

A panoramic view of a city skyline at dusk, with mountains in the background. The sky is a mix of blue and purple, and the city lights are glowing. The text is overlaid on the image.

*GOD'S CHURCH*  

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*GOD'S WAY*»

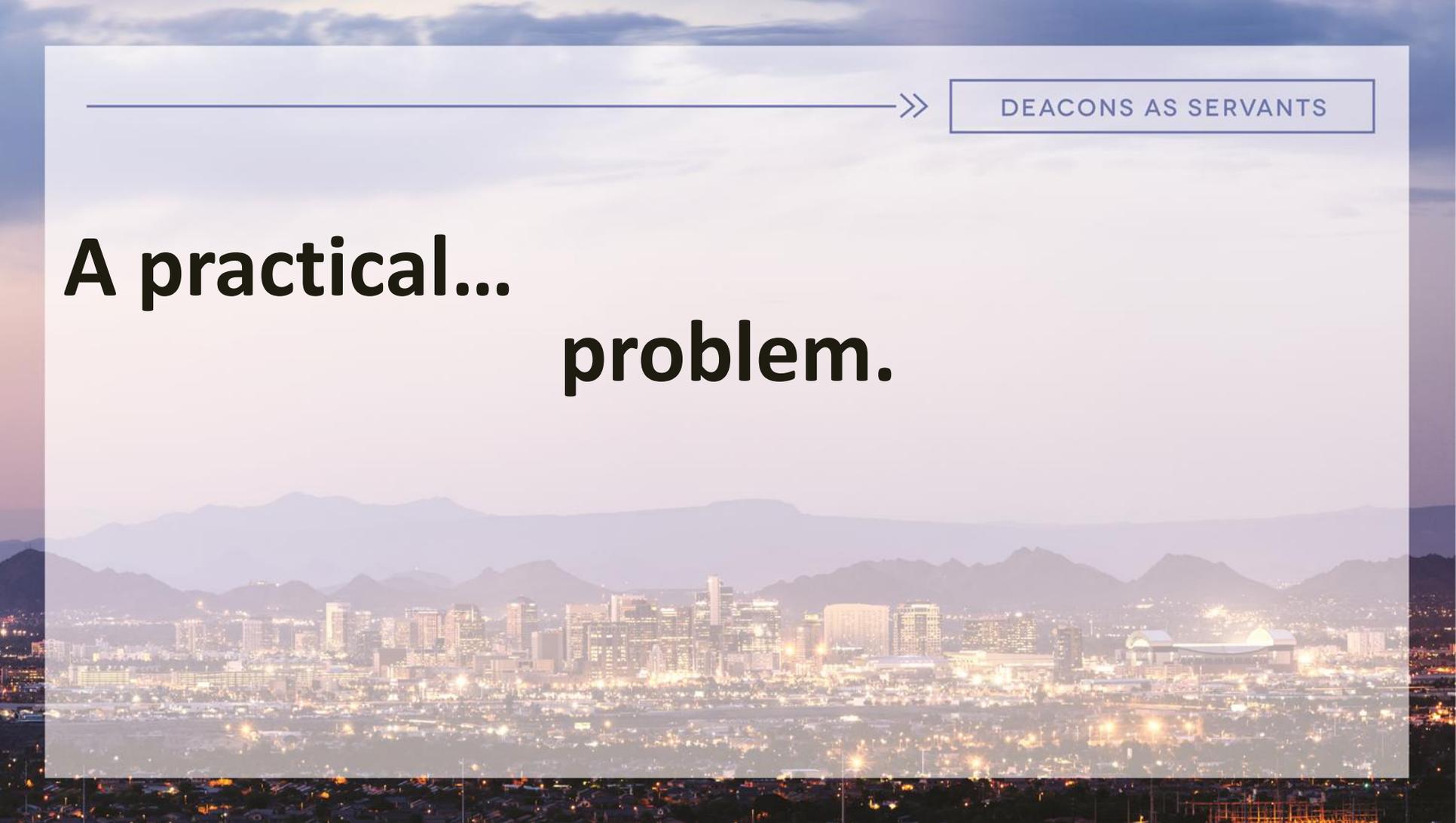
TOWARD A VIBRANT CHURCH

# Deacons as Servants

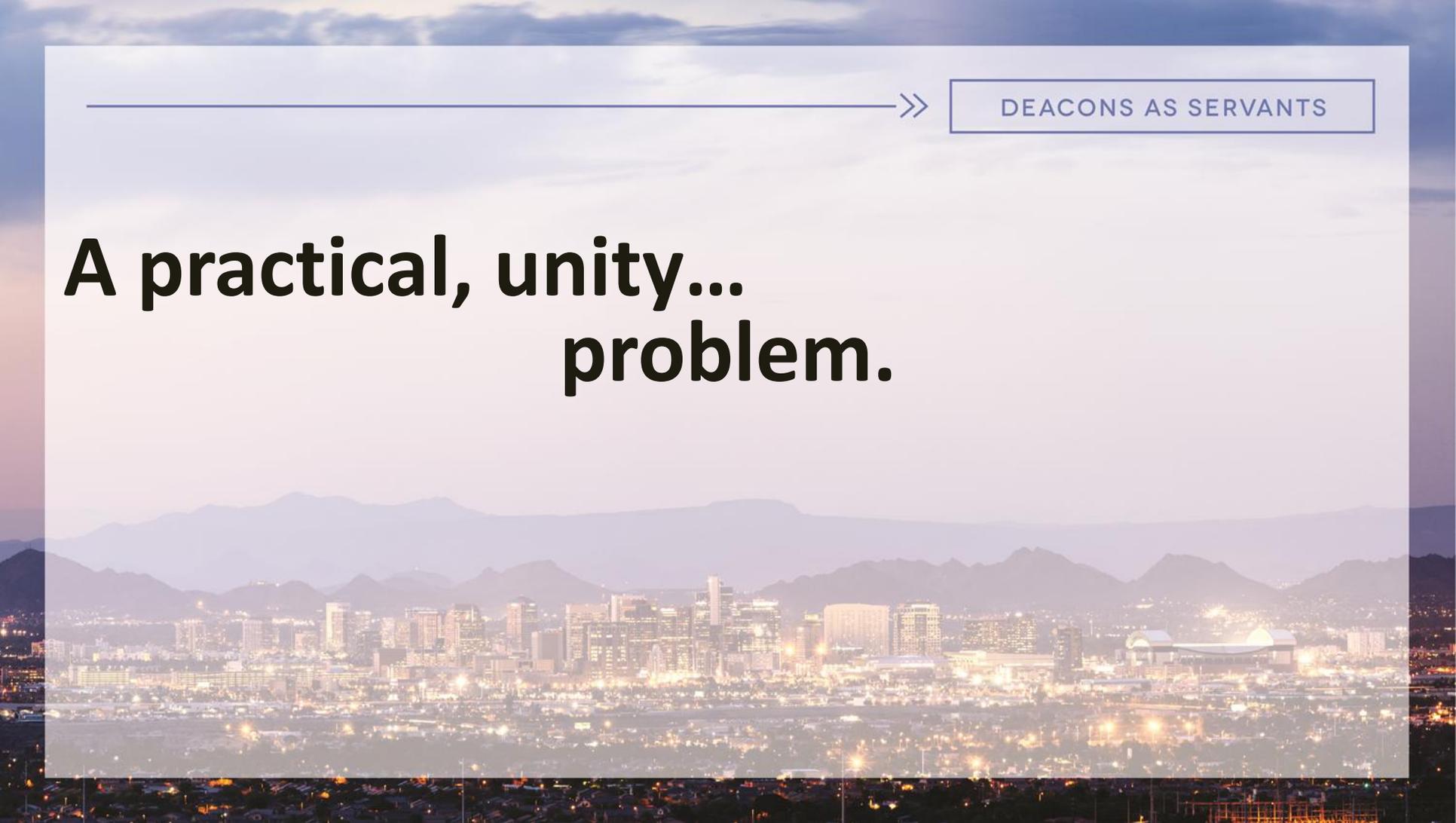
# Acts 6:1 (ESV)

**Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.**

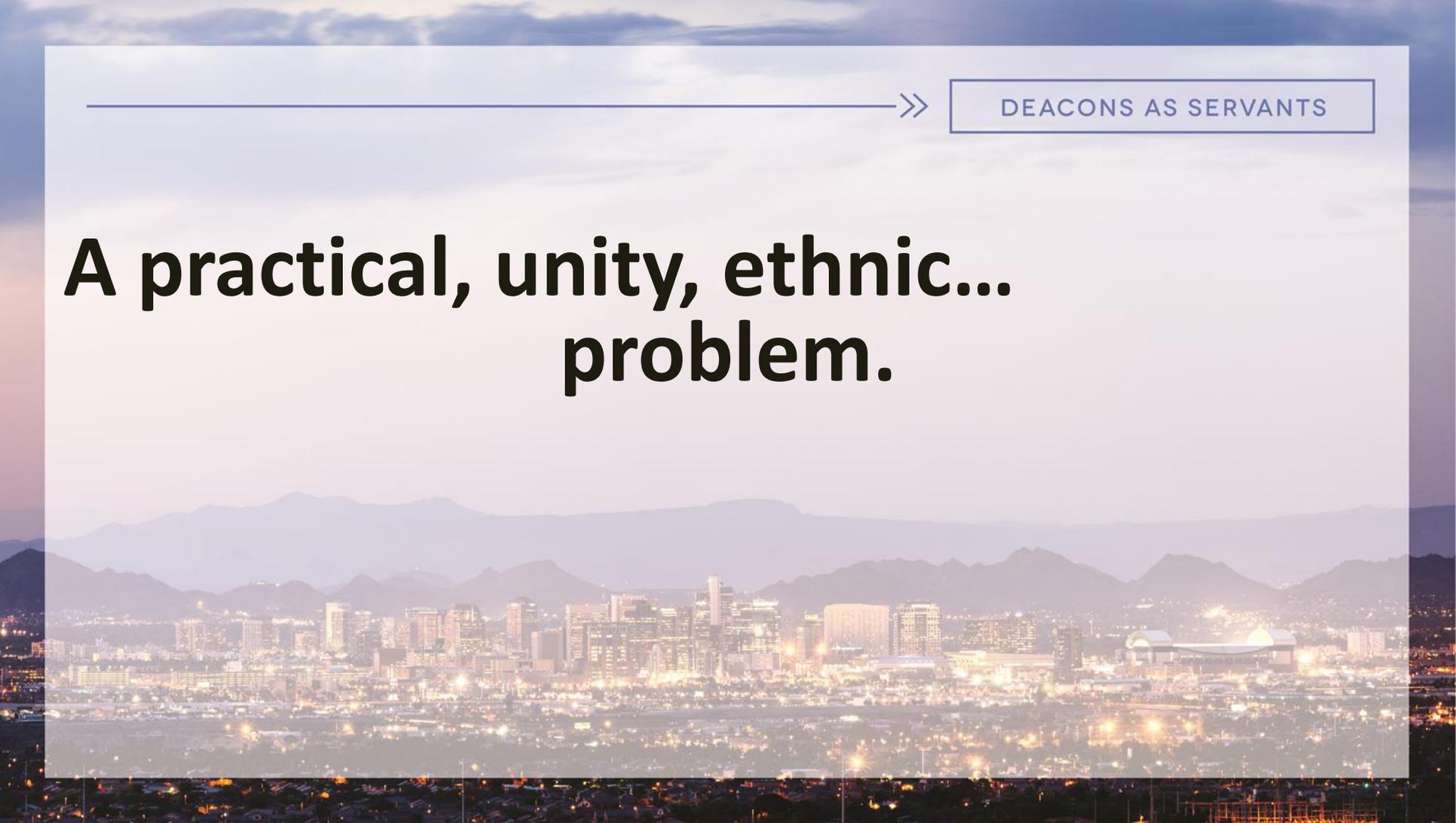
# A practical... problem.



# A practical, unity... problem.



# A practical, unity, ethnic... problem.



**A practical, unity, ethnic, sin...  
problem.**

**A practical, unity, ethnic, sin, gospel  
problem.**

## **Acts 6:2-4 (ESV)**

**And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to**

## Acts 6:2-4 (ESV)

<sup>3</sup> this duty. <sup>4</sup> But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

# Early church leaders led by:

- addressing the problem
- gathering the church together
- teaching about ministry responsibilities
- providing a solution
- recognizing their limits

# Early church leaders led by:

- **setting Spirit-informed priorities**
- **sharing their responsibilities**

## Acts 6:2-6 (ESV)

**“It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. <sup>4</sup> But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of**

## Acts 6:2-6 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> the word.” <sup>5</sup> And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch.

<sup>6</sup> These they set before the apostles, and they

# Acts 6:2-6 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup> prayed and laid their hands on them.

# 1 Timothy 3:8-13 (ESV)

Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup> They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup> And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless.

# 1 Timothy 3:8-13 (ESV)

**<sup>11</sup> Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup> For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and**

# 1 Timothy 3:8-13 (ESV)

**13** also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

# A word on deaconesses:

- **Diakonos is used for both masculine and feminine; Romans 16:1 “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deaconess of the church”**
- **No mention of elders’ wives in preceding passage suggests a translation of “women” rather than “wives” in verse 11**

