

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via [hopewellarp.org](http://hopewellarp.org))

So, we Considered an act, two and act. Four god's second invasion. Uh, into the world.

A little provocative way of describing what we think about at the beginning of Galatians 4 god sending his son and the fullness of time god himself. Taking on humanity and entering his world. And both being a display. Of. Of what it looks like. When A man as righteous and holy and Desire is not only to the destruction of sin.

Uh, but the destruction of the effects of sin, the destruction of misery. Opposed to all of the fault as the lord jesus was. And the assault on the devil that took place. In the lord jesus's un ministry. And then the assault on sin and misery and the works of the devil.

That jesus taught his disciples, they would be following him in. And, Praise god. When Uh when god invades a second time when the spirit is is poured out, not now only as one who works upon us. Uh, to give life and give faith. That's always been. The only way anyone was ever made righteous anyone was ever redeemed, but was by the spirit giving life and giving faith in the christ until he came the Christ who was to come But now, the skirt is poured up that he may dwell in us.

And this was, Uh, this was something that Happened on occasion, on a rarity. As the spirit of the triune god. Uh, we read of some in Um, In the old testament being filled with the spirit. Uh, but very specifically. Uh, when not only in the fullness of time, god had sent forth his son, but because now we have this conscientious adoption jesus, having become a man and our believing in him.

And being aware, that god is saved us through union with christ because we are sons, god has sent the spirit of his son into our hearts. Uh, that is that is a difference for new testament. Uh, new testament believers. There's always a how much more Uh, Right. So That's something that.

That we should be reflecting and what we saw in x2. With the outpouring of the spirit at Pentecost in acts four. Again, with With the furthering of the work was that all of the things that we had expected by what jesus did. And what? Jesus, taught his spirit began to produce.

Among the believers even to the point. That something that we know is not the ordinary or ongoing experience of god's people actually happened there in the passage and act four that we were considering last week they had no needy among them. God had told israel and deuteronomy. Uh, that that they would have no media among them if they kept his law and then almost immediately.

He told them that they would always have media among them. And so, If if they missed it, we should not. And that is that they would need atonement. But the lord jesus also told us that the poor. We would have always among us. But it should not be so in the church and this is one of the things.

That ought to be. And effective reformation and revival. Uh, would be the weaponizing, the mobilizing of all that we have. Not just all our time, not just our fault life, not just our affections,

not just our priorities and desires and pleasures but our possessions. The, the weaponizing and mobilizing of all that we have for the glory of god.

And the service. Of his people. Including those who we are bringing the word and hope that they will be his people. Since there are there is an innumerable multitude. Of those elect whom we do not know who they are and God gives us the free offer of the gospel.

There's a corollary there. Once the, The attention to the needs of The churches. Is fulfilled. Of also, a A free neighborly. Uh, love and material things. So, Uh, we saw at the end of x4 last week that they had no needy among them. And yet. Uh, we are not yet perfected.

That's why i use the the phrase there. Uh, at the beginning of letter c, which covers the next five sections? I don't know if we'll take five whole sessions, i hope not. Um, But the next five sections, Um, Uh, sorry, not just the next five sections, but the, the whole rest of the course, Already.

But not yet. And the fact of ongoing sin in the church, that produces Or was Results in ongoing neediness is Uh, what what provokes the ordination of the first deaconate. In act 6. So, the situation at the end of Um, of chapter 4 verse 34 nor was there, anyone among them who lacked?

For all who were possessors. So they didn't stop possessing. It's a change in mindset, not a change in owner ownership. For all who are possessors of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds etc. They're nor was there. Anyone among them who lacked? Well by the time we get just to chapter 6 there are some Who lack?

What's important that we connect? In order that we may understand verse 4, well, Back to verse 42 of chapter 5. So, let's go ahead and read. Acts 5:42 through six verse 7 and daily in the temple. And in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching, Jesus has to Christ.

Now, in those days when the number of the disciples was multiplying there, arose of complaint against the Hebrews by the hellness because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the 12 summoned, the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not desirable that we should leave the word of god and serve tables.

Therefore brethren seek out from among you seven, men. Of good reputation full of the holy spirit and wisdom him. We may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer. And to the ministry of the word. And the same pleased the whole multitude and they chose Steven a man full of faith and the holy spirit and Philip procurus nikonur.

