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So we're still in that six versus one through seven. Now, in those days when the number of the disciples is multiplying, The rose complaint against the Hebrews by the hellness. Because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the 12, summon 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. Then we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer. And to the ministry of the word.

And the saying please the whole multitude and they chose Steven. A man full of faith and the holy spirit. And philip procurus nikonur. Timon. Harmonis and nicholas across light from antioch. Him they set before the apostles. And when they had prayed, They laid hands on them. Then the word of god, spread and a number of disciples of the disciples multiplied, greatly in jerusalem, And a great, many of the priests.

Where obedient to the faith? So, for the reading of God's word, And considering this passage and really going back to verse 42. Of chapter 5 last lord's day morning in the cyber school. We considered, first of all, the purpose of the deacon, That the deaconet. The office of deacon was necessary in order to free, the apostles who were ministering in the means of grace, especially prayer and the ministry of the word.

Uh, to give themselves to that. Uh, to that ministry. And even as we have seen all the way, Through the bible, the priority of worship. The priority of acting rightly upon god, and Looking to go out to act upon us. Uh, by those means of his grace, which he has, uh, which he has, Command it to compose his worship.

And so that was the purpose of the deacon, the work of the deacon, then was to Oversee whatever is needed in temporal things. Which just at this moment in Act 6 was to receive complaints. To make decisions as an independent council, so that the apostles Or now the elders by continuing application.

Um, Are not having to consider these things. To facilitate service. The laying of things at the apostles feet would now be Replaced by laying things. Um, before the deacons and so forth. And now we come to consider the qualifications of the deacon. Which we have primarily in verse 3.

Therefore brethren seek out from among you seven, men. Uh, now one of the difficulties for us is that there are two Greek words for men Anthroposs, which is a general word that can be applied to humanity. Generally, and On there. Or undress. Uh, But usually, Of form of an era Andrus's derivative of it.

But it's a male specific word. It cannot be applied to women. And that's, of course, that's going to figure even into the Uh, the sermon in a little while in Acts 20 verse 28, No. That that uh, that's going to figure next week. When in verse 30, he says from among yourselves will arise men.

And he uses the male specific word there to make it clear and act 6, 30, that it is specifically from among the male elders that he's talking about. He's not talking generally. About the church at ephesus, but from the elders. Uh those ones are going to arise, he's talking about in acts 20 verse 30 here.

Uh, in acts six for three. When they say, seek out from among you seven, men, it is the male specific word. Women were not eligible. Uh, to be ordained as deacons. There's a this is never been the case. And any attempt to broaden the deaconate to include. Women has to come from somewhere else.

Other than the bible. Uh, you could pray for the The arp, the And this will work of our committee that was assigned to Uh, To see whether this needed. Reformation back to what it was before 1972. In the arp. Uh, they had initially done. Good work. A prof from Erskine College was added to the committee.

In the past year. And the The report that has been submitted to the senate, the general senate, that we're going to be dealing with. In a couple weeks time is very disappointing. It basically says nay parked, didn't kick us out. Hasn't kicked us out for having them, so it must be okay.

Um, And, That's basically recommends, maintaining the status quo. This, despite the fact that Uh, one of a Largest presbyteries. In the rp, first Presbytery had submitted a very good and thorough exegetical paper. Uh, demonstrating things like i had just told you. From the bible. And the The committee report came back and said the paper from first Presbytery has demonstrated that the bible can be read.

As. As teaching a male-only deaconate. Doesn't engage at all with any. Uh, any of the exegesis Uh so in the words of bb warfield, i am hoping that there will be a great battle. Um, It's probably been a few. A minute since i Uh, since i made that anecdote for you, Uh, there was There, there was a time at That princeton, when Warfield ran into the the wife of who was at the time, the president of the seminary.

And she said, oh dr. Warfield i do, i hear that there may be uh A trouble. At the at the assembly, they call it general assembly. Uh, there may be trouble at the assembly. Let us do pray for peace. Dr. Wherfield said madam. If the other side does not do the right thing.

I am praying that there may be a mighty battle. Um, So, Please pray with me that there may be a mighty battle. Uh, or an astonishing repentance. Before we get there. Um, yes, dave. And i think an important thing to note in that with that issue of equal to my church, And decide that it's like, no women.

