**First, Our Sister Phoebe**

1. Paul Closes Letter = W/ Very Personal Section = No Explicit Teaching = But Lot of Names = Personal Info
   1. Not ***Insignificant*** = Paul’s ***Most*** Personal & Intimate ***Chapter*** = Begins ***By Commending*** A Woman
2. **(1)** Our Sister ***In Xp*** = Phoebe = ***Want*** To Take ***Her*** Separate ***From*** ***Rest*** of List = ***Bec***/ Of What ***Says*** @ Her
   1. Verse 1 = ***Created*** Lot of Debate = **Bec**/ Paul ***Calls*** Her = ***Servant*** of Church ***In Cenchreae*** = Deaconess
   2. ***So*** This Verse ***Often*** Quoted ***As Part*** of Debate = ***Much*** of Sermon = ***Put*** Verse ***In Context*** of Debate
3. ***Paul*** Mentions 33 ***People*** = Some ***Represent*** Groups = ***Starts*** W/ Phoebe = ***Who*** Stands ***Apart***
   1. Vs 3-16 ***List*** 24 People ***In Rome*** 🡪 Vs 21-24 ***List*** 8 People ***In Corinth*** = Phoebe ***Arriving*** In Rome
   2. Almost ***Certain*** Phoebe = ***Delivered*** This Letter ***To Church*** In Rome = ***So*** Paul ***Commends*** Her
   3. ***From*** Cenchreae 🡪 ***Eastern*** Port ***of Corinth*** = Probably ***Daughter*** Church = ***Phoebe*** Served ***There***
4. **(1)** Paul ***Expresses*** ***Family*** Connection & Intimacy = ***Refers*** To Her = ***Our*** Sister 🡪 ***So =*** My ***Sister***
   1. We Are ***All*** Xpians = ***Followers*** of Jesus = ***Citizens*** Of Same Kingdom = ***Servants*** of Same King
   2. ***But*** Our ***Relat***/ More ***Than*** That = ***We All*** Share ***Same*** Father = ***Become*** One ***Family*** = Brothers & Sisters
   3. True ***For*** Many Us = ***Just*** As Close—***Closer*** To People ***In Our Church*** Family = ***Than*** Biological ***Families***
   4. ***In Our*** Shared ***Love*** For Lord—***Shared*** Worship & Ministry—***Share*** Our Lives = ***Indeed*** Brothers & Sisters
5. Phoebe ***Clearly*** Trusted ***Sister*** In Xp = ***Who*** Served & Supported ***Paul*** = Who ***He*** ***Entrusted*** W/ His Letter

**Second, Servant’s Heart, Not the Office**

1. ***So*** The Debate = ***Found*** In Simple ***Commendation*** = “***Servant*** of the Church”
   1. ***Word*** Translated ***Servant*** = In Greek = ***Diakonos*** = Same ***Word*** Translated ***Deacon*** = Raises ***Question***
2. Many ***Denominations*** = Like ***Ours***—PCA = ***Believe*** ***Offices*** of Elder & Deacon = ***Limited*** To Men
   1. ***So*** Need ***To Answer*** Question = ***How*** Can ***Believe*** Office ***Limited*** To Men = ***If Phoebe*** Called ***Deaconess***
   2. ***Want*** To Put ***This*** ***Word*** = Broader ***Context of*** Usage & Biblical Teaching = ***Range*** Far Afield ***To Do It***
3. First = ***Diakonos*** = Common ***Word*** = Means = ***Servant*** = Word ***Borrowed*** To Designate ***An Office***
   1. So ***Word*** = Not ***Always*** Refer ***To Office*** = Often ***Simply*** Used ***To Mean*** = Servant = ***Only*** Context ***Tells***
   2. ***For Example*** = John 2:5—"*His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you*.” = Household
   3. Rom. 13:4—***Uses*** Same Word ***To Describe*** Secular ***Gov’t*** Rulers = “*For he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God*”
4. ***Same*** True ***For Word*** Apostle = ***Common*** Word ***Means*** Messenger—***Anyone*** Who ***Is Sent*** = Church ***Borrows***
   1. Phil. 2:25*—"I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need*” = Apostle = ***Common*** Verb & Noun
   2. ***Diakonos*** Commonly ***Used*** = Only ***Context*** Tells Us = ***Whether*** Common ***Usage*** = Or Office ***Intended***
5. 2nd = ***Paul*** Not ***Teaching*** @ Church Offices ***Here*** = Simply ***Describing*** = Phoebe ***Our*** Sister—Servant—Patron
   1. ***Context*** Not ***Conclusive*** = Use ***of Word*** Here ***Literally*** Tells Us ***Nothing*** = Have ***To Look*** Elsewhere
   2. Important ***Rule*** of Interpretation = ***Let*** Clear ***Passages*** Interpret ***Unclear*** Passages = ***This*** One ***Unclear***
   3. ***So*** We Ask ***Question*** = Are There ***Other*** Passages = ***That*** Address ***This*** Topic = ***Shed*** ***Light*** On Meaning
6. ***Answer*** of Course = ***Yes*** = Paul ***Clearly*** Teaches @ ***Church*** Offices = ***Roles*** of Men & Women ***Many*** Places

