

Elders and Deacons In The Church

(The Organization of The Church Series - #3)

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Review

The Bible speaks of the church (universal) and the church (local).
We recognize differences as to membership, structure, & salvation.
Jesus is the head of the church and His Word is our written standard.
Authority in the visible church is congregational and no higher.
Leaders are referred to as elders, bishops, pastors, overseers, or shepherds.

ELDERS

What IS an Elder?

Presbuteros (presbyter, elder) to indicate age or maturity
Episkopos (overseer, bishop) to indicate responsibility of oversight
Poimen (shepherd, elder) to indicate the care of the flock

What does an Elder DO?

Protects “guard the flock... wolves will come...” Acts 20:28,29

by watching for danger Acts 20:31 Hebrews 13:17

with Bible knowledge Titus 1:9

by disciplining sin, admonishing 1 Thess. 5:12

Feeds “Feed my sheep.” Jesus to Peter – John 21:17

with Bible knowledge Titus 1:9

by maturing Christians Eph. 4:11-16

Leads

“serving as overseers” 1 Peter 5:1,2 [supervise, manage]

“as a steward of God” Titus 1:7 NKJV [household manager]

“the elders who rule” 1 Tim. 5:17 NAS [lead, direct the affairs]

Is an Example “being examples to the flock” 1 Peter 5:3

What must an Elder BE (in order to DO)? 1 Tim 3:1-7 / Titus 1:6-9

	(good reputation)	(successful family)
Willing	Above reproach	Husband of one wife
	Respectable	Manage own family well
Hospitable	Not a lover of money	Believing children
	Good reputation	
Not recent convert	Holy	(disciplined)
		Temperate
(knows & respects the Word)		Self-controlled
Loves what is good		Not given to wine
Able to teach		Not violent
Hold firmly to the message		Not quarrelsome
		Not overbearing

DEACONS

What IS a Deacon?

Diakonos simply means servant (of an earthly boss, or of God)

It is also used as a fixed title for a group of “servant-officers”

Phil. 1:1 To all the saints... together with the overseers and deacons

1 Tim. 3:8 Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy...

What does a Deacon DO?

The servants in Acts 6 are sometimes thought to be the first deacons.
They: were chosen by the church, appointed by the apostles, were given responsibility, and served widows (benevolence).

Other than that possible case, the NT does not name one specific deacon, nor does it specify any duties for deacons.

3 things we do know allow us to infer a deacon’s duties:

1. Elders oversee the church. So, what do the elders need done?
2. Qualifications are listed So, what do they suggest?
3. Deacons are servants of the church So, what does the church need done?

What must a Deacon BE (in order to DO)? 1 Tim 3:8-12

His Personal Character

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.

His Spiritual Character

They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

His Family

In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers, but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of one wife and manage his children and his household well.

OTHERS

A study of the *diakonos* word family shows that every Christian should be a servant of all other Christians. Eph. 4:12 indicates that all Christians should be involved in some kind of ministry.

Eph. 4:11 also mentions the role of **evangelist**. Since it is only used of Timothy and Phillip, it probably is closer to what we call a missionary, rather than a local minister.

A minister is not “the pastor” of a congregation, nor is he even *one of* the pastors (elders) unless he is qualified and selected as one.