Deeply There arguments about living room argument there, arguments of pragmatic, like, if we get rid of the limited, our church, we're going to lose that participation. They're yes, there are. There are definitely pragmatic reasons that are the primary things and some people say the quiet thing out loud. And then there are others who will take Um, Things like the the word deacon being used.

In the sense of servant and not talking about an ordained office. Uh, And they will. Try to reinterpret. We did we did a bad thing, four years ago at scinted. Uh, where someone pointed out that Um, That we're ordaining women to the office of deacon, but our form for installation, still had congregations, bowing obedience.

To the deacons as they were being installed and that it was wrong. Uh, to have congregations vow obedience to women. So what the seller did at that point was changed the vow so that no

longer included vowing obedience. And that actually got brought up in. In the paper that the committee sent back this year saying, well, see we don't vow obedience to them so we don't really believe it's an office of authority.

Which the whole question of ordination and the laying on a hands. And office in the church. Is. Is connected and the thing, unravels. All the way to the top. One of the great things about both offices is that they are offices of both authority and service. The elder who does not see his office as an office of service.

Is mistaken, what his office is just as the elder who does not see his office as an office of authority. As mistaking, what his office is and it goes all the way up. To the one who is chief over head, over the whole church. Uh, who Demonstrates and exercise of his authority quote, i am among you as one who serves.

And the lord jesus's definition of authority in the church being over again. The way authority is. Uh, is practice. Among the nations. Uh, so It's kind of, like, i was It's having a pastoral visit recently, and Uh, the guy was wearing a hat and it had a dot a period in the insignia of the company, but there was a thread coming up at the top of it and it looked like a bomb.

And so, I commented on it and he was Very concerned about that and he started pulling on the thread. And he, he went from a bomb to a half a pie. Uh, to A letter u in almost like because you know, the thread was pulling the whole thing. You cannot pull.

On a thread of doctrine and keep pulling. Without undoing the whole thing. All biblical doctrine ties back to christ. At best, we can hope that If and where we are wrong, that we will be happily inconsistent. But you can see. Uh, you can see how Yeah, in verse 3 to come all the way back to Uh, the lesson today but we do.

Please. Pray for the general senate. Um, Well. Per shot on time, anyway. Um, The, the other. The other thing that a couple years ago, there seems to be some hope is Uh, we had a committee that was supposed to be Uh, considering how to bring. The senate back to the presbyterianism that we confess.

Uh, considering syndge and councils having their purposes defined by westminster confession. 31. So it's like an actual chapter in our confession of faith. Uh, because what has happened in the arp over the last half century or so. Is missions and church planting instead of being something that is really done by Presbyteries.

And overseen by Presbyteries, it has more and more, but common agency thing agencies are these like centralized para church organizations, Uh, they have executive directors who currently make? I think one makes 165 thousand a year and the other makes odd 170 thousand a year. Not that that Uh, you know, not that you should muzzle the ox.

Um, But, To give you an idea of the professionalization and the deprespiritization. Of Presbyterian missions. And anyway, so All of the agency is, existence, was supposed to be being reconsidered. Um, by the senate and this committee was supposed to be studying what the bible says, about, how to do these things, but their report came back.

Uh well, we talked to the the directors of the agencies. And they think that we should keep doing the ministry through then. Uh, so that's what we recommend. Meanwhile knowing that it was coming back to this particular synod, the agencies put together an agency fest that that starts even before the senate is done.

Called world focus, which is Um, Yeah, they have a Yeah, it's kind of like a two-day conference thing. The lord actually took from this world, the speaker Uh, that they were bringing in. Who is a good man. Um, Probably does not know. Uh what is going on in the action of the synod and how that relates to what he was coming into to be a speaker at Uh, well, he knows now.

Uh, but he's been delivered from that using he's in glory. Uh, And, Uh, Contracted or hired music missionaries. Uh, to write a theme song that they're going to perform a concert steering. The It is everything that we were supposed to be getting away from. The professionalization of that, which is supposed to be The ordaining and sending by Presbyteries and sessions.

Of men. To proclaim the gospel at home and abroad. Which is what church planting and missions is supposed to be. So, please do pray for the general senate. As you could probably tell Um, My own heart is. Uh, as much tempted. Uh, to Forget. To have my hope in God, and to focus on.

