

Gospel-Shaped Service

1 Timothy 3:8–13

Thesis: God desires deacons, transformed by his grace, to support gospel ministry by sacrificially serving Christ's body and leading all members to serve.

I. The Office of Deacon

- A. Lead Servants (cf. Acts 6:1–7)
 - 1. Ordained by God
 - 2. Under authority of elders
 - 3. *Not* a governing, leading, or teaching role
 - 4. “Word ministry” (Elders) vs. “table ministry” (Deacons)

II. The Deacon's Task

- A. To meet the physical needs of those in the church community
- B. To serve as auxiliary support for the ministry of the Word
- C. To cultivate unity within the body

III. Deacon Qualifications

- A. Must be spiritually mature, gospel-centered, and missions-minded (9; cf. Acts 6:3)
- B. May be men or women (11; cf. Rom 16:1)
- C. Must be above reproach in character (8–11, 13)
- D. Must be above reproach in family management (12)

IV. How Does Diaconal Ministry Apply to the Rest of Us?

- A. A healthy-functioning church community is a powerful magnetic force in the world (cf. Acts 6:7; Isa 2:2–4; John 17:20–23; Phil 2:1–11)
 - 1. Generous with resources, time, and energy
 - 2. Unified in its diversity
 - 3. Gospel-proclaiming
- B. Church members commit “to work and pray for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (RFC Covenant)
- C. Church members commit “to pray for one another regularly and seek to serve one another when needs arise within the body” (RFC Covenant)
- D. Follow the deacons as they lead in service