

The Responsibilities of a Deacon

Acts 6:3

We have spent a couple of weeks considering the passages that deal with the office of a deacon. Deacons offer a vital and necessary service within the church. This is not an idea that was arrived at by a committee or council, but of God Himself. If a church is to function as God intended, it must have deacons set aside to serve. I cannot emphasize the importance of godly deacons enough, especially in today's society.

Up to this point we have discussed the Role of the Deacon and the Requirements of a Deacon. We have discovered why they are needed and the guidelines by which they are ordained. This is a very important step in the process of appointing and ordaining deacons, but it is not the final step. Simply identifying the need for deacons and ordaining men as deacons is not all that is required. Once these men are ordained, there is a work to fulfill. In the last message of our study I want to point out: [The Responsibilities of a Deacon](#). Once these men are set aside to serve, there are certain responsibilities that they must meet. When a man is ordained, he is obligated by the Word of God to understand and fulfill these responsibilities. So, let's look at the [Responsibilities of a Deacon](#).

I. The Service of a Deacon ([Acts 6:1-4](#)) – The first responsibility deals with the deacon's service. These few verses reveal several responsibilities.

A. Involves Compassion (1) – [And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations.](#) A very present and urgent need had arisen within the church. Believers were being overlooked and felt as if they were being shunned by their own. The apostles understood that this was a legitimate need and called upon the church to set aside men to meet this need. If these men were to be successful in this endeavor, they had to be men of compassion. There had to be a concern for the need at hand and compassion for that need.

- Deacons have a responsibility to possess compassion. Needs will arise and those needs must be met with compassion. A deacon must possess the ability to feel the pain of others and in turn be compelled to act on that need.

B. Involves Consistency (1) – Division and murmuring had resulted from the issue at hand. There were two different and distinct groups involved in this controversy. The deacons were not charged to take sides or to straighten out the aggressors. They were simply called to meet the needs of the people whomever they may be, Hebrew or Greek. They were to treat each group fairly and with due respect. They had to be consistent in their dealings with the church.

- That responsibility has not changed in 2,000 years. In fact, the church hasn't changed much in many ways. We still deal with particular groups and cliques within the church. Often deacons find themselves feeling pressured to identify with a particular group over another. God has not called the deacon to please people or groups. He has called them to serve the church with a consistent, compassionate spirit.
- Now, I am aware that certain situations and even some people are easier to deal with than others, but there is a responsibility to fairness and consistency when serving the church. Deacons must be consistent in all their dealings, especially concerning the church.

C. Involves Conformity (3a) – Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. We have already dealt with the character that a deacon is to possess. He is to be a **Sound** man, a **Spiritual** man, and a **Seasoned** man. The deacons were expected to conform to the image of Christ. They were expected to continue to mature and grow in the Lord. Simply put, the deacons were expected to provide a spiritual example concerning a life lived for the Lord.

- All Christians ought to desire to conform to the image of our Lord, but the deacon has that responsibility. Your life must be lived in a way that honors and testifies of the goodness of the Lord. The only way this is possible to achieve is through self-sacrifice and dying daily to the flesh.

D. Involves Condescension (3b) – whom we may appoint over this business. Do you remember what the business at hand was? It wasn't being lords over the church. It wasn't a position of prominence and pride. The business they were called to do was waiting tables, serving others.

- A man can't be a servant to others with pride in his heart. A man can't serve the Lord when all he desires is recognition and control. Deacons are responsible to be men of humility. They must be willing to humble themselves in order to serve others. This goes against human nature, but this is the way God ordained it. Pride and arrogance should never be mentioned when someone is speaking of a deacon!

I. The Service of a Deacon (Acts 6:1-4)

II. The Standing of a Deacon (I Tim.3:8-12) – The deacon is also responsible for maintaining his standing with the Lord and the church.

A. Men of Character (8, 10) – Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; And let these also first be proved; then let them

use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. The Lord established some very stringent qualifications concerning deacons. These are not mere suggestions; they are character traits that a man must possess if he is to be ordained a deacon. We have already dealt with these in detail, but we must ensure that those who serve meet these qualifications.

- The ordination is just the first step in a lifetime of service and responsibility. Those who are ordained are obligated to maintain this high level of integrity and character. This is a special office for a special purpose that requires a special type of character. You must live it and maintain it!

