all, men of good reputation, the same idea. So a deacon is to be a man who is a man of integrity, a man with a good reputation, a man who's worthy of respect. Secondly, the deacon is not to be double tongued.

Now, the term here double tongued, it doesn't refer necessarily to a gossip. But what it actually probably refers to is the need for a deacon to be a straight shooter. If we could use that sort of a modern term, the Greek word actually means straight.

And the idea is that this person, they would they would speak very forthrightly and they wouldn't say one thing to to one person and then turn around and say something different to somebody else. Now, they're going to be in this position of taking care of practical things in the church. They're going to be dealing with people.

They're going to be you know, questioning people. They're going to be, you know, making commitments and things like that. So they need to be men of real integrity in their speech.

You know, the tongue, as James tells us, it is a world of iniquity and it can get us in so much trouble and it does cause quite a bit of trouble around the church these days, always has evidently because there's so much written about it in the scriptures. But it's something that, you know, we we don't always think so seriously about, but it's something that we need to really guard ourselves in regard to. We need to watch the tongue.

David, in one of the psalms, he said, oh, Lord, put a watch on my mouth, put a guard before my lips, and that'd be a good prayer for all of us. In another psalm, he said, let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight. It's so easy to just, you know, be loose in our speech and to say things that can be hurtful to people.

And I myself can think of many times that I've said things and oh, boy. You just think, why in the world did I ever open my mouth? So the deacon is to be a man who has control over the tongue and then like the overseer not to be addicted to wine, not to be greedy for money. We looked at those things in the previous study, but then he says, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

So a deacon, a deacon must have a good grasp upon the faith. A deacon is to be a spiritual man as well. And although that's clearly laid out here in the scripture, historically, quite often men have been appointed to the position of deacon who were not necessarily spiritual men.

But Paul makes that a requirement. And remember again, back in Acts chapter six, they were to be men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. Now, going back to Acts for a moment, when you look there in the sixth chapter.

As as Peter gives that instruction, they go ahead and they choose seven men and and those seven men's names are listed for us. And two of the men, Stephen and Philip, two of those men, their ministries are then highlighted in the next couple of chapters of Acts. In chapter seven, you have the ministry of Stephen.

In chapter eight, you have the ministry of Philip. And what you find is that these men that were appointed to take care of the practical aspects of the ministry were indeed full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. They were men who had a great understanding of the faith.

They were godly men. They were men who were used powerfully by God. Stephen, of course, was the first martyr in the church, and he was martyred because he stood before the Jewish Sanhedrin and he rehearsed their entire history to them and then pointed out to them that they were continuing to follow in the footsteps of their fathers by resisting the Holy Spirit.

And they killed him for it. But the amazing thing is, is as you read through that whole seventh chapter there, you find Stephen knew the scripture so well. He rehearsed all of the Old Testament.

To these men and then coming into the eighth chapter, you find this other man who was appointed to be a deacon, Philip, and you find that he was used in an extraordinary way as an evangelist. He went from Jerusalem over to Samaria and God used him in Samaria to bring a great work of the spirit. And many of the Samaritans were converted under Philip's ministry.

And then Philip was called by God to leave Samaria and he went down into the area of Gaza and it was there that he led the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ. And so you get an example in Stephen and Philip, you get an example of the kind of caliber of men. That the deacons are to be.

Men who have a good grasp on the faith and then it says that they are to be tested first. And I think here what Paul is basically saying is similar to what he said in regard to the pastors. You remember he said that an overseer is not to be a novice, not to be a new believer.

And I think the idea here with the deacon is similar is to be tested first. In other words, you don't just throw anybody into the position. And as I said a few moments ago, historically.

That's what's happened in many churches, they just threw anybody into the position and it's become quite disastrous at times because of that, sometimes the deacons are chosen because they're sharp in business or, you know, in some cases they're chosen because they're, you know, they have some sort of prestige in the community or wealth or something like that. And of course, those are obviously all the wrong reasons. But historically, those kinds of things have occurred many times over, haven't taken into consideration the spiritual caliber of the individual, but just, you know, wow, that guy's wealthy and he's a, you know, a big tither.

