

Scriptural Elders and Deacons

The Work and Qualifications of Scriptural Deacons, the Qualifications of Elders' and Deacons' Wives, Duties of the Church toward Elders, and Plans and Procedures for the Appointment of Elders & Deacons

1 Timothy 3:8-13

What Is A Deacon?

- Deacons are skilled servants in the work of the local church.
 - Diakonos - Literally “Through dust”; verb form: “To raise dust by hastening; to hasten after, pursue. From an obsolete diako (to run on errands; an attendant, a waiter at table or in other menial duties; specially, a Christian teacher, deacon, minister, servant” (Strong's 1249)
 - A deacon is a servant in relation to his work; a slave is a servant in relation to his master.
- Practically speaking: one that promotes the welfare and prosperity of the local church by carrying out tasks assigned by the elders.

What Is A Deacon?

- It has been falsely assumed in the church that the elders oversee the spiritual needs of the church and the deacons oversee the physical needs. Incorrect. Elders oversee all needs of the church, and deacons serve them in the work.
 - Deacons are not given oversight; they are given tasks.
 - The diakonate is a ministry, not a position.
 - 1Tim. 3:13 - “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.”

What Does A Deacon Do?

- First assigned to look after the poor.
 - Acts 6:1-4 - “Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. 2 Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. 3 Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; 4 but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

What Does A Deacon Do?

- Often, deacons were teachers.
 - Stephen and Philip of Jerusalem - Acts 6
 - Epaphroditus of Philippians 2
 - One would be a great asset to the local church as a deacon in the capacity of teacher.

What Does A Deacon Do?

- He can teach new converts' classes.
- He can teach wayward Christians about faithfulness.
- He can conduct Bible classes in the homes of shut-ins.
- He can help with Gospel meeting preparation.
- Be alert to the physical and financial needs of widows and shut-ins.
- He can go out and teach and preach where needed if he has the ability.

The Qualifications Of A Deacon

- From Acts 6:3
 - Man
 - Known for his honesty
 - Full of the Holy Spirit
 - Wise

The Qualifications Of A Deacon

- From 1Tim. 3:8-13
 - Grave - Serious and dignified
 - Not double-tongued
 - Not given to much wine
 - Not greedy for money
 - Not a holder of false doctrines
 - Not a novice
 - Blameless
 - Husband of one wife
 - Ruling children and his own house well

The Benefits Of Becoming A Deacon

- 1Tim. 3:13 - “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.”
- Pleasing the Lord,
- Personal fulfillment and growth,
- Develops courage and experience to become an elder one day,
- Service to others as per the example of the Lord.

Godly Wives Of Elders & Deacons

- 1Tim. 3:11 - “Likewise their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.”
- Gen. 2:20 - “...But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.”

Godly Wives Of Elders & Deacons

- A good woman can make of a man more than he would ever be alone.
 - 1Sam. 1:22-23 - “But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, Not until the child is weaned; then I will take him, that he may appear before the LORD and remain there forever. 23 And Elkanah her husband said to her, Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him. Only let the LORD establish His word. So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him.”

Godly Wives Of Elders & Deacons

- A bad woman can be the undoing of the best of men.
 - Judges 16 - Delilah's influence on Samson

Godly Wives Of Elders & Deacons

- The wife of an elder or deacon:
 - Can support and encourage him in this difficult work, thus enhancing his service to the congregation.
 - Can by her example, set a model of behavior for other women.
 - Can damage his influence.
 - Can dominate the congregation by trying to rule through him.
 - Can destroy the good name of other disciples with the access she has to sensitive information.

Godly Wives Of Elders & Deacons

- Being the wife of an elder or deacon carries with it no significance other than she is held to a higher standard than other women.
- She has no office in the church; in position, she has no more standing than any other member.
- Yet she will live the same fishbowl existence that is experienced by the wife of a preacher.
- She will not be thanked for the extra effort she will expend, and she will often be the object of hurtful things said about her husband's work.

