

## Qualifications for Deacons

### Introduction

We are in the midst of a mini-series on Leadership taken from Philippians 1:1. Healthy and growing churches are always developing leaders. They are committed to the growth and development of their members.

(Philippians 1:1) "Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:"

We have looked at team leadership. The world is pushing for team development today. Jesus has been pushing for team development since the beginning of time. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are a team. They worked together as a team. Jesus said that He only did what He saw the Father doing.

(John 5:19) "Jesus therefore answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing; for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner."

Our second message was on Servant Leadership. All of us are to be servants. Karen and I were discussing all the strong men and women that the Lord is bringing to East Mountain Vineyard. Whenever you have a group of type A personalities, you have great potential. You have great potential for marvelous kingdom exploits, but you also have great potential for kingdom explosions. For us to walk in a manner worthy of the calling, and do the things that the Lord has called us to do in the East Mountains, it is essential that we walk in humility, gentleness, and patience. In our study of Ephesians we looked at our calling in the first three chapters. Then, in Ephesians 4, we turned the corner. The last three chapters of Ephesians are about walking out that calling. For us to walk out our calling in the East Mountains, we must walk in humility, gentleness, and patience.

(Ephesians 4:1-2) "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, {2} with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love,"

In Philippi, there were two strong women who had worked with Paul and struggled with him in the spreading of the gospel. These two women were having a tough time getting along with one another. One of the reasons that Paul wrote this letter was to promote unity and harmony in the church. What does he tell these two women with strong personalities? He tells them to look out for one another's interests, not just our own. He tells us them do nothing from selfishness. He tells them to have the attitude which Christ had, which was to be a servant. How are we going to work together and accomplish great things in the East Mountains? We must all have a servant's heart and dwell in harmony with one another.

(Philippians 2:5-7) "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, {6} who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, {7} but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men."

## Qualifications for Deacons

(Philippians 4:2-3) "I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. {3} Indeed, true comrade, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life."

Next, we looked at overseers. We looked at the work of an overseer, the charge to overseers, the calling of overseers, and the qualifications of overseers. The overseers provide a model for the work we do, the way we minister, how we are called, and the way we live our lives.

Last week, I gave the introduction to the office of deacon. We saw that there was an order in how the government was established. God first appointed the apostles. Then, He established elders. Then, we saw the first deacons in Acts 6. The deacons were chosen because a need had arisen in the church. The Greek widows were being overlooked and the apostles needed to keep prayer and word ministry as their priorities. The deacons were charged with the responsibility of taking care of the widows so that the apostles were freed up to do the things that God called them to do. The result was that the church continued to grow. The number of disciples grew and the word of God kept spreading.

(Acts 6:7) "And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith."

We also looked at the word for deacon, which is diakonos. It is a transliteration, not a translation. Diakonos means servant, and it is generally translated as servant. Sometimes it is translated as minister, or transliterated as deacon. Because of this, there is some confusion and wrong doctrines about the office of deacon. The early church did not have a special word for this office. It was the office of servant. A deacon is a servant of the church. It is important to be able to distinguish when the word is speaking of the office of servant or just being a servant. All leaders are servants, but not all leaders are in the office of servant, i.e. a deacon. Paul was a servant, but he did not serve in the office of deacon. He was an apostle. Prior to becoming an apostle, he was a pastor or overseer at Antioch.

This morning, we will pick up where we left off last week. We will look at the qualifications of deacons given in Acts 6. Luke gives three specific qualifications that the apostles gave to the congregation to help them select the men. We will look at these three qualifications this morning.

1. Men of Good Reputation
2. Men Full of the Holy Spirit
3. Men Full of Wisdom

- How many of you have ever had someone steal something from you?
- How many of you have been let down by someone who did not do the things that you were counting on them to do?
- How many of you have been lied to by someone about something?
- How many of you were promised something by someone only to find out later that they never intended to fulfill that promise?

## Qualifications for Deacons

I think that most of us can identify with bad experiences with people that lacked character. We have met people that did not swear to their own hurt. We have met people that lacked integrity and character. As we have been looking at the qualifications for overseers, and now are turning our attention to the qualifications for deacons, there is a strong emphasis on character.

