

# GRACE BIBLE CHURCH LORTON

## The Ministry of Deacons

Philippians 1:1; Acts 6:1-4; First Timothy 3:8-13

*Doug Sachtleben, Lead Pastor*

*June 9, 2019*

The ministry of Deacons provides an organized body of qualified servants who are appointed by a church's elders to serve needs and to keep the elders on-task.

The Greek word *diakonos* shows up 29 times in the New Testament and is usually translated as *servant*. Only five times is it translated as *deacon*.

Philippians 1:1 identifies the positions of elder and deacon in the local church. Elders are the governing leadership and are called to shepherd and oversee the flock, while deacons provide a body of "organized servants, who are under the oversight and direction of the elder team."

Acts 6:1-4 does not specifically mention "deacons," but the church has historically viewed it as containing a prototype for the position of deacon.

The seven servants in Acts 6:1-4 were:

1. Organized to serve the body of believers
2. Appointed by the leadership, from among those recommended by the body, to keep the leaders focused on their calling
3. Qualified as wise, Spirit-filled examples in serving

First Timothy 3:8-13 elaborates on the qualifications of Deacons, which can be summarized with the words **proven character**.

First Timothy 3:11 begins, "Their wives likewise..." (ESV) or "Women *must* likewise..." (NAS).

It can be translated as either, "Wives, likewise..." or "Women, likewise..."

The GBC Elder Team positively affirms the view that GBC has held – that verse 11 speaks of wives of Deacons – while not rejecting out of hand any possibility that it could be speaking about women serving as Deacons, nor rejecting individuals or churches who hold that view.

### **Questions to Consider**

1. If you've attended other churches before Grace Bible Church, how did the Deacons function in those churches? What are some common, though not necessarily biblical, ideas about who Deacons are and what they are called to do?
2. Read Mark 10:42-45, Galatians 5:13-14, and First Peter 4:8-10. Whether or not you are a Deacon, or aspire to be one, what is the calling of a Christian regarding service to others? Are you actively engaged in serving within the body of Christ?
3. How does Philippians 1:1 contribute to our understanding of the particular position of Deacon?
4. Do you think the phrase "organized servants" is helpful and biblical as a description of Deacons? Why or why not?
5. In what ways could cultural and racial differences threaten the unity of the body of Christ today, as they did in Acts 6?
6. Based on Acts 6:2-4, what priorities did the apostles emphasize in the selection of the seven?
7. Are there specific areas in the qualifications for Deacons in First Timothy 3:8-13 in which you need more growth and application of biblical truth?

For further reading: GBC's **Handbook for Deacons** at [gbclorton.com/deaconhandbook](http://gbclorton.com/deaconhandbook)