

# DEACONS

## The Call to Service

Acts 6:1-7

January 25, 2026

The enemy will not conquer the church through persecution, so he tries to corrupt the church. If unable to corrupt the church, the enemy will seek to bring conflict into the church. You have often heard me ask you to pray for the unity of our church family. It's not because we are lacking unity, but rather it's because the enemy wants to create disunity. Especially when the church is progressing in gospel ministry.

In Acts 6, we see the occasion that called for the creation of the office of deacon. The church in Jerusalem was approximately five years old and was experiencing tremendous growth and gospel advancement. A conflict arose in the church that began to threaten the church's fellowship, unity, and fruitfulness. The deacon ministry (office of deacon) was formed in response to the needs that were creating the conflict. The first deacons were chosen by the church and set aside by the laying on of hands of the apostles. The "deacons" were appointed primarily for...

1. the tasks of serving their church
2. supporting the spiritual leaders (pastor/overseer/elder) of the church
3. protecting the unity of the church

The early church continued to thrive by involving others in service and keeping the focus of the apostles on prayer and teaching God's Word. A church will thrive when everyone serves and spiritual leaders keep their primary focus on prayer and teaching God's Word.

### Key Thought

**Structure, leadership, and service help the church to spread the gospel.**

### Terms:

- **Ecclesiology** – the study of the church, theology applied to the nature and structure of the church
- **Church Polity** – the governmental structure of a local church
- **Church offices:**
  - **Pastor/Overseer/Elder**

There is no distinction between a pastor, a bishop or an elder in the Scripture. They all refer to the exact same office.

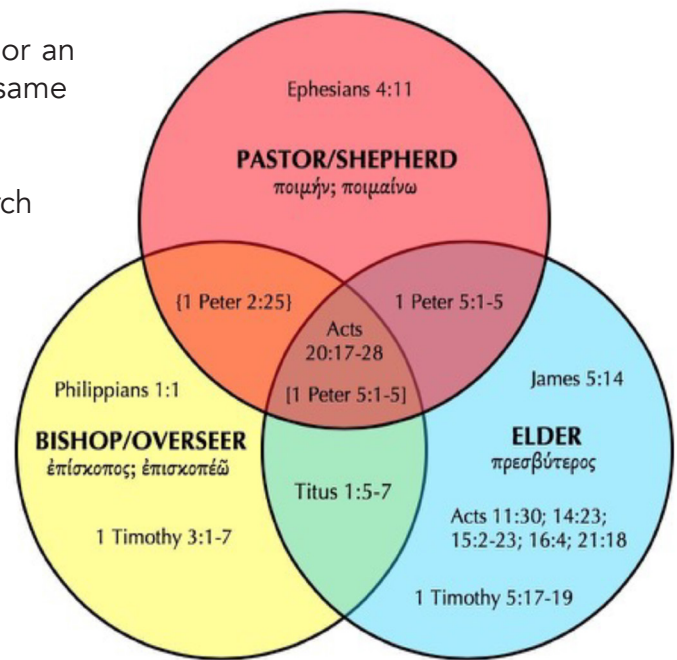
There must be integrity and accountability in church leadership.

### ○ Deacon

There are three words used in Scripture (diakonos, diakonia, diakonein) that relate to the office of deacon. Each of these forms are derivatives of the root "diakonew," which in the classical sense meant "to wait at table." More generally it meant "provide or care for" and has the inclusive meaning "to serve."

The word "deacon" (diakonos) is a derived noun used specifically to denote the office of deacon in 1 Timothy 3:8 and Philippians 1:1. This word is used 29 times in the New Testament, but only 3 times for the office of a deacon (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8,12).

Deacons serve as assistants to pastors, freeing them to prayer and ministry of the Word. Deacons set an example of godliness for the church.



## OUTLINE

### 1. The biblical foundation for the office of deacon (Acts 6:1-7)

In Acts 6, we see the occasion that called for the creation of the office of deacon. The church in Jerusalem was approximately five years old and was experiencing tremendous growth and gospel advancement. A conflict arose in the church that began to threaten the church's fellowship, unity, and fruitfulness. The deacon ministry (office of deacon) was formed in response to the needs that were creating the conflict. The first deacons were chosen by the church and set aside by the laying on of hands of the apostles. The "deacons" were appointed primarily for...

1. the tasks of serving their church
2. supporting the spiritual leaders (pastor/overseer/elder) of the church
3. protecting the unity of the church

## 2. The biblical qualifications for deacons (Acts 6:3,5; 1 Timothy 3:8-13)

## 3. The role/function for deacons in the church

The church should be marked by servant leaders and shared ministry. The ministry of deacons did not focus on overseeing or administering the church, but on ministry to people.

The deacons' role/function = Key word: "service"

*"The New Testament does not provide much information concerning the role of deacons. The requirements given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 focus on the deacon's character and family life. There are some clues as to the function of deacons when their requirements are compared to those of elders." Benjamin Merkle*

### Deacon ministry teams at WBC:

Each deacon is requested to serve on one deacon ministry team during each year of his active term of service. In addition, deacons prepare and serve the Lord's Supper, provide godly counsel to the pastors, serve as prayer warriors, and serve as requested to meet the needs of the congregation.

There are 4 primary teams for all deacons:

- **In-reach team:** Follow up with new members about connecting in Life Groups, serving, prayer needs, and questions.
- **Outreach team:** Follow up with guests utilizing phone calls, email, texts, and personal visits.
- **Hospital/bereavement team:** Assist the pastors with hospital visits and ministry to those who have experienced the death of a loved one.
- **Widows/Widowers team:** Phone calls, visits, and practical ministry to widowed church members

### The deacon's reward (1 Timothy 3:13)

- He gains a good standing
- He gains great confidence in the faith



### Take aways:

- Expect distractions and disruptions – The enemy will do anything to stop the gospel from progressing (1 Peter 3:8; Colossians 3:14; Ephesians 4:1-6)
- People need to be equipped for service. (Galatians 5:13; Colossians 3:23-24; Matthew 20:28; Ephesians 4:11-12)
- There are different roles in the body of Christ. (Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11)
- The church flourishes when there are servant leadership and shared ministry.

### Structure, leadership, and service help the church to spread the gospel.

#### Acts 6:7 (NASB95)

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.