

GSM

Qualifications for Deacons

I. Deacons

- A. Deacons are to keep the spiritual wine flowing. They are to do the practical matters of the ministry so the Pastor/bishops/elders can devote themselves to prayer and ministry of the Word. This does not mean they cannot minister the Word to others. They can minister the wine themselves.
- B. Those who serve God in the church have qualifications they must strive for. God puts character above ability or function.
- C. Deacons are in leadership compared to the congregation who are not. If a Christian will not strive towards these qualifications they may be in the congregation but they should not be put in as a deacon or leader. Being in the congregation will mature them so that they can serve.
- D. Bishops and elders arise from among the deacons. The Pastor arises from the bishops/elders.
- E. There are no listed qualifications for apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, or teacher. This is because they all arise from the bishops/elders, which in turn come from the deacons. The five fold ministry gifts have the same qualifications of character as a bishop does.

II. 1 Timothy 3:8

- A. Likewise- deacons have qualifications also.
- B. These characteristics should be seen in a person **BEFORE** they are put into the deacon position
- C. These qualifications should be present to promote a deacon to bishop/elder. A bishop should have these qualifications. The office of deacon is where you are to see these qualities. If they do not meet these they should not be a bishop/elder.
- D. Must be reverent- Gr. **semnos**- *dignified, admirable*. This word is the root word for worship. This means having characteristics that are admirable. Deacons should be admired by those around them.

- E. Not double tongued-Gr. **dilogous**- *speaking two things*; double speak- This means to say something to one person to gain approval and then say something different to another person to get their approval. This kind of man is like a wave in the sea. He is like a chameleon. Someone who is double tongued makes a good politician but a poor deacon. This is important that deacons not be double tongued because they are the closest to the people. Often the congregation disagrees with leadership and complains to the deacons. A double tongued deacon will agree with and sympathize with them against leadership, but to the leadership they give lip service to their allegiance to them. This kind of behavior causes strife and undermines authority.
- F. Not given to much wine- Gr. **me oino pollo prosechontas**- *“not holding the mind towards wine”*. Addictions begin in the mind. Drinking wine is not prohibited but they are not to be given too much wine. It is wise to abstain totally from alcohol however.
- G. Not greedy of gain- Gr. **me aischrokerdes**- *“not seeking dishonest or shameful gain”*. Deacons often were in charge of distributing goods or funds to the poor. They are not to steal small amounts as Judas did. They were not to swindle finances from the congregation in secret.

III. 1 Tim 3:9

- A. Holding the mystery of the faith
1. Holding- Gr. **echontas**- *“having in one’s possession and using its principles”*
 2. The mystery- Gr. **ho musterion**- *“that which has long been hidden but now revealed to one who is initiated.”*
We become initiated by receiving Jesus. Deacons need to be grounded in NT truths of grace and faith. The term mystery refers to the church and its doctrines. Deacons should be able to minister the truth to those they serve. Those visiting the widows and sick should be able to minister the spiritual wine when needed. Young believers should not be put in a significant place where ministry of the Word is needed.

3. Of the faith- Gr. **tes pisteos**- *The body of Christian doctrine.*
- B. With a pure conscience
1. Pure- Gr. **en kathara**- *“cleansed of what defiles and is impure”*
 2. Conscience- Gr. **suneidesai**- *“to know together- co-witness”*- That inward voice which compares what we do to what we know and believe and lets us know when they don't balance. Conscience correlates what you do to what you know and believe. If you taught wrong you conscience will be weak. [**1 Cor. 8:7**] Ex. Not eating meat. You can strengthen your conscience by renewing your mind to the Word of God.
 3. Whatever is not of faith is sin. [**Romans 14:23**]
 4. A leader should have a clear conscience. They should be living according to what they believe and profess and have a good conscience.
 - a. Paul lived with a clear conscience- [**Acts 23:1; Acts 24:16**]
 - b. The conscience can be damaged and even seared if it is not heeded.
 5. [**1 Tim. 1:5**] The goal of our teaching should lead to a good conscience. Good- agathos- divine good, intrinsic good. The goal of solid NT instruction is to give the saints a inward barometer to gauge their actions according to God's will, not the teachings of man, or our own will.

IV. **1 Tim. 3:10**

- A. Let them first - first priority
- B. Proved- Gr. **dokimazo**- *“to examine in order to approve as genuine”*. Those in the congregation should be positively examined for genuine Christian character which comes from faith in the NT doctrines of grace. Look for faithfulness. Don't decide on what someone says but by examining what they do. This takes some time for those who are new.
- C. Let them serve as deacons- Gr. **diakoneitōsan**- *“to serve as a deacon”*.

- D. Being found- Gr. **ontes**- “*being*”
- E. Blameless- Gr. **anegkletos**- “*without legal accusation; without a formal and valid accusation*”

V. 1 Tim 3:11

- A. Wives- Gr. **gunaikes**- This word means *women or wives*.
- B. In context this speaks of deaconesses. There are no qualifications for bishop/elder wives. Women did function in the position of deaconess. Ex. Pheobe- **[Romans 16:1]**
- C. A deaconess should be grave- Gr. **semnas**- “*admirable or respectable*”
- D. Not slanders- Gr. **diabolous**- “*one that accuses to divide*”; they should not be devilish. They are not to participate in slanderous gossip. Gossip in leadership is deadly. You have to get a handle on this if you have trouble with it!
- E. Sober- Gr. **nephalious**- “*without wine*”- This means to be clear headed and vigilant in prayer
- F. Faithful in all- “*trustworthy*” in all things

VI. 1 Tim. 3:12

- A. Husbands of one wife- “*one wife at a time*”; admonition against polygamy.
- B. Ruling their children- Gr. **proistameno**i- “*standing out front as an example and leader*”
- C. Own houses- Gr. **oikos**-“*household*”
- D. Well- Gr. **kalos**- “*nobly*”

VII. 1 Tim. 3:13

- A. Used the office of a deacon well- “*served as a deacon nobly*”
- B. Purchase- **Gr. peripoieo** - “*to acquire for oneself; purchase for one’s own use*” Middle voice in Greek.
- C. Good standing- Gr. **kalos**; “*noble*”; **bathmos**- “*a step up*”. In the Greek agora- market place- there was a small podium called a bathmos. This small podium was purchased by ones wanting to make announcements or to advertise. It was a custom from time to time that the bathmos would be purchased by the general public to

place a notable servant of the community that was commended by his good deeds to speak to the people and provide encouragement and practical help. Paul used this picture for one who served well by their lifestyle. Their own acts of service purchase or acquire for them a step up. This speaks of a **promotion** to elder/bishop.

- D. Great boldness in the faith- Gr. **pollen**- “much”; **parresia**- “*freedom to speak*”. This promotion puts them in a place where they are free to speak and teach. This allows them to teach with their mouths and not only by their actions. Elders were promoted from the deacons.

VIII. Promotion and growth comes through using what you have now.

- A. [**Matthew 25:14**]- The master gave his talents- Gr. **talanton**- [*gifts*] according to their ability.
- B. When the master came back two of the servants had more than what they had first received. Their capacity grew with use. Their talents and gifts grew.
- C. One servant did nothing with the talent but hid it in the earth- covered it by living in the flesh. They did not value it. It was just a little gift. He did not realize that the little he had would have grown if you would have used it.
- D. [**Luke 19:13**]- The master gave them pounds- Gr. **mina** [*a certain weight*]- figurative for positions of authority
- E. Those who were faithful with their small weight, they were given a greater weight.
- F. He put the faithful ones over **cities**.
- G. When we use our small gifts and talents they grow. When we use our small weights of authority they will be increased.