



**“It’s not just
changing
light bulbs”**

Deacons Are Not...

- **THE Leaders** — The role of overseer is given to elders alone (1 Peter 5:1–3, Acts 20:28), who wisely delegate authority to others (1 Peter 5:2–4).
- **Only concerned with material things** — While a huge part of what they do is to relieve the pressure on our elders (who must keep their focus on the spiritual health and safety of the flock), we should not view them as merely changers of light bulbs and doers of busy work.
- **More valuable to the church than anybody else** — It can be very tempting to become envious of a deacon if we perceive that it is a position of prestige in the church. Humble service is prestigious in God's eyes (Matthew 20:25ff).



It Is An Essential Office

- *“Deacons, likewise, must be...”* This shows there is a need for care when appointing men to this office. They are not perfect people, but the standard is high.
- Even though a church may exist and function without deacons (or elders or evangelists, for that matter), these men make a church complete. There just seems to be something missing, or “lacking” (Titus 1:5) when offices are left unfilled.

“Men of dignity”

- *“Because a deacon has greater access to people who are hurting and weak, he can more easily exploit them. So Scripture warns us against hasty appointments (1 Timothy 5:22) ” (Minister of Mercy, The New Testament Deacon, Alexander Strauch, p. 94).*
- We cannot take the oft-forgotten quality of “dignity” lightly!

“Not double-tongued”

- James 3:6–10, Ephesians 5:3–6
- “The term plainly prohibits any kind of manipulative, insincere, or deceitful speech. Behind a deceitful tongue is a deceitful mind” (Strauch, p. 97).
- Being honest about personal shortcomings goes a long way toward fulfilling this qualification.

“Not addicted to much wine”

- Warnings against strong drink (Proverbs 20:1, 23:30–35, 31:4–5). Therefore, since *“deacons work with people, often those who are troubled, if a deacon has a drinking problem, he will lead people astray and bring reproach upon the church”* (Strauch, p. 98).
- Some use this as justification for “drinking a little”, but this explanation does not hold a lot of water.



“Or fond of sordid gain”

“Deacons handle money—other people's money, the church's money—and where there is money there is always problems. Money is an irresistible magnet for many people. Some people seek out positions that provide access to money, although they do not admit their true desires. So we must carefully examine a man's financial integrity before he is chosen” (Strauch, p. 99).

“But holding to the mystery...”

- **The “mystery” is clearly the Gospel, as per Ephesians 3:3–6. A deacon must, therefore;**
- **Be able to discuss gospel truths (2 Timothy 2:15);**
- **Explain it to others (1 Peter 3:15);**
- **Be seen as one who is stable, steadfast, and firm (Colossians 1:23).**

“Let them first be tested...”

This testing is prior to their serving. It is not referring to a “trial period” or some kind of invasive, inappropriate inquest, but a definitive investigation of a man’s consistent lifestyle. He must be able to sustain the test of having the eyes of the whole church focused on him. The idea of testing also shows us that we cannot haphazardly confer upon a man the office of deacon. Being a deacon is not a prize, a pacifier for whiny church members, or a tool to manipulate church politics.

Their Families



- *“Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be husbands of one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households” (1 Timothy 3:11–12).*
- Paul puts the issue of a man’s family life at the forefront of the discussion because . . .



- How a man carries himself in the home is directly connected to the rest of his life;
- The office of deacon is a difficult task, and it should not be given to men who have an immediate need in their home (struggling marriage, a difficult chapter in parenting);
- If a man is struggling at home, it opens him up for particular temptations;
- The very word “deacon” means servant, which is the highest calling of all Christians, in every facet of life.

“Those who serve well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus”(3:13).