And those are some of the, you know, that has happened definitely or, you know, oh boy, well, he's sharp in this area, so we want to get him here in here on this. And but you find that people who might be sharp in the area of business or something like that, unless they're truly spiritual men, they're not going to be beneficial to the ministry. If they are truly spiritual men and sharpened business and all that as well, well, that can be a real blessing.

And we have that here. Some of the guys that serve here in that role of deacons, they're sharp, sharp men. And in their fields, they've done very well.

But beyond all that, they're godly guys. They love the Lord. And you see that that's what you look for, first and foremost.

So there's a test. And I think basically what the picture is here is that before a person is sort of recognized as a deacon, that they would be, in a sense, sort of just doing the work already. And in the years I've been in the ministry, that's generally what I have done when I have been looking for people that I wanted to put in a position in the ministry.

You know, I didn't put an ad in the paper and see if somebody would respond to it. But what I would do is I would look around the congregation and see, well, who's who's already doing this? And you find a number of people, well, they're they're actually doing it already. So what we're going to do now is we're just going to acknowledge that.

In some cases, it might in our current situation, it might have meant a person would go from maybe being a volunteer to coming on, you know, the paid staff could mean a number of other things. But but you look for a person who's already involved in ministry. They're not doing it because of anything other than just love for Jesus.

They just want to serve the Lord and they're there as servants. That's that's the meaning of the word again. And so then the the deacon is to be the husband of one wife, as is the pastor.

And the deacon is to have his children in his house under control. And again, we looked at that previously, so we won't go any further into it. But then it says that those who have served well as deacons, they obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness or confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

So those who are faithful servants within the body of Christ, they gain a good standing. And, you know, that's true. There are people that you just look at and they're they're servants of the Lord in the fellowship.

And and you look at them and you respect them. You admire them. You look up to them.

You think, man, that's a that's a great guy right there. That's a godly man. That's somebody that I'd like to pray with.

That's somebody that I want to seek counsel or advice that from. That's that's what happens just on a very practical level. That's what happens when somebody serves faithfully in this role.

But then it says and they also gain great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. The word boldness can be translated confidence or assurance. And I think that confidence or assurance is probably a little bit of a better word to communicate what's actually being stated here.

Boldness makes me think of somebody serves as a deacon and then they go out boldly to minister the gospel. And, you know, I think that's a great thing, too, but I don't necessarily think that that's what is being spoken of here exactly. I think the idea is more that the person who faithfully serves the Lord, as a result of that, it's inevitable you develop a greater confidence in your walk and your relationship with the Lord.

You know, there are a lot of people who are very unstable in their walk there, they lack any real confidence or assurance. Sometimes they go through much of their Christian life, wondering if they're even ultimately going to make it to heaven. A lot of instability.

But, you know, when somebody takes on a task of ministry and and commits themselves to it, it begins to faithfully do it. It has a way of just solidifying them in their walk and relationship with the Lord, sometimes in even a greater way. And the end result of that is you you just grow in your confidence in your relationship with God.

And I think that's what Paul is actually referring to here. Those men who are serving well, who are faithful, their their confidence in their relationship with the Lord increases through that faithful service. And so these are the qualifications that Paul gives for the deacon.

And in just a minute, we're going to come back and we're going to kind of connect both the pastors and the deacons together and talk a little bit about what it might look like when a person is being called into one or the other of those positions. But verse 11, it says, likewise, that was great. But likewise, or likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.

Now, the reason why I came back to verse 11 is because it is. There's two possibilities with verse 11. It is possible that as it reads right here, likewise, their wives is actually what it says.

But it's also possible that this isn't so much a reference to the wives of the deacons, but it's actually a reference to the women serving in the position of a deaconess. And the interesting thing is the word for wife and the word for woman in the Greek, it's the same word. So the context just sort of you have to determine by the context whether it's wife or woman.

