



Family Devotion #18
For the Week of December 31, 2017

Beloved,

This week our church had the pleasure of ordaining a new deacon. This is truly a wonderful event in the life of the church. The process was as follows: someone in the congregation nominated this young man, he met with the pastor and deacons to answer questions regarding his salvation/testimony of knowing Jesus as Savior, and questions regarding the call on his life to serve in the capacity of deacon at Landmark Baptist Church.

There was a questionnaire for the candidate to fill out and then discuss with the leadership team. Upon this examination the candidate was agreed upon by pastor and deacons for service. On Sunday the chairman of the deacons recommended the candidate to the church for service as deacon. The church body voted in approval of accepting the candidate to fill the office of deacon.

At this point a charge was given to the candidate and to the church as well.

Following the church's approval all ordained pastors and deacons in attendance were invited to come, lay hands on, and pray over the candidate.

Following the time of prayer a certificate of ordination was presented. This newly ordained and elected deacon along with two others who have already been ordained will begin a three year period of service at midnight on January first! They will be joining three other men who are currently serving. At the end of three years of service each deacon rotates off the active deacon body and will once again be eligible to serve after one year should that be the pleasure of the church.

The question now arises, what exactly do deacons do? A definition of the deacon's responsibilities follows. This definition can be found on the website of www.gotquestions.org. under the following article,

Question: "What are the responsibilities of deacons in the church?"

Answer: In the New Testament, the word usually translated "serve" is the Greek word *diakoneo*, which literally means "through the dirt." It refers to an attendant, a waiter, or one who ministers to another. From this word we get the English word "deacon." We first see the word "deacon" used this way in the book of Acts. "And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables" (Acts 6:2). The men who were giving themselves to feeding the flock by preaching and teaching realized that it wasn't right for them to leave those activities to wait tables, so they found some other men who were willing to serve, and put them in place to minister to the church's physical needs while the elders or pastors ministered to their spiritual needs. It was a better use of the resources they were given, and a better use of everyone's gifts. It also got more people involved in serving and helping one another.

Today, for the biblical church, these roles are essentially the same. Elders and pastors are to "preach the word...reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching" (2 Timothy 4:2), and deacons are to be appointed to take care of everything else. In a modern church, this might include taking on administrative or organizational tasks, ushering, being responsible for building maintenance, or volunteering to be the church treasurer. It depends on the need and the gifts of the available men.

The responsibilities of a deacon are not clearly listed or outlined; they are assumed to be everything that does not include the duties of an elder or pastor, which is to preach, teach, and exhort. But qualifications for a deacon's character are clearly outlined in Scripture. They are to be blameless, the husband of one wife, a good household manager, respectable, honest, not addicted to alcohol and not greedy (1 Timothy 3:8-12). According to the Word,

the office of deacon is an honor and a blessing. “For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 3:13).

Recommended Resource: The Master's Plan for the Church by John MacArthur