

Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church
Deacon Policies and Procedures
(as revised January 13, 2008)

General

The Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church (STBC) Bylaws, Article II, Section 1, defines the Deacons as officers of the church and Section 3 defines their task.

These procedures apply to the elected active body of deacons during their term of office. The term deacon in the procedures shall apply only to the active membership.

Deacons shall be elected by the church to serve for an indefinite term. For reasons of personal illness, illness within the family or any other providential hindrance, a deacon may be transferred from the active deacon body and placed on the Reserve Deacon list with a written request to the Chairman of Deacons. Reserve deacons participate in the deacon prayer groups, widow/widower ministry and homebound ministry but not in regular Sunday outreach and hospital visitation. A reserve deacon may also request transfer back to the active deacon body. This request shall be in writing to the Chairman of Deacons and approved by the Deacon Selection Committee and the Deacon Body. As part of the Deacon Selection Committee's duties, reserve deacons shall be screened at least annually for possible transfer back to the active Deacon Body.

Deacons shall not propose, speak for, support or vote for an alternative or opposing position to that supported by the majority of the deacon body voting in a regular or special meeting of said body.

The Deacons shall meet at least bi- monthly:

On the second Sunday of each odd numbered month.
Any other time on call by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.

The agenda for meetings shall usually include:

- Opening prayer.
- Reading of the minutes of the previous meeting
- Requests for prayer for sick, bereaved and people in need.
- Discussions led by the Pastor and others of the church staff.
- Reports of the Widow/Widower and Homebound Ministry activities.
- Other reports and actions as requested by the Chairman.
- Closing prayer.

The Deacons shall be supported in their duties by the church staff and other employees of the church.

Membership

A deacon shall be a member of this church.

A deacon may resign by giving written notice of his resignation to the Chairman. The Chairman shall notify the church of such resignation.

A deacon may be removed due to any of the following:

- Lack of attention to his duties as a deacon
- Consistent conduct unbecoming to a deacon as listed in the qualifications found in Acts 6 and I Timothy 3
- Reasons of health

Officers

The officers of the deacons shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary. These officers shall be elected by the deacons at the September meeting.

Duties of Officers:

Chairman

- Preside over deacons meetings
- Consult and coordinate with the Pastor for:
 - Ordination time of new deacons
 - Scheduling of quarterly conference between the Pastor and Deacon Officers
 - Other items as necessary
- Appoint committees
- Appoint Group Leaders
- Present recommendations of the Deacon Body to the church
- Normal responsibilities of a deacon as listed under "Deacon Ministries Duties"

Vice-Chairman

- Preside over deacons meetings in the absence of the chairman
- Responsible for overall supervision of the widow/widower and homebound ministries and other ministries, including a frequent report of the total number of family member contacts made by the deacons
- Normal responsibilities of a deacon as listed under "Deacon Ministries Duties"

Secretary

- Record the following at deacons meetings:
 - Minutes of the meeting
 - Deacon attendance
 - All recommendations to be presented to the church
 - All changes to minutes of prior meetings as a part of the current meeting's minute
- Preside over deacons meetings in the absence of other officers
- Enlist deacons for service at the Lord's Supper
- Prepare deacons meeting attendance records. Present these records at the quarterly conference between the Pastor and the Deacon Officers.
- Maintain the policies and procedures on a current basis
- Normal responsibilities of a deacon as listed under "Deacon Ministries Duties"

Committees

The chairman shall appoint the following standing committees:

- Deacon Selection (Nominating) Committee
- Banquet Committee
- Ministries Education Committee

The chairman may appoint other committees as he deems appropriate

Committee structure

Each standing committee shall have no less than five (5) members and shall be appointed for a one (1) year term ending the first Sunday in October
Other committees shall have a term ending in August
A deacon is eligible to succeed himself on any committee
Each committee shall report on their activities at least annually
Minutes of each committee meeting shall be maintained in a binder that shall be passed on to the succeeding committee chairman. Copies of the minutes shall be maintained in the church office.

