

In other words, these guys are going to come alongside and do this.

Stephen is one of those guys that you meet in Acts chapter 6 and becomes the first martyr of the church.

But basically, they were servants. They were support people to make it happen.

In summary, you can say 3 things about the deacons that would help describe where they fit.

1. There is no reference to the teaching duties of a deacon.

In other words, that's not in his job description to be a teacher like it is for the elder.

2. There is no reference to the governing of the deacon over the flock.

3. There is no reference to the deacons serving the whole church in some kind of a representative way. In other words, they didn't have administrative clout and responsibility over the flock.

They truly were servants and functioned in this capacity.

How's your servant's spirit?

Let's look at verse 8, our key verse:

V. 8 *Deacons, in like manner, (in like manner, like the elders, these are some things you should be doing) should be worthy of respect, not insincere (double-tongued), not addicted to much wine, not fond of dishonest gain,*

This is our key verse for Law #7. You have one POSITIVE CHARACTERISTIC and then you have 3 NEGATIVES right here in this first verse.

The positive characteristic is “*deacons, in like manner, should be,*” what? “*Worthy of respect.*”

When you think of somebody who’s *worthy of respect*, you think of them as a person that you may like to pattern your life after. You think of them as a person that has traits and qualities that you’d like to have in your own life.

Qualification #2 is a word that only occurs here one time in the Greek text. Whenever you have a word that occurs only one time that's a clue that we better study it.

When we think of *insincerity*, you think of a jillion things that come to your mind.

And so I put in parenthesis double-tongued. Because that's really what that word means.

And you say, "*Well, what's double-tongued?*"

Double-tongued means that the person is dishonest.

It means that the person is hypocritical.

It means that the person comes in to one circumstance and says what needs to be said in that one circumstance, but then goes over here to this group and says something completely different in order to gain an acceptance from that group.

Now, can you imagine what a deacon would be like if he's calling on a certain house and he says one thing to this family and then he says something different to another family? What happens when the two families get together and compare notes and see a discrepancy?

In other words, you can't be two-faced.

There are some illustrations of this in Scripture.

The classic illustration in the New Testament is in Acts 5. Ananias and Sapphira decide to be double-tongued.

They sell a piece of property for X number of dollars but they're going to lie to Peter and tell him that it wasn't for that much it was for this much. So for their trouble they both become fatalities. Ananias comes in and tells Peter that he's dead and pulled out of their way.

And a few hours later in comes Sapphira and Peter says, "*Did you sell it for this?*" And she says, yeah, and BAMM, she's outta there.

It's being a person who manipulates people by saying what they think needs to be said in the situation.

A servant can't afford to be two-faced. And to lie.

In *USA Today* they had a little survey and they discovered that we fib 50 times a day on an average.

And this is why they say we do it:

We lie about our age.

About our income.

Our accomplishments.

We use lies to escape embarrassment.

The common reason for “*little white lies*,” we’re told, is to protect someone else’s feelings. And yet in so doing, we are really protecting ourselves.

And he goes on to say, “*Here are some of the commonly common fibs.*”

He says, First of all,

“*I wasn’t feeling well.*

I didn’t want to hurt your feelings.

The check is in the mail.

I was just kidding.

***I was only trying to help.”* Just to name a few.**

One fellow says this from *What Makes a Man?*

by Bill McCartney

Nothing binds us more together than a promise kept and nothing divides us like a promise broken.

Remember the classic movie Mary Poppins? As Mary tucks Jane and Michael Banks into bed the first night, Jane says, “*Mary Poppins, you won’t ever leave us, will you?*” And Michael, excitedly adds, “*Will you stay if we promise to be good?*” And then Mary Poppins makes that memorable statement, “*Look, that’s a pie-crust promise. Easily made, and easily broken.*”

There’s another story about an enthusiastic salesman trying to set up a major, major contract with an engineering firm. He had his bid all prepared as he comes into the purchasing agent’s office. However, the agent must leave the office for minute. While he’s out the new salesman looks down on the desk and he sees his competitor’s bid sitting on the desk. The only problem is, he desperately wants to see what the bottom line is so he can compete with it. But there’s a juice can sitting right on the figures. He struggles with the temptation like crazy and it’s too much. He reaches over to pick up the can and it’s bottomless and full of BBs. Hundreds of BBs just roll all over the floor. Needless to say, the guy did not get the contract.

