

The Deacon: His Character and Purpose (Teaching Outline)

(material courtesy of Dr. Tony Wolfe, Southern Baptists of Texas)

1 Timothy 3:8–13

1. The Deacon's Report (8) – *“Deacons likewise must be dignified...”*

- The deacon should be worthy of respect or dignified.
- This means having a good report in the church and community.
- The church's reputation in the community is often connected to the deacon's reputation in the community.

2. The Deacon's Sincerity (8) – *“Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued...”*

- Too often, the world sees the church as a bunch of hypocrites.
- To avoid being double tongued, one must have a humble heart.
- Non-hypocrisy directly correlates with the witness to the world.

3. The Deacon's Sobriety (8) – *“Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine...”*

- Simple truth: don't drink alcohol.
- 1 Thess. 5:22, “abstain from the appearance of evil.”
- It is a biblical concept to surrender our temporary freedoms to advance the eternal causes of Christ.

4. The Deacon's Generosity (8) – *“Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain.”*

- Greed is a human condition that has invaded our society.
- Generosity is the antidote to a greedy mindset.
- “It's amazing how, no matter where you keep it, your pocketbook is always in such close proximity to your heart.”

5. The Deacon's Conviction (9) – *“They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.”*

- Our society is now post-Christian and there are many questions.
- A deacon does not have to be an expert, but he should be firm in his faith.

6. The Deacon's Experience (10) – *“And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless.”*

- Deacons are often asked questions before ordination.
- This passage is more about character than a checkbox.
- Perseverance is the key character trait here for a deacon.

7. The Deacon's Home (11-12) – *“Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. ¹² Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well.”*

- The phrase “husband of one wife” means literally “one-woman man.” The deacon must be a one-woman kind of man.
- This is also a test of character and includes how he manages his home life.
- This is not a harsh judgment on the wife and children.

8. The Deacon's Reward (13) – *“For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.”*

- There is a two-fold reward here: good standing and good witness.
- One is internal to the church, the other external to the world!
- “A deacon stands tallest on his knees. He is most honorable when he is most humbled.”

Deacon on Purpose Online Course

- A six-week, self-paced course led by a pastor or deacon.
- Perfect for training new deacons or in monthly deacon's meetings.
- Available at ibsa.org/learning-resources (early 2022).

Need more information?

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