Uh, what he is doing and to act before his face. Uh, so you can Pray that If no one else is speaking. That the lord will will give me the The fear of god. To just speak for the head of the church. Um, and that he will give his people to listen.

Um, Now, all the way back to Uh, to the lesson. If they said, therefore brethren seek out from among you seven, men of good reputation and they use the male specific word. And the congregation brought back and says nothing to do with our dear sister. Except for her name, brought back phoebe, who was a servant of a church.

And is referred to using. A word that has a root in common with the office of deacon. Uh, what do you think the apostles would say? They wouldn't say, oh, welcome Phoebe! You must identify as a man. Knows the the error. Is actually related, isn't it? You can hear.

Uh, how When god defines something as male. Uh, it is not. Thoughtful, or welcoming, or Or kind. To redefine it as being male slash female. Um, So that's the first qualification of the deacon. Um, And you can hear how. And saying it is to say that. Some churches may have them in some churches.

Don't If uh, If Phoebe is, A deacon incentre. And she comes to, And she comes to Corinth. Well, corns would be just as likely to mess it up, she comes to philip high or ephesus. Um, Do they? Not recognize someone whom the holy spirit has made a deacon. Are we going to turn?

The whole enterprise of the church into a human endeavor. And not see that. It is. God the holy spirit who places? Uh, her officers within her. As we're going to hear in x 20 and in a few minutes, So this idea that It's really up to the session and shoulder shrug from this in it.

Um, That just cannot fly either. Um, so Pray for us. First qualification male not female. Second qualification is their reputation. Um, Well, literally, they're witness their works. Testify to their profession of faith and others. Testify that their works. Testified to the their profession of faith, it's the thought sort of thing.

That is obvious to all Um, The third. Third qualification. Therefore, brethren seek out from one year, seven men of good reputation. Full of the holy spirit. Now. Uh, what does this mean? Does this mean that they're always talking about the spirit, or That there are some kind of Head in the clouds.

A kind of weirdo that that That is disconnected from reality. I asked that question because the people who thought that they were full of the holy spirit and my weird in my youth group, the that's what they were like. It was, it was it was closer to Some sort of.

Mental illness. Um, But the bible tells us, What being full of the holy spirit. Looks like it is identified by the fruit of the spirit. And it is identified by not only the, the production of the fruit of the spirit. In galatians 5:22. To 26. But also the absence or the increasing absence or diminishing presence.

Of. Uh, the works of the flesh, as described in Galatians 5, 19 to 21. Someone who is full of the spirit as someone who is less and less full of himself. Who is less and less full of sin. Okay, so full of the holy spirit has describing someone who the new nature, which is created by the spirit and grown by the spirit is identifyably displacing, the former nature.

That he had when he was in the first Adam that he had when he was in himself. There's a characterized, especially by sound doctrine, the spirit, who produces this fruit in us producing it by way of truth. So there is doctrine that accords with godliness, which is why, where we are in first and second Timothy where we're going to be entitus.

The apostle is so concerned with the ordaining of elders, who will maintain sound doctrine in the churches. Not only for the sake of the doctrine itself. Not only forsake of the truth theology, but for the work of the spirit, who uses that truthiology that he produces To produce also.

Uh, right. Living Okay, so that that's what full of the holy spirit means. Um it's not like some sort of sanctified flatulence where they're they're they're they're farting spirit perfume gas. I know this sounds. Uh, crazy to you and maybe a little bit. Vulgar. Obscene, but Trust me. It is spiritually and theologically vulgar and obscene.

When the people who think that, they just kind of give off the spirit. Because of how much. They, they love to talk about being led by other things than sound doctrine. Uh, are Fullness of the holy spirit. Sounds like rich in bible knowledge, caring very much about precise theology caring.

Very much about killing the works of the flesh. Full. Of love, and joy, and peace, and patience, and kindness, and goodness, and faithfulness and gentleness, and self-control. Loving the law of the lord, living by the law of the lord. Um, Living by the and being characterized by a character.

Against which the there is no law. The holy spirit then gives wisdom. Uh, part of that wisdom. The first part of that wisdom is submission to god and his word. But then also skill. Uh, in In practice, in carrying out what god says. Uh, in his word and we'll get to that more specifically.

