

## The Requirements of a Deacon

I Timothy 3: 8-13

The deacon is an office that is ordained of God for the church. The deacon's work began because there was a need within the church that the pastors couldn't fulfill within themselves, [Ac.6:1-4](#). Let me say that the office of a deacon should not be entered into lightly. It is a high and holy calling to serve the Lord and His church as a deacon.

The role of deacons has been misunderstood down through the years. It seems as if every church has a different idea as to what deacons are called upon to do. Well, the Bible is very clear as to what is expected of them. Deacons are not ordained to be lords over the church or to set themselves in a position of absolute authority. Deacons are ordained to be servants of the church. The word deacon is translated from a word that means "*a table waiter; a servant; one who tends to the needs of others.*" The word literally means "*to kick up dust.*" It has the idea of one so busy that he creates a cloud of dust as he attends to his work.

I want to share with you from the pages of God's Word what is expected of a deacon in the church of Christ our Lord as we consider: [The Requirements of a Deacon](#). First of all, the work of a deacon is:

**I. A Separated Work** – It seems in our day that many churches no longer look to the Bible in selecting deacons. God has set aside some qualifications that must be met if a man is to serve as a deacon. The world may not like God's requirements, but He has set them forth. This separated work involves a couple of areas, personal and spiritual qualifications.

**A. Personal Qualifications** (8, 12) – [Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; V.12 – Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.](#)

**1. Grave** – The word grave means "*honorable, worthy of respect, pious, and holy.*" It is a character trait that views the work of God in a serious light. It is a man who is respected for his zeal and care for the church and the Lord.

- The deacon is to treat his office with a holy respect and fear of God. The deacon is to guard the interest of the church with all sincerity. It doesn't mean that you can't laugh and enjoy life, but fully understanding the seriousness of the work of Christ. The church's work is eternal business.

**2. Not Doubletongued** – The word literally means "*saying the same word twice.*" It refers to a man who speaks out of both sides of his mouth. Many in our day call it being "*twofaced.*"

Deacons cannot tell one person one thing and another something totally different, regardless of how they may react.

- There is no room for gossip among the church, especially among the deacons. They will hear and be entrusted with things that must keep confidential. A deacon must be a man to whom the church can share its burdens without fear of that conversation being shared with everyone else. The church needs to be able to trust you and depend on what you say. If you make a commitment, you are obligated to stand by it.

**3. Not Given to much Wine** – The deacon is to refrain from the use of alcohol and other abusive substances. He is to be under the control of the Holy Spirit rather than the control of wine.

- Many in our day try to condone social drinking by this verse. The Bible says we are to [abstain from all appearance of evil](#). A man who consumes alcohol isn't qualified to be a deacon. This also applies to anything that would create a stumbling block or hindrance to those who are watching him.

**4. Not Greedy of Filthy Lucre** – The phrase means that deacons are not to seek to make a dishonest dollar. [1 Tim. 6:10 – For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.](#)

**5. The Husband of One Wife (12a)** – [Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife](#). The phrase means “*a one woman man*.” He is to be the husband of one wife and remain faithful to her as long as they both shall live.

- Many believe this to mean one wife at a time and that a polygamist shouldn't be allowed to serve. Polygamy wasn't a problem in the church in Paul's day so it would seem unreasonable to assume that this is what the text speaks of.
- I believe this verse forbids those who have been divorced and remarried to serve as a deacon. God wants those who serve in these offices to be a one woman man in every regard! A man who has not been married but once, and yet is unfaithful to his wife, is not qualified either.

**6. Ruling the Home (12b)** – [ruling their children and their own houses well](#). God ordained the man to be the head of the home. He is responsible for the well being of the home. The deacon should be recognized as the leader of the home and respected as such. He is to be in control of the atmosphere of the home.

**B. Spiritual Qualifications** (9) – [Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience](#). The deacon is to be a man of the Word. He is to be a man who knows the doctrines of the Bible and one who lives them before others.

- There will likely be a time when you will be called upon to stand upon the truth of God's Word. I can't emphasize enough the importance of knowing the Word of God; know what you believe and why you believe it. Let others see your faith in God's Word revealed through the life that you live.

