

## The Foundation of Serving the Church: Scriptural Considerations for Deacons

- Let's all remember, throughout this study we have tried to be sure to focus on the service to the Body of Christ instead of positions!
  - Pride and error come in when we focus on "titles and positions" rather than functions of service!
- I. First let's consider word meanings and services to formulate our understanding of the ministry of deacons!
- A. In the references most sighted concerning deacons we find the Greek "diakonos."
1. It means "a servant or minister."
  2. It refers to "any person performing a service," an administrator.
  3. In language usage it comes in both masculine and feminine forms.
  4. In context usage it refers to a person who "carries out the inspiration and ministry of God's plan for His people."
  5. Here is something interesting! In cultural usage, it means, "to kick up dust as one running an errand!"
- B. There are multiple scriptures throughout the N.T. where this word "diakonos" can be found!

Matthew 20:26 (NLT)

26 But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant,

Mark 9:35 (NLT)

35 He sat down, called the twelve disciples over to him, and said, "Whoever wants to be first must take last place and be the servant of everyone else."

John 2:5 (NLT)

5 But his mother told the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Romans 16:1 (NLT)

1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a deacon in the church in Cenchrea.

1 Corinthians 3:5 (NLT)

5 After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God's servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us.

2 Corinthians 3:6 (NLT)

6 He has enabled us to be ministers of his new covenant. This is a covenant not of written laws, but of the Spirit. The old written covenant ends in death; but under the new covenant, the Spirit gives life.

Ephesians 3:7 (NLT)

7 By God's grace and mighty power, I have been given the privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News.

Philippians 1:1 (NLT)

1 This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. I am writing to all of God's holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus, including the church leaders[a] and deacons.

Colossians 1:23 (NLT)

23 But you must continue to believe this truth and stand firmly in it. Don't drift away from the assurance you received when you heard the Good News. The Good News has been preached all over the world, and I, Paul, have been appointed as God's servant to proclaim it.

II. The beginning of what we call "the deacon ministry" can be found in Acts as the church was being established and began to grow!

Acts 6:1-4 (NLT)

1 But as the believers[a] rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food. 2 So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. They said, "We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. 3 And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility. 4 Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word."

A. First, notice how the two "gifts of service" to the church complimented each other!

1. The obvious intention was to care for the physical and practical needs of the church so that lives could be touched with The Gospel of Jesus Christ!
2. The deacons were to assist the elders, who would later take over much of the ministry of the apostles, with many of the necessary functions of ministering to people with The Gospel!
3. The Church inherited the charitable practice of the Jews.
4. Each Friday in every community official "collectors" went around (named Lee and William) collecting donations for the poor and needy.
5. This fund was called the "kuppah or the basket!"

B. The service of deacons are mentioned more than 30 times in the scriptures!

1. Each time it refers to service, administering outreach and serving the Church!
2. Stop and think of all the functions of the early church and of ministry today!
3. Notice what activities “make the world go around” in the life of the Church!
4. In one place “qualifications of a deacon” are mentioned.
5. It states that “deacons are to be honest and not greedy!”
6. This is practice because they were the ones handling donations and distributing assistance!!!
7. Another place it says they are to be “full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom”!! So, they will know when and how to assist!

C. We can now begin to see and understand the ministry to The Church!

1. We all are “gifted by The Spirit” for service to others!
2. God has gifted some to lead, some to preach, some to encourage and others to serve and still others to discern and give!
3. All of these functions work well when we are submitted to one another and lead by The Holy Spirit!