

Summary of Qualities in the Life of a Deacon (Special Servant)

Deacon – greek word “*diakoneo*” is translated as one who serves or servant. We view the appointment of men to serve the widows in Acts 6 as the first recorded appointment of special servants. Their primary description: “men from among you who are known to be **full of the Spirit and wisdom**. We will turn this responsibility over to them...”

Timothy was instructed by the Holy Spirit to select those with certain character traits to serve the church as special servants (deacons.) Let’s look at what he wrote:

...deacons must be well respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers or dishonest with money. They must be committed to the mystery of the faith now revealed and must live with a clear conscience. Before they are appointed as deacons, let them be closely examined. If they pass the test, then let them serve as deacons. In the same way, the women must be respected and must not slander others. They must exercise self-control and be faithful in everything they do. A deacon must be faithful to his wife, and he must manage his children and household well. Those who do well as deacons will be rewarded with respect from others and will have increased confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 3:8-10)

Some have viewed these as “qualifications” for an “office.” Some churches appoint those that reach a certain standing to an “office” with the title of “Deacon” as a badge of stature. Instead, the New Testament focuses not on titles (Matthew 23:8-12) or stature (Matthew 20:25-28) but **on the servant heart**. This was truly what Jesus sought to emphasize to his disciples.

Paraphrased, Jesus said, “**Don’t seek a title, seek a service.**” To meet the needs of the body, the Holy Spirit gave gifts (abilities) for the good of His church. “We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. **If their gift... is serving, let them serve**” (Romans 12:6-8). We need servants in many ministries in the Body. In preparing to serve the Body, evaluate whether your character is growing in these **qualities**. They are not a list to be checked off. **No one** will perfectly have all these qualities in full measure. We should **ALL** be growing into the image of Christ.

- “**Full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom**” – seeking the direction and guidance of God’s Spirit. Applying the teaching of God’s word to your life – a disciple of faith, prayer & Bible study.
- Allowing God to develop a servant heart in you. Willing to serve – seeking a service.
- Committed to the gospel of Jesus. Having a good understanding of the essentials of the faith.
- Living with a clear conscience – behavior consistent with beliefs.
- Faithful to meet a need when appointed to a task. Not double minded or a quitter.
- Not a new convert or member – having a track record of service in the church.
- A person respected and having integrity. Honestly handling money. Free from love of money – Godly life focus. Godly work-ethic.
- Not heavy drinker – self-controlled. Dependable. Steady. Serious. Not focused on seeking an escape.
- Married with children – faithful to them – manages their home well.

Questions – please email the elders (elders@brooks.org) or talk to us by phone or in person.

Source: adapted from the Shepherds’ Table series taught by the elders in 2014.