

DEACONS:  
SPECIAL SERVANTS TO GOD'S PEOPLE

*1 Timothy 3:8-13*

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1. **General** - servant, helper minister, cared for, serve, preparations, support, etc.
2. Those especially equipped by God with the **spiritual gift** or divine enablement of serving others in the church (Romans 12:6-8).
3. One of two **offices** of administration in God's church (1 Timothy 3).

“Everyone is a deacon in the general sense, some are specially gifted by the Holy Spirit for service, but still others hold the office of deacon. They model spiritual service for everyone else. They work alongside the elders, implementing their preaching, teaching, and oversight in the practical life of the church.”

*John MacArthur*

Those **two aspects** of the role of deacons, (1) modeling spiritual service, and (2) applying the preaching, teaching, and oversight of the pastors in the practical life of the church family, are the **hallmarks** of faithful diaconal service.

# I. Similarities Between Elders and Deacons

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1. Men of dignity
2. Not double-tongued
3. Not addicted to much wine
4. Not fond of sordid gain
5. Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clean conscience
6. First tested
7. Beyond reproach
8. Husbands of one wife
9. Rulers of their own households

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Beyond reproach (v. 10) sums up the character of a deacon as well as an elder/overseer — **beyond accusation.**

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Beyond reproach (v. 10) — **beyond accusation.**

Husband of one wife (v. 12) — men are not **automatically disqualified** because they have been divorced. The man is **wholly devoted** to the woman he is married to. He is a **one-woman man** in mind and manner. Sexual purity characterizes his life.

## I. Similarities Between Elders and Deacons

Beyond reproach (v. 10) — **beyond accusation.**

Husband of one wife (v. 12) — a **one-woman man**

Not addicted to much wine (vv. 3, 8) — not a **prohibition** against alcohol, but a negative way of expressing a positive requirement to be **controlled by the Holy Spirit** and not by **strong/excessive drink** that clouds judgment.

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Beyond reproach (v. 10) — **beyond accusation.**

Husband of one wife (v. 12) — a **one-woman man**

Not addicted to much wine (vv. 3, 8) — **controlled by the Holy Spirit**

Not fond of sordid gain or free from the love of money (vv. 3, 8) —

Not materialistically driven; does not use position to **embezzle**



## II. Differences Between Elders and Deacons

- 1. Men of dignity**
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3. Not addicted to much wine
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## II. Differences Between Elders and Deacons

Men of dignity/above reproach (v. 10) — not silly, flippant, clownish, or hard to take seriously. He has an **admirable** way of going about his life with a **good measure** of seriousness and realism about the issues of life.

## II. Differences Between Elders and Deacons

Men of dignity/above reproach (v. 8) — admirable

Not double-tongued (v. 8) — doesn't say what's expedient or based on what's best for him. He has integrity of speech; **not a busy-body.**

## II. Differences Between Elders and Deacons

Men of dignity/above reproach (v. 8) — **admirable**

Not double-tongued (v. 8) — **integrity of speech; peacemaker**

Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience (v. 9) —  
possesses, safeguards, and lives out his **faith in the gospel** without  
**hypocrisy** and with a **repenting** heart towards God and fellow  
believers.

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First tested (v. 10) — **approved over time** by the clear demonstration of living in our midst. We must come to **know, trust, and admire** these men. They have been **tested** by **proving** themselves in the **trenches** with us. Then they can be considered for serving as deacons.

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Functional Differences:



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### Functional Differences:

Elders...

- **rule** (1 Timothy 3:1, 2; 5:17; Titus 1:7)
- **shepherd** (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2)
- **teach** (Ephesians 4:12-13; 1 Timothy 3:2)
- **pray for** (Acts 6:4)

... the church of God

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How? By **representing** the elders in a practical ministry of meeting the needs of the congregation across the spectrum of church life.

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2. Deacons serve the **practical needs** of the congregation.

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2. Deacons serve the practical needs of the congregation.

Fulfilling these **two primary roles** means the congregation's needs are not being overlooked, and the pastors are being kept free to focus on their primary role of **ministering the Word** (preaching, teaching, discipleship) and **prayer**.

GRACE CHURCH  
WILLIAMSBURG