



OURC Deacon Orientation & Training

August 24, 2013

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The Biblical Basics of the Deacon

Rev. Danny Hyde, Pastor

Session #1

The *Idea* of “Offices” in the Church

From the Latin, *officium* (“work”)—an official, appointed task with special duties and dignity

1. *Office in the Old Testament*
2. *Office in the New Testament*
3. *How Do the Old and New Offices Relate?*

The *Nature* of the Office of Deacon

The *Qualifications* for the Office of Deacon

1 Timothy 3:8–13:

Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

1. *The deacon must have self-mastery* (v. 8)
 - He must be master over his behavior, being dignified (ESV), reverent (NKJV), or, worthy of respect (NIV).
 - He must be master over his speech, not being double-tongued (ESV), but sincere (NIV).
 - He must be master over alcohol, not being addicted to much wine (ESV).
 - He must be master over the lure of money. As the various translations say, the deacons must not be greedy for dishonest gain (ESV), must not be pursuing dishonest gain (NIV), and/or must not be fond of sordid gain (NASB). Anyone who desires to be a deacon because it is a good way to supplement their own budget or because they view the church’s budget as an extension of their personal bank account is not fit for office.

2. *The deacon must have orthodox convictions* (v. 9)
 - “The mystery of the faith” means the revealed truths of the person and work of Christ, that is, the basic gospel message (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16).
 - The deacon must not only know the truth but needs to hold it “...with a clear conscience” (cf. 1 Tim. 1:6). Unlike false teachers who have rejected their conscience and shipwrecked their faith (1:19), and who have seared their consciences by disregarding it (4:2), the biblical deacon holds to the truth conscientiously and has no doubts about it.
3. *The deacon must have a tested character* (v. 10)
 - He must be one whose beliefs and life are obvious to the congregation. How this “testing” is applied in the local church is a matter of wisdom, but it is clear that there is to be some period of probation. This makes it clear to the congregation that he is able to fill the office as well as confirms to the nominee that his call comes from God.
4. *The deacon must have an irreproachable home life* (vv. 11–12)
 - His own household must be in order so that no one should be able to look at his family and say, “How is he supposed to care for us if he is not caring for his own family?”
 - This irreproachableness is found in that he must be, just like the elder, the husband of one wife.¹
 - Not only does his own life reflect his being irreproachable, but his wife and children reflect upon him as well. Thus the character of his wife must be taken into account. His wife reflects on him, either positively or negatively. She must be dignified (ESV), reverent (NKJV), and/or worthy of respect (NIV). She must not be a slanderer (ESV), malicious talker (NIV), and/or malicious gossip (NASB). She must be sober-minded (ESV) and temperate (NKJV, NASB, NIV) as well as faithful in all things (ESV), or, trustworthy in everything (NIV). The deacon, then, must manage his children and home well.

Tasks of the Deacon

Michael Spotts

¹ It is not the purpose here to answer definitively where there is biblical support for women deacons. A few points to ponder are:

1. Acts 6:3 uses a word for men that focuses on the idea of “male” rather than the generic “man.”
2. 1 Tim. 3:12 specifies that the deacon “must be the husband of but one wife” and also refers to “their wives” in verse 11.
3. 1 Tim. 2:12 teaches that a woman cannot be an office-bearer since she cannot teach or have authority over a man.

There are, of course, many women in the New Testament who serve their Lord in the setting of the Church. Phoebe is one of these. She is called “our sister...a servant (*diakonos*) of the church in Cenchrea” (Rom. 16:1). Tabitha, also called Dorcas, is called “a disciple...who was always doing good and helping the poor” (Acts 9:36). In Ephesus and perhaps in other Churches there was a “list of widows” who were over sixty and devoted themselves “to all kind of good deeds” (1 Tim. 5:9-10).

Gathering and Managing Offerings

Glenn Wheaton

Session #3

Dispersing Funds

Danny Miranda

Session #4

Benevolence

Ron Lockman

Session #5

Select Bibliography

All these are available for borrowing on the bookshelf in our storage closet.

Elder:

Taking Heed to the Flock: A Study of the Principles and Practice of Family Visitation, by Peter Y. de Jong

The Elder: Today's Ministry Rooted in All of Scripture, by Cornelis Van Dam

The Elders Handbook: A Practical Guide for Church Leaders, by Gerad Berghoef, Lester DeKoster

With a Shepherd's Heart: Reclaiming the Pastoral Office of Elder, by John R. Sittema

Deacon:

Ministries of Mercy: The Call of the Jericho Road, by Timothy J. Keller

The Deacons Handbook: A Manual of Stewardship, by Gerad Berghoef, Lester DeKoster

The Ministry of Mercy for Today, by Peter Y. De Jong

Elder & Deacon:

Called to Serve: Essays for Elders and Deacons, edited by Michael Brown

Handbook for Elders and Deacons, by William Heyns

Church Polity:

The Church Order Commentary, by Idzerd Van Dellen and Martin Monsma (1941 edition; reprinted by Credo Books, 2003)