

Sympathy and Service

It is generally acknowledged that Jesus is the perfect archetype for the office of elder. It is less frequently recognized that he is also the perfect archetype for the office of deacon. In fact, the fulfillment of any office or role in the church and the use of any spiritual gift finds its perfect example in the life and ministry of Jesus. As a congregation of the PCA, we believe that the office of deacon is “one of sympathy and service, after the example of the Lord Jesus.” (Book of Church Order 9-1.) One of the clearest demonstrations of this aspect of Christ’s ministry is found in these verses. Moved with pity, Jesus healed a leper. Sympathy and service.

In imitation of Jesus, we are called to sympathy and service despite...

1. Dangerous Situations
 - a. Leprosy in the ancient world *Lev. 13-14 (esp. 13:45-46)*
 - b. Jesus was susceptible to all of our infirmities. *Isaiah 53:4; Heb. 2:17; 4:15*
2. Scandalous Associations
 - a. Being ‘unclean’ in the days of Jesus *Luke 11:38*
 - b. Jesus’ consistent engagement with the most objectionable
3. Inconvenient Circumstances
 - a. Our interruptible Savior
 - b. The ‘messianic secret’ and Jesus’ ministerial agenda

Application:

1. Are we committed to sympathy and service despite such things as danger, scandal, and inconvenience?
2. Who is God calling you to be sympathetic to? Who is he calling you to serve today? And what will it cost you?
3. Have you sought Jesus out for deliverance and been touched by Him?