

**When I say the Word Deacon there are a multitude of thoughts as to whom I am speaking:**  
--In many ch's ...the ruling body (in such ch's t/ pastor in essence is employed by & works 4 t/ deacons)  
--A College in NC (T-Shirt)

**Today's Dilemma** ----We call ourselves people of the Book... We believe it is the Divinely Inspired Word of God, that it is Inerrant (w/o error). But tragically, we tend to be biblically illiterate. Too often we accept elements into our faith system because they've become a part of our culture or faith tradition.

\*\*\*During the 50's, 60's, and 70's liberal thought began to grow in many SBC agencies and in our seminaries. By the 70's it was common to have SBC seminary prof's who didn't believe in the Inspiration or the Inerrancy of Scripture.

\*\*\*Realizing the theological straying of the SBC, beginning in 1979 many began to work to bring the SBC, all of it's agencies, and it's seminaries back to a strong biblical focus. I am the product of a SBC seminary that once openly employed liberal professors, many of which didn't believe in the Bible and some who didn't even believe Jesus was born of a virgin. But thankfully because of the change in the SBC, I didn't have those kind of prof's. My prof's were strong Bible believers and I represent a new generation that was taught to Love the Word.

\*\*\*A byproduct of what many here know of as the Conservative Resurgence in the SBC is that many in my generation no longer accept things just because “that's the way we've always done it.” My generation was taught to love the Word and to live according to the teaching of the Word, even if deeper study of the Word calls us to abandon our preconceptions about the Word and the Way We Do Church.

It would be easier for me to stand and teach on this topic according to Baptist Tradition. But as a student of The Book, I would encourage us to be a people of The Book.

To be a Word-Centered People we have to lay down our presuppositions and let the Bible shape our beliefs.

When it comes to items of faith, that which we are familiar with often becomes in our mind, the only way b/c we assume it is the right way and if it is the right way, every other way can't be right. If we're to understand the biblical teaching of the deacon ministry, many of us may need to lay aside our preconceived ideas of who deacons are and what they're to do.

We often point out the dangers of taking Scripture out of context.

When reading a particular text there are several things to consider: it's context in the larger passage, it's context in relation to the teaching of Scripture as a whole; & the cultural context in which it was written.

We often point out that Deviant Sects and Occultic Groups have developed by taking the original Scriptures out of context and coming up with deviant translations of Scripture such as The Book of Mormon and the Mormon Bible and the Bible published by The Watchtower Society, the publishing arm of the Jehovah's Witness Church. Others take Scripture out of context for the sake of Getting Rich with a Health & Prosperity Gospel. Such people teach that if you're following Jesus and giving Him your all, you will always experience Great Blessings from God in terms of Wealth & Health. But to do so is to ignore the evidence of Scripture that many Obedient & Faithful people suffered greatly because of their faith... such as Steven, Paul, and most of the disciples who were even killed because of their faith. Though we point out the flaws of such belief systems, we're prone to accept what we believe just because we've been told to believe it ---or just because it is the accepted norm of teaching according to cultural or church tradition. For this reason there are a lot of misconceptions about the Role & Qualifications of Deacons.

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## History Of Deacons:

**Up until the 5th Century, Middle Ages,** Deacons focused on their Biblical Role ---- That of Service; especially service to widows, orphans, and the needy. *So up until the 5th Century, no one thought of deacons as serving in any capacity except that of a servant, there to meet the benevolent needs of the church.*

**Middle Ages:** 5th Century to the early part of the 16th Century.

Deacons became an Organized Office for those later planning to enter into the priesthood.

**Reformation:** 16th and 17th Centuries, beginning with Martin Luther's 95 Theses in 1517.

Recovered the Biblical Role of Deacons ---- Service, especially benevolent service.

By the late 18th century, deacons began taking on more of a management role in the church, managing the material and financial issues of the church.

At one time many important business decisions were made during a meal, around a wooden table... a board table. \*Out of this period a "Board" came to define any group that made decisions. As a result, throughout the secular world these decision making bodies became known as Bank Boards, Hospital Boards, Financial Boards, School Boards, etc...