**Third, Qualifications For Elder & Deacon**

1. Want ***To Briefly*** Examine ***Qualifications*** For Elder & Deacon ***Given In*** =1 Tim 2 & 3—Tit 1 = ***Start W/*** Elder
   1. 1 Tim. 3:2—“*An overseer* [elder] *must be above reproach, the husband of one wife…able to teach*”
   2. 1 Tim. 2:12-14—"*I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. For Adam was formed first, then Eve; and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.” =* Elder ***Able*** To Teach = ***Role*** For Men = ***Grounded*** In Creation
   3. Tit. 1:5-6 “*Elders in every town as I directed you—if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife*”
   4. Little ***Debate*** Among ***Evangelical*** Reformed ***Churches*** =@ Office ***of Elder*** = Less ***Consensus*** On Deacon
2. ***Some*** Of Us ***Think*** Paul ***= Clear*** On Deacon = ***Enough*** Ambiguity = ***Leave*** Room ***For Debate*** = Word ***Deacon***
   1. 1 Tim. 3:11-12—"*Let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless*. *Their* *wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.”*
   2. ***Ambiguity*** In Word ***Wives*** = One ***Word*** Used For ***Wives/Women*** = Only ***Context*** Makes ***Clear***
3. Our Denomination—***Myself*** = Believe ***Text*** Clear = ***Office*** Reserved ***For Men*** = Phoebe = ***Servant*** Not ***Officer***
   1. ***Creational*** Order = ***Clearly*** Taught ***Here*** For Church = ***Mirrored*** In Home =***Principle*** Governs ***These*** Relat
   2. Eph. 5:23—“*The husband is the head of the wife even as* ***Christ*** *is the head of the church, his body*.”
   3. 1 Cor. 11:3—"*But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God*.” = Wants ***Understanding*** = Creational ***Order*** Of Things
4. ***Back To*** Vs 1-2 = ***End of*** **(1)** ***Calls*** Phoebe ***Servant*** =In V 2 = ***Describes*** Her Service = ***Patron*** To Paul & Others
   1. She Is ***Servant*** of Church = ***Welcome*** Her—***Help*** Her = ***Bec***/ ***She*** Served & Helped ***Me*** = Many ***Others***
5. **(2)** ***Help*** Her ***Bec/*** She ***Herself*** = Helped = Word = ***Patron*** To Many = ***Someone*** Who ***Renders*** Assistance
   1. ***Familiar*** W/ Patronage = ***People*** of Means & Wealth ***Who*** Support ***Worthy*** Causes = ***Usually*** Financial
   2. ***Patron*** of Arts = ***One*** Gives ***Generously*** = Promote & Support = ***Phoebe*** Supported ***Paul***—Others
   3. Patron = ***Honorable*** Title = ***Highlights*** Her Generosity & Service = This ***Why*** Called ***Servant*** of Church
6. ***Given*** Paul’s ***Description*** of Her ***Service*** = No ***Need***—***Warrant*** To Assume = ***Held*** Ecclesiastical ***Office***
   1. Though ***Male*** Deacons ***May*** Lead & Serve ***= Need*** Godly ***Women*** To Come ***Alongside =*** Assist ***In Mercy***
7. ***It’s*** Ladies ***Who*** Lead & Serve ***In Many*** ***Ministries*** = Meals—Visitation—Refugee = Women’s—Children AHG

