

# When the Bible Talks About Deacons... (1)

- A. *Philippians 1:1* provides a snapshot of a fully organized local church.
- B. Each member of a local body has work to do (*Eph 2:10; 4:12*).
  - 1. Among the “saints” at Philippi, some were serving as “overseers” and others as “deacons.”
  - 2. Without “overseers,” significant work is “unfinished” (NIV), full potential is “lacking” (NKJV, *Tit 1:5*).
  - 3. Without “deacons,” issues of utmost spiritual concern and oversight can be neglected (*Acts 6:2*).
- C. When the Bible talks about deacons, what can we learn?

## I. Three words from the original language of Scripture to enhance our understanding

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ (noun): \_\_\_\_\_, helper, deacon.
  - 1. “Whoever would be great among you must be your **servant**” (*Matt 20:26*).
  - 2. “And where I am, there will my **servant** be also” (*John 12:26*).
  - 3. “For he is God’s **servant** for your good” (*Rom 13:3-4*).
  - 4. “For I tell you that Christ became a **servant** to the circumcised...” (*Rom 15:8*).
  - 5. “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a **servant** of the church at Cenchreae” (*Rom 16:1*).
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ (verb): to wait on, to serve, to care for, to help or \_\_\_\_\_.
  - 1. “Whoever serves, as one who **serves** by the strength that God supplies” (*1 Pet 4:11*).
  - 2. “I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might **serve** me” (*Philem 13*).
  - 3. “Even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to **serve**” (*Matt 20:28*).
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ (noun): service or \_\_\_\_\_.
  - 1. “That my **service** for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints” (*Rom 15:30-32*).
  - 2. “Martha was distracted with much **servicing**” (*Luke 10:40*).
  - 3. “They have devoted themselves to the **service** of the saints” (*1 Cor 16:15*).
  - 4. “Do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your **ministry**” (*2 Tim 4:5*).
  - 5. “To equip the saints for the work of **ministry**, for building up the body of Christ” (*Eph 4:12*).

## II. “To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons...”

- A. In the “infant” days of the life of the Lord’s church (*Acts 6*), men were selected to serve.
  - 1. Very real physical needs of believers were being neglected (*6:1*).
  - 2. It was not right for the twelve to give up preaching the word of God to serve tables (*6:2*).
  - 3. Seven men were picked out from among the disciples and appointed by the apostles (*6:3-7*).
- B. As Paul, Barnabas, and others proclaim the gospel throughout the Gentile world and seek to appoint elders in every church (*Acts 14:21-23*), it only makes sense that elders would depend upon deacons to cover and resolve a wide variety of physical needs (*Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8-13*).
- C. These men are not:
  - 1. \_\_\_\_\_ (*Matt 20:25-38*).
  - 2. The holders of an \_\_\_\_\_ position (*1 Tim 3:10*).
  - 3. \_\_\_\_\_-in-training (*1 Tim 3:13*).
- D. As elders serve the chief Shepherd (*1 Pet 5:4*), deacons serve the chief Servant (*John 13:1-20*).