Duties of the Deacon Selection (Nominating) Committee

Prepare a list of prospects who have been members of this church for at least one (1) year who are not currently serving as a deacon. The list shall make no reference to a previous ordination as a deacon. The list shall be made available to the church membership by the third Sunday in February to recommend men to be considered for the office of deacon. The lists, marked by the church membership, shall be returned to the church no later than the first Sunday in March.

The committee shall compile a list of candidates for submission to the deacon body at the March meeting for additions to the list or removal (with cause) from the list.

The committee shall screen the revised list of candidates to be presented to the church for election based on the following selection criteria:

Initial contact shall be by telephone or visit to ask if the man would be willing to serve if elected
Follow up contact to those willing to serve shall be by questionnaire (See sample in Appendix

A). A copy of deacon policies and procedures shall be given to the candidate.

Final contact, after receipt of the completed questionnaire, will be an interview by at least three (3) members of the committee.

Screening shall consist of determining if the candidate meets the qualifications defined in the scriptures as interpreted by this church, the deacons, the pastor and the committee members. All decisions should be made after prayerful discussion and with the assumption of salvation by grace.

Screening may also include a review of church records about the candidate. Such review will be conducted with the assistance of the staff. All information derived shall be confidential and only for the purpose of screening.

Present the nominee list to the church no later than the third Sunday in July by having biographical information on each nominee posted in a prominent place in the church and making ballots, which must be signed to be valid, available to membership.

The committee will count ballots no later than the first Sunday in August.

All nominees on the list shall be notified as to the outcome of the balloting.

This committee shall also present nominations for the officers of the deacons at the September meeting.

No more than two (2) candidates shall be presented for each office

Nominations from the floor shall have the prior consent of the nominee

The vote shall be taken by show of hands. The candidates shall be excused prior to the voting.

Duties of the Banquet Committee

Plan the annual deacons banquet and any other social event of the deacons

Periodically report to the deacon body, at regular meetings, progress on plans for events

Promote the banquet and other activities

Duties of the Ministries Education Committee

Evaluate needs, seek reference materials on subjects, develop training outlines and implement instructions to deacons and others to educate them in techniques of ministering to those in need

With the assistance and support of the pastor, the other staff, the deacon officers, the deacons and church members, continue a program of education and training, especially for deacons. The program should be made available to any church member, deacon prospect, yokefellow, etc

Duties of other committees shall be defined by the Deacon Chairman at the time the committees are Appointed

Organization of Deacons

The chairman shall organize the deacons into groups. Each group shall have a leader appointed by the chairman.

Duties of Group Leader

Supervise a group of deacons as follows:

Obtain a schedule of deacon ministries and assignments for the coming year. This commitment will require active involvement during at least four (4) non-consecutive weeks during the year.

Telephone or visit with deacons assigned to his group during each week that his group has assignments (voice contact).

Remind each deacon of his assignment

Give advice on how to conduct the assignment if requested

If a deacon has a scheduling conflict, work with him and other deacons in your group to substitute and reschedule. The group leader is responsible for insuring that the assignment will be manned.

Normal responsibilities of a deacon as listed under "Deacon Ministries Duties"

Deacon Ministries Duties

Family Care Ministry

(PURPOSE: Assist the pastor and staff in ministering to the members of the church; to make certain that every member and family in our church experiences the love and care of the whole congregation)

Widow/Widower and Homebound Ministries

Each deacon shall be assigned the responsibility of ministering to an appropriate number of widow/widower or homebound members. That is, they shall have regular contact with each and render assistance in fellowship and spiritual needs. Where there is a need that requires further assistance, the deacon shall do his best to resolve the need.

Lord's Supper

(PURPOSE: To administer this ordinance as a part of a worship experience to meet the needs of the church body)

Be available to serve when requested. (Scheduled and listed on the Annual Assignment Sheet)
Be available at any training sessions conducted prior to the service.

Sunday Outreach Visitation

(PURPOSE: To indicate immediate, personal concern and to ascertain further ministry and follow-up needs for all who visit our church)

The group leader of the visitation team should arrange to pick up the cards for the visitation team from the greeting counter in the foyer.

The visitation team can divide the cards prior to leaving the church and make their visits from home.

Have prayer together.