**Finally, A Model For Women In Ministry**

1. As ***I Said*** = Debatable ***Whether*** Our Denomination ***Gets It*** Right = ***When*** Restrict ***Office*** of Deacon ***To Men***
   1. I Think ***We Do*** = Respect ***Those*** Who ***Disagree*** = Humbly ***Recognize*** = All Have ***Something*** Wrong
2. What ***Should*** Be Important ***To All*** Of Us = ***To See*** Godly ***Women*** Leading & Serving ***In Life*** of Church
   1. Women ***Can*** Do Everything ***In Church*** = Unordained ***Man*** Can ***Do*** = Whole ***Landscape*** of Church Life
   2. There Is ***Sense*** In Which ***Every*** Xpian = ***A Deacon*** In Broad ***Sense*** of Word = ***Servant*** of God & Church
3. ***While*** God-Ordained ***Offices*** = Important ***In Life*** of Church = ***Need*** To Be ***Careful*** Not ***Make*** All ***Important***
   1. ***Vast*** Need ***For*** Leadership ***In Church*** =Well ***Beyond*** Elder & Deacon=***Church*** Needs ***Feminine*** Leadership
   2. Gen. 1:27—"*God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them*.” = Men & Women = ***Both*** Image Bearers = ***Church*** Needs ***Both*** To Be ***Healthy***
4. ***NT*** Makes ***Clear*** Men & Women = ***Equal*** Standing ***W/ God*** = Sons & Daughters ***Together*** =Adopted & Gifted
   1. Gal. 3:28—"*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*.” = In Saying ***This*** = Not ***Gender*** Fluid = ***Gender*** Clearly ***Important***
   2. ***Make*** Clear = ***Our Full*** Equality ***Before*** God = ***IOW*** Different ***Roles*** = Not Mean ***Unequal*** Value & Gifting
   3. For ***Example***=Police ***Given*** Role—***Authority*** =Not ***Necessarily*** Better ***People***—Smarter = ***Important*** Role
   4. Women = ***As*** Smart ***As*** Men 🡪 ***As*** Gifted ***As*** Men 🡪 ***Equally*** Important ***Before*** God—***In*** Home—Church
   5. Women ***Have*** Taught Me ***As*** Much ***As*** Men @ ***Sacrificial*** Servant’s ***Heart*** For Christ & His Church
5. Phoebe ***Presented=***Extremely ***Capable*** Woman=***Business*** Woman—***Traveling*** World =Supporting & Serving
   1. ***Whether*** Phoebe ***Held*** Office ***Or*** Not = Obvious = ***Held*** Significant ***Role*** In Life & Service ***of Church***
6. Paul’s ***Commendation*** of Phoebe ***As Servant*** = Reminds Us = ***Broad***—***Rich***—Important ***Role*** of Women
   1. Paul ***Presents*** Phoebe ***To Church*** In Rome = ***As Someone*** Important ***To Him*** = Trusted ***Leader*** In Church
   2. Duncan & Hunt—"*The complementarian position acknowledges that God created men and women equal in being but assigned different—but equally valuable—functions in His kingdom and that this gender distinctiveness complements, or harmonizes, to fulfill His purpose…Complementarians believe that the Bible teaches that God has created men and women equal in their essential dignity and human personhood, but different and complementary in function…God has made us different. He has given certain functions and roles to men, and certain functions and roles to women, that are distinct*.”
7. Church ***Needs*** Strong—Gifted—***Theologically*** Grounded—***Servant***-Hearted ***Women*** To Lead & Serve