The literal rendering here is not likewise their wives. The literal rendering is women likewise. So some believe that what Paul is doing right here is he is breaking for a moment to address the female.

The females who are serving in that same kind of a capacity, and we talked to a few weeks back when we were looking at the role of women in the church, we we mentioned a woman named Phoebe. Her name comes up in Acts chapter or excuse me, Romans chapter 16. And she's referred to as the the deaconess of the church of Centuria.

And we talked about the word meaning servant or minister. And so it could very well be that in the early church, they recognize certain women that would serve in this practical role. And.

I think that there's a good reason to perhaps believe that that is what Paul is talking about. You know, there are certain things that that men are probably shouldn't do. You know, quite frankly, one of the great problems.

In the churches have been problems related to infidelity, sexual immorality, things of that nature, and quite often it's happened because men have been getting involved in women's lives and counseling them and ministering to them and things like that. And one thing leads to another. And, you know, sometimes it ends up in a in a horrific situation that could probably.

Be avoided greatly. If we would. Realize that women.

Ought to be the ones primarily to minister to women on a personal level. And that's what happened in the early church. The ladies would minister to the other ladies.

And a bit later on after the apostolic period, we know from some of the some of the literature of the day that there were women who were responsible for baptizing other women and things like that. Now, I don't know if we have to go to that extreme, but they did do that. This is after the apostolic period.

There's, of course, John the Baptist baptized the apostles baptized. There's never any reference to any women that were helping them in the baptism. So that might have gone, you know, a bit overboard.

But I do think that there is a place where women ministering to women is much more appropriate. And I'll just be real honest with you guys. I've had times when I'm counseling with women and they're saying stuff to me that you know what? I don't want you to say that to me.

I don't really want to hear that. It's inappropriate. It's not right for me to listen to that kind of thing.

It's just you know, it's just weird. It's awkward. And, you know, so, you know, and it's not sometimes that happens with husbands and wives as well.

You know, sometimes people want to get very explicit and detailed into their personal lives and say, you know, I can I think I can figure it out on my own. You know, I don't really need you to give me any, you know, my my kids, they anything like that that goes on, they say too much information. That's yeah, I agree.

That's too much information. I don't need that much. But.

The point is simply. That women. I think from verse 11, we can again build a case that women serve in these kinds of capacities.

And if you think about the serving tables that we mentioned earlier, as as the ladies would come, of course, there would have been women there to help them with the distribution of food, with the distribution of clothing and things like that, as well as men involved in it. So anyway, just another area of ministry for the ladies to be involved in. And we did talk extensively about that a few weeks back, and so I won't go any further with it.

But as we look at this third chapter up through these first 13 verses. Paul is giving instruction, as we've seen, he's giving instruction regarding the pastors, regarding the deacons. And he's talking about.

The leadership of the church. The whole of this epistle has to do with the life of the church. Look at verse 14, these things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly, but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God.

So for Paul, the apostle and for the other apostles as well, and for Jesus, for that matter, remember, Jesus is the one who said. Go into the world and make disciples of all nations. Jesus is the one who brought the church into existence.

You see, the church is God's means of reaching the world. The church is the vehicle that God uses to reach the world. And the biggest mistake Christians have made historically.

When it comes to seeking to fulfill the Great Commission is to go out and evangelize, but not establish churches. You see, when you go out and you just evangelize, but you don't establish a church, you do not set up the God appointed means through which people are to be disciplined and to grow in the faith. So what did the apostles do? They went out and they didn't simply go out evangelizing.

They didn't simply go out handing out tracts or doing different kinds of outreach to get people to accept Jesus. They went into communities and they planted churches. They led people to Christ and then they established fellowships so those people could be brought up in the faith.

That's what it's all about. That's what we are to be doing today. And God calls people.

Into the ministry, no one. Takes the ministry upon themselves, at least no one ought to. A person who goes into the ministry ought to go into the ministry because they are being called by God into it.