Visit in the homes. Call first to be sure a visit is acceptable. Use the church brochure and share your testimony about Christ and the church.

Have a sincere desire to learn as much as possible about the people you are visiting.

Record the results of the visit on the back of the assignment card/slip.

If "Not at Home", leave a brochure.

All cards should be returned to the church office as soon as possible.
Please make notes on the cards indicating information about your visit. This is very helpful to the staff in determining further assignments.

Weekly Church Wide Visitation

(PURPOSE: To follow up on all visitors to our church and absentee members)

Each deacon will be assigned (at least once each quarter) to participate in the weekly church wide visitation.

(NOTE: You are encouraged to participate every week)

Meet others going visiting in the appointed place at the appointed time. Have prayer to prepare your way.

Pick cards of people to visit.

Locate homes and visit, being sensitive to all needs and ready to share your testimony.

Visitation is normally over within an hour to an hour and a half.

Return cards to the church indicating results on the back of each card.

If you cannot attend the weekly church wide visitation, visit some other time during the week. Contact the church office for prospects.

Hospital Visitation

(PURPOSE: To show concern for those who are physically ill)

Service for this responsibility runs from Sunday through Saturday.

Hospital list is prepared by the church office.

The group leader is to call the other group members and divide the list among them. This includes checking on those on the "At Home" list and with the relatives of those on the "Special Prayer" list.

Those on the team finding out information should report back to the Pastor's secretary regarding those "At Home" and "Out of Town". This will help keep the information up-to-date and help the Pastor and staff in making contact when follow-up is necessary.

The list changes from day to day. It is suggested the hospital be called to verify the patient is still there. The deacon may also call the church for information.

The hospital visit:

Prepare by praying and asking for God's wisdom and for Him to minister through you.
Read through the sheet, " Suggestions Concerning Hospital Visitation ." (Appendix B)
Visit, being sensitive to needs.
Let the church staff know if there are any special needs.

Prayer Ministry

(Deacons may be requested to provide leadership in prayer.)

(Purpose: To focus, through a selected deacon, on the presence of God with a desire to worship, praise and thank Him)

Worship Services:

Morning invocation
Morning offertory
Evening offertory

Prayer Room—Voluntary participation is encouraged.

Deacon Training Program

Purpose of Deacon Training Program

To prepare eligible unordained men to better serve our Lord as deacons of **STBC**
To create a closer bond of love between deacons through working together
To allow future deacons to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of our mature deacons

Method of Selection

The Deacon Selection Committee will expend every possible effort to provide a minimum of three and a maximum of nine unordained men to serve in the Deacon Training Program each year. The trainee will be eligible to serve as an active deacon after successfully completing the Deacon Training Program.

Service

Eligible, unordained men selected will be required to serve a minimum of one year in the Deacon Training Program before being ordained to serve as an active deacon.

The trainee will participate in:

The family care ministry
Sunday outreach visitation
Weekly church wide visitation
Hospital visitation
Prayer ministry
Assist in serving the Lord's Supper
Attend monthly deacons meetings and any other meeting called by the chairman or vice-Chairman

The trainee will not be eligible to vote on business matters.

Trainees will serve with a minimum of two deacon trainers per year.

Trainees will be required to read "The Ministry of the Deacon" by Howard B. Foshee, Convention Press, 1968, and other assigned material.

Duties of Deacon Officers and Deacon Trainers

The deacon officers will be responsible for assigning an active deacon to work with the trainee.

The deacon officers and trainers should counsel with the trainee periodically to encourage and uplift him for future service.

The deacon trainer will submit a quarterly form to the deacon officers evaluating the progress of the trainee.

Deacon Emeritus Program

Purpose of Deacon Emeritus Program:

To honor those deacons who have served faithfully as active deacons of **STBC** but have reached their GOLDEN YEARS and are unable to fulfill all duties of an Active deacon

To allow these deacons to continue to serve our Lord to the full extent of their abilities

To allow **STBC** and the deacon council to benefit from the counsel, wisdom and experience of these deacons

Method of Selection

Any member of the deacon council may recommend candidate(s) for the Deacon Emeritus Program to the deacon officers or the Deacon Selection Committee.