How are you under pressure? Do you say the things that are right in a situation even if it's going to cost you something? Are you desirous to be approved of the Lord more than anything else? You can't be a servant and a leader and be double-tongued.

Third qualification, "*Not addicted to much wine.*"

We talked about that last week.

It's not lingering long over the wine.

And then qualification #4: "*Not fond of dishonest gain.*"

Let's have a little definition here. We're talking about a person who has the tendency to want to embezzle funds.

Now what does the deacon do?

He not only serves in a humanitarian way, meals and various needs of the congregation, but he's also responsible for the money. Can you imagine a guy who has a weakness in handling money and sticky fingers being in this position? So it's necessary for Paul to stipulate that this person has to have a healthy integrity with regard to money.

Remember in John 12 when at Mary's house, Mary breaks this expensive flask of perfume and anoints the Lord with it? What happens to Judas? I mean, the guy goes up in smoke. He's really ticked. He said, "*That could have been sold and the money could have been given to the poor.*"

Bless Judas' heart. He's the treasurer of the organization. But everybody in the twelve knew what he was like.

John 12:6:

"Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it."

All the other guys knew that he was snitching funds from the treasury because the books never balanced.

It never came out right.

Judas always ended up with a little bit of this and that and always had ready cash when it came time to stop to buy yogurt or something else, he always had more than everybody else. And they knew it.

You have to have a healthy attitude toward material things to survive in leadership. It's a key ingredient.

Now, verse 9,

Qualification #5: “*Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.*”

I would like to place a hold on the word “*mystery*” till next week.

Let’s talk about the *pure conscience*, which is qualification #5.

Are you noticing that this is the direct opposite of the 3 previous ones? “*Holding faith in a pure conscience.*”

This is the 3rd time we’ve had the *conscience* mentioned. If something is mentioned 3 times it is very important. Is *conscience* important to a leader?

Chapter 1:5 Paul says:

“*have a good conscience and a genuine faith.*”

Chapter 1:19 he says:

“*holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having rejected, have suffered shipwreck in their faith.*”

**Are you a person who has a good conscience?
Is it right before God?**

Acts 24:16

"In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience [both] before God and before men.

Listen to this survey from Colson's book, *The Body*.

A survey of mainline denominational members found that only 32 percent believed their faith had anything to do with their outside life.

32 percent!

Today, without a moral compass to gauge direction, "Does it work?" has replaced "Is it right?" as the question to ask in business and lifestyle choices. . . .

Covey says it well in *Principle-Centered, Positive personality traits, which often are essential for success, constitute secondary greatness.*

To focus on the personality before character is like trying to grow the leaves without the roots.

If we consistently use personality techniques and skills to enhance our social interactions, we may truncate the vital character base. We simply can't have the fruits without the roots. Private victory precedes public victory. Self-mastery and self-discipline are the roots of good relationships with others.

Many people with secondary greatness—that is, social status, position, fame, wealth, or talent—lack primary greatness or goodness of character. And this void is evident in every long-term relationship they have, whether it is with a business associate, a spouse, a friend, or a teenage child. It is character that communicates most eloquently. As Emerson once put it, “What you are shouts so loud in my ears I can't hear what you're saying.”

One person said:

“You know you're getting old when you become exhausted simply by wrestling with your conscience.”

V. 10 “*And these, moreover, are to be first put to the test (put on probation); then being blameless let them be serving as deacons.*”

Now that looks like you have to take a test, doesn't it?

And you have to get all the right answers.

That's not the picture.

When you are working together with a group of people you can always tell the servants because, immediately, they're out of the shoots, they're anticipating and they're doing things ahead of time. When there's a job to be done they're doing it. And when you get a group of believers together you know who the deacons are. You begin to see those people. That's all he means. They're on probation.

Last week we said that you don't put a person into leadership who's a new convert.

You let him marinate in the grace of God for a while till he has aged a little and ready to assume the responsibility of leadership. The same thing is true with a deacon. You watch him for a while before he takes his place of leadership. Is he a servant, will he carry the ball? Will he be faithful?

Watch him and then put him in leadership. “*Then being blameless,*” there’s no accusation against him, “*let them be serving as deacons.*”

v. 11 *Women, (how did we get women in here?), Women, likewise [should be] worthy of respect, not given to slandering (gossipers), temperate, trustworthy in all things.*

Now, these women are one of two groups.