Now, as I as I mentioned in the previous study, and I want to go back to that, we were talking about, you know, people being called, people being sent out. We were talking about churches being planted. And I said in the last study that, you know, some of you might listen and think, well, you know, who am I and how why would God want to use me or, you know, how could it be possible that I might even be able to do something? I'm not a pastor.

I'm not like Pastor Chuck or I'm not like Pastor John or I'm not like that. And remember, I said, you know, there was a point where those people that we look to admire, respect, learn from, there was a point where they were right where you are. They were there learning.

And growing. And probably in some ways not even imagining, I know for sure some were not even imagining that God could or would do anything in and through their lives. But guess what happened? God began to stir their hearts.

God put a call upon their lives and through a process of time and through different circumstances, they became convinced that the Lord wanted them to go into pastoral ministry or God wanted them to serve in the capacity of a deacon or something like that. And that's how. The almost fifteen hundred Calvary chapels worldwide, that's how they've pretty much happened.

People sitting in the church, getting fed the word, being stirred up and thinking, man, I want to do something for the Lord. When I was sitting here, however long ago it was a long time ago and listening to Pastor Chuck. I just thought, you know, I want to do that.

I want to serve the Lord. And just sensing that God was calling me to do that very thing. Now, who was I? I was just.

Just me. Was it anybody? I'm still not, but. You know, that's the thing, I want you guys to grab hold of this and to realize this, that, you know, God just takes ordinary people.

That's the story of the work of God throughout all of history. Now we know about Abraham. We know about Isaac and Jacob and Moses.

David, we know all these people. How do we know these people? We know them simply because God chose them. He exalted them.

He used them. And that was written down for us. And and it goes all the way right down to this very day.

It's just simply because of what God does. And so I want to just take a few moments and I want to address the subject of the call to the ministry, because I believe that in this church. There are people that are called people that God wants to raise up and send out as pastors, as deacons, as deaconesses, as just helpers in the ministry.

You know, we are a fellowship of, you know, to some extent, I think, of people who are more well taught. Then perhaps most people in the church today. But that teaching, that information that's been imparted to us is not simply so we can just sit here year after year after year and feed on this stuff.

You know, there's a point where you've got to get out and you've got to begin to pass on to others the things that God has shared with you. So there is a call to the ministry, and this is the question I want to address. How do you know whether or not God might be calling you? What are some of the signs? What are some of the indicators? What are some of the things that you can sort of look to to see whether or not maybe God is calling you? I have found this many, many times.

People who are actually being called generally speaking, initially they don't they don't believe it. They can't imagine it. No, it can't really be happening.

And I've talked to people who have, you know, they'll tell me about what's going on in their life and their experiences and things. And I say, you know, I think the Lord's calling you. So, oh, no, that's not me.

No way God can. But, you know, if you have those kinds of things stirring in you, if you have desires, if you have some vision developing and, you know, there's a strong possibility that that is something God's doing in you. And so let's look at seven things that.

Can indicate to us. That God is placing a call upon our lives, and I'm speaking more specifically about the role of the pastor, the role of the deacon. And let me say this when when churches have been planted in other parts of the country or other parts of the world, for that matter.

And this is what happened back in in the New Testament period as well. Paul traveled around with a team of people and as they would establish churches in areas, Paul would leave parts of his team there to develop the the disciples. And then once a team was sort of raised up to replace them, they would then move on, rejoin the apostle, and then they would go about their business.

God often sends people out in teams. And so it might not be that you're actually being called to be a pastor, but God might be calling you to go out and be part of a team that's going to go into a community and establish a church. Many of you know Chris Warner and Chris filled in for me many times when I was traveling and Chris has gone out to the Washington, D.C. area.

And we planted a church out there a few years ago with a good friend, Jeff Quazzo, who since has gone back to the UK. And and so Chris is out there. Chris has been called out there to pastor the church.

But there are some others that have gone out with him and they're part of the team they're serving alongside of Chris. They're not pastoring, but in a sense, they're kind of serving as deacons. They have jobs in the community.