As many of you know I grew up in the country of Iran. Labor was very inexpensive in Iran. Most people had a servant who did household chores, a servant to cook, and a servant to do yard work. A full-time servant may cost you \$30.00 a month, so for \$100.00 a month, you could have three full-time servants. It was a real help because we did not have washing machines, dishwashers, and other modern conveniences. We also could not buy bread, mayonnaise, and other prepared foods. Therefore, the cook would make bread, donuts, and other things several times a week.

There were hidden costs to having servants. The food in the pantry would disappear. Items in the house would suddenly disappear. They were very clever about how they stole items. They would move an item on the coffee table ten to twelve inches. The second day they would move it another ten to twelve inches. After several days the item was near the edge of the table. By the end of the week, the item was no longer on the coffee table. In fact it was no longer in the house. Many of the servants were more than cooks or houseboys, they had a secondary occupation as thieves.

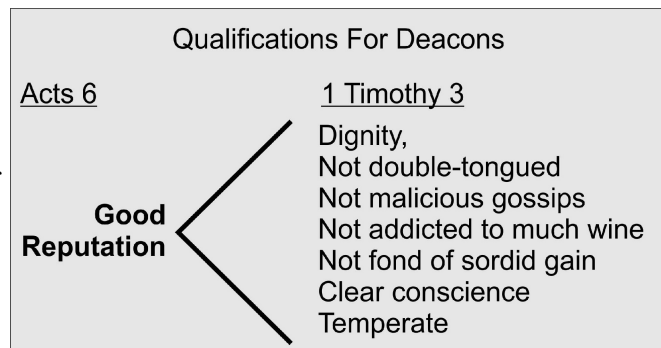
When the apostles chose qualifications for servants, the very first qualification that they gave was that they must be men of good reputation. In other words, they did not want thieves posing as cooks. They did not want dishonest or deceitful people working as servants in the church.

(Acts 6:3-5) ""But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. {4} "But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." {5} And the statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch."

### A. Men of Good Reputation

In the text there are three specific qualifications that the apostles asked the congregation to use in their selection of the men. First, they were to find men (aner) of good reputation (martureo). The Greek word is martureo, which means witness or testimony. We get our English word martyr from it. The lifestyle of a deacon must be a good witness to people. They must be men of good character.

In 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Paul also gives the qualifications of deacons. His list may appear a little different, but the essence of the message is the same. Paul simply gives a detailed sketch of what it means to be a man of good reputation. A man of good reputation will be honorable or dignified. He will not be double-tongued, or a malicious gossip. He will not be a drunk or a greedy person. He will have a clear conscience.



## Qualifications for Deacons

Both accounts focus on character and reputation. A man of good reputation is above reproach. When it comes to selecting someone to an office in the church, we must focus first on character. We cannot be persuaded by gifts, abilities, or potential. We cannot promote people to an office in the church based on potential. We must raise up leaders first and foremost based on character. Do they have a good reputation? Are they above reproach.

The text focuses on determining who is qualified for the office of servant. It does not say how these men became men of character. I want to offer two things that will produce good character in our lives.

### **1. Fear of the Lord.**

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. When we hate evil, pride, arrogance, the evil way, and the perverted mouth, we will amend our ways and try not to do these things. The problem with many people is that they love the ways of the world. We need to see things like God sees them and have a hatred of sin and disobedience. It takes a fear of the Lord to hate evil.

(Proverbs 8:13) ""The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; Pride and arrogance and the evil way, And the perverted mouth, I hate."

Solomon also tells us that by the fear of the Lord one keeps away from evil. If you hate evil, you will stay away from it. I hate poison ivy so I stay away from it. The fear of the Lord keeps us away from evil.

(Proverbs 16:6) "By lovingkindness and truth iniquity is atoned for, And by the fear of the LORD one keeps away from evil."

The fear of the Lord is wisdom and to depart from evil is understanding. Wisdom and understanding help us learn how to apply the word of God in our lives and to depart from evil. Consequently, the fear of the Lord produces good character in our lives.

