

**1 Timothy**  
**B.) The Church and its members**  
**3. 3:8-13 Proven deacons**  
**3:8-13**  
**“Time to kill the spider”**

**I. Introduction**

**II. Vs. 8 General characteristics of those that serve**

**III. Vs. 9-10 Threefold demonstration**

**IV. Vs. 11 Four characteristics of a deaconesses**

**Vs. 12-13 Two results of good service**

**I. Introduction**

The primary difference between Elders and deacons is that elders guide the ministry in prayer and teaching the word whereas the deacons guide the church in the physical functioning of the fellowship. Things such as administration, distribution and other general areas of need within the local church. Two weeks ago we looked at the structure of the church with the **characteristics** and **qualities** of an elder today we look at the same two aspects of a person who is a deacon or what makes a deacon “*deek*”. Some have noted that ***Biblical maturity happens when the believer takes of the bib and puts on the apron.*** But even those that serve need to be reminded to grow. There once was a deacon who was found of praying, “*Lord God help me clean out the cob webs of my life!*” Week after week, year after year he prayed the same prayer until one fella couldn’t take it anymore and stood up and said, “**Lord don’t do it, don’t just clean out the cobwebs, KILL that darn spider!**” Saints I pray that as we study this area on church leadership we take the time not just to ask the Lord to clean out our cobwebs but to kill that darn spider!

## II. Vs. 8 General characteristics of those that serve

Vs. 8 There are two striking differences in the church between elders and deacons:

- A. ***The absence of gender with regards to deacons:*** In chapter 3 verse 1 Paul had wrote Timothy that “If a MAN desires the position of an elder, HE desires a good work.” But right off the bat we notice the position of a deacon is not gender specific as Paul writes, “Likewise deacons must be reverent...” The likewise is not linked to the gender of the male elders but rather to the godly characteristics and qualities.
- B. ***Their beginnings in Acts chapter 6:*** There arose over a dispute over the distribution of goods to the needy Greek speaking the Hebrew speaking Jews. It seems that some of the Greek speaking Jews felt that the distribution was not equable between these two groups and that the Hebrew speaking Jews were getting more of the benevolence. At first the apostles tried to handle this but it became too time consuming as they began to neglect the prayer and teaching of the word to (as they put it) wait on tables. God used adversity to establish leadership.

In Acts chapter 6 verse 3 the apostles list **three qualifications all deacons MUST have:**

1. **Good reputation:** Their character must be in full view of the congregation. You can see why when you know of the conflict between the two sides. What interests me is that of the 7 men chosen all of them have Greek names suggesting that they were all Greek speaking Jews. Yet apparently they were so well respected that none of the Hebrew speaking Jews felt slighted by their promotion.
2. **Full of the Holy Spirit:** The reason these 7 men were accepted by both sides has everything to do with them being “*full of the Holy Spirit*”. You cannot behave in the flesh if you are “*full of the Holy Spirit*”, you cannot carry your prejudices forward if you are “*full of the Holy Spirit*”. No one

saw these 7 as Greek or Hebrew speaking they saw them only as those who spoke and acted consistently in the heart and mind of Christ.

3. **Full of wisdom:** They were to display the gift of wisdom. The difference between wisdom and knowledge is:

- **Knowledge** is the *accumulation* of truth
- **Wisdom** is the *application* of truth

We are not to be just **collectors** of truth, we are instead to be **possessors** of truth putting it into practice every day.

#### **Four personal qualifications:**

1. **Reverent:** Just like the quality in elders above they are to be “doers” as well as “dreamers”. A deacon by their very nature is a person who “**completes tasks**”. There are many folks today that have great vision but just never seem to compete a thing instead they just move from one dream to another and seem to be more excited about the dream than they are in seeing it get finished.
2. **Not double-tongued:** The meaning of the word is saying one thing and doing another. A man who speaks the truth the first time, with no intent to deceive. Deacons are people who are believable, straight shooters and not into saying different things to different people just to gain favor.
3. **Not given to much wine:** This is the same word that was applied to elders in verse 3 and doesn’t mean that they are never to drink intoxicating substances, but that they are “**Never to Get Drunk**”. I have met Christians over the years who have said to me that either publically or privately that they like to “**Take the edge off**” as they differentiate between fallen down drunk and tipsy. The Bible doesn’t draw that difference as Paul says in Ephesians 5: 18 that we are not to be “**drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit**”. **If you are truly interested in “taking the edge off” I’d suggest you try the Holy Spirit instead of distilled spirits as intoxicating drink has never taken any edge off but sure has added a few!**
4. **Not greedy for money:** They are not to be materialistic, a person whose values are influenced by opportunities for personal gain. It’s a tragic truth that you can see this even in God’s church where people miss use the funds that the Lord has laid upon the hearts of His people to give to go to work for His glory. Those that handle the finances need to be people who are “**not greedy for money**”.