A couple from here went out there, both teachers. He went back. He got a job teaching in one of the local schools.

She got a job working for an adoption agency. Another couple gifted in music and worship leading. He works at a print shop and I'm not sure where she works, but they're a vital part of that team that's establishing this church.

And so I wanted to share that with you because. I want you to understand that it's not just being called to be a pastor, God will call us to to go out and be part of what he's doing, to come alongside and make a contribution and support and maybe do children's ministry or something like that, but maybe move to a place, get a job in the area. But you're really there, not so much for that job.

You're really there for that work that God's establishing. So seven things. That we can look to that can indicate to us that God might be calling us.

Number one, for those who are being called, there is an intense. All absorbing desire for the work. Here's what happens when somebody is being called, especially into pastoral ministry, this the desire for it sort of just overwhelms their life.

It just kind of takes over everything else. You might have previously been totally content doing what you're doing. Maybe you went to college, maybe you went there because you wanted to do a specific kind of a

job or a business or whatever, and you've done all of that, you've gotten into it.

But now you're finding that although you initially loved it and maybe spent years and years and enjoying doing that, it just it's not where your heart is anymore. And you find that more and more you're you're wishing and desiring that you could be freed up so you could be more involved in ministry. That is one of the first things that to me are strong indicators that God might be doing something like that.

Secondly, there would be an understanding of the scriptures and a desire to share them. There's there's a God given understanding that comes. You know, not everybody has the same kind of insight into the scriptures that those who are gifted by God to teach do.

And you guys know that. I mean, sometimes people say this quite often. You know, they say, you know, I read that same passage.

I didn't get any of that stuff out of there. Well, don't feel bad about that. If you did, then we wouldn't have anything to do.

And that's that's that's where we come in. But there's the there's the gifts that God gives. He gives certain people to teach.

So it's not the kind of thing that just anybody and everybody can do. So there's an understanding of the scriptures and then there's a passion, a desire to communicate them with others. And as I said, and thirdly, but it's connected to that there is this God given ability.

That comes upon a person and they are able to communicate the truth of God in a way that people can lay hold of it, they can grasp it, they can they can make it part of their lives and they can experience growth and maturity in the faith. So an all intense and intense, all absorbing desire for the work and understanding the scriptures and a desire to share them, a God given ability to teach a love for souls. You know, maybe God's just poured out his love in your heart.

You just love people. You want to you want to see them saved. That's the Lord.

We don't naturally have that kind of love in us. But when God's calling a person, he gives us a passion and a concern for other people and a desire to see them come to know Christ or a desire to see them built up in the faith. There also is.

As I alluded to earlier, but I want to elaborate on it just a bit more, there also is, along with all of it, a sense of inadequacy. When God's calling you, you know, you're thinking, I, I don't think so. I, I doubt it.

It's just, you know, because you're looking at yourself and you're, you're, you're just realizing that, man, this is this is so far beyond me. The person who's like that is quite often a person who God really is calling the person who's the opposite of that. Of course, God's calling me.

How could he not? I mean, you know, what is he? You know, he's not very smart if he's not calling me because I'm such a great guy. I would do a great job for him. And some people do think like that.

But those are the people who aren't being called, the ones who are are there. They're not looking at it like that at all. And those who are being called are going to be living a holy life.

They're going to have a genuine experience with Christ in their own life. That's that's given them victory. And that's, you know, caused them to be an example, really, in their lifestyle.

And then finally, when God is calling, there will be others that will bear witness to the call. There will be others that will say, you know, I, I sense that God's doing something in your life. Or you might come and share what you're feeling and the things that are stirring in you.

And they'll say, you know what? I've I've sensed that with you. I've seen that I've seen how God's hand is upon you. And like I was saying earlier, with the with the deacons that Paul mentioned here.

Those who are being called. Generally, are also already just sort of involved, you can't just sit around and do nothing, you got to get involved. And so you've you've maybe got involved in children's ministry, maybe you've just been helping out ushering, maybe you're joined the men's prayer group or the ladies prayer fellowship or but, you know, something's going on already.