(Proverbs 9:10) "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."

(Job 28:28) ""And to man He said, 'Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; And to depart from evil is understanding.'""

### **2. Meditating on the word of God.**

James tells us that when we look intently at the word of God and abide by it, our lives are changed. James also gives us a glimpse of what it takes to look intently. He said that we must receive the word implanted with humility. We must also be willing to put aside all filthiness and the remains of wickedness. When the Holy Spirit shows us things in our lives, we respond in humility and repent of the sin. We put aside the filthiness and put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

(James 1:21-25) "Therefore putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. {22} But prove yourselves

## Qualifications for Deacons

doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. {23} For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; {24} for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. {25} But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does."

### **B. Men who are Full of the Spirit**

The second qualification that they specified was that they must be full of the Spirit. There are some men who have an awesome anointing on their life, but they lack character. There are some who have character, but they are not full of the Spirit. Someone who has both godly character and is full of the Holy Spirit is an awesome and powerful combination.

Leadership is like a sailing vessel. If we think in terms of a ship with sails. It requires both structural integrity and wind. Without structural integrity, i.e. it has a hole in it, the ship will sink. Without wind, (pneuma, spirit, anointing), the ship will go no where. We need people in leadership who have character and are full of the Spirit.

There are several ways to look at this Scripture. These first deacons were chosen shortly after Pentecost. There were people at that time who were not filled with the Holy Spirit. The church was experiencing great power, signs and wonders through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This is Acts 6, in 30 AD., and Paul has not been saved yet. He is saved on the road to Damascus in Acts 9, around 37 AD. Therefore, this account takes place somewhere in that seven year period.

In Acts 19, we find an account of Paul at Ephesus. He finds a group of 12 men who had only been baptized into John's baptism, not the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This account takes place between 50 AD and 58 AD, which is thirteen years later. The point of this is that there were still people who were not filled with the Holy Spirit. The early church wanted to make sure that those in the office of servant were filled with the Holy Spirit.

(Acts 19:1-7) "And it came about that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper country came to Ephesus, and found some disciples, {2} and he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said to him, "No, we have not even heard whether there is a Holy Spirit." {3} And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" And they said, "Into John's baptism." {4} And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus." {5} And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. {6} And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying. {7} And there were in all about twelve men."

When Paul writes Timothy about the qualifications for elders and deacons, he does not mention being filled with the Holy Spirit. He wrote that epistle around 64 AD. By this time the church the baptism of the Holy Spirit was pretty well established in the church. The pockets of believers who were only familiar with the baptism of John had disappeared. Therefore, the Lord did not lay it on Paul's heart to include that requirement.

## Qualifications for Deacons

A second way to look at the Scripture is that Paul merely expounded on Acts 6, and gave more details about some of the qualifications. He was not led to say anything additional about the requirement of being filled with the Holy Spirit. In my opinion, we must always look at all the Scriptures and not just one or two. I do not believe this condition was taken away; it was just that Paul did not include it in his list. Paul focused on character, faithfulness, and ability.

A third way to look at this Scripture is to look at the lifestyle and relationship that a man has with the Lord. Is this man continually being filled with the Holy Spirit. Does he have relationship, fellowship, and intimacy with the Holy Spirit? Is he continually being filled with the Holy Spirit?

Ephesians 5 gives us some ways that we to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We are to speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. We are to sing and make melody in our heart to the Lord. We are to always give thanks for all things. Our thanksgiving, praise, and worship of the Lord creates an environment that welcomes the Holy Spirit. Psalms 22:3 says that God inhabits the praises of Israel.

(Ephesians 5:18-20) "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, {19} speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; {20} always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;"

(Psalms 22:3) "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel."

God wants to fill us with His Holy Spirit. James tells us the He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us. It is sin in our lives that sometimes prevents us from being filled. In our study of 1 Corinthians 3, we saw that the divisions in the church were preventing them from being filled. We also saw in 1 Corinthians 6 that immorality in the church was preventing them from being filled. If we want to be a church that is filled with the Spirit, we need to dwell in unity, live uprightly, and be a church that worships the Lord.