### **III. Vs. 9-10 Threefold demonstration**

Vs. 9-10 Three things that they have to have demonstrated among the body of Christ.

1. **Holding the mystery of the faith:** A “mystery” in the bible is not something that is mysterious and past our understanding but rather something that was beyond our understanding but is now understandable because of the Spirit of God working through the Word of God. A deacon must be a person who can communicate the simple truths of the Bible simply! Elders are called upon to “teach” the Word of God whereas deacons are to “hold” the Word of God.

2. ***With a clear conscience:*** This phrased means that they are to practice what they preach with regards to the truths of God’s word. Deacons may not be called on to teach the Word regularly but they are called to live out what they believe daily.
3. ***Let these also first be tested:*** The word implies time as well as observation in which they have a measurable record of dependability, willingness and loyalty in serving Christ and His people. There is no shortage of biblical illustrations to observe: First a servant, then a ruler!
  - Joseph served 13 years before he became 2<sup>nd</sup> ruler in the land of Egypt.
  - Moses cared for sheep for 40 years before God called him.
  - Joshua also spent better than 40 years before he led the nation of Israel after Moses. David spent years tending his father’s sheep then was hunted by Saul for another 15 years before he realized the throne.
  - Paul was making tents for 14 years.

#### **IV. Vs. 11 Four characteristics of a deaconesses**

Vs. 11 Paul now moves to deaconesses as he addresses four personal qualification for women who serve. In verse 11 the word “***their***” is italicized which can mean by the use of the word that it is a reference to the wife of a deacon but I believe that because of the above passage in verse 2 that this verse isn’t about the deacon’s wife but rather about the women that serves. In Romans 16 we read of a deaconess named Phoebe who served at the port city near Corinth, so clearly the early church had women who served in this capacity. ***These women have four things that should characterize their lives before they serve:***

1. ***Reverent:*** Just like their male counterpart women deacons must take be task completers. Vision is a wonderful thing but nothing will get completed if all a person has is vision.
2. ***Not Slanderers:*** The word used is diabolos and in Titus 2:3 in older translations is “*she-devils*”. Apparently while men in Ephesus were more prone to being double tongued (saying one thing and doing another) the women were more prone to gossip and slander. Scientific studies indicate that on average women have 7000 more words a day then do men and Paul is saying that those that serve as deacons need to make sure that they use those words to build other up not tear others down!
3. ***Temperate:*** This word can refer specifically to a woman’s alcohol consumption but it is a general word that includes all habits. Women deacons ought to live in a way that doesn’t indulge the things of this life, be that eating, shopping, working etc.

4. ***Faithful in all things***: They are to be “*trustworthy*” and faithful individuals who when given something to do will see it to completion. Paul will conclude speaking on both men and women deacons in verse 13 that those that serve with these traits “*obtain a good standing and great boldness in the faith...*” In other words when a servant is faithful in the little things God will grant them greater opportunities.

### **Vs. 12-13 Two results of good service**

Vs. 12-13 Paul closes with a general word of instruction to both male and female deacons.

- A. The first admonishment is clearly addressed to the male, married deacon and like the elder above they are to be a “one woman man” this of course in not insisting that they be married or that they have never divorced as Paul had both of those situations. Rather this is a statement that says that they are to have eyes for only their wife!
- B. Furthermore they are to manage their homes and their children well. It doesn’t mean that they never have any problems only that they know how to handle those problems when they arise. I have found that you can best view how a person is going to lead others by examining how they live their home life.

Paul concludes with **two results when the service of a deacon is done the right way**:

1. **Obtain a good standing**: First it will cause a sense of appreciation on the part of those they serve. Those they serve will appreciate their service and often tell them what it means to them or take them out to lunch. These 80 or so folks are not paid here on earth for their service their reward is laid up in heaven but it is nice for them to hear a thank you from time to time to encourage them.
2. **Great boldness in the faith**: Paul says that Christ will give you even more boldness and greater desire to share His love with others. Isn’t that great that service produces greater opportunities? Saint’s the healthiest thing you can do for your spiritual life and wellbeing is get involved and serve others. If you want to experience more joy, more peace and boldness then get involved.