

# Servants: Deacon Ordination Service for Austin Swayze and Jason Hardin

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 16 November 2025

Preachers: Joe Dugger, Ronny Powell, Steven Collins

[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome to First Baptist and our ordination service today.! Exciting time, especially for Jason and Austin.! Serves in the office for the church.

So, we're expected as deacons to always be ready to take up whatever comes up in the church. And in the early church, they had some disputes among the people about how the widows were being taken care of and so forth.

And so, the twelve apostles grabbed all the disciples together and they decided that they would pick out seven men, full of the Spirit, knowledgeable, with good reputation.

And they would make them, give them charge over these responsibilities. Because from the apostles' point of