Timon harmonis and Nicholas a proselyte from antioch him they set before the apostles. And when they had prayed, They might enhance on them. Then the word of god spread and the number of the disciples multiplied, greatly into Jerusalem. And a great, many of the priests. World obedient to the faith.

Amen. The reading. Of god's word. So we see Immediately the purpose. Of the deaconate again, everything. Serves the worship of god, the knowledge of god. And the knowledge of his character, the imaging of of him and his character which which happens ultimately in a superior way. When we act upon god himself, Uh, it also happens when when we act upon the creature or the creation, Uh, but all of life flows out of Acting upon taught himself and unto.

Acting upon god himself. And we consider that even when we considered the creation, And how god so ordered the way that he created everything. So that the very first day that

manhattan Was a sabbath day. Uh, He first had that sabbath enjoying the rest of god up front. The the most unmerited favor there has ever been, because they had not had opportunity to do anything in order to merit and immediately.

An entire lord's day and ever. Since then, we have seen this priority and purpose of the worship of god above, and leading to provoking resulting from all of the work of man. And so, the offering of our bodies as Delivering sacrifices is not just analogous to but it is resultant from the formal worship.

Of god. And this is what we see here in our passage as well in the first ordination of the deaconate. Verse 42 and daily in the temple. And in every house They did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ and what a wonderful providence of god. That we should hear this.

But as we all, as we are doing, where we are in the preaching through Acts 20, because many of you have just Recently memorized. How I kept back. Nothing, that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you and taught you. Publicly and from house to house. And so, there is that preaching and teaching in the temple publicly and in every house that ministry of the apostles that they could not would not leave off in order to oversee the congregation's ministry to one another, in earthly things.

So, there's a very direct connection there. Between Acts five verse 42 and Acts 20, 20, Just looked at I think it's verse 20. Yes. X 20 verse 20, Which indicates to us that this is an ongoing thing because that which was done by the apostles and Jerusalem. Paul had done an emphasis and when Paul was never going to see the Ephesian elders again, he called them out to my leadus because, because he did not have time to go to Ephesus in order to teach them that this is what was to continue under their ministry and therefore 2000 years later.

And however many thousands of miles that is what is to be taking place here. This preaching and teaching, by those whom the Lord has called to that ministry in the congregation, both in public and from house to house or according to houses. Uh, Or in this case in every house.

And that is what leads to verse 3 and 4. Uh,

Sorry, verse two and four. It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables but we will give ourselves continually to prayer. And to the ministry. Of the word. And when we come to see what the success of the deacon, it looks like or aims at, you have that.

Then in verse 7, then the word of God spread the word of God spread because That which the Lord had appointed as the instrumental means by, which it would spread. His ordained ones, fulfilling their ministry of the word. And, Uh, And they leading also in prayer because this is not a mechanical or magical enterprise that we are in.

It is the personal providential work of God. It is not light. It is not as if we preach all the right things in all of the right places by the correct men, to all of the people. Uh, then we will automatically get the results. Uh, no. There is a calling upon the living God and interaction with Him Himself.

Uh, that That is a necessary and appointed instrument as well, because he is the one who must Give the increase but this is the reason for the deactivate That we may continue to have the ministry of the word that the Lord has appointed and So that when we are trying to live out, What we have heard and what we are now hearing that we will have help, because we're still sinners, This spirit filled church with this ministry of the word that they already had.

This wasn't a, a reformation of the ministry of the word exercise. Although, in many places of the academic may be necessary for that, You may have minister and elders who are not fulfilling the what we're going to hear about even this morning in the not shunning to declare to you.

The whole council of god in verse 27, and part of the reason for not telling there may be many of them. But it really is just such a significant. And life demanding tasks that there is not room. Uh for minor things like overseeing the non-neglective widows, which considering all that we have heard about god's care for widows.

We'd say, how is that a minor thing? Well, it's a minor thing in comparison to The whole council of god. Preached and taught publicly. And from a house to house, that's Um, That's the major thing that's uh, what the d, the deaconate is facilitating. Not just being done, but then when we hear it, when we hear all that is required of us, Not now only in being in the image of god but an expressing the life of christ to whom.

We've been united in whom we've been created, new creatures who actually belong. As we've been hearing, especially since Uh, we got to the incarnation, we actually belonged to a heavens and an earth in which there will not be need. In which there will not be. And, and in which There will be no need for.