\*By the 19th century, deacons were commonly referred to as Deacon Boards. Hence the idea that many of us grew up with of a Deacon Board is completely secular in its origination and its emphasis.

In early American Baptist life, most churches were small, many rural, and unable to hire more than a part time pastor, at best. Due to the needs of the times, often deacons stepped up to take care of the management & decision-making needs of the church.

## WORD STUDY on Deacons:

There are 3 Common Greek wds associated with Deacons in the Bible... "diakonos," "diakonia," & "diakoneo" are used at least 100x's in t/ NT.

Qualified Servants 4 v Church - Deacons (Pt 1), John McArthur

### TRANSLATIONS:

- diakonos = servant
- diakonia = service
- diakoneo = to serve

To Translate = to express the sense of a word or a text in another language

To Transliterate = write or print (a letter or word) using the closest corresponding letters of a different alphabet or language : names from one language are often transliterated into another

So to Translate is to... ★be true to the text ★express the words into the new language in the same sense in-which the word was used in the original language ★accurately reflect the context of the word.

Whereas a Transliteration ✿ allows for the potential to deviate from the original sense or context of the word, because the value isn't an accurate translation of the word... the value is taking the letters of the word in the original language and replacing those with the corresponding letters of the new language.

✿✿ In transliteration you have the ability to create new words.

✿✿ New Words tend 2 take on New Meanings -often differ'g from t/ intended original mean'g

✿✿ Transliteration is generally a less than ideal way to convert communication from one language to the next.

In most Bible versions (including the KJV, NKJV, NAS, NIV) the Greek Words for servant (diakonos) is transliterated rather than translated in 1 Tim. 3:8-13 and Philippians 1:1.

Am I stating that the Bible is in Error? NO! But we all know that the Objective when it comes to the Study of the Word is that we are to study so we can accurately understand and apply the Bible as God has written and intended it... AND TO DO SO, we have to measure our understanding of Scripture against the Original Language & Intent of the Bible.

Philippians 1:1 NIV Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons

(Greek: Diakonos: servant) (Tense: Plural..... Literally = Servants)

1 Timothy 3:8 NIV Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.

(Greek: Diakonos: servant) (Tense: Accusative Plural..... Literally = Servants)

Verse 8 Literally = Servants likewise be honorable, of good character, worthy of respect, not double-tongued, not addicted much wine, not covetous, eager for dishonest gain, greedy in a shameful way

9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.

10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them **serve as deacons**.

(Greek: Diakoneo: to serve) (Tense: Present Imperative, Active..... Literally = **Serve**)

**Verse 10 Literally** = And let them also be tested first; then serve if they prove themselves not having been called up before a judge; hence free from reproach, blameless

11 In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

12 A **deacon** must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

(Greek: Diakonos: servant) (Tense: Nominative Plural..... Literally = **Servants**)

13 Those who **have served** well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. (Greek: Diakoneo: to serve) (Tense: Aorist Active..... Literally = **serve**)

**Verse 13 Literally** = For those serve well gain a good standing of respect and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus

**"Diakonos, diakonia, and diakoneo" ... Are general words used by The New Testament writers to describe those who serve, service itself, or the act of service. These same words are used all over the NT... Here are just a few of the examples:**

## Diakonos - Servant

Matt 20:26 "It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant,

Mrk 9:35 Sitting down, He called the twelve and \*said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."

John 12:26 "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

Rom 16:1 I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;

1 Cor 3:5 What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one.

2 Cor 3:6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Cor 6:4 but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses,

2 Cor 11:15 14b... Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is not surprising if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

1 Tim 4:6 In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

## Diakoneo - to serve

Matt 4:11 (after Christ's temptation) Then the devil left Him; and behold, angels came and began to minister to Him.

Matt 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

John 12:2 So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was servicing; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.

John 12:26 "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.

1 Pet 4:10 As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

1 Pet 4:11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

**Next Week We Will Discover how we might best utilize Deacon Ministry in light of Scriptural Teaching.**