(James 4:4-5) "You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. {5} Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"?"

When the Scriptures say that the candidates for deaconship needed to be full of the Spirit, it tells me that these men were worshipers of the Lord. It tells me that these men were speaking psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to one another. It tells me that they were peacemakers. They were not contentious men. It tells me that they were living uprightly.

### **C. Men who are Full of Wisdom**

The third qualification that the apostles gave the church for deacons was that they must be full of wisdom. They wanted these men to head up a ministry, and they recognized the necessity for wisdom. James was the half-brother of Jesus and he became the Lead Pastor at the church in Jerusalem. James was probably part of the group that made these initial guidelines for deacons. James later wrote an epistle and explained that there are two different kinds of wisdom, worldly

## Qualifications for Deacons

wisdom and godly wisdom. James also lets us know how to distinguish between the two different types of wisdom. He says the wisdom from above is pure, peaceable, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, and without hypocrisy.

(James 3:13-18) "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. {14} But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. {15} This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. {16} For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. {17} But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. {18} And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."

A man who is full of wisdom will show his wisdom by his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. A man who is full of wisdom will be a man of peace. He will sow peace and make peace. A man full of wisdom will bear the fruit of righteousness in his life.

How do we get this wisdom? There are many ways to acquire the wisdom of God. Here are just a couple of few ways to become wise.

### 1. **Ask God for wisdom.**

James tells us that if we lack wisdom, we should ask God who gives generously and without reproach. When Solomon became King, he asked God for wisdom so that he could do a good job ruling the people. God granted him both wisdom and wealth.

(James 1:5) "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him."

### 2. **Walk with wise people.**

Solomon gives us a couple of different ways to acquire wisdom. One of the ways is to walk with wise men. He says that the companion of fools suffers harm, but he who walks with the wise will become wise.

(Proverbs 13:20) "He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm."

### 3. **Seek wisdom through the Scriptures.**

Solomon also tells us to receive His sayings and treasure His commandments within us. We are to make our ear attentive to wisdom and incline our heart to understanding. We are to seek her as silver, and search for her as hidden treasures. This tells me that there must be an eagerness and strong desire to search the Word of God for the wisdom we need in our lives.

(Proverbs 2:1-10) "My son, if you will receive my sayings, And treasure my commandments within you, {2} Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; {3} For

## Qualifications for Deacons

if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; {4} If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures; {5} Then you will discern the fear of the LORD, And discover the knowledge of God. {6} For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. {7} He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, {8} Guarding the paths of justice, And He preserves the way of His godly ones. {9} Then you will discern righteousness and justice And equity and every good course. {10} For wisdom will enter your heart, And knowledge will be pleasant to your soul;"

Let me give you a couple examples of how we can search out his wisdom for our lives. I will give you one from the Scriptures and one from my life.

When David wanted to bring back the ark of the covenant, he initially brought it back with worldly wisdom. He put it on a new cart, just like the Philistines had done when they sent it back to Israel. It was a worldly method. The ways of the world may work in some situations, but when there is a bump in the road, the wisdom of the world falls short. When the cart hit a bump in the road, Uzzah reached out his hand to prevent the ark from falling out. His intentions were good. His heart was right. But, his method was wrong.

(2 Samuel 6:3-9) "And they placed the ark of God on a new cart that they might bring it from the house of Abinadab which was on the hill; and Uzzah and Ahio, the sons of Abinadab, were leading the new cart. {4} So they brought it with the ark of God from the house of Abinadab, which was on the hill; and Ahio was walking ahead of the ark. {5} Meanwhile, David and all the house of Israel were celebrating before the LORD with all kinds of instruments made of fir wood, and with lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals. {6} But when they came to the threshing floor of Nacon, Uzzah reached out toward the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen nearly upset it. {7} And the anger of the LORD burned against Uzzah, and God struck him down there for his irreverence; and he died there by the ark of God. {8} And David became angry because of the LORD'S outburst against Uzzah, and that place is called Perez-uzzah to this day. {9} So David was afraid of the LORD that day; and he said, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?""