Um, For overseeing. The business because we will all be righteous and holy and conformed to christ. But right now That is something that the word is working on or even better working in us as we work out our salvation with fear and trembling it is because we are working out what God is working in.

For his god, who works in you both to will and to work. According to his good pleasure. So, the purpose of Uh, of the deaconate is to free ministers and the ministry. Of the word for that work. The work of the deacon then. Is to oversee, whatever is necessary whatever is needed in temporal things.

And the very first part of these things that are necessary is to receive complaints. Uh, the church has a complaint department. It is the deaconate. Verse one. Now, in those days when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there are rows a complaint against the Hebrews by the hellenists.

Because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution, then the 12 summoned and so forth. Uh, so this complaint had come to the apostles. And they determined that we need a new complaint department. Because the apostles can't be daily in public and according to houses, or in every house teaching and preaching the ministry of the word and giving them themselves continually to pray and to the ministry of the word.

If there are also the complaint department of the church for who is being neglected in the distribution. Uh, and so here we have What you'll see on your outline called groaning pains and that's a veiled reference to Or an implied hint act, Romans chapter 8. Where the creation continues to grow, and it is going to do.

So until That revelation of the sons of god that comes not only in our treating the creation itself the way that we are created to do and have been redeemed to do. But when we are revealed this as sons of god, even by the redemption of our bodies at the resurrection.

And so, as long as the creation continues to be fallen, there will be complaints because man will continue to be sinful. Much of the new testament. Has to do with how to interact with one

another, even though we continue to sin, none of the new testament has to do with how to conduct ourselves.

Once we are sinless. Or how to celebrate that or what role the sinless christian tab in among the rest of the congregation. And the reason is because such a person does not exist in this world. And so there are groaning pains The bible does not. Uh, does not anticipate a time prior to the resurrection in which there is going to be a church on earth, that is essentially trouble free.

And if not a church, then certainly not a nation. Um, although Some people. But god has promised will happen. And it will happen at the time that he has promised for it to happen, but there's not just groaning, pains there's growing pains. If you were, Swimming along in your proverbs readings this week and you, you got again to chapter 10 because it was May 10th.

Uh, you Might have read. Where words are many? Transgression is not absent. A great reason not to have peter as your patron saint. Uh, you shouldn't have, you should have jesus as your patron saint, he's available and he's holy, and he is the one to whom. We are to conform ourselves and the one whom the spirit is conforming you to, and he is the one who supplies everything.

Uh, but if Peter were your patrons saying you would You would hope for later, peter, not early peter because early peter didn't know to keep his mouth shut even if jesus Moses and Elijah was there and jesus is glory had been unmasked, and he didn't know what to say.

He would speak. Where words are many? Transgression is not absent. If you really hate sinning. Speak only as much as as necessary to be righteous. Well, there's a corollary that's a little bit too much. Well, A little bit more than intended and from proverbs 10. But there's a corollary here.

Where converts are many, transgression is also not absent. We're church members are many, transgression is not absent and so you don't just have, you don't just have these groaning pains that belong to the fact of our still being this side of the resurrection? You have these growing pains? We should expect.

That as church size increases challenges of functioning. Well, with one another, As as the number of sinners is multiplied, those challenges will increase. As we pray and desire from god, that he would multiply our families. Where children are money? Many transgression is not absent. It is, it is a great motivation to seek before god in the means of grace.

Public and private for our households, the sanctification of our households to, uh, to keep pace with the multiplication. Of our households. I've known a few instances where people got the multiplication part down, but the sanctification part had not been emphasized to them and you ended up with mother goose and father goose, Uh, with a whole bunch of gozlings who were just barely holding it together in public.

And, There's that's enough about that. But now they have Uh, they have all of these thousands of goslings. So So, the first thing that the actinant does, the first part of the work of the deacon is that they receive complaints. The second part of the work of the deacon is that they make decisions as an independent council.

Now, this is important. Just like the elders, do not have a personal individual authority over you. They have a ministerial authority in the ministry to which they are called to, but they oversee The congregation as a body, it is the session in. In the plurality of the elders. Together.

Taking council from the word from christ and the spirit by the word. That wields authority over the congregation. So, also, deacons do not have And individual. Authority. Well, there are The idea here behind the number seven is not that you establish the number of deacons that your church needs.

