

A FAITHFUL DEACON

Acts 6:1-8
I Tim. 3:8-13

From these Scriptures we learn that: --

1. Office of deacon is of divine origin.
2. Qualifications for this office are very high.
3. Work of this office is very important.
4. Office is position of divine trust and responsibility.
5. Deacon has unlimited opportunity to serve Christ and His church.
6. Great prosperity comes to cause of Christ when deacons discharge their sacred duties fully and faithfully.
7. Loyal and faithful deacons win for themselves a crown of glory.

The word "deacon" comes from Greek word "diakonos." Meaning is servant. Servant view is confirmed by circumstances of origin. In church at Jerusalem, new duties and responsibilities arose that overtaxed time and strength of apostles. Needed servants to relieve them of details that they might be free to give themselves to study and ministry of word. Thus office called into existence by specific and manifest need of service. Particular need passed, but not office. It was perpetuated, but under different circumstances and for different services.

Deaconship involves idea of service. It is distinctly a call to serve. Deacons are servants of church. Elected with view to service. Office is not just a post of honor, but a medium of service. If deacon conceived of his office as place of personal honor and authority, he has taken first step toward making himself disagreeable to his co-laborers and hinderer of work of church. Deaconship dishonored when regarded as post of honor rather than medium of service. First Church, Wichita, ceased to ordain deacons. Certificate for retirement or elevation to church boss. Congratulate you upon election. Make ordination a significant event in life of church, one makes abiding impression on all here. Not get any salary, but will get little praise, and a lot of criticism. Hope be good men, loyal to Christ and faithful to church. Talk about three things: ---

I. What You Should Be.

1. Men of Christian character.

A Christian -- experience of grace -- saved. Also a man of well-developed Christian character.

2. Men of good reputation.

"Men of honest report." Unblemished reputation among church members and others. Must have reputation as well as character. Circumstances amid which live determine reputation; truth believe determines character. Reputation is what supposed to be; character is what you are. Reputation is photograph; character is face. Reputation comes over one from without; character grows up from within. Reputation will enable you to get position; character enables you to keep it. Reputation makes you rich or poor; character makes you happy or miserable. Deacon must have reputation for honesty. If unreliable in discharge of personal obligations should not be entrusted with Lord's business. Be noted for keen sense of honor and promptness in meeting obligations. That will inspire confidence. Conduct be such as to command respect. Not honest and pay debts bring dishonor to church and reproach upon Christ.

3. Men of genuine piety.

"Full of the Holy Spirit." Religion is indispensable to a deacon. Can't get along as should without it. Cash not take place of Christ. Man of prayer -- in secret, at home, in church. Avail himself of spiritual enrichment afforded by mid-weekk prayer service. One church quit having prayer meeting service. Ill. Consider it duty to be present. Spirituality is always valuable asset with deacon. If man of prayer and consecration, will have stronger and more wholesome influence with membership.

4. Men of wisdom.

"Full of wisdom." Not literary men, not college graduates, but men of good common sense. Filled with that divine wisdom which gives a peculiar insight or understanding. Piety is not only requisite. Known godly men in whose ability to direct business affairs do not have confidence.

5. Men of sound judgment.

Plenty of good common sense. Need gumption as well as grace. Needs sense. Ability to see proposition from all angles. Need sense to understand conditions, meet emergencies, and solve problems. Promote harmony rather than cause friction and discord.

6. Men of exemplary deportment.

Obligated to set worthy example for other members.
Influence multiplied in official position.

(1) Serious-minded. "Be grave."

No, not graveyard men. Not long face. Not think it a sin to smile. Cause people to draw wrong conclusion. Boy and mule. Long face not mean one long on religion; maybe short on faith and grey matter. Deacon be able to tell clean joke and be happy. "Grave" signifies gravity or weight. Deacon should be a man who counts; whose support of cause will be a distinct asset. World may take religion as joke, but deacon must not do so. Serious men, not frivolous.

(2) Truthful. "Not double tongued."

Not say one thing to one man and another. Say what mean and mean what you say. Word as good as bond. Honestly not called in question. Men who do what say. Not two faced.

(3) Sober. "Not given to much wine."

Intemperance brings disgrace on church. Be a total abstainer. If going to represent and lead a church, temperance is essential.

(4) Lacking in covetousness.

"Not greedy of filthy lucre." Stinginess disqualifies for deaconship. Right to make money is right way and us it for God's glory, but never can all you get. Covetousness is a deliberate crime, and no criminal should be a deacon.

(5) Orthodox.

"Holding the mystery of faith in a pure conscience." Must believe right or cannot live and do right. Be rooted and grounded in the faith.

(6) Not a polygamist.

"Husband of one wife." Not mean that must be married. Not have more than one wife. Most husbands convinced that one is a plenty.

(7) Blameless. "Blameless."

Dictionary says means, "free from fault." Not mean perfect -- preacher had letter from mother filled with misspelled words and grammatical errors. Very defective but blameless. She did best she could. Is that not meaning?

7. Men of tact.

Sanctified common sense. Barber. Have level heads and use tact in dealing with many problems: --

- (1) Trouble between members.
- (2) Dissatisfaction with pastor.
- (3) Work of young people.

Time is great solvent.

8. Men of vision.

Take long look into future. Plan challenging program. Be aggressive and progressive. Not hold back -- deacon wore out one collar and twenty-five pairs of back straps in 25 years.

II. What You Should Do.

Average church member think should accept blame for everything goes wrong. Pass plates.

1. Grow as a Christian.
Become an informed church man.
2. Help fill the church pews.
Pastor fill pulpit and deacons fill pews.
3. Care for the sick and needy.
Don't just call pastor and inform him about them.
4. Enlist the unenlisted.
(1) The unaffiliated.
(2) The inactive members.
5. Greet visitors.
6. Help create a good fellowship.
7. Look after the church finances.
A church with good deacons will not need a "finance committee."
Deacon should give before soliciting others.
Illustration: SEG -- GBD.

8. Give some time to the church.

Greatest danger is drifting into idleness.

Be willing to perform disagreeable tasks even, "for Jesus sake."

9. Do your very best.

Let your motto be: "I magnify my office."

- (1) For you own sake.
- (2) For the sake of others.
- (3) For the sake of the church.
- (4) For the sake of Christ.

III. What Your Reward Will Be.

1. Consciousness of a task well done.
2. Appreciation of pastor and people.
3. Joy over helpful service rendered.
4. Benediction of the Lord Jesus.
5. Crown of glory.