

**Organized to Magnify Christ**  
Majorities, Boards and the Bible

KSBC 08.10.08

1Timothy 3:14-16

**Intro** So what about majority votes and board decisions? Shouldn't the workers and givers have a say in the decisions in our church? Don't we need a board of successful, godly people to watch over the church and keep the pastors and congregation in line? Is it possible that the way churches approach these issues has significant impact on magnifying Christ or not as a church?

Our assignment for the month of August is to learn and consider what the Bible teaches regarding how we as a local assembly of Christ followers should be organized in order to have the maximum impact on our community and world with the good news. Last Sunday we looked at 4 reasons why KSBC needs to change our leadership structure. This morning we will address the roles of the congregation and deacons in a biblical church structure.

Organization or structure in a church should reflect what the Bible teaches regarding where authority resides and how are decisions to be made. Who leads, how are leaders recognized, what are their job descriptions and how are they to lead are all important structural issues for the assembly of believers who are committed to God being glorified in the church.

KSBC is going through a process that began in 2006 of a major change in how we organize or structure our approach to leadership. The basic content of my message this morning regarding the roles of congregation and deacon are the result of careful study and interaction of our current leadership team. Statements of understanding for elders, deacons and congregation have been written by a team of leaders over the last year or so and approved by the Advisory Council.

Let's begin by connecting our mission of magnifying Christ together as a church with structure and organization. The sizzle or core excitement of our church should be Jesus Christ. Organization, structure, policies, bylaws, rules, and leadership style should never become the main message or identifying mark of our church. The apostle teaches us the connection between mission and structure in 1Timothy 3:14-16.

**1Timothy 3:14-16** Conduct connected to confession.

3:14-15	Instructions regarding church behavior
3:15	Identity that drives church behavior
3:16	Message that is magnified by church behavior

Instructions . . . certainly include teaching of entire letter for Timothy to teach the church at Ephesus (1:3) such as worship, women, elders, deacons . . . overall responsibilities of church members. The clear implication is that a church should have elders and deacons and a system to recognize and select them.

Identity . . . God's household – his family  
Church of the living God – his life and power as opposed to dead idols  
Pillar & foundation of the truth – outlet for truth

Message . . . the unanimous conviction of Christians is that the mystery of God is unwrapped and made known in Jesus Christ. 6 truths re Jesus make up this hymn of praise and confidence.

Since KSBC is one of many congregations all around the world that is identified in scripture as God's family, the place he manifests his presence and the sustainer of his truth; and along with all other biblically established assemblies of believers around the world are God's chosen instrument to advance the mystery of godliness which is Jesus Christ; how then should we behave or conduct ourselves as it relates to deacons and members?

### **How deacons and church members can glorify God in our church:**

#### **Role of the deacon.**

The office or position of deacon is described in 1Tim. 3:8-13.

1. Assistant to the elders. Acts 6:1-7; Philippians 1:1
2. Servant – leader to the church family. 1Tim. 3:13
3. Tested trend setter for church family. 1Tim. 3:8-10

Worthy of respect, clear conscience, tested

#### **Role of church member/congregation.**

These define the role of church members as it relates to church structure/leadership.

1. Submit to and follow leaders. Hebrews 13:17; 1Thess.5:12-13
2. Hold leaders accountable. 2Cor. 11:4; Gal.1:6-9; 1Tim.5:19
3. Express church authority. Matthew 18:15-17; 1Cor.5:12-13

Appointment of leadership; membership matters/discipline

## Take Aways

- Pray, interact and ask questions during this process of change.
- Thank God for and support the ministry of our deacons.
- Evaluate and grow in your commitment to this local assembly.
- Trust Jesus Christ today.

## Study Questions

1. Read 1 Timothy 3:14-16 as a group. What are some of the topics addressed in chapters 2 & 3 that are included in the term 'these instructions' in v.14?
2. What 3 descriptive phrases are used to describe the church and what do they mean? Are these truths included in the life and ministry of KSBC? How so?
3. What is the mystery of godliness or religion in v. 16? In what ways is it great or extraordinary?
4. What are some common assumptions or understanding about the role of a deacon in a local church? What are some of the influences on our thinking that shapes our understanding of church structure and roles?
5. Review the three components of the role of the deacon. What questions or concerns do you have about these? Do the same with the role of the congregation. Have the group leader pass on any questions to Steve Wilson or Pastor Whipple.
6. In what ways is your thinking challenged or changed by this perspective on deacons and congregational roles?
7. Spend time in prayer for our church family and deacons as we represent and unravel the mystery of godliness together by proclaiming Christ.