

# a HEALTHY MINISTRY JOURNEY

A. Intro: Yuichi & Sue Watanabe

## B. What does healthy ministry look like?

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV) *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."*

### 1. Stay faithful when persecution assaults you.

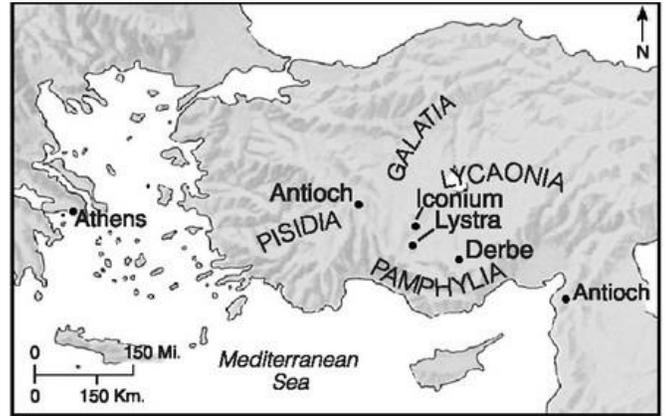
**Acts 14:1-7 (ESV)** <sup>1</sup> Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that a great number of both Jews and Greeks believed. <sup>2</sup> But the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the brothers. <sup>3</sup> So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands. <sup>4</sup> But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles. <sup>5</sup> When an attempt was made by both Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to mistreat them and to stone them, <sup>6</sup> they learned of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, <sup>7</sup> and there they continued to preach the gospel.

### 2. Stay faithful when success tempts you.

**Acts 14:8-18** <sup>8</sup> Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. <sup>9</sup> He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, <sup>10</sup> said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking. <sup>11</sup> And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" <sup>12</sup> Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. <sup>13</sup> And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was at the entrance to the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds. <sup>14</sup> But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out, <sup>15</sup> "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and we bring you good news, that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them. <sup>16</sup> In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. <sup>17</sup> Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness." <sup>18</sup> Even with these words they scarcely restrained the people from offering sacrifice to them.

### 3. Stay faithful when circumstances weary you.

**Acts 14:19-23** <sup>19</sup> But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. <sup>20</sup> But when the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. <sup>21</sup> When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, <sup>22</sup> strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God. <sup>23</sup> And when they had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.



### C. Reflection Questions

1. When were you the healthiest in your life? What contributed to your health?
2. What kinds of persecution have you endured for your faith? Is there a type which most deters you from remaining faithful?
3. How does being successful tempt you to forget God?
4. How is God overcoming unhealthy spiritual pride in your life?
5. What circumstances tend to make you weary in your faith? How does the truth of Phil. 4:13 address your weariness in a practical way?
6. In what new ways is God calling you to serve Him next year? Commit that to Him in prayer and seek out the steps He wants you to take in order to move ahead in that service.

### D. A Final Note from Richard & Debbi

Dear Journey Family,

It has been a joy to serve among you these 26 months and to see how the Lord made His Name great as He healed and refocused the church. Who would have thought that our final year together would coincide with such turbulence across the face of the earth? In a way, 2020 has been the culmination and final exam of all the lessons God has taught us and many of you over decades of faith. It was a practical experiment in testing the roots of our lives in Christ, and for showing us His love and sovereign will.

I will remember fondly your smiles, tears, hugs, stories, and examples of Christ-like love and service. Your partnership in the Gospel at Journey and with us in our Apartment Life mission were so refreshing and encouraging to us. Thank you! There was much fruit borne through your acts of mercy and service.

We will begin driving northward soon after my last day at Journey (Dec 31<sup>st</sup>), and we ask for your prayers for our safety and sensitivity to the Spirit as we travel and transition. A new staff team at **Calvary Fellowship in Mountlake Terrace WA** (<https://calvaryfellowship.org/>) is awaiting us, and I am praying that I may be a friend, mentor, and leader who exemplifies Jesus in all that I do among them. Our new home address is:

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May the Lord bless you and keep you close to Him all the days of your lives.

With our deepest aloha in Christ,  
Richard & Debbi

# Church Elders

The items below are taken from Scriptures which specifically outline the qualities essential to those who seek to serve as elders. The list does not require sinless perfection, but it does require a high level of Christian character and a mature faith in Christ. (Source: "Who Qualifies To Be A Church Leader?" by Martin De Haan II, Radio Bible Class Booklet, 1988)

## General Responsibilities of Elders

- A. **Lead the church with a servant attitude** (1 Tim 5:17; Heb 13:17; 1 Pet 5:1-3)
- B. **"Equip the saints" by teaching the Scriptures** (Eph 4:11,12; 1 Tim 4:6,11,13,16; 2 Tim 4:2-4)
- C. **Committed to the ministry of the Word and prayer** (Acts 6:3-4)
- D. **Protect the flock from false or distorted doctrine** (Acts 20:17,28-30; 1 Tim 1:3,4; 6:20,21; 2 Tim 4:1-5; Titus 1:10-16)
- E. **Shield the church from the work of unruly and divisive individuals** (2 Tim 2:14-18,23-26; Titus 3:9-11)