When we get to the first Timothy, Three. All right, so we only got through one one section. Uh, i think i hope it's helpful to you. Uh, to know. What is coming at the senate so that you can pray for us. Pray, especially for the preaching at the synod.

Uh, there are several faithful ministers, who are Uh, lined up to preach on several important. Topics from the text. And, What you are asking? What we are asking god to do in the business of the senate? Uh if that is going to come, then one of the great ways that we have hoped that it would come from the bible.

Is that god would bless the preaching of his word among the elders and convince the men. From the hearts. And put away. Any political-mindedness or earthly mindedness? That may be driving. Uh some of the discouraging reports that are in our scented packets. Yes. Sorry christian. Two questions on a practical note, if it's the same live stream at all three, I'm gonna say, probably not.

Bon clarkin is Notoriously in need of help and technological matters. And, One thing they've started to do is Uh, do zoom participation. For some of the delegates. And i'm not sure that they can handle. Zooming and streaming at the same time. So i i would guess. No, but maybe Sorry, was the other question.

From my understanding of bowel, Are things get changed, is that it requires over church? Is that right to to decide on them and vote on in the ARP? We call the memorials. But yeah, if you're a pca, we'd call it overseas. Yes, sir. Or they're currently memorial. A memorial towards.

The changing of the wording of the vco, then for female only. They only be acting it was a. So a memorial came from first Presbytery with this very thorough very well done. Exegetical paper. Several years ago, And the way the memorial was answered. And it was actually a pretty close vote.

We almost We almost voted to change the language in the church order. Uh, then Uh but a number of people stood up and said, if we're going to do this, we should bring our brothers who are not convinced along. Let's appoint a study committee. To produce something, to give them time to come to the same.

Place from the bible. But the study committee morphed. In the past year. And became a non-studied, you know, don't study don't change committee. Um, So this is actually in response to a memorial that came from a Presbytery. Um,

Yeah. So would it carry on then? Would there be a further vote on it, then was that and then if, if it does it motive, Like an absolute upper down. Um, if it's an up, is that The president areas, then what this company is, how they then vote on it to the effect of change.

The book of reporter after that or is it after signals? With that memorial of the prove that the book of preparagus. So the recommend the recommendation from the committee is to answer the memorial from First Presbytery. In the negative. Um, If rather than the committee is recommendation. The the general synod the assembly, that's there in a couple of weeks.

Votes to answer. The memorial from first Presbytery from several years ago in the affirmative. Than that language. The change in language to the church order would be sent down to the presbyteries. And would have to be ratified, i think by two-thirds. Of the presbyteries.

So, I think even more than the particular. Issues that are being brought. To the general senate this year. The bigger issue of Are we going to be a a top heavy? Uh, centralized. Government with these kind of pseudo officers. Uh, whether they be seminary in college professors or agency directors or whoever Are they going to be driving the arp?

Or is the ARP going to be presbyterian? And the decisions really being considered and made by bodies of elders. Ministers considering things from the bible, So there's a there's an essence and identity. Issue. That is even bigger than any of the particular issues. All right, we're Out of time.

Let's pray. Our father in heaven, how we thank you that it is you Father, son, and holy spirit. Who have chosen for yourself a church who have send your son into the world to redeem her, who have sent your spirit. Together and perfect, her We thank you, lord, jesus, that you are building your church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it and we pray.

Oh, lord, that we might be faithful as a congregation. That our Presbytery might be faithful. That our senate might be faithful. We pray. O, lord, that we would honor you because we know

If we deny you still, you will not deny yourself. And so we pray that our lamp stand might be spared to us.

So that we might be heralds of your glory and heralds of your grace. Unto the world. Rather than a cautionary tale of what happens. When the church becomes earthly minded and self-directed. So oh, lord deliver us. And especially now, as we come to worship and we know How much these things?

Threaten? Each one of our own hearts and each one of our own minds, grant the merciful work of your spirit to conform us to christ. To thrill us and delight us and subdue us with his glory. As the great display of the triune god to us, receive us through him.

And help us by his spirit to worship you. That we may have grace to worship acceptably with reverence and awe because you are still oh lord our god, a consuming fire. And so we come to you through and ask all these things in the name of lord jesus christ.

Amen.