

Title: Deacons: Servants for God's Glory

Passage: 1 Timothy 3:8-13

Draft Summary:

Passage

- Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Application:

- We should always seek to be a deacon.
- We should receive instruction to serve as an encouragement to do so.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What are some ways you can serve the body of Christ at Trinity? (would serving in some way to support this year's VBS be an option?)
 - What next steps will you take in response to the sermon?
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Passage:

1 Timothy 3:8-13 (NASB)

"Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus."

EXPOSITION

Introduction

Church leadership - is key in the life of the church.

Deacons

- one of two offices that lead the church (elder/overseers/pastor, deacon)

- Word (deacon) = servant, one who ministers, one who cares for others.

Philippians 1:1

Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus,

To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:

- deacon = position of servant hood.

1 Timothy 3

Acts 6 (prototype of office of deacon)

- Problem arose in the church.
- Solution was to choose 7 people to serve.

Acts 6:1-7

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

1 Timothy 3

- 30 years later, this letter was written. The position of deacon in church leadership is referenced.
- Problem: people chosen as leaders who are not properly qualified.
- Solution: Good theology will always influence the church in good practice. Good theology is exemplified by good leaders.
 - Leaders should be chosen by character (not by external competency or gifting)

Overview

I. Qualifications for Deacons

II. Rewards for Deacons

III. Responsibilities for Deacons

I. Qualifications for Deacons

A. Dignified

Deacons likewise must be men of dignity,

- dignified = honorable

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

- there are no insignificant jobs in the church.

Colossians 3:23

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,

B. Be Sincere, Not Double-Tongued

not double-tongued

- guard one's mouth and ears as serve others.
- Be aware and wise against gossip (information where you are not part of the problem nor the solution) as well as how much of the truth to share.
- Question: Is who you are sharing with part of the problem or the solution (if not, then don't share)?
- Question: is what you are sharing promote unity/Christ-likeness?

C. Not Given to Addiction

or addicted to much wine

- Be discerning of how pleasures are met.

D. Not Fond of Sordid Gain

or fond of sordid gain,

- Be content with what they make.
- Not materialistic.

2 Corinthians 8-9

- giving cheerfully, wisely and with accountability

2 Corinthians 9:13

By their approval of this service, they will glorify God because of your submission that comes from your confession of the gospel of Christ, and the generosity of your contribution for them and for all others,

E. Be Spiritually Astute

but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

- Question: are you a good theologian or a bad one?
 - We are all theologians (whether look at God and accept all that He says He is and what He does or reject it)
- *mystery of the faith*
 - Meaning = Gospel of Jesus Christ

Romans 16:25-26

Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but has now been disclosed and through the prophetic writings has been made known to all nations, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith

- must have a full understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

F. Be Tested and Proven

These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if

- Having had a history of service, a record of proven character.
- fully and properly evaluated by the church

G. Unblameable

they are beyond reproach.

H. One-Woman Man

Deacons must be husbands of only one wife

- Happily married or happily single and not flirtatious.

I. Good Father

good managers of their children and their own households.

Women as deacons

Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.

Why female deacons allowed:

1. ***Passage itself points to female deacons.***
 - distinction: not referring to deacon's wives but women separately.
 - "Their wives" is not in the original Greek but added in certain translations.
 - Grammatically - "likewise"
 - "Deacons likewise..."
 - "Women must likewise..."
 - No reference to elder's wives. Therefore, passage points to female deacons.

Romans 16:1-2

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

- Phoebe was a deacon
2. ***Scripture nowhere forbids women to be deacons.***

- The Bible forbids women to be elders but no such prohibition with reference to the office of deacon.
3. **Church history**
- Key leaders throughout history affirmed and allowed female deacons.

Female deacons - characteristics

Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.

- dignified
- Not malicious gossips
- Be trustworthy

II. Rewards for Deacons

For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus."

A. Recognition from people around them.

obtain for themselves a high standing

B. Recognition from God.

- God's affirmation for God's design for your life.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

III. Responsibilities of Deacon

- Spotting practical needs and meeting them efficiently.
- Elders lead ministry, deacons facilitate ministry, the church does ministry.

Romans 12:9-10

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Outdo one another in showing honor.

APPLICATION

If a Christian, we should always seek to be a deacon.

- Deacon means serving, which is the calling for all Christians.

Mark 10:43-45

But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Philippians 2:3-11

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

If a Christian, receive instruction as encouragement to serve. (not conviction)

John 13:13-17

You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

- Jesus served regardless of those being served. (They all would later abandon with one to betray Him)
- Jesus served regardless of His position

Matthew 25:37-40

Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' And the King will answer them, Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.'