

Lesson 21 Deacons

1. Meaning of “deacon”

The Greek word is διάκονος in its basic form means *service*

2. Official role of deacons

In both **Phil 1:1 and 1 Tim 3**, elders and deacons are grouped together

3. List of qualifications 1 Timothy 3:8-13

8 Likewise deacons *must be* reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,

Διακόνους ὡσαύτως σεμνούς, μὴ διλόγους, μὴ οἶνῳ πολλῷ προσέχοντας, μὴ αἰσχροκερδεῖς,

9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

ἔχοντας τὸ μυστήριον τῆς πίστεως ἐν καθαρῷ συνειδήσει.

10 But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless.
καὶ οὗτοι δὲ δοκιμαζέσθωσαν πρῶτον, εἶτα διακονείτωσαν ἀνέγκλητοι ὄντες.

11 Likewise, *their* wives *must be* reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.

γυναικας ὡσαύτως σεμνάς, μὴ διαβόλους, νηφαλίους, πιστὰς ἐν πᾶσιν.

12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well.

διάκονοι ἔστωσαν μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρες, τέκνων καλῶς προϊστάμενοι καὶ τῶν ἴδιων οἴκων.

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.

οἱ γὰρ καλῶς διακονήσαντες βαθμὸν ἔαυτοῖς καλὸν περιποιοῦνται καὶ πολλὴν παρρησίαν ἐν πίστει τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

I. The Meaning of the Term:

1. General. "Deacon" means waiter, attendant, servant, minister. It is derived from the word "diako" which means to run or hasten. The radical idea of the word "deacon" is active service. In this general sense it includes:
 - a. Evangelists (Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7; I Tim. 4:6).
 - b. Any and every faithful servant of Christ (Jn. 12:26).
2. Special. From the association of the word with the office and work of bishops and elders, it is evidenced that the word "deacon" is used also in an official sense.
 - a. Phil. 1:1. Here bishops and deacons are distinguished from the saints in general.
 - b. I Tim. 3:8-13. Association of an especially qualified group with the elders in this passage indicates a regularly constituted or established office.

II. Their Position and Work as Seen From:

1. The meaning of the word "helper", "minister." In contrast to the word bishop which means "overseer" the deacon is a helper or servant of the Church, working as does every other member of the congregation, under the oversight and in assistance to the bishops of the Church.
2. Acts 6:1-6. From this passage we observe:
 - a. These men were selected to relieve the apostles of secular duties and responsibilities in order that they might give themselves more fully to spiritual matters.
 - b. These men were selected by the congregation and then appointed by the apostles.
 - c. The performance of the work for which they were selected constituted the full measure of special responsibility.

III. Their Qualifications:

1. I Tim. 3:8-13.
 - a. Grave.
 - b. Not double tongued.
 - c. Not given to much wine.
 - d. Not greedy for money.
 - e. Holding the faith in a pure conscience.
 - f. Proved.
 - g. Husband of one wife.
 - h. Ruling their children and homes well.
2. Acts 6:1-6.
 - a. "A man of honest report", a good reputation both within and without the Church.
 - b. "Full of the Holy Spirit," bearing its fruits in his life (Gal. 5:22-24).
 - c. "Full of Wisdom," a man of prudence and sound judgment.