

# Deacons (Part 1 of "Polity: Understanding Church Structure")

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Acts 6:1-7; 1 Timothy 3:8-13

**Polity** - the organization created for managing affairs; especially public affairs like government

*"Church order and the ceremonials of religion are less important than a new heart; and in the view of some, any laborious investigation of questions respecting them may appear to be needless and unprofitable. But we know, from the Holy Scriptures, that Christ gave commands on these subjects, and we cannot refuse to obey. Love prompts our obedience; and love prompts also the search which may be necessary to ascertain his will. Let us, therefore, prosecute the investigations which are before us, with a fervent prayer, that the Holy Spirit, who guides into all truth may assist us to learn the will of him who we supremely love and adore."*

*–John L. Dagg*

## 1.) Deacon Defined

*"If anyone serves (deacons) Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant (deacon) will be also. If anyone serves (deacons) Me, him My Father will honor." (John 12:26)*

*"... whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant (deacon)." (Matthew 20:26)*

*"But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant (deacon)." (Matthew 23:11)*

## 2.) Historical Background

### 3.) Three Aspects that Comprise the Ministry of Deacons

Read Acts 6:1-7.

#### A.) Deacons Care for the Physical Needs of the Church

*"By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." (John 13:35)*

B.) Deacons are Centered on the Unity of the Body

Read Acts 6:1.

*"Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel." (1 Corinthians 14:12)*

*"The more anxious a person is to devote himself to upbuilding, the more highly Paul wishes him to be regarded"—John Calvin*

*"Each should use whatever gift he has received to serve others administering God's grace" (1 Peter 4:10)*

C.) Deacons Support the Ministry of the Word

4.) The Qualifications of Deacons

Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

*"The church does not need brilliant personalities but faithful servants of Jesus and the brethren"—Dietrich Bonhoeffer*