

**Keeping the Church Alive #7**  
**Who's Next**  
**By Russell Earl**

There are several types of leaders in the Lord's church. We will be looking specifically at the leadership and the role that elders and deacons play. God desires for all churches to have the proper leadership. This means He desires for them to have Elders and Deacons. Elders have three major roles in the work of the church.

First, they are to feed the flock. Growth cannot happen unless the Church is fed. How is the Church fed? The church is fed through sound and adequate teaching of God's word. Thus when a congregation has elders that do not insist on sound teaching or they allow false teaching to enter in, they are not fulfilling their duties. We already have plenty of false teachers in the world that are spreading false doctrine that in turn, cause the Lord's church to be spiritually starved. We do not need weak elders who allow anything or anyone to come in. We need elders who make sure the flock is properly fed with God's Word.

Second, they are to strengthen and help the weak. Elders cannot sit and watch as the spiritually weak continue to decay. The elders have a responsibility to strengthen and to help those who are weak. We find the same idea in Galatians 6:1-2 where we are told to "restore" and to "bear one another's burdens" so that no one grows weak during their spiritual walk.

The third main role of elders is to seek out and return the lost to the flock. Many today have left the faith for various reasons. Thus one of the roles of the Elders and the Christian is to do what we can to restore those who have left the faith.

What about the role of deacons in church growth? Deacons are those who are servants for the Lord's church. They do multiple works that need to be done by those who meet the qualifications set forth in God's word.

These men are not errand boys. They do various works that minister to the needs of the church. They also assist the Elders in protecting and providing for the flock. Their qualifications differ some so obviously they are not the same as Elders.

Deacons many times do services that provide different things for the members. They may oversee the Bible classes and the topics being taught in them. Deacons many times also oversee different ministries that the church does like the use of the church's vans. They may oversee the youth activities or the activities of the older members. The deacons have similar roles of those of elders but also do activities that are more service or outreach types of work

Why does the church need men like elders and deacons? The Lord set up His church with the intention that these men would be in place to help make sure the church is taken care of as it should be. These men are not people who are selected because there is a job to be done. These men are given these positions because they are the men qualified to make sure these jobs are accomplished. We should ask ourselves who are our next leaders? Men are needed to fill these positions, thus the question is, who's next?