

**Character Counts**  
**Acts 6:1-7 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13**  
**October 23, 2022**

*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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup> 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;<sup>4</sup> but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”<sup>5</sup> And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch,<sup>6</sup> whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.<sup>7</sup> Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.* **Acts 6:1-7**

*<sup>8</sup> Likewise deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money,<sup>9</sup> holding the <sup>[m]</sup>mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.<sup>10</sup> But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless.<sup>11</sup> Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not <sup>[s]</sup>slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.<sup>12</sup> Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.<sup>13</sup> 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.* **1 Timothy 3:8-13**

**DEACON**—Anglicized form of the Greek word *diaconos*, meaning a “runner,” “messenger,” “servant.” For a long period, a feeling of mutual jealousy had existed between the “Hebrews,” or Jews proper, who spoke the sacred language of Palestine, and the “Hellenists,” or Jews of the Grecian speech, who had adopted the Grecian language, and read the Septuagint version of the Bible instead of the Hebrew. This jealousy early appeared in the Christian community. It was alleged by the Hellenists that their widows were overlooked in the daily distribution of alms. This spirit must be checked. The apostles accordingly advised the disciples to look out for seven men of good report, full of the Holy Ghost, and men of practical wisdom, who should take entire charge of this distribution, leaving them free to devote themselves entirely to the spiritual functions of their office (Acts 6:1–6). This was accordingly done.”<sup>1</sup>

**DEACON** (διάκονος, *diakonos*, “servant”). One who serves in an official capacity in the church as a deacon (compare Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8–13; possibly Rom 16:1). The office of deacon may parallel the role of the assistant (חָזַן, *chazzan*) of the synagogue (Burtchaell, *From Synagogue to Church*, 317–21; compare *m. Sukkah* 4:4; *Sotah* 7:7).

There are two primary classes of church leadership offices in the New Testament: that of the overseer and elder, and that of the deacon (Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:1–13). Deacons do not hold teaching

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<sup>1</sup> Easton, M. G. (1893). In [\*Illustrated Bible Dictionary and Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature\*](#) (pp. 187–188). New York: Harper & Brothers.

or ruling authority in the church, but exercise responsibility for the physical needs of the congregation.

The necessity for the Deacon was to primarily meet the needs of the Church and then supporting the ministry of the Word, a partnership.

### **Deacons**

Not gossipers

Reverent

Not given to much wine.

Not greedy

Hold mystery of faith with pure conscience.

One wife

Ruling their own house.

### **Wives**

Reverent

Not slanderers

Temperate

Faithful in all things.

A deacon is a “server.” I see many men in our Church that fit this description.

This is where our study of the New Testament brings us, and I find it interesting and wonderful timing as we are in need of Deacons. We have deacon applications in the back, who might the Lord have you to grab a form and place it in the hand of a potential Deacon?

### **Prayer Focus:**

- How can I serve God’s Church?
- Men, Would the Lord have me serve as a Deacon?
- Congregation, who would the Lord lay on your heart to serve as a Deacon?