Either they’re the wives of the deacons, which is one possibility, they’re not just the women in the congregation. Secondly, they could be deaconesses. Because, in Romans 16:1 Phoebe is a servant of the church and the word is “*deaconess.*” It’s the same word. So she would be officially a deaconess.

And Paul says, These women should have these things true of them.

“*Worthy of respect.*”

Where have you seen that before?

verse 8 - first qualification of the deacon.

So the woman is *worthy of respect.*

Secondly: “*Not given to slandering.*”

That’s gossipers in the Greek. But do you know what that Greek word is? “Diabolous.” Does that sound familiar? That’s the devil. He is the slanderer of the brethren.

“*Temperate*” is the next word, we had that last week. That just means “well-balanced.” Calm, cool and collected. A woman who is physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually in balance.

“*Trustworthy in all things*”, you could change that to faithful in everything.

**She is a woman who is faithful.
And she’s faithful in everything she does.**

Now, back to the deacons in verse 12.

Let the deacons be one-wife sort of men (husbands of one wife), managing their children and their own homes commendably.

We said this last week, what you do in the little group is what you're going to do in the big group. And so family relationships are vital when it comes to being a leader.

And if a guy can't lead his own home, how in the world can he lead the church?

And that brings us to verse 13.

“For those who have served in the office of a deacon commendably gain for themselves (2 things) #1 a good standing, and #2 much confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Now the word “*good standing*” means “step.” It's the rung of the ladder. As you serve functionally, as you are faithful to serve as a servant, it can be a step up.

And secondly, while you serve, because you know your conscience is right, you have boldness and integrity to face the onslaughts of those who are criticizing you and would make weaker men fail.

You have boldness because of your consistency and your integrity, you have *“confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”*

I wish that the statement I’m about to read was written by a Christian, but it wasn’t. It is George Bernard Shaw who said in *Principle-Centered Leadership* by Stephen R. Covey:

“This is the true joy in life, being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one.

“Being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

“I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as I live it is my privilege—my privilege to do for it whatever I can.

“I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I love. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me; it is a sort of splendid torch which I’ve got a hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.”

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

LESSON #1: *"It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave"*
Matthew 20:26-27

LESSON #2: **There Is No Place in Leadership for Dishonest, Double-Tongued Drunks (Law #7).**

LESSON #3: **When you promise something, is your word as good as a signed contract?**

LESSON #4: **Are you in the habit of saying one thing to one person and something else to another, or are you consistent in your conversation?**

LESSON #5: **Wine and money have the potential to disqualify us from leadership.**

LESSON #6: **The mystery of the faith is the jewel that is placed in the setting of a pure conscience.**

LESSON #7: **The control of our words is a critical concern in leadership.**

LESSON #8: **Are you a person who is faithful in all things?**

LESSON #9: **Marriage and family are major concerns in leadership.**

LESSON #10: **There is a great reward for those who are faithful in their servanthood leadership.**

STUDIES IN THE FIRST EPISTLE TO TIMOTHY

PART I — 1 TIMOTHY 1-3

"The Laws of Leadership"

**LAW NUMBER SEVEN - There Is No Place in Leadership for Dishonest,
Double-Tongued Drunks**

1 Timothy 3:8-13

Key verse 3:8

Notes

v. 8 Deacons, in like manner, should be worthy of respect, not insincere (double-tongued), not addicted to much wine, not fond of dishonest gain,

v. 9 holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

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v. 13 For those who have served in the office of a deacon commendably gain for themselves a good standing and much confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

QUESTIONS:

- 1. Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and summarize in your own words what Paul is saying in this section.**
- 2. What four things are said about the "deacons" in verse 8?**
- 3. What is the fifth thing he says about them, according to verse 9?**
- 4. What does Paul want done to them before they begin serving, according to verse 10?**
- 5. What four things does Paul say about women leadership, according to verse 11?**
- 6. What does Paul say about the deacons, marriage, and family, according to verse 12?**
- 7. What two things does a deacon gain by serving "commendably," according to verse 13?**
- 8. Where is the faith located, according to verse 13?**
- 9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?**
- 10. What lesson have you learned from this study?**