# A word on deaconesses:

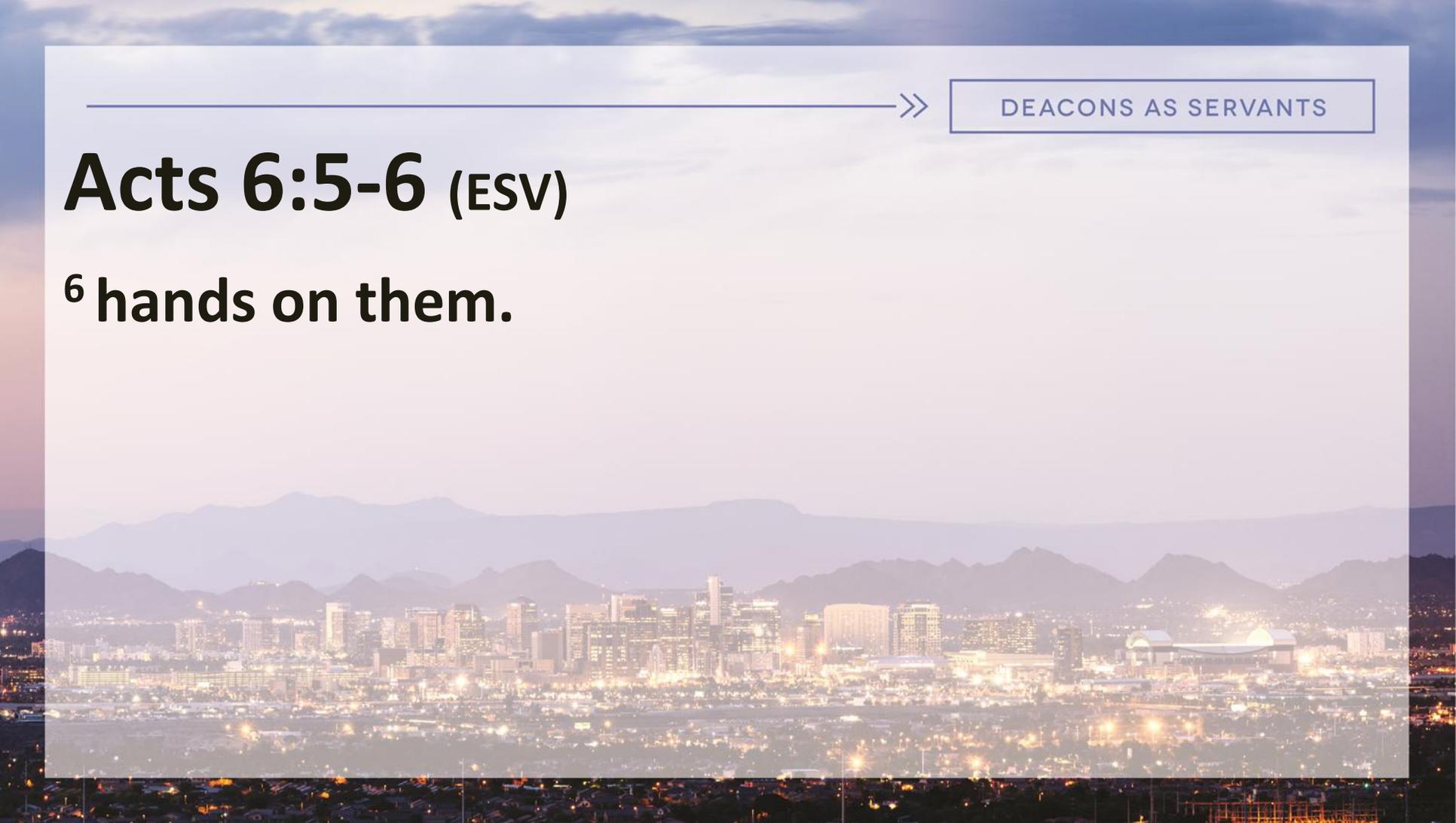
- **Scripture doesn't exclude women from serving as a deacon in the manner described in Acts 6 or I Timothy 3; it encourages it!**

## Acts 6:5-6 (ESV)

And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. <sup>6</sup> These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their

# Acts 6:5-6 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup> hands on them.



**“The Bible does not clearly indicate the function of deacons. Yet based on the pattern established in Acts 6 with the apostles and the Seven, it seems best to view deacons as servants who do whatever is necessary to allow the elders to accomplish their God-given calling of shepherding and teaching the church. Just as the apostles delegated administrative responsibilities**

**to the Seven, so the elders are to delegate certain responsibilities to the deacons so that the elders can focus their efforts elsewhere. As a result, each local church is free to define the tasks of deacons based on their particular needs.” Benjamin Merkle**

## Philippians 2:3-8 (ESV)

**Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the**

## Philippians 2:3-8 (ESV)

<sup>6</sup> form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

## **Acts 6:7 (ESV)**

**And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.**

If you would like to talk to Tad about the sermon, please feel free to call him, email him or friend him on Facebook.



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