By dividing seven into And the the number at this point. Is just the men. So maybe as many as 20 thousand in this congregation, Uh by this time you know divide seven into twenty thousand and and say okay we need one one deacon for every Uh, Or. 2.9. Um, The thousand church members.

No, it's you need. You need a body of deacons and a complete body. It's seven being here, a number of completeness. And so, Uh, they make decisions as an independent council, why an independent council Because, Verse 2. It is not desirable that we should leave the word of god and serve tables.

Therefore brethren seek out from among you seven. Men of good reputation whom we may appoint a full of the holy spirit and wisdom who we may appoint over this business. And so we're not to see the deacons as the glorified maintenance, men at the church. Uh, who who are always referring back to find out what the elders want?

Uh, there are places where diagonal decisions are going to connect with. With worship decisions, with minute with means of grace and ministry decisions. But the point of the deaconate is to free the elders, to free the session. From having to consider these things. And so the first uh, first thing is they receive complaint second thing that they make decisions as an independent council.

Third thing that they facilitate service and that we see that especially in the whom we may appoint over this business. Now the the idea of the the word business there, And, So remember correctly, the The Greek word behind it for o'ne, as crea. Uh, but the idea is all of the stuff that needs to be done.

And it's not just making sure that the distribution of the widows. Is done. Judiciously, they're going to be other things that need to be done. Yeah, you know the widows are Uh, are eating living from The generosity of, of others. At this point, the apostles themselves are going to need to Uh, they are oxen their laboring and they are not to be muzzled as they thrash.

This is something that That the new testament. Well, not just the new testament. Comes also from. From the old testament. But paul says, God didn't write this because he's so concerned. With, uh, with being just in your treatment of oxen. I mean he gets concerned with that. But there's a principle there that applies.

Also to the laborer. In the congregation. So, the apostles, there are other poor Uh, they're not always going to have a spacious temple with quartz because the gospel is not supposed to stay in jerusalem isn't Where is it supposed to go? Jerusalem judea Samaria. And all. All of the, all of the earths and they're not in order to facilitate public worship.

Uh, there's going to be need to be things like a place to gather. Uh, it's not wrong to have church buildings. It is governed by the light of nature. And overseen by the deaconate and that would be in conjunction with the session, wouldn't it? Because One of the primary purposes is the facilitating.

Of right worship. Uh, But, Facilitating the service. In whatever is needed. And then, of course, in receiving, And administering collections, this is something that The apostles were doing.

They were. Receiving. Whatever was laid at their feet. We didn't actually go in and complete the niacin, sapphira section the beginning.

Of chapter 5, but that was something that was always. Being done or continually being done by the apostles. Uh, You know, ananias coming in. And laying something obviously, not a public worship because Sapphire was Was not there and would come in a few hours later. And so forth. And so, Just as a matter of the things that the deaconate was picking up from the apostles, Um, receiving collections administering, what was collected?

Uh, facilitating gathering including facilities eventually. Um, And so forth. So, that's purpose of the deacon and work of the deacon. Uh, so we got Uh, we got two of the five. Uh, done in the one day. Any questions from that? From the passage so far. Obviously there's a lot more.

Uh, to cover, we've got three more sections. We got three more sections there, the qualifications, the ordination, and the success. Of the deacon. Very good. Let's pray. Our father in heaven. How we thank you for your purpose. For us. That we would glorify you and enjoy you and it does not surprise us then.

That the purpose of the deaconate would be so closely tied. But we may be forgetful Lord. Day by day week by week. That you have given us that purpose, each of us of our own diagonal service, what we do. And our enjoyment of an employment of The things of this world that you have given us, And so we pray that you would make us to see how you have loved you.

That in this we would know law of not that we have loved you. But that you have loved us and that you would stir up our hearts. To love you. Because you first loved us. And then to obey your word, which teaches us. That what we do with earthly things is a big part.

Of knowing your love to us and of loving you. And therefore, loving our neighbor and our brother. So we pray for the ongoing ministry of your spirit that these ultimate purposes would be fulfilled. In the application that you make in each of our lives in the details. Of how we live before you.

And then on Lord. As we seek to do that, we pray that you would give us to do it by the way that you have designed with a deaconate overseeding us. In these parts of it. Granite. We ask in jesus name. Amen.