The deacon officers or the Deacon Selection Committee shall present the candidate(s) to the deacon council for approval.

After approval by the council, the Deacon Selection Committee shall present the candidate(s) to the church for approval at the same time they present candidates to serve as active deacons for that year.

Service

Only those ordained deacons that have faithfully served as active deacons of STBC shall be considered as candidates for Deacon Emeritus status.

Deacons Emeritus shall be members of the deacon council in an advisory position to participate in monthly deacons meetings and all other ministries of the active deacon.

Once selected, the deacon emeritus will be a lifetime member of the deacon council.

The deacon emeritus will not be assigned any duties as an active deacon.

Recognition

The deacons emeritus should be recognized in an appropriate Sunday morning service after their selection and church approval.

Deacons as peacemakers and ministers of reconciliation

This ministry requires a cool head. You will facilitate the solution of problems instead of complicating them by accepting the promise of God's word for wisdom, patience and love as you approach hurting people in intense situations.

Don't panic. Much of what we can do in terms of helping people feel better about hurt feelings, misunderstandings, etc. will be enhanced as we communicate a sense of stability and optimism.

You can perform a real service by helping people identify the real issues about which they are concerned.

Use discretion. After real issues have been identified, problems are minimized as we keep in the narrowest possible circle discussions related to the problem(s).

Maintain your objectivity.

Be mediator and negotiator wherever possible with understanding, patience and forgiveness.

As much as possible, understand the total circumstances of people with whom you are dealing.

Use pertinent information available from the church staff or other reliable sources in overcoming misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication. Most church policies have been born out of experience and are applied objectively. Often just a bit of interpretation helps people to understand the dimensions of the program of STBC and helps them to appreciate the need for certain operating procedures.

Remember, "**BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS.**"

Amendments

The deacon policies and procedures may be amended by addition, change or deletion.

The proposed amendment must be presented at a regular meeting for discussion. No vote shall be taken at that time.

The proposed amendment shall be presented a second time at a regular meeting for discussion. After the discussion, a vote shall be taken.

The majority of the deacons present and voting shall determine the acceptance or rejection of the amendment.

APPENDIX A
Deacon Qualification Form

Your name has been submitted as a nominee for deacon selection at Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church. If you would be interested in pursuing this course, leadership and commitment to the Lord and His people, fill out this form and return to the church office by July 10.

Name _____

Address _____

Age _____ Occupation _____

Marital Status: Married _____ Single, never married _____ Divorced _____ Widowed _____

How long have you been a Christian? _____

Please check the services you attend regularly:

Morning Worship _____

Evening Worship _____

Midweek Worship _____

Sunday School _____

Discipleship Training _____

Bible Studies _____

Please list any offices and committee memberships you now hold in the church:

Have you ever served as a deacon in the past? _____ If so, where? _____

Doctoral Questions

Please answer the following questions the best you can concerning the following vital areas of Christian Service.

1. Give the testimony of your conversion experience (use back of form).
2. What do you believe about the Bible? Its inspiration? Its authority?

3. Briefly, what do you believe about:

a. God the Father _____

b. Jesus Christ _____

c. The Holy Spirit _____

d. The church, its purpose, its mission? _____

- e. The virgin birth of Christ and the bodily resurrection of Christ? _____

- f. The security of the believer? _____

- g. The Lord's Supper? _____

- h. Baptism? _____

4. Who are the two "Biblical" officers of the church? _____
5. What are the church's two ordinances? _____
6. Who can be a member of the church? _____
7. Do you believe that the deacon body is primarily: (a) a governing body of the church or (b) a ministering body?

8. What will be your relationship to your pastor? _____

9. Do you consider your church to be more important than any human organization, such as clubs, unions, lodges, schools, etc.? _____
10. Will you give priority to your church in your activities? _____
11. Do you practice new testament stewardship and support your church with your tithe?