## Character and Lifestyle Qualifications for Elders (1 Timothy 3:1-7 = ●; Titus 1:6-9 = ◆)

- A. **blameless** ●◆  
*Characteristic pattern of life is in line with biblical standards*
- B. **husband of one wife** ●◆  
*Faithfully devoted to one wife; not an adulterer or flirtatious person (Note: interpretations differ on this area.)*
- C. **temperate** ●  
*Balanced in living habits and judgment; stable, steadfast, clear in thinking; not legalistic or fanatical*
- D. **soberminded** ●◆  
*Self-controlled and prudent in actions; avoids quick decisions based on inadequate information*
- E. **good behavior** ●  
*Reflects a life of consistency and well-arranged order, rather than crisis-management*
- F. **hospitable** ●◆  
*Literally "loving strangers"; friendly and willing to help others in need*
- G. **able to teach & teachable** ●  
*Communicates God's truth without arrogance; open to learning new things; discusses issues in an objective and patient manner*
- H. **not given to much wine** ●◆  
*Not overindulgent or controlled by alcohol (no drug addiction, as well)*
- I. **not violent** ●◆  
*Literally "not a striker"; not given to displays of temper or intimidation in order to control others*
- J. **not greedy for money** ●◆  
*Ethical in business practices; priorities not centered on the accumulation of worldly wealth*
- K. **gentle** ●  
*Gracious, kind, forbearing, considerate, magnanimous, genial*
- L. **not quarrelsome** ●  
*Not stubborn or argumentative; not given to controversy or rivalry; willing to participate in a dialogue, even if his point of view is not prevailing*
- M. **not covetous** ●  
*Doesn't center life on the acquisition and maintenance of material things*
- N. **manage house well** ●  
*Maintains a godly, well-managed home; children properly trained; good relationship with wife*
- O. **children obedient** ●  
*Children show evidence that their father is a respected leader at home and that he knows how to instruct and train them; children not wild and insubordinate*
- P. **not a novice** ●  
*Not a new convert - to prevent the outgrowth of pride*
- Q. **good testimony** ●  
*Reputation among the non-Christian community is good*
- R. **believing children** ◆  
*Disciples own children well; does not imply perfection, but a professed faith in Christ*
- S. **not self-willed** ◆  
*Not overbearing or inconsiderate; not consistently insensitive to opposing facts, circumstances, and peoples' needs/feelings*
- T. **not quick-tempered** ◆  
*Not quickly angry or belligerent; not given to uncontrolled personal attacks*
- U. **lover of good** ◆  
*Shows by his actions that he desires to reflect God's goodness in all that he does and in all of his relationships*
- V. **just** ◆  
*Concerned with justice in all his dealings; fair and impartial; makes decisions based on principle, not personality*
- W. **holy** ◆  
*Demonstrates a heart centered on God and His kingdom; seeks after God and follows His Word*
- X. **self-controlled** ◆  
*Exhibits a disciplined life, one not controlled by passions and appetites (Gal. 5:16-26)*
- Y. **hold fast to the Word** ◆  
*Firmly grounded in sound doctrine in faith and practice*
- Z. **able to exhort & convict** ◆  
*Knows the Bible well enough to guide and correct others*

# Church Deacons

The term *deacon* comes from a Greek word meaning "one who serves." The seven men mentioned in Acts 6:1-6 functioned as deacons in a limited sense as they assisted in the distribution of food to needy widows. From what we see happening in Acts 6 and what is described elsewhere in the New Testament, as local churches were established and grew, the official role of deacon was to assist the elders so that they could give themselves to teaching and prayer. Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13 closely tie the role of deacon to the work of the elders, and we may assume that deacons were administrators of the many details in the life of the church. That's why many churches today assign to the deacons the very important matters of the church's financial and physical needs.

The items below are taken from Scriptures which specifically outline the qualities essential to those who seek to serve as deacons. The list does not require sinless perfection, but it does require a high level of Christian character and a mature faith in Christ. (Source: "Who Qualifies To Be A Church Leader?" by Martin De Haan II, Radio Bible Class Booklet, 1988)

## **Character and Lifestyle Qualifications for Deacons** (1 Timothy 3:8-12)

### **A. reverent**

*Respectable and dignified, without frivolous attitude toward spiritual issues*

### **B. not double-tongued**

*Not contradictory, inconsistent, or insincere in speech; keeps promises; not hypocritical or slanderous*

### **C. not given to much wine**

*Not overindulgent or controlled by alcohol (no drug addiction, as well)*

### **D. not greedy for money**

*Ethical in business practices; priorities not centered on the accumulation of worldly wealth*

### **E. holding the faith with a clear conscience**

*Possesses not merely an intellectual faith; displays sincerity of faith and a firm conviction to the truth of God's Word*

### **F. tested**

*Shows by proven faith and character that he is qualified to serve as an example to others*

### **G. found blameless**

*Characteristic pattern of life is in line with biblical standards*

### **H. husband of one wife**

*Faithfully devoted to one wife; not an adulterer or flirtatious person (Note: interpretations differ on this area.)*

### **I. manage children and household well**

*Children properly trained; maintains a good relationship with spouse*