## **I. A Separated Work**

**II. A Serious Work** (10) – [And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless](#). First of all, the candidate must meet God's requirements, but that isn't all that is involved. The work of a deacon is a serious endeavor. Notice we see that:

**A. His Faith Must be Examined** – [And let these also first be proved](#). God is concerned with the faithfulness of those who serve as deacons. They are to be "*proven, tested, or examined*" for the work.

- A deacon must be a man who has had time to mature in the faith. He must not be unfamiliar with the ways of God. The deacon is to serve as an example for fellow believers. There must be clear evidence that the man has been saved and has made a commitment to serve the Lord.

**B. His Faith Must be Exercised** – [Then let them use the office of a deacon](#). This isn't an office that deacons are asked to "fill," it is an office that they are called to [use](#). You are to exercise your faith in Christ through your service to the church. A deacon should seek ways to be of service to the Lord and His people.

- There are far too many who simply fill the role, but don't actually use the role. You are coming on to serve with men who have been a great deal of help to me. They are using the office of a deacon. It will be your obligation to work as these men are in using the office well.

**C. His Faith Must be Enduring** – You are ordained to this office "[being found blameless](#)." That word means "*to be above reproach*." There has been nothing found that could be laid against you in preventing you from serving Fellowship Baptist Church. Ordained men are to live so that there is no opportunity for charges to be brought against them. If for some reason they are brought forth, your life is to be so clean that the charges won't stick.

- A deacon's ordination is just the beginning of living above reproach. He is responsible from that day forward to continue to uphold the qualifications and responsibilities of a deacon. You will stand before God and give an account of the time you served as a deacon. If for some reason you disqualify yourself, the call will still remain. [Rom.11:29 – For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.](#) You are agreeing to a life of service from here on out as long as you are physically able.

## **I. A Separated Work**

### **II. A Serious Work** (10)

**III. A Supported Work** (11) A deacon is set aside to serve the Lord, but he isn't the only one involved in this work. Their wives, if married, are also responsible to meet and uphold certain qualifications and responsibilities. I know ordained men today who are not being used of God because their wives are not willing to support the work God has called them to do.

- Just as the deacon will give an account to God for his service, the wife will give an account of her support as well. You have the privilege of being a great help to the Lord through the support of your husband. God has a word for the wives of deacons as well. They are to be: [1 Tim. 3:11 – Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.](#)

**A. Grave** – This shares the same meaning as that of your husband. You are to be “*honorable, worthy of respect, pious, and holy.*” You are to understand the seriousness of the work that he has been called to do.

- You are to set the example for other women in the church to follow. You will be looked to for spiritual guidance among the women of the church.

**B. Not Slanderers** – You are to be a woman who “*controls her tongue, not a gossip, talebearer, or one who stirs up mischief and disturbances.*” I'm sure there will be occasions when others will press you for information and want to share gossip. In those times you must exercise restraint and refrain from engaging in those conversations.

- Let me say here also that your husband will at times be engaged in some private and maybe even controversial matters. He will not be able to come home after the deacons' meeting and share with you what we have discussed. There is much that is discussed in confidence. You will need to respect that and not push him for information.

**C. Sober** – This means you are to be “*temperate and abstain from wine and abusive substances.*” You are to keep a sound mind with sound judgment.

**D. Faithful in all Things** – This means just what it says, faithful in all things. You are to be faithful to your husband and his work, your family, the church, and the Lord.

- The deacon and his wife are expected to support the church in every area. There will be those who will look to you as an example of faithfulness in the church.

I'm sure that some may be a bit overwhelmed by what I've shared, but the Lord has set these things aside for the good of His church. Serving as a deacon is an exciting and wonderful journey with the Lord. There will be some days of heartache and distress, but there will also be many more good days of blessing and assurance from the Lord.

We will vote on new deacons in a couple of weeks. I have tried to share with you what God requires concerning the office of a deacon. We must appoint men who meet these qualifications. These requirements are strict, but they are of God. I urge you to keep these truths in mind as you pray and seek the Lord's will for our church.