12. Will you take the life of this church as a real burden and personal responsibility to your own life?

13. How will you feel and what will be your reaction if the church turns down a proposal the deacons have recommended? _____

14. If you move to another place, will you join the fellowship of another Baptist Church there and serve as a deacon if asked? _____
15. Will you guard the fellowship in a spirit of meekness? _____

Personal Life

1. Have you totally committed your life to Christ? _____
2. Have you in the past and will you in the future give yourself to personal soul-winning or training?

3. Do you drink or sell alcoholic beverages? _____
4. Do you use tobacco? _____
5. Do you use abusive or vulgar language? _____
6. Can you and do you control your temper? _____
7. Is there agreement on the things of the Lord and general harmony in your home? _____
8. If you ever find that you cannot fulfill the requirements of a deacon, would you ask that church to rescind your ordination? _____

If elected and ordained, would you serve in a cooperative spirit with the pastor and other deacons and, under the leadership of the Holy Spirit, fulfill the office of deacon to the best of your ability? _____

Date _____ Your signature _____

Question for wives

If your husband is elected and ordained as a deacon, will you cooperate and support him in every way, uphold the total program of the church and dedicate yourself to fulfilling the requirements of a deacon's wife as stated in I Timothy 3:11? _____

Date _____ Wife's signature _____

Scriptural References for Study of Qualifications

Acts 6: 1-7
I Timothy 3: 1-13
Titus 1: 6-9

APPENDIX B

Suggestions concerning hospital visitation

1. Enter with care. You may well avoid embarrassing circumstances for yourself and the patient by knocking and listening at the door before you enter the hospital room. Respect signs that limit visitation privileges for the patient. Check with the desk if there is a question about the propriety of your visiting.
2. Identify yourself. At the appropriate point, be sure the patient understands who you are and that your visit is in the context of your ministry as a deacon. If the patient is asleep, you should leave a card with perhaps a note to indicate a personal word of concern.
3. Let the patient talk. He/she may need to vent some anger, worry, fear or other emotional responses to the circumstances. You are ministering to him/her by letting him/her have a listening, uncritical ear.
4. Listen to criticism but be careful about responding to it. Be especially careful if the patient is critical of his/her doctor. You may want to suggest that he/she explicitly discuss questionable areas with the doctor. Hospital staff or services should be complimented whenever that is possible.
5. Be careful with questions about the patient's illness. Let him/her decide how much he/she wants to tell you about what the problem is and what is being done about it. You may use oblique questions such as "Are you pleased with your progress?" to indicate you are interested in the problem with which he/she is dealing.
6. Avoid morbid illustrations of what has happened to people who have the same disease or condition.
7. Avoid unrealistic promises. Your ministry may be to help the patient come to grips with the inevitable.
8. Be careful about making specific suggestions concerning treatment or remedies or comparing what is being done in this case with the other people whose experiences you have shared.
9. Watch the length of your visit. You do not want to appear hurried nor do you want to over-stay the length of your welcome.
10. Should you pray in every hospital room? If the patient feels comfortable with this idea or requests that this be done.
11. Help the church staff to know of special needs. Notify the church if you discover a need or a problem they could minister to.
12. Leave with a word of encouragement, affirmation and hope. You are a minister in behalf of the Great Physician. Accept that role with confidence and a sense of fulfillment as you understand that you are helping to contribute to the healing process.

APPENDIX C

Dos and Don'ts

1. **DO** educate yourself. Do all you can to know about your assigned families and how to meet their specific and general needs.
 2. **DO** make a commitment to yourself and to the Lord to consistently perform the Family Care Program responsibilities. They are **HIGH PRIORITY**. No one else has your specific responsibilities.
 3. **DO** depend totally on the Lord. This must be a faith work. Always pray before making a visit or even a phone call.
 4. **DO** get to know your families----the more, the better. Become a friend of the family.
 5. **DO** think continually about ways to possibly reach the families for active fellowship within the church.
 6. **DO** be able to relate something God has done recently in your life. (Practice)
 7. **DO** be on the alert for crisis situations.
 8. **DO** become aware of church ministries and programs available for the family you are trying to reach. (RA, GA, Graded Choirs, Youth Ministry, College Ministry, etc.)
 9. **DO** talk about the church—positively.
 10. **DO** expect results, even though some may be unseen.
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1. **DON'T** assume you know all you need to know to minister to people.
 2. **DON'T** be haphazard. Have a plan.
 3. **DON'T** trust in yourself. "The Lord is the strength of my (your) life." (Psalm 27:1)
 4. **DON'T** betray one's confidence.
 5. **DON'T** push the church but share as naturally as you would share about your family.
 6. **DON'T** live on past years' blessings.
 7. **DON'T** think your ministry is useless. Just your caring enough to try to visit means more than you would realize even if there are no problems, sickness, etc.
 8. **DON'T** assume the family will know all the church activities that would help their family.
 9. **DON'T** have a conversation about church problems or your personal disagreements with its programs, etc. **DON'T** talk about other people—anybody else—except to say something good about the person.
 10. **DON'T** brag about results, you were only the instrument of the Spirit.

