

REFLECTION

Questions

ACTS 6:1-7; 1 TIMOTHY 3:8-12

- In Acts 6:1-7, what practical problem arose in the early church, and how did the apostles respond? What does this reveal about the relationship between the ministry of the Word/prayer and practical service?
- How do the qualifications listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-12 expand or clarify the character requirements seen in Acts 6 (men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom)?
- Why does Paul emphasize that deacons must first “be tested” (1 Tim. 3:10)? What might healthy testing look like in a local church today?
- Acts 6 shows the Seven appointed to “serve tables” so the apostles could devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word. How does this shape our understanding of the deacon’s primary role in the church?
- In what ways does faithful diaconal service protect and advance the church’s witness and unity (see Acts 6:7)?
- How might the church suffer if the practical needs of the body are neglected, or if spiritual leadership is distracted by those needs?
- Paul lists several “negative” qualifications (not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain). Why are these particular areas of integrity so important for those who handle the church’s practical and material concerns?
- What does it mean for a deacon to “hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Tim. 3:9)? How is doctrinal faithfulness connected to practical service?
- 1 Timothy 3:11 addresses the character of wives (or women who serve). How does the household and family life of a deacon (or prospective deacon) relate to their fitness for ministry?
- Whether or not you currently serve as a deacon, which of the character qualities in these passages most challenges you personally right now? Why?
- How can every member of the church support and partner with those who serve in diaconal roles, rather than treating their work as “someone else’s job”?
- What practical needs in our own congregation might require the same kind of Spirit-filled, wise, and tested servants that the early church sought in Acts 6?
- How does the example of the Seven (and the qualifications in 1 Timothy) encourage us that ordinary acts of service, done in the power of the Spirit, advance the gospel and the health of the church?