



**Faith Baptist Church of Cabot, Arkansas**  
**Pastor's Mid-Week Bible Study**  
**November 18, 2009**

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**Lesson Ten - The Deacon**  
**1 Timothy 3:8-13**

Likewise deacons *must be* reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless. Likewise *their* wives *must be* reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well. 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.

### Introduction

The Apostle Paul is writing these things to Timothy hoping to see him soon. But if not, he wants Timothy to know how to conduct himself in the house of God. (3:14-15) Key to that conduct is having the right kind of men in positions of oversight and service. In 3:1-7 Paul addressed the character of the Bishops and now he addresses the character of the Deacons.

### Exegesis

❖ What is a Deacon?

➤ Deacon defined

The word simply means “servant”. In secular usage it could refer to a table-waiter. In the church it came to refer to those who are ordained to care for the needs of the people.

➤ Deacon's origin (Acts 6:1-7)

There was discontent in the Jerusalem church over the care of widows. The first deacons were given the responsibility of overseeing the resolution for the need and thus provide needed and equitable care for the people.

➤ Deacon's purpose

Deacons are charged with the oversight of the care of the people. In faithfully carrying out this responsibility they promote the unity of the church and allow the pastors to give themselves fully to prayer and the ministry of the Word. When this occurred at Jerusalem, Scripture records that the Word increased and the number of disciples was multiplied. (Acts 6:7)

❖ The Qualification of a Deacon

➤ A plural singular

Just as with the qualification for a Bishop, the list given in verses eight through thirteen is not a buffet of choice, but rather a snapshot of the whole picture of a deacon's

character. Perfection is not the issue. But a deacon's character must generate the confidence of the people and be an example to the people. A deacon will be in the position to know the private matters of the lives of the people. He must therefore be of such a character to be trusted by the people.

➤ The list

- Reverent – he must be honorable, worthy of respect, serious about serious things.
- Not double-tongued – not saying one thing to one person and something else to another; not deceptive.
- Not given to much wine – the mind controlled by wine will not produce a lifestyle given to the confidence of the people.
- Not greedy for money – the deacon is entrusted with the charitable funds of the church and must be trustworthy in handling those funds.
- Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience – he must be settled in what he believes and be living a life free of personal agendas: believing Jesus and living to Jesus' glory.
- First tested – he must already have lived a life of proven character.
- Blameless – he is to fulfill the office with no charge of character flaw against him.
- Wives must be of good character
  - Reverent – same as with husband.
  - Not slanderers – same word used of the devil; she is not to be a false accuser, a gossip, a trouble maker.
  - Temperate – she is to be sober-minded, self controlled, thoughtful and not controlled by any foreign substance.
  - Faithful in all things – by virtue of her husband's office, she will be privy to personal and private information and be involved in particular ministry with women; her character must then be proven faithful in all areas.
- Husbands of one wife – his faithfulness is proven in how he treats his wife.
- Ruling their children and their own houses well – his ability to manage is seen in how he superintends his home.

➤ The reward

The deacon who serves well secures for himself a good grade of dignity and respect before the people and God. And he secures great boldness in the faith not unlike Deacon Stephen. (Acts 6:8-7:60)

### **Application**

1. The consequences of a man of unqualified character serving as deacon can be destructive to the unity of a church.
2. The church that doesn't recognize the weight of the office of deacon often turns the process and position into one of popularity and power resulting in church division.
3. The man who occupies the office of deacon must always be on guard against the wiles of the devil lest he be used to divide rather than unite the church.