So all of these things. These things can all be indicators. And I'll tell you what, if you've got four out of the seven, I would say you're being called and.

We need we need. To see, as I said in the previous study, we need to see more believers, more men and women rise up and take the call and get the message out. You know, it's funny.

Remember last week I was saying, you know, well, a good place to start and talking about the blue states, the blue counties. I got an email this week from a pastor and he's struggling. It's in a rough area.

He's wanting to leave. And he says to me, he says, you know, I'm in one of those blue counties and I want to come back out to another place. And so I wrote him back and I said, well, if you heard my message last week, you're going to know this.

You're not going to find any sympathy with me. You're not going to find any sympathy with me wanting to leave a blue county and come back to a red one, because that's not what we need. We need to get into those places where the devil has just taken control of people's lives.

And you know what it is? It I'm telling you, it's because a lot of it is simply because the church has stopped doing what the church is supposed to do. I don't know if you realize this or not, but most churches and I'm not exaggerating, most churches do not do what. The Bible presents as the picture of what the church is supposed to be doing.

And we wonder why sin is proliferating in our society. We wonder why the inner cities are taken over by sin and all that is because the church stopped doing what it was supposed to do. The church doesn't preach the gospel, the church doesn't teach the Bible.

And what's the solution? The solution is the church needs to get back in there and do it. Now, once a church or a denomination turns away from the the essentials of the faith, decides to go in a different direction, it's highly unlikely that they're ever going to reverse it. It's highly unlikely that they're ever going to change their direction.

Once you start going down the road to liberalism or whatever else you go down the road to, it's highly unlikely that you'll ever come back. So in other words, we can't sit around and wait for those churches that were once maybe 60, 100 years ago doing something in that community to start doing something fresh

and new. They're never going to do it.

We've got to go back and start all over again. And I believe that that is what God has raised up Calvary Chapel to do, and that's what's been happening. And I believe that God wants it to happen more and more and more.

And this is kind of radical, I guess, but, you know, in my mind, I think, well, we ought to have a Calvary Chapel in every city in the world. Why not? I mean, why not? Maybe it's beyond the realm of possibility, but hey, it's a good goal to shoot for. But how does it happen? It happens because God puts his call upon the lives of men and women.

And he leads us out into his service and he uses us to bring his gospel to people and to build them up in the faith. And then their lives touch lives and those lives touch other lives. And it's just a wonderful chain reaction.

What God sent us to the UK back in 96, there were five churches, Calvary Chapel affiliated churches in the country. Today, there's almost 30. And it's just that sort of thing.

You know, you go and you touch people's lives and they get excited about God and they want to move out and do something. And it just starts happening like that. And so I want to close tonight, as we've looked at the pastors and the deacons, I don't want it to just be simply information for us to know what this is supposed to look like.

But I want us to be able to look at it and say, Lord, where do I fit into the picture? What are you doing with me? Maybe God wants to give you new direction in life. Maybe he wants to call you out. Maybe he wants to send you somewhere.

Maybe he wants you to get plugged in right here. Maybe you've just been sort of spectating and the Lord is wanting you to move into active service to him. I trust that he will direct you accordingly.

Let's pray. Lord, we do thank you that the work you began. Two thousand years ago is a work that's carrying on today.

And Lord, we thank you that we are part of that work. And Lord, I thank you that you're still calling men. You're still calling women into ministry today.

And Lord, that there's a whole great big world out there. That we can get out to. And get your word out to.

And so, Lord, whatever it is, if it's to pack up and head out, if it's to just plug in and get involved right here, if it's to take the gifts that we might have never thought to use for your glory. Whatever it is, Lord, we just want to we want to serve you. And so, Lord, I pray that you would touch hearts and speak into lives.

Lord, that you would send forth labors into your harvest, that you would raise up pastors and deacons to shepherd your flock in these days. We pray in Jesus name, amen.

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