

Recap of 4/15/18 (1 Timothy 3:8-13)

1. In 1 Timothy 3:8-13 Paul turns his attention to the Biblical office of Deacon. The English deacon comes from the Greek word “diakonos” which means “servant.” In its verbal form it means “to serve.”
2. “The origin of the office of deacon is not clearly stated in the New Testament, nor does there appear to be any antecedent to this office in the Jewish community, as in the case of elders.” “The evidence, although somewhat scanty in the New Testament, indicates the office of deacon was primarily concerned with material ministries of the church, specifically distribution of relief to the poor. This corresponds well with the term chosen to designate this office, denoting service in general and table-waiting in particular.” (Author unknown)
3. Acts 6:1-6 is the first example of the function of deacons, though they are not called “deacons” as an official title in this passage.
4. Deacons had a serving role in the church, not a ruling role. They served at the direction and under the supervision of the Elders. Their ministry was personal, one-on-one it seems, which fits well with the qualifications having to do with not being double-tongued (i.e. no “double-talk”), and their wives “not malicious talkers” (i.e. “slanderers”).
5. There is a question in verse 11 as to whether Paul is talking about Deacon’s wives or about an office of Deaconess. The word translated “wives” in verse 11 is literally “women.” It can mean the wives of the Deacons or it can refer to a group of women servants. Because Paul returns to the discussion of Deacon’s qualifications in verse 12, it seems likely that he is speaking about the wives of the Deacons. If he was changing gears and discussing a different office or group it seems logical that he would finish the requirements for Deacons and then go on to the requirements for Deaconesses.
6. Paul closes his discussion of Deacons with a statement of the importance of their role. To the world their work may have seemed menial (humble service to others) but Jesus Himself performed the most menial of tasks when He washed His disciples feet (John 13:1-17) and spoke of greatness in terms of service (Mark 10:42-45; Luke 22:24-27). Believers should value humble, sacrificial, Christlike service no matter how small or menial.”