

Deacon says sharing faith, not running the church, his most important responsibility_12604

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RICHARDSON — Deacons at First Baptist Church of Colleyville have taken their eyes off of “running the church” and have focused instead on sharing their faith and serving the church, said Ron Cogburn, deacon chairman.

Cogburn focused on the sharing part of that equation during a workshop on deacon evangelism ministry at the Texas Evangelism and Missions Conference.

Ron Cogburn

Three years ago, Cogburn said, he had been a deacon for 15 years but never had led anyone to Christ. A man experienced in sharing his faith began to teach him. On their first time out visiting, they led three people to

profess faith in Christ.

"I caught the passion," Cogburn said. "I saw how powerful the gospel could be."

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He now seeks to share his faith with every person in whom he has a “meaningful contact.” He trusts the Holy Spirit to prompt him, and Cogburn always begins with a statement and a question that are printed on a small tract: “Jesus is coming! Are you ready?”

“Every deacon should be a soul winner,” Cogburn said.

He cited several things needed to develop an evangelistic deacon body:

- ◆ Decide that soul winning is the most important thing deacons do.
- ◆ Talk about soul winning, not running the church, in deacons' meeting.
- ◆ Make meetings about Jesus rather than finances, the staff and other issues.
- ◆ Follow the example of biblical deacons Stephen and Phillip, who were soul winners.

All difficulties in soul winning “stem from the heart,” Cogburn said.

When something really makes a difference in a person's life, he tells others about it, he said.

Cogburn listed three reasons people are not winning others to Christ.

First, Christians are “not going after lost souls,” he said. Believers should go where non-believers spend time. “We must seek them out.”

Second, Christians “often are not presenting Christ to the sinner,” Cogburn said. If people are to be saved, believers must talk to them about Jesus and about being saved.

Third, Christians who witness often are “not drawing the net,” he said. It's not enough to present Christ; the believer must invite the non-Christian to

receive Christ.

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