David was upset, angry, and afraid of the Lord after that happened. Therefore, he sought the Scriptures to see how the ark of the covenant was supposed to be carried. Consequently, he had poles made and he had the Levites bring up the ark of the covenant back on the shoulders of men, like the Scriptures taught. David had asked a question, "How can the ark of the LORD come to me?" He went and searched the Scriptures and then did according to what the Scriptures taught.

(Exodus 25:13-14) ""And you shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. {14} "And you shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them."

(1 Chronicles 15:15) "And the sons of the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders, with the poles thereon as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD."

When I was a young man and had just qualified for the PGA Tour, a friend of mine strongly encouraged me to travel the tour in a 5<sup>th</sup> wheel trailer. I did not have any money and I co-signed a note with my parents to buy a truck and trailer. Thus, Karen and I lived and traveled in a 5<sup>th</sup> wheel



## Qualifications for Deacons

for the first seven years of our married life.

A number of years later I found out from the word of God that surety or co-signing was not a good thing to do. Fortunately for me, I did not have an ox upset the cart. I got away with using a worldly way to buy a truck and trailer. I repented and amended my ways in this area of finance. My children have asked me to co-sign notes, and I have refused. When we search God's Scriptures for His principles about marriage, raising children, handling money, and every area of our lives, we will gain God's wisdom.

These deacons who were chosen were men of wisdom. They were prudent men. They were men of understanding. They were men who knew how to make wise choices and decisions. These were men who walked with wise men. These were men who sought the Lord for wisdom in their lives and for their ministries. These are the kind of men who we want leading ministries in the church.

### **D. Women who Meet the same Criteria**

Notice that I keep using the word men, men of this , and men of that... Women were not included in the Acts 6 passage. They were not eligible and there were no women chosen. One of the big changes in the list of qualifications is that women were included in Paul's list. In verse 11, Paul says women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. This verse is sandwiched in between all the other verses on servants.

(1 Timothy 3:8-13) "Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, {9} but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. {10} And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. {11} Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. {12} Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. {13} For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus."

Paul wrote the letter to the church in Rome around 58 AD. This is probably 25-28 years after the qualifications are given for men in Acts 6. There has been a change in the attitude and understanding of the church regarding women in those 25 years. We do not know when that change occurred, only that it did. It could be that they found out that women would do a better job serving widows than men. I happen to believe that women are best suited to minister to women.

I am very cautious about laying hands on a woman. I am very cautious about counseling or ministering to women. I take more of Billy Graham's approach. He would not stay in an elevator if a woman got on and there were no other people in the elevator. He would get out and wait for the next one. We are not to give the enemy any room for reproach. There is to be no hint of impropriety in our ministries. There are some things that we need women to minister to other women about.

In Romans 16:1-2, Paul writes about Phoebe, who is a servant of the church at Cenchrea. It is one of the two ports of the city of Corinth. Paul is in Corinth and theologians believe that it is Phoebe who is delivering the letter for him to the church in Rome.

## Qualifications for Deacons

(Romans 16:1-2) "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea; {2} that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may have need of you; for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well."

Notice what Paul says about Phoebe, that she is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea. She is not just a servant, but she is a servant of the church. She was in the position or office of servant in the church at Cenchrea. **Phoebe is the first servant, diakonos, or deaconess mentioned in Scripture.** In this case, the translators are not giving or crediting Phoebe with her position in the church. Since the translators did not accept women in leadership, they translated diakonos literally here, as a servant, rather than as the office of deacon. Notice that she is a servant of the church; this indicates an office in the church, not just a servant.

Cenchrea is one of the two ports in the city of Corinth. Paul is writing this letter in 58 AD, which is about 25-28 years after the first deacons are mentioned. In Acts 6, only men were allowed to serve as deacons. We do not know when the church began allowing women to serve as deacons, but it was sometime in this 25-28 year period. When Paul gives his qualifications in 1 Timothy 3 for deacons, he also gives qualifications for deaconesses. Paul wrote the book of 1 Timothy around 64-65 AD, which is about seven years after he had mentioned that Phoebe was a deaconess.

