

General Format:

Weeks 1 – 3: Lectures by Prof. Hanko

Weeks 4 – 8: Group Discussions Based on Questions Submitted Prior to the Class Starting

We would encourage you to listen to the principles as well as the discussion as they form a foundation for the answers to the questions

Week 1

Introductory remarks

Reference materials: Belgic Confession Article 31, Church Order Articles 24 - 27 & Commentary, P. Y. DeJong's *The Ministry of Mercy*, Herman Hoeksema's *Reformed Dogmatics*; see also particular commentaries on Acts 6, 1 Tim. 3, Rom. 12:8, 1 Cor. 12:28, Gal. 6:10, 2 Cor. 9:1-7, Exod. 22:22-24, Deut. 14:28-29, 15:7-8, 26:12, Form for the Ordination of Elders and Deacons, and H.

Baumann's *The Office of Deacon* (written in Dutch)

Lecture: Principles of Prophet, Priest, and King

The office of prophet is fundamental

History of the offices

Week 2

Scripture: 1 Timothy 3

Lecture: The Spiritual Character of the Office of Deacon

How is the office of deacon different from the office of all believer?

Comments on the Church Order, various Scripture passages, and Lord's Day 18

Week 3

Scripture: Romans 12

Lecture: The Idea of the Office Is of Mercy

Collecting the alms

1 Timothy 3, qualifications of the office

Week 4

Scripture: John 12

Discussion Questions (Some of this discussion content is difficult to hear)

Relation of the deacons to the congregation and church

What is the pastor's role in instructing deacons?

What is the relationship of the elders to the deacons? May the elders overrule the deacons and destroy the morale of the deacons?

What is the role of an elder in a deacons' meeting?

Should deacons in small consistories vote in discipline cases or go on discipline calls, and may they make motions?

Week 5

Scripture: Deuteronomy 15:1-11

Discussion Questions

Do deacons have a responsibility toward those who fail to give toward the needs of the poor?

What are the specifics implied in "diligently giving alms"?

How can a congregation be most effectively taught the biblical principles of giving aid?

How can a congregation be taught a proper attitude toward the poor?

How can a congregation (individuals in the congregation) be taught to ask for aid when needed?

How do you show the people that they are coming to Christ?

Is it the responsibility of the deacons to teach people to give to the general fund and other causes?

If you can't meet the general fund, do you go to the deacons? Is the general fund a bill or a principle (give as you are able)?

What are good passages to use in deacons' work?

Week 6

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 9

Discussion Questions

How do the deacons determine a true, real need?

May deacons require digging into the finances of those whom they are giving to?

Did God in his providence bring poverty to this family, or does this family need to learn stewardship, or both?

Does tuition fall under need?

What about payments on cars, clothes, furniture, etc.?

What are priorities in family expenses?

Are deacons to encourage a man with a poor-paying job to seek better employment?

What are the responsibilities of families of the poor?

Week 7

Scripture: Psalm 18:13-28

What are some good Scripture passages to use for deacon work?

What is the definition of family? (Go to the family first)

If a pastor is in need, should he go to the consistory or the deacons?

What does "alms not misused" mean?

May deacons become financial advisors and take over a family's budget?

May deacons withhold money to force a family to get it straight?

Week 8

Scripture: Romans 12

Do deacons have an obligation to seek the poor?

Should the deacons go to another congregation to seek money? If so, how should they go? Should they notify their own congregation that they are going to seek funds outside of the congregation?

Why do people find it difficult to go to the deacons for help? Are deacons sometimes at fault for this?

What is the proper relation of the deacons to government programs?