**PREPARATION**

Because of the spiritual role she is to play, the deaconess... who desires to “walk in the newness of life” should be even more cognizant of the need to keep spiritually renewed and up to “par.” This is necessary for service in that coveted position. Spiritual stagnation and complacency are enemies to the Christian life. ...Take time out for a spiritual renewal; a chance to brighten up, sharpen up, straighten up, and fill up anew for a more effective service for the Master.

Sometimes we get so bogged down in meaningless activities in the church that we soon become exhausted. ...To walk in the newness of life means to live a “separated life.” ...Whatever unbecoming involvement, and/or associations you continue to have from the past ... will cause you to straddle the fence.

Every deaconess ... whether new or seasoned with years of experience needs to take a periodic inventory of her/himself and the services she/he renders. ...As a deaconess, you have been appointed to the position of deaconess in your church. Your employer on this job is God. He must be pleased with your service. ...In your church, your Pastor is your manager. Your job description is to assist him in either the spiritual matters or the programmatic ministries of the church. Therefore, he too should be pleased with your services. ...Before agreeing to accept this position, first take a look in the “mirror” to see what you need to do that would enhance your chances to qualify for this job. To be impressive, you will have to “Dress Up.”

A. **Search Me** (Ps. 139, 23,24)
B. **Wash Me/Cleanse Me** (Ps. 51:7)
C. **Renew My Spirit** (Ps. 51:10)
D. **Fill Me** (Eph 3:19; Eph 5:18)
E. **Use Me** (1 Cor. 3:9; Rom. 7:6)

**QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION**

- What routine or practices do you have to “renew” yourself spiritually?
- How do you understand the “job” of a deaconess from this writing?
- Reflect on the A to E of “dressing up.” Which of these, is a challenge in your life now? What could you do to meet each of those challenges?
- Paul speaks of dropping every weight so that you can run the good race. How do you go about letting go of the unnecessary “weights?”

**THE DEACONESS BOARD**

Many Christian women on the Deaconess Board may also be member and perhaps officers of other outside (secular) groups. This may be a fraternity, P.T.A., vacation club, or even an alumni association. Often these groups are very prestigious and widely spread on a local, state as well as a national level.

Christians too, sometimes become creatures of steadfast habit, and often make the mistake of expecting and even trying to conduct church meetings just like a social club. This often causes conflict and confusion in that committee. ...I’ve heard it said many times, and I’m about to be convinced that “more hell is raised in church groups than in outside social groups.” People are often wounded by selfish and thoughtless
words carelessly said by professed Christians. ...One may have skills of manipulating a “social group” into working for them in order to look big, but on the Deaconess Committee, togetherness is the key, for the uplifting and the enhancing of the spiritual matters of the church and not in inflating oneself. ...The Deaconess Committee should be an opportunity to plan together on one accord, leaning and trusting in the same Lord and Master... There is no time to waste in frivolous matters that cause strife and controversy; and which discourages and disdains. Time is running out, and we must “get about our Father’s business.”

**THE DEACONESS AS AN INSTRUMENT OF PEACE**

It was Satan’s first diabolical work to destroy the unity among angels and then among men. ...Satan has been most successful in causing Christians to fight each other, rather than uniting forces to help foster the cause of Christ, for which they have been called.

Christians often glibly fall into Satan’s trap through personality clashes, and unbridled tongues. ...Deaconesses can take pride in performing in “Jesus name” as instruments of peace, for “blessed are the peace makers for they shall be called the children of God” (Matt 5:9) ...You are “angels of mercy.”(Hab. 3:2) When you look back at these senseless disputes, you’ll realize that the disagreements were foolish and uncalled for. These issues usually have nothing to do with enhancing the spiritual aspects of your position.

**Philippians 2**

1. Therefore if there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy,
2. fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.
3. Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself.
4. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.
5. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
6. who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,
7. but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a servant, and coming in the likeness of men.
8. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Peacemakers should emulate the humility of Christ and sometimes surrender their own rights, even if the other person is wrong. Peacemakers must realize that, “A soft answer turneth away wrath.” (Prov. 15:1)

**THE DEACONESS AS AN “ANGEL OF MERCY”**

Mercy is that compassion which causes one to help the weak, the sick, and the poor. Showing mercy is one of the cardinal virtues of a true Christian (James 2:1-13). ...Christian mercy is a part of the “fruit of the spirit” (Gal. 5:22,23), in love, gentleness, goodness, and long suffering. ...To be an “angel of mercy” is a great challenge for the deaconess. The deaconess filled with Christ is also filled with His compassionate concern for all people. ...Today in the confused and cruel world in which we live, many people are hurting...sometimes these hurting souls are right in church with us. ...Deaconesses, must reach out for those “hurting ones” and serve as God’s “angels of mercy” in an ear of ruthlessness and selfishness.

**Hebrews 3**

12. Beware then of your own hearts, dear brothers, lest you find that they, too, are evil and unbelieving and are leading you away from the living God.
13. Speak to each other about these things every day while there is still time, so that none of you will become hardened against God, being blinded by the glamour of sin.
14. For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as we did when we first became Christians, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.
DEACONESS TRAINING

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

- What differences should we see in a Deaconess’ Ministry Team as opposed to a secular committee or board?

- What are some practical ways that the Deaconess may act as a “peacemaker”?

- What are some practical ways that the Deaconess may act as an “angel of mercy”?

- From what we have covered so far, how would you describe the ministry, role, and qualifications of the Deaconess?

- What does it mean for a Deaconess to be “filled with the Holy Spirit”? What does such a woman look like?

- What are some of the dangers of having a woman not qualified, or performing the role, other than the Bible dictates?

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