B. Men of Conviction (I Tim.3:9) – Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. I have often heard it said that deacons are to be “apt to teach.” That is not biblical; that is a requirement for the pastor. However, the deacon is to hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

- He is to be a man who knows what he believes and why. This verse speaks of his knowledge of the Word of God, its truths and doctrines. He is to be a man who not only knows these great truths, but one who lives them on a daily basis, having a pure conscience. He must be a man who lives his life, in every aspect, according to the precepts of God’s Word.
- Some never take the time to study and apply the Word. Men who refuse to study and apply God’s Word are not qualified to serve. Others may know the Word, but refuse to allow it to control their lives. These too are not qualified to serve. There must be a commitment to truth and conviction.

C. Men of Commitment (12a) – Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife. Keep in mind that this phrase has the idea of “*being a one woman man*.” It reveals a man’s commitment to his wife and family. Marriage takes work. Securing and building a home takes effort. It isn’t always easy, but there must be a determination to stay committed. If a man is not committed to his home, he will not be committed to the church.

- We live in a day where few are committed to anything. They live on a whim, seeking only to satisfy their personal desires. Home and family take a “backseat” to their own desires and wishes. We must seek out those who are committed to serve the Lord and His church.

D. Men of Commendation (12b) – ruling their children and their own houses well. This is something that is definitely needful in the office of a deacon and in our day in general. The deacon must be a man who takes the lead in the home, especially in spiritual matters. The husband ought to be the spiritual leader in the home, a man who desires his family to grow in the Lord and maintain a healthy relationship with Him.

- Now, here is the important aspect of this. He is not to rule with a heavy hand or through fear. He is not to be a man who creates submission by violence or abuse. He is to be a man who lives in such a way that his wife and children are happy and thankful to follow his lead. He

is viewed as a spiritual asset to the family rather than a social dictator. If a deacon doesn't possess the respect of his family, he will never achieve the respect of the church.

I. The Service of a Deacon (Acts 6:1-4)

II. The Standing of a Deacon (I Tim.3:8-12)

III. The Stability of a Deacon (I Tim.3:13) – Lastly the deacon is to be one who creates an environment of stability among the church. He is not to be a tale-bearer or trouble maker. He is entrusted with helping the pastor care for God's people. Let's look at the aspects of this stability.

A. Men of Confidence (13) – For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. Paul speaks of a deacon obtaining for themselves a **good degree**. This is of utmost importance regarding the responsibility of a deacon. It has the idea of "*a grade of dignity and wholesome influence in the church.*"

- In other words, the deacon is to be one who is viewed with the church's interests always at heart. He seeks to preserve unity and peace among the congregation. He is not out to create division or discord among the people. He uses his position as a means of influence for the glory of God and the good of the church as a whole.

- I have known deacons who did not seek a wholesome influence. They sought to promote the agenda of a select and influential few. I urge our deacons to be men of confidence. Carry yourself in such a way that the people will be confident in you and your service!

B. Men of Counsel (13) – The deacon is also to obtain and possess **great boldness in the faith**. The word boldness speaks of "*freedom in speaking, unreserved in speech and without concealment.*" It has the idea of "*free and fearless confidence; one that is bold and courageous.*"

- The deacon must be a man who is able and willing to offer godly counsel to the people. He must be a man who is settled in his faith and willing to stand upon his convictions. He is not afraid or ashamed to take a stand for the Lord and speak openly concerning the good of the church.

- We desperately need godly men of counsel in our day. Far too many have agreed with the world rather than stand for truth. We need men of courage who will defend the church and its people!

C. Men of Christ (13) – All of this is to be performed and carried out through Christ our Lord. It goes without saying that we need saved men to serve as deacons. Also we need those saved men to rise above average in their walk with the Lord.

- I want to leave the deacons of this church with a challenge. The congregation is looking to you to lead and provide a godly example. This is impossible to achieve apart from a close relationship with the Lord.

We will be making a decision soon on whom to place in this holy work. It is not something to be entered into lightly. It is a work that once called, there is no place to sit down or quit.

The deacon is responsible to fulfill these obligations. I trust you have been and will continue to pray about this very important matter regarding our church.