

ECCLESIOLOGY:
THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH
Gulf Coast Baptist Church
Bible Institute

The Offices of the Church

1. Deacon

- a) Deacon - *diakonos* -
 - (1) The establishment of the office
 - (a) Acts 6:1-4
 - i) A ministry of the early church resulted in complaints within the Body as certain needs were not being met
 - ii) The apostles directed the church to choose men as deacons so that they would not be distracted for caring for the spiritual needs of the church
 - iii) A select group of individuals, bearing the marks of spiritual maturity, were to be chosen to literally "wait on tables"
 - (2) Biblical usages
 - (a) Ma. 4:11 - angels ministered to Christ's physical needs
 - (b) Ma. 8:15 - Peter's mother-in-law met their physical needs after being healed
 - (c) Ma. 25:44 - group questions Jesus about when He was hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick, or in prison and they did not minister to Him
 - (d) Jo. 12:2 - Martha prepared meal and served it
 - (e) 2 Ti. 1:16-18 - Onesiphorous met Paul's needs in Rome and in Ephesus
 - (3) The term *diakonos* repeatedly refers to meeting menial yet necessary needs so that the apostles and pastor can focus on spiritual matters
 - (4) The qualifications for one to serve in the office of deacon - 1 Ti. 3:8-10, 12
 - (a) Grave - "the word points to seriousness of purpose and to self-respect in conduct"; one who takes seriously the office of deacon and their role in meeting the physical needs of the members of the local church in order to free the pastor to focus on the spiritual matters of the church
 - (b) Not double tongued - not two-faced
 - (c) Not given to much wine
 - (d) Not greedy of filthy lucre - the office of deacon is not to be viewed as an opportunity to accumulate wealth or expand one's power
 - (e) Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience - their life is consistent with their understanding of what God has revealed about how to live the Christian life
 - (f) First be proved - tested by observation
 - (g) Blameless
 - (h) Husband of one wife
 - (i) Ruling their children and their own houses well
 - (5) The qualifications for the deacons wife - 1 Ti. 3:11
 - (a) Grave
 - (b) Not slanderers - one who makes false accusations about another's character
 - (c) Sober - saving frame of mind
 - (d) Faithful in all things - dependable in all matters
- b) Notice that like the qualifications for the pastor, the emphasis is on the spiritual character of the individual

- c) Notice that these qualifications do not give the deacons:
 - (1) Authority over the pastor
 - (a) What to teach
 - (b) Oversee the church's spiritual well-being
 - (2) Authority over the church
 - (a) They are not power-brokers with the church
 - (b) No authority over the spiritual lives of the members of the church