PURPOSE OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE

This committee was formed out of a growing concern from members of Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church nominating committees with regard to the position of Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church concerning deacon qualifications. This concern has created uncertainty and confusion in past years in the screening of prospective candidates of the office of deacon.

Consequently, our purpose is to identify deacon qualifications in the scriptures and interpret their meaning and application as they relate to Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church. Herein, we will address issues which are perplexing and, hopefully, provide our Deacon Nominating Committees with tolerant guidelines for potential screening.

Therefore, should the conclusions of the Ad Hoc Committee concerning deacon qualifications be adopted, they will serve as the official position of Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church and will be used as guidelines by the Deacon Nominating Committee.

After discussions concerning deacon qualifications, particularly related to the issue of divorce, the Committee was formed in order to prepare a document for consideration by the entire deacon body, active and inactive, concerning deacon qualifications. Upon their final approval, the subsequent document would be presented to the entire church body for their consideration. The Committee was to review and evaluate an earlier Ad Hoc Committee report and other material as needed. The following is the recommendation of the Committee to the deacon body.

DEACON QUALIFICATIONS

Introduction:

Article II of our church bylaws establish deacons as:

Elected officers of the church

Servants of the church with responsibilities of serving with the pastor and staff in performing pastoral ministries of:

1. Leading the church in the achievement of its mission
2. Proclaiming the gospel to believers and unbelievers
3. Caring for the church's members and other persons in the community

Having biblical qualifications as set forth in I Timothy 3:8-13

Exercising responsible Christian stewardship

The Deacon Selection Committee is responsible for receiving ballots, evaluating, and presenting candidates to the deacon body and the church for consideration for the office of deacon.

Discussions and Recommendations

There are various beliefs and thoughts of just what Paul intended wholly and in part when he wrote these scriptures. After prayer, examination and discussion of the text, the Committee feels that the goal of deacon nomination and election is to have those of good reputation who are beyond reproach, well equipped in the scriptures, full in the Spirit, able to devote time and resources to the church's goals and have an established pattern of faithfulness and ministry in their lives.

There are specific subject matters which the Committee felt needed to be addressed in order to provide guidance to the Deacon Selection Committee and uniformity in the selection process. These specific matters, discussion and recommendations are as follows:

Use of Alcohol

Because of the abuse of alcohol in our society it should not be used as a refreshment or drink by deacons.

Women as Deacons

Women should work and serve the Lord at the church, except in the office of deacon.

Divorce

The lifestyle and witness of a prospective deacon will determine whether they are qualified. Past divorce in a nominee or spouse's life will not automatically disqualify the prospect. Each nomination instance where divorce has occurred must be individually evaluated by the Deacon Selection Committee with council of the pastor (or his appointee), with respect to the prospect and (if needed) spouse's own testimony.

Stewardship

Responsible Christian stewardship should be exercised in all areas of life which includes the giving of at least 10% of their income for the Lord's work.

Respectfully Submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee:

Rev. Don Brown (advisory role)
Rolando Pupo (Dissenting on divorce issue)
John Baker, Chairman
Charlie Qualls
Bill McCarter
Al Vestal
Ed Johnson

WHAT SHOULD A DEACON DO?