Paul tells the Romans to help her in whatever matter she has need of. She was there on official church business, and they were to give her assistance in those matters. We do not know what those exact matters were, only that they were important. Again, this points to the fact that she was in the office of a deaconess.

There is one more word that is used here that gives us an indication that she is a deaconess. Paul writes that **Phoebe has been a helper of many, including himself.** The Greek word for helper is prostatis. The root word is proistemi, which means to stand over, preside, or rule. Both elders and deacons are required to proistemi, or to manage or rule. Anyone can serve in the church, but deacons and deaconesses are required to manage, not just serve. There are lots of leadership skills involved in managing and ruling, and we looked at some of those last week. **Phoebe was able to manage, lead, or rule over business matters in the church.**

G4368. prostatis, pros-tat'-is; fem. of a der. of G4291; a patroness, i.e. assistant:--succourer. [G4291. proistemi, pro-is'-tay-mee; from G4253 and G2476; to stand before, i.e. (in rank) to preside, or (by impl.) to practise:--maintain, be over, rule.]

(1 Timothy 3:4-5) "He must be one who manages (proistemi) his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity {5} (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?);"

(1 Timothy 3:12) "Let deacons be husbands of only one wife, and good managers (proistemi) of their children and their own households."

## Qualifications for Deacons

### **Conclusion**

Today, we have looked at the qualifications given for a servant in the church, i.e. a deacon or deaconess. There are three primary qualifications given. A servant of the church must be a person of character. Second, a servant of the church needs to be a person who is full of the Holy Spirit. Third, a servant of the church must be a person who is full of wisdom and is able to manage the area of ministry that is given to them. God wants a church full of servants, a church full of people with servant's hearts. And, to be set in the office of servant, a servant must also have these various qualifications in place in their life.

The church in Philippi had both overseers and deacons. We want to be a church that has empowered leaders. We want empowered overseers to manage the affairs of the church and to care for people. We want empowered deacons to manage the affairs of certain, non-pastoral type ministries within the church. All leaders in the church, whether in the office of overseer or the office of deacon, must have the heart of a servant. In fact, everyone in the church needs to have the heart of a servant. The church will not grow and mature until every joint supplies and we have the proper working of each individual part.

This morning, if you need prayer for anything, we want to pray for you. It may be prayer for a relationship, prayer for direction, prayer for healing, or prayer for provision. It could be prayer for any area. James tells us that we do not have because we do not ask. We do not want you to be in need simply because we did not ask. We want to take every opportunity to see God move and work in our lives.

**Introduction** (Phil 1:1, John 5:19, Eph 4:1-2, Phil 2:5-7, 4:2-3, Acts 6:7, 6:3-5)

Diakonos means \_\_\_\_\_. It is translated as servant, minister, and deacon.

Sometimes it refers to a person in the \_\_\_\_\_ of servant or deacon.

**A. Men of Good** \_\_\_\_\_. (Acts 6:3, 1 Tim 3:8-13)

Two things that bring about good character in our lives:

- \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_. (Pr 8:13, 16:6, 9:10, Job 28:28)
- \_\_\_\_\_ on the word of God. (James 1:21-25)

**B. Men who are \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_.** (Acts 6:3, 19:1-7, Eph 5:18-20, Ps 22:3, James 4:4-5)

**C. Men who are \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_** (Acts 6:3, James 3:13-18)

**Ways to grow in Gods wisdom:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ God for wisdom. (James 1:5)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_. (Pr 13:20)
3. \_\_\_\_\_ wisdom through the Scriptures. (Pr 2:1-10, 2 Sam 6:3-9, Ex 25:13-14, 1 Chr 15:15)

**D. \_\_\_\_\_ who meet the same \_\_\_\_\_** (1 Tim 3:8-13, Rom 16:1-2, \_\_\_\_\_ was in the office of servant or a \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_ was a \_\_\_\_\_ (prostatismos, from proistemi) of many. (1 Tim 3:4-5, 3:12)

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