

OFFICES OF THE CHURCH - DEACONS

A. Terminology for the word “deacon”

1. The specific name of the office comes from 1 Timothy 3:8.
2. In Acts 6:1-7 this appears to be the selection of the first deacons. The Greek word for “serve” in verse 2 has the same root as the Greek word for “deacon.”
3. Some churches have deaconesses based on Romans 16:2 but the Greek word there is usually translated as “servant.” Some see 1 Timothy 3:11-12 as referring to deaconesses, but the fact that the qualifications for deacons occur in 1 Timothy 3:8-10 and 1 Timothy 3:12-13 would strongly support the stance that the reference is to the wives of the deacons.

B. Selection of deacons (Acts 6:1-6)

1. The leaders of the church which would be the pastor(s)/elder(s) would gather the church together for a special meeting (6:2).
2. The number of men to be chosen is determined by the leaders (6:3).
3. In order to be selected as a deacon, the man has to be chosen by the congregation (6:3-5) and approved by the leaders who show it by praying for him and laying their hands on him (6:6).
4. The leaders of the church are to tell the congregation what the qualifications are for deacon prior to their selecting them (6:3).

C. Responsibilities of the deacons

1. Any duty that would free up the pastor(s)/elder(s) for the ministry of God’s word and for prayer (Acts 6:2-4).
2. The one specified responsibility is the administrative oversight of the distribution of food or money to the poor believers of the congregation, especially destitute widows (Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 5:3-16).