In **Philippians 1:1** we read ***“Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons.”*** Here in this verse we have the entire organization of the church. Jesus the head, who all in Christ are bond-servants to Christ, Saints (or Christians), Elders, and Deacons. I want to focus on one of these groups, Deacons.

**What is a Deacon?**

1. Our English word Deacon comes the Greek *Diakonos*
   1. *Diakonos –* From which Latin gets Minister and English transliterated Minister.
   2. It means Servant, attendant, or waiter.
2. It is mostly translated one of two ways in the NT.
   1. Minister **Colossians 1:25**
   2. Servant **Matthew 20:26**
3. All Christians are to be servants
   1. **Romans 16:1-2** – Was counted a valuable servant of the church
   2. **Colossians 4:7**
   3. **1 Corinthians 3:5**
4. The word is also used specifically three times to refer to an official office of the Church
   1. **1 Timothy 3:8**
   2. **1 Timothy 3:12**
   3. **Philippians 1:1**

**His Qualifications (1 Tim. 3:8-12):**

1. There are ten qualifications we find listed in scripture, or ten characteristics.
   1. Men of dignity - Worthy of respect, dignified, honorable.
      * **1 Tim. 4:12**
   2. Not double-tongued - insincere, deceitful.
      * **James 3:9-10**
   3. Not addicted to much wine. Literally one who is not constantly holding on to thoughts of wine.
   4. Not fond of sordid gain – honest in his financial dealings.
   5. Holding the mystery of the faith – stability in the faith.
      * **Eph. 4:14**
   6. First be tested – this is not on the job training.
   7. Beyond reproach - having a good reputation, not open to accusation.
      * **Titus 2:7-8**
   8. Of one wife – a person who knows how to commit.
      * **Matt. 19:6**
   9. Good manager of their children and household – stands and leads.
      * **Joshua 24:15**
   10. Their wives must also be good Christian women.
       * **1 Tim. 3:11**
2. These qualifications are important because while the Deacons work may be physical in nature, it often has a *spiritual result.*

**His Work:**

1. Unlike Overseers, Deacons do not have a specified work detailed in scripture.
   1. Elders – Commanded to watch out over the flock **(Acts 20:28)**
   2. Elders – Commanded to feed, or teach, **(1 Timothy 3:2 -able to teach)**
2. So, then what is his work?
   1. “Although elders are to serve the church, they are also to oversee it. The deacons are not overseers, but they are servants of the church.”[[1]](#footnote-1)
   2. Their general work then is service. Deacon again literally means minister or servant. So, one who serves.
   3. From literature from the first three centuries after Christ confirm that the primary function and responsibility of Deacons was serving needy members of the church.[[2]](#footnote-2)
   4. One example of their work can be seen in **Acts 6:1-6**
      1. Again, to emphasize, these men were chosen for what? For serving, specifically seeing to the needs of the widows of the church.
      2. A General principle: Their work can often be found by asking this question, *what are the needs of the church which can be met by men with these qualifications?[[3]](#footnote-3)*
      3. They are Christians like we are, part of a local congregation. So, the large part of their work depends on their location and judgement from their Elders and the needs that they see that need to be filled.
   5. NOTE: They are not the *only* ones that can serve the church. They are many members who labor at teaching class, visiting the sick, encouraging the weak, etc. But, the Deacons are official servants of the church.
3. **1 Timothy 3:13**
   1. Men who serve well as deacons are rewarded by our Lord
   2. They obtain a good reputation, with God and men
   3. Also, the office has a habit of deepening a mans faith and strengthening their bond with God.

**Conclusion:**

**“just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” – Matthew 20:28**

**Mark 16:16**

1. Bales, James. *The Deacon and His Work.* Pg. 62 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Strauch, Alexander. *Minister of Mercy: The New Testament Deacon.* Pg. 75 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Bales. 64 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)