

**Intro:** Story originally shared by Stuart Briscoe, Pastor "I left your Church!"

**Listen to the key again:** *When people in the pew stop saying, "They're not meeting my needs" and start saying, "Whose needs can I meet?" Then needs will be met. When the servant spirit flourishes in a congregation then they minister to each other."*

This morning I want to introduce you to some of the people in RTBC that have taken that to heart. Today we are going to recognize the Deacons and Elders...and at the end of the sermon set them apart for service here in the life of our church.

### 1 John 3:11-4:6 Page 863

While this passage is written to the church as a whole, it is a wonderful overview of much of what Elders and Deacons do in the life of the church. They are right on the front lines. They are the people pouring their lives out for the body. Look w me

#### **1. The Ministry of A Deacon: Servant 3:11-24**

Deacon: Lit = *Servant*: Used to talk about those that serve the body...primarily meeting physical needs of some kind.  
Acts 6:1-7; Rom 16:1

That is what John is talking to us about 1 Jn 3: Ultimately something we are ALL to be doing in church.

He is talking about it individually: These are the responsibilities of every Christian

1John 3:11-24

- **Love one another: Vs 11-15**  
~ Joh 13:34 *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*  
Attitude and Mindset: YOU are more important than I am! I am here to serve you...care for you...meet your needs  
**Illus:** *How do others know? Not theology; Not Orthodoxy; Not your lifestyle; Worship; Building; Preaching*  
By your LOVE for one another: That is why it is so important to genuinely care for people  
This is what it means to be part of a church. You LOVE the people God places there
- **Lay down your lives: Vs 16**  
*"...we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers."*  
Jesus said exactly that: **Joh 10:11** *"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."*  
Shepherd Voluntarily choose to put others people needs before our own. OWNERSHIP: PERSONAL STAKE  
They give of their Time, Talents, Treasure, Prayers  
Not so the hired hand! The hired hand RUNS when trouble comes!
- **Love with deeds and truth. Vs 17-18**  
This is exactly why we have a benevolence ministry. Practical way of meeting needs of members.  
People say, why should I be a member? Because we can love you better...more practically  
Sept and Oct : \$4822.89 Last year: Almost 25,000.00 dollars!
- **Lift up our prayers for others. Vs 19-24**  
*"Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him."*  
That is part of our responsibility one to another in the body.  
**Illus:** *That's why we have a prayer chain. If you aren't on that, you should be.*  
Take a connection card, write: Add me to prayer chain: clearly write your email address  
Then when a request comes in...stop, pray...Just for 30 seconds: Amazing power of 300 people praying!

But, in the same way that we are to be doing this individually, we also do it ORGANIZATIONALLY

1. Organizationally Deacons are charged with that kind of ministry. Meeting the ongoing needs of others
  - a. Visit the sick, shut-in, and hospitalized members of the body as needed.
  - b. Contact guests as requested.
  - c. Administer the membership functions. (Membership class and interviews)
  - d. Assist with the baptism functions.
  - e. Assist with and serve the Lord's Supper.
  - f. Administer the benevolence ministry, food ministry, and other need-oriented ministries.
  - g. Serve as the first call for ministry needs arising within the congregation.

So Today I want to recognize some very special people

- Roger Lynham: Outgoing chairman: Served many years...faithful and organized!
- Richard Edmonds: Incoming chairman: Just coming on board, recently retired...making plans...I called!
- Alan Haines: Yokefellow: Deacon in training, 1 yr: mutual look at one another
- All other deacons please stand:
- Prayer

## 2. The Ministry of An Elder: Shepherd 1John 4:1-6

Again, John is writing to the church in general, but the things he writes about in this passage are some of what an Elder does!

A deacon is a **SERVAT TO THE BODY**: Meeting physical needs  
An Elder is a **SHEPHERS TO BODY**: Meeting spiritual needs

The way RTBC is put together, the Elders (7) Assist the Pastor in shepherding the Body

When we wrote the constitution, we wanted a Pastor Led Congregation...not a Pastor CONTROLLED congregation!

Pastor Led: Lots of freedom, influence, ability to chart course, set vision, make decisions, listen to God and act  
But...there are 6 others on the team...who serve as a sounding board, vetting group, check and balance  
Pastor led is NOT a “*One man show*”  
It is unwise to put every single decision in the hands of one man...without having other Godly men’s input

Some of the different ways Elders serve alongside the Pastor:

- Test the spirits: Ch 4:1

Carefully evaluate the spiritual origin and authenticity of those that say they speak for God!

Put the “to the test” Consider carefully what they are saying...See if it matches up with what heard “*from the beginning*”

All of us should do that individually, Looking at TV, reading a book, Watching a podcast

Not everyone who says “Lord, “Lord” really belongs to Him!

Illus: John is calling out some false teachers in the church...

Our world is no different. There is a LOT of untruth being shared:

One of the “spiritual advisors” to the President recently told listeners send 229.00 in order to gain spiritual victory

- Evaluate Spiritual Truth Ch 4:2-3

Every spirit that doesn’t confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh

Illus: When I was in China teaching; Allan Yuan: “Come sit here...this is where Billy Graham sat:

As I was teaching I noticed a group...4-5 older men...taking notes...quietly talking...flipping thru bibles...

- Listen to God ALONG with the Pastor Ch 4:4-6

Listen to have a KINGDOM mindset...instead of a WORLDLY mindset

Church is DIFFERENT: It is not OF the world...and so it works on a whole different set of principles.

Church is not a business, (operate in businesslike manner)

Not an educational institute, though it educates).

Not a government entity, though it governs specific things

Not a military group, though it has a mission and is engaged in spiritual warfare!

It has components of ALL of those....BUT... It is not those...and when you try to make it that mess it up

Church...is the Body of Christ...God’s chosen instrument of bringing His Kingdom to our world

As such, you have to have a KINGDOM MINDSET “Speak from” the mind of Christ...Not from the world’s mindset

Church functions with an entirely different set of priorities and principles...than any of those other organizations

That is part of what Elders do. They come alongside the Pastor in seeking the mind of God for our church

If you look at our constitution that is what you will find

- Assist Spiritual Oversight
- Shepherd the flock
- To be an example
- Assist Pastor in overseeing
- To teach, exhort, equip
- Function as legal representatives of the body

So today I want to recognize some very special people

Outgoing after 4 years

- Billy Greulich
- Larry Leitch

Incoming for next 4 years

- Greg Hudson (served before)
- Orin Redmond

At 11: Pastor Raudel

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Call them forward and ask other Elders to come lay hands on them