

Ambassador Church Deacon Ministry

Deacon Ministry

Deacons are to complement the ministry of the elders by serving the needs of the Body of Christ. The word “deacon” means, “one who serves” and came to denote any service done in the local church.

The temptations should be resisted to view the deacons as the JV team, while the Elders are the Varsity team. While the deacons serve under the authority of the elders, both are very important and are respected positions of responsibility.

Qualifications (1 Timothy 3)

“8 Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 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. 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. 13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.”

Deacons:

Dignified, truthful, honest, understand the gospel/faith, and good family management.
Not addicted or greedy.

Deaconesses:

Dignified, Sober-minded, faithful. Not slanderers or gossipers.

Biblical Model

Acts 6:1-7 is the best model of deacons serving and meeting a physical need in the church.

“1 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. 2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.” 5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.”

All the other mentions in Scripture are about an individual who is a deacon or deaconess. Scripture simply just says that they served the church.

After deacons were appointed for the Jerusalem church in Acts 6, we do not hear about another group of deacons organized in another church. Titus was told to appoint elders in each church, but not told to appoint deacons in each church. Every mention of deacons was in an “individual” sense where they were serving as individuals (i.e., not on a board). However, because Paul gives Timothy qualifications for Deacons, there should be some structure for them to serve.

Gifts/Passion

They should be people who do not seek being in the spotlight or upfront leadership, but rather have a willingness to quietly serve and seek the best for the church. Their love for Christ’s church should be clearly seen by all through their loyalty, commitment, and passion to their ministry. Their primary gifts should be hospitality, care/compassion, administration, mercy, etc.

Role/Responsibility

The Bible does not give official or specific responsibilities for deacons; therefore, the deacon model looks different in many churches. Their basic responsibility is to free the elders to shepherd the members of the church while they take care of the details related to ongoing service. Deacons are to serve the *practical needs* of the body, while elders lead and serve the *spiritual needs* of the body.

The deacons will lead the church through their ability to serve as examples and mobilize the church towards various kinds of service. They encourage church members to broaden and deepen their relationship with Christ by exploring and exercising their spiritual gifts through serving in various ways. Deacons will partner with pastoral staff to implement and operate the ministries of the church, in partnership and willingness under the authority of the church elders.

Examples might be: to coordinate set up/clean up for Sunday morning, to hire a janitor, order communion supplies, organize meals for those who are sick, build CM storage unit, organize a prayer ministry, evaluate CM room dividers, move the church office, plan an all-church retreat, organize picnics, serve meals at meetings, etc.

Accountability

All deacons will ultimately be under the authority of the Elder board, but each deacon will be under the direct supervision of the Associate Pastor. The Associate Pastor will meet with the deacon team each quarter (4 times a year) for updates, prayer, encouragement, and direction, as well as individual meetings as needed.

Experience

People must show that they can serve in the role of a deacon (1 Tim. 3:10). They must be committed to the church and able to submit to the board. Therefore, the church must not be hasty to call someone a deacon. It seems reasonable to have them become a member (i.e., regularly attend for at least six months and go through Essentials, while they are serving in a ministry) and attend a Deacon Orientation class before they are considered to serve as a deacon.

Application

Anyone interested in serving as a deacon will fill out an application and meet with the Associate Pastor. Upon review of the application, a motion will be made to the Elder Board for their approval.

Questions

If anyone has any questions or comments, please contact Associate Pastor, Ethan Hedberg at the church office or ethan@ambassadorchurch.com.