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LET THEM SERVE AS  
DEACONS

I TIMOTHY 3:8-13

# THE WORK OF DEACONS

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“IT IS NOT DESIRABLE  
THAT WE SHOULD  
LEAVE THE WORD OF  
GOD AND SERVE  
TABLES.”



## **Terminology** (*diakonos*)

- “probably from an obsolete διάκω diakō (to run on errands); an attendant, i.e. (genitive case) a waiter (at table or in other menial duties)” (STRONG)
- “primarily denotes a “servant,” whether as doing servile work, or as an attendant rendering free service, without particular reference to its character.” (VINE)

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## **Terminology** (*diakonos*)

- Descriptive of work – “*let them serve as deacons (diakoneo, verb)*” (*1 Timothy 3:10*)
- Christ (*Romans 15:8*); Apostles (*Mark 9:35*); Evangelists (*Ephesians 6:21*); Disciples (*John 12:26*); Civil Authorities (*Romans 13:4*)



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## **Terminology** (*diakonos*)

- In an official sense – *Philippians 1:1*
  - “(1) generally of a person who renders helpful service servant, helper (MT 20.26; possibly RO 16.1); (2) as an official in the church; deacon,” (ALGNT)
  - “one who gets someth. done, at the behest of a superior, assistant to someone” (BDAG)

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## **Terminology** (*diakonos*)

- In an official sense – *Philippians 1:1*
  - In Jerusalem – *Acts 6:1-6*
  - In Philippi – *Philippians 1:1*
  - In Ephesus – *1 Timothy 3:8-13*

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## What the Work is Not

- A deacon's work is not preaching/teaching – *Acts 6:2, 4*
  - One who is a deacon can also do the work of preaching and teaching, but his work as a deacon is distinct from that – *Acts 6:5, 8, 10; 8:4-5; 21:8*



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## What the Work is Not

- A deacon's work is not oversight/shepherding – *Acts 6:2* (under apostles); *1 Tim. 3:1, 8*; *Phil. 1:1* (under bishops)
  - “one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master, a servant, attendant, minister” (THAYER)



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## What the Work is Not

- A deacon's work is not oversight/shepherding – *Acts 6:2* (under apostles); *1 Tim. 3:1, 8*; *Phil. 1:1* (under bishops)
  - **Misconception** – elders oversee the spiritual work, and deacons oversee the physical work. (cf. *1 Peter 5:2-3*; *Acts 11:29-30*)

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## **The Work (Acts 6:1-7)**

- To “*serve tables*” (v. 2)
  - (v. 1) – “*daily distribution*” (cf. Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35)
  - (vv. 2-3) – appointed to the “*business*” – *chreia* – “an activity that is needed, office, duty, service” (BDAG)

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## The Work (Acts 6:1-7)

- To “*serve tables*” (v. 2)
  - “*tables*” – which food sat upon, or money (moneychangers).
    - I.e. providing service for physical needs.
- **Generally** – ANY work needing to be done, specially set apart and assigned by the elders to the deacons.



# THE WORK OF DEACONS

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## The Importance of the Work

- Observed in the fact that it is a product of God’s mind – *Ephesians 3:10-11; Philipians 1:1*
- The work relieves others to execute more important spiritual work:
  - **Apostles** – *Acts 6:2, 4; Elders* – *Acts 20:28-31; 1 Peter 5:1-5;*
  - **Preachers** – *1 Timothy 4:12-16*



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## **The Importance of the Work**

- Through relief provided, the word of God is furthered – *Acts 6:2, 4, 7*
  - Anything necessary for the work of the church to be carried out is assigned to deacons by the elders to ensure the efficient execution of the Lord’s will – *Evangelism, Edification, Benevolence*



## THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

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### **Spiritual**

- Full of Holy Spirit (*Acts 6:3*) – *Eph. 5:18; Col. 3:16; Gal. 5:22-23*
- Full of Wisdom (*Acts 6:3*) – *James 1:5; 3:13, 17-18*
- Holding the Mystery of the Faith with a Pure Conscience (*1 Tim. 3:9*) – *1 Tim. 1:19; 3:16; Jude 3*



## THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

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### **Character**

- Of Good Reputation (*Acts 6:3*) – *1 Timothy 3:7*
- Reverent (*1 Timothy 3:8*) – “men of dignity” (*NASB*); “dignified” (*ESV*); “grave” (*KJV*); “serious” (*RSV*)
- Not Double-Tongued (*1 Timothy 3:8*) – *Acts 5:1-11*





## THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

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### **Character**

- Not Given to Much Wine (*1 Timothy 3:8*) – *1 Peter 4:3; 1 Tim. 3:3*
- Not Greedy for Money (*1 Timothy 3:8*) – *1 Timothy 6:9-10*
- Tested (*1 Timothy 3:10*) – *cf. Acts 6:3, 5*
- Blameless (*1 Timothy 3:10*) – no accusation can be sustained.





## THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

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### **Domestic**

- Husband of One Wife (*1 Timothy 3:12*) – faithfully married male.
- Ruling Children and Own House Well (*1 Timothy 3:12*) – *Eph. 5:25-33; Col. 3:21; Eph. 6:4; Col. 4:1; Mark 10 42-45*



## THE QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

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### **Domestic**

- Deacons' Wives (*1 Timothy 3:11*) – Reverent, Not Slanderers, Temperate, Faithful in All Things

# THE EXHORTATION FOR DEACONS

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*1 Timothy 3:13*

Obtain a Good  
Standing

Obtain Great  
Boldness in the Faith

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