Qualifications

- Grave, reverent
 - Prudent, dignified, of sound judgment; not giddy or foolish
 - Prudent in attire
 - 1Tim. 2:9-10 - “In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing, 10 but, which is proper for women professing godliness, with good works.”

Qualifications

- Not slanderers, not double tongued
 - No slander is ever pleasing to God. Gossip will destroy a church; it is an audible form of malice, and without exception it is a sin.
 - James 3:5 - “Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!”
 - 1Peter 3:10 - “For He who would love life And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips from speaking deceit.”

Qualifications

- Sober, temperate
 - Self-controlled, self-possessed, calm and even-tempered to the extent that she can credibly teach others.
 - Titus 2:3-4 - “The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things-- 4 that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”

Qualifications

- Faithful in all things
 - In how many areas of life and duty? ALL!
 - In the home - Eph. 5:22-23, 33; Titus 2:3-5
 - In the church - 1Tim. 2:12; Heb. 10:23-26
 - In the community - Matt. 25:34-40
 - She manifests the characteristics of the worthy woman of Proverbs 31:10-31

Duties Of The Church Toward The Elders

- Know the elders.
 - *1Thes. 5:12 - “And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you.”*
- Esteem the elders highly in love.
 - *1Thes. 5:13 - “And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.”*
- Be submissive to the elders.
 - *Heb. 13:17*

Duties Of The Church Toward The Elders

- Be at peace among yourselves.
 - *1Thes. 5:13*
- Obey the elders.
 - *Heb. 13:17*
- Do not rebuke an elder, but speak to him as a father.
 - *1Tim. 5:1 - “Rebuke not an elder, but entreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren.”*

Duties Of The Church Toward The Elders

- Do not accept an accusation against an elder except by the testimony of witnesses.
 - *1 Tim. 5:19 - “Do not receive an accusation against an elder except from two or three witnesses.”*
- Remember and imitate the elders.
 - *Heb. 13:7 - “Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.”*

Duties Of The Church Toward The Elders

- Count the elders worthy of double honor
 - *1 Tim. 5:17-18* - “Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. 18 For the Scripture says, You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”
- Call on the elders when in need
 - *James 5:14* - “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.”

Plans And Procedures

- “Study To Show Yourselves Approved”
 - We have had scripture based sermons on scriptural elders and deacons over the last few weeks. You were encouraged to study these things for yourself at home and to ask questions if you had any doubts or misunderstandings.

Plans And Procedures

- “Look Out Among Yourselves”
 - For the next few weeks, members are asked to consider the qualifications of elders and deacons and to look within this congregation for men who meet those scriptural requirements. Write the names of these men on paper along with a brief statement of why you believe these men are suited to this office. Sign this paper and submit it to Paul Blake. To avoid secret selections and vetoes, no unsigned recommendations or anonymous objections will be considered.

Plans And Procedures

- “Let Each One Examine His Own Work”
 - The men who were named by the congregation and who meet the qualifications of elders and deacons will be asked if they desire the office and if they believe they can fulfill all of the responsibilities of that work. Paul Blake in his capacity as an evangelist, will attend to this task with the assistance of faithful brethren as witnesses.

Plans And Procedures

- “Recognize Those Who Labor Among You”
 - These names will be placed before the congregation for a brief period of time to allow all members to consider whether or not there is a Biblical objection to their appointment. If there is a scriptural reason why any of these men should not serve, those who have the objection will go with Paul Blake to the man against whom they hold the objection and talk to him about it. Only if it is a valid, scriptural objection will he be asked to remove his name from consideration. Personal, secret, or anonymous objections will not be considered.

Plans And Procedures

- “Set In Order The Things That Are Lacking And Appoint Elders.”
 - Those men whose names remain under consideration at this point will be ordained at a Sunday morning worship service, and will serve as elders and deacons of this local church until such time as they are no longer capable of filling that office.