

Deacons, Servants of the Church

1 Timothy 3:8–13

1 Timothy 3:8–10 Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, ⁹ holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. ¹⁰ But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. ¹¹ Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. ¹² Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. ¹³ For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Main Point: *Deacons function as servants to the church and examples of Christlike virtue to both the world and the body of Christ.*

Outline

I. Introduction

- A. If elders serve as the spiritual guidance/leadership for the church, the deacons function as servants to the elders and congregation.
- B. The term *deacon* comes from the Greek word *diakonos* which is variously translated in our English copy of Scripture as *deacon*, *minister*, or *servant/serve*.
- C. The origin of the office of Deacon seems to be rooted in an issue which plagued the early church (though there is debate amongst Bible scholars about that point).
 1. The Hellenistic Jewish widows were neglected in the daily serving of food (Acts 6:1).
 2. The Apostles summoned the congregation to select seven godly, reputable men who could serve the church (and these Hellenistic Jewish widows) so that the Apostles would be freed up to minister in the Word and prayer.
 3. Note that the success of the church followed the prudent and intentional actions of the church and its leadership (cf. Acts 6:7).
- D. The success of a church, while ultimately resting in the sovereign hand of Almighty God, depends on it faithfully adhering to the guidance of Scripture, the proclamation of the gospel, and maintaining the proper structure of servants and leadership.
- E. The qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 do not focus on the functions of the deacons within the church as much as the spiritual character of the ones filling the office.
 1. Some believe Scripture teaches the office of *deaconess* based on 1 Tim. 3:11.
 2. The word translated as *wives* should be understood as the wives of the deacons, not another office of deaconess.
- F. If elders are to be the spiritual leaders within the church, what is the function of deacons? Scripture provides us two primary functions of deacons.

II. Functions of the Deacons in the Church

A. Servants

1. Helping the Elders
2. Helping the Assembly

B. Examples

1. To the Outside World
2. To the Believers in the Church

III. Conclusion

- A. The church should carefully follow the guidelines of Scripture which lay out the functions of deacons.
- B. A healthy church will continue to thrive when it's leadership and servants maintain godly attitudes and conduct.

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