Acts 6:3

September 9, 1995

- A. Be filled with the Spirit (Pre-requisite being)
 - 1. We can put ourselves in a position to be filled with the Spirit. (Must be constantly aware of this)
 - Pray
 - Systematically study God's word
 - Be repentant (Denying pride)

- B. Be full of wisdom
 - 1. Be able to look at a set of facts and come to a spiritual conclusion about those facts.

- C. Examine life through the scriptures
 - 1. Ask the right questions. (Opens you up to the filling of the Spirit.)
 - 2. Look for the teaching.
 - 3. Realize that life is breathed into the scriptures by God.
 - 4. Don't look for just one text to support your conclusion.
 - 5. Look for an assortment of scriptures that support your conclusion.
 - 6. Look at direct teaching.
 - 7. Look at indirect teaching.
 - 8. Look at the nature of God.
 - 9. Look at the law.
 - 10. Determine how your conclusion affects the Kingdom. (Always ask this question.)

WHAT SHOULD DEACONS BE BEFORE THEY DO ANYTHING?

I Timothy 3:8-16

September 17, 1995

Worthy of Respect (v. 8)

Held to the same high standards as a pastor

Sincere (v. 8)

God makes you useful on the basis of your sincerity

Not a wine-bibber (v. 8)

One who avoids dishonest gain (v. 8)

Not consumed by material things—if it costs your family and church, it's dishonest gain

A holder of deep truths (v. 9)

Be careful what you consider the deep truths. Live the deep truths.

Verses 1-7 are instructions for overseers and pastors.

Verses 8-16 are instructions for deacons.

Shiloh Terrace Baptist Church Deacon Body

Training Materials

March 10, 1996

Eight ways to show that you care for the chronically ill

Those who face chronic illness need the generous support of their family, friends and church members. Individuals who have such support can face long-term illness with more courage, confidence and dignity. Studies demonstrate that those with strong social support have higher survival rates than those who do not.

This is why the bible is consistent in urging and encouraging Christians to be supportive of those who are suffering.

I Peter 3:8 “be sympathetic and compassionate”

Acts 20:35 “help the weak”

Galatians 6:2 “carry one another’s burdens”

1. Be there early in the crisis.

As soon as you learn that someone is experiencing health difficulties, call or visit. Anxiety can be diminished early when people realize they do not face it alone.

2. Be there for the long haul.

Most serious illnesses are lengthy, drawn-out conditions. Too many demonstrate attention during the initial crisis and then drift away. This is a long haul ministry of Ministers, Deacons and the Sunday School class.

3. Accept the person as he/she is.

Initially after a diagnosis, the patient experiences a wide range of conflicting emotions. Listen to them without passing judgment. Do not say “don’t worry” or “don’t talk that way.” Allow the person to express whatever feelings are there at the time. Emotions expressed are often emotions diminished. Articulating feelings helps to overcome many fears.

4. Get comfortable with anger.

Anger is the most common reaction to the news of a serious illness. Supportive ministers tolerate personal anger. Many of the Psalms express anger—and often strongly. (Psalm 44, 53, 109) It is perfectly human and acceptable for good, religious people to become angry. The Psalms allow and express not only man’s anger but an ability and confidence in God to take care of the problems. Try to bolster their faith that will give them the strength necessary to bear any burden.

5. Do what you can.

It is natural to feel powerless. Do not let helplessness keep you from practicing assistance. You can not take away their pain nor change their condition but you can provide emotional help, support and prayers.

6. Listen more than you speak.

THE GREATEST SERMON IS SOMETIMES SILENCE. Be very careful and judicious in your “quoting scriptures.” Suffering people do not need a lecture. They need a listener. Make it as easy as possible for hurting people to talk and express themselves.

7. Offer your skills.

This doesn’t always mean regular chores, duties and responsibilities but it could be what is needed at this time. Are you able to take care of some of them? Does the future’s uncertainty involve your ability to shed light on or give assistance to the person?

8. PRAY, PRAY, PRAY.

Often, physicians report that patients will be lifted out of depression and disease by the prayers and efforts of faithful friends. Pray for healing (according to the will of God), strength for each day, courage to face the difficulties and hope whenever despair or fear becomes overwhelming.