

DEACONS

1 Timothy 3:13 *For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

EXAMPLES OF DEACONS

There are not many specific examples of the New Testament Deacon. In Philippians 1:1 we are introduced to the deacons of the church there; not much is said about them. We know that whenever deacons are mentioned, it is always in a plurality (similar to elders) and only with elders. Outside of the New Testament, early church writers also referenced deacons in a similar way, always with elders, and always in a plurality.

There may be an indirect example of deacons in Acts 6. These men cannot be called deacons, as the qualifications that were put on them were quite different than those found in 1 Timothy 3. However, they may be an example of what a deacon is meant to do and to be. In that case, those men were selected to keep the peace of the congregation over the issue of those widows who were being neglected in the daily distribution (likely the same as 1 Timothy 5:3-11). From there example we often suggest that deacons are men who see to it that a congregation maintains peace by making certain that the workings of the church continue without interruption.

QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS

The list of qualifications for a deacon are found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. There Paul commands Timothy to appoint deacons in a “likewise” manner as elders. It seems likely that the role of the evangelist in appointing deacons (or elders) is by directing men to the Scriptural qualification, rather than some ordination system.

Qualifications of Deacons in 1 Timothy 3:8-13		
Stated Qualification (NKJV/NASB)	Greek Word and meaning (Strong's)	Comments
a man & husband		A deacon is a man and husband of one wife. This is a gender specific role.
reverent/grave	<i>semnos</i> : venerable, i.e. honorable:--grave, honest. (related to revered)	All Christian men are to possess this quality (Titus 2:2). In Philippians 4:8 it is translated as honest.
not double tongued	<i>dilogos</i> : lit. 2 worded; equivocal, i.e. telling a different story:--double-tongued	All Christians are to possess this quality (Matt. 5:37).
not given to much wine	<i>prosecho polus oinos</i> : 1. To be held; 2. long or much; 3. wine (Hebrew equivalent - drunk)	All Christians are to reject drunkenness (Eph. 5:18). Consider that this applies to any intoxicant.

not greedy for money	<i>aischrokerdes</i> :- shameful accumulation or profit	Spoken of the elders too in 3:3, Titus 1:7. This speaks to the honesty of a deacon's business reputation.
holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience	<i>katharos suneidesis</i> : pure or clean conscious/moral awareness (see James 1:27)	Perhaps the most unusual qualification. It may refer to the mystery as described a few verses on in 1 Tim. 3:16; if so, then the point is that a deacon must be grounded in the fundamentals of Christianity. It may also refer to the mystery as described in Eph. 3:6, that the church is unified as one group. This then speaks to their work as peacemakers in the congregation (similar to Acts 6).
tested	<i>Dokimazo</i> : to test (literally or figuratively); by implication, to approve:--allow, discern, examine	This testing likely speaks to the examination of a man to be qualified for the work. He holds these qualifications before being placed into the position. See 1 Peter 1:7, Galatians 6:4 for all Christians.
blameless/beyond reproach	<i>anegkletos</i> : with no charge or accusation	In this case, up to the qualifications. All Christians are to possess this quality (1 Cor. 1:8. Col 1:22).
husbands of one wife	<i>Aner mia gune</i> : one woman man	There are several possible meanings here: (1) That he possess a wife; (2) That he is scripturally married (3) That he has only married once, and is married only once. The third point would be the safest, as it would include the previous two. Consider a similar term in 1 Timothy 5:9 (although the word for "one" is different; in 1 Tim. 3 it could mean first, and 1 Tim. 5 it refers to the number one).
ruling their children and their own houses well/ good managers of their children and their own households.	<i>Proistemi</i> : to stand before, i.e. (in rank) to preside, or (by implication) to practice:--maintain, be over, rule.	All fathers have this obligation (Eph 6:4). The language of "rule" is not the authoritarian type (see Matt. 20:25), but to be the source of moral integrity in the home (headship).

QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACON'S WIVES

In the midst of the qualifications for deacons are a series of qualifications for their wives. It should be understood that since these are not parallel to the qualifications of a deacon, that these are not for the purpose of qualifying deaconesses. Perhaps a more intriguing question is why the wives of elders are not similarly charged; some point to the elder women of Titus 2 as a series of qualifications. More likely, her qualifications do directly parallel her husband the elder.

Qualifications of Deacon's Wives in I Timothy 3:8-13		
Stated Qualification (NKJV/NASB)	Greek Word and meaning (Strong's)	Comments
(wives) reverent	<i>semnos</i> : venerable, i.e. honorable:--grave, honest. (related to revered)	In Titus 2:3 this is applied to all Christian women (as Titus 2:2 is to men). Consider that in Philippians 4:8 it is translated as honest.
not slanderers	<i>me diablos</i> : not (falsely) accusative	Once more, in Titus 2:3 this is applied to all Christian women. Note that the word here, <i>diablos</i> , is the word "devil".
temperate	<i>Nephaleos</i> : sober, i.e. (figuratively) circumspect:--sober.	Speaks here to the balanced emotional state; this person has their emotions under control. Seen in Titus 2:2 for all Christians.
faithful in all things	<i>pistos en pas</i> : faithful in all	All Christians are to be found faithful in their charge (1 Cor. 4:2). This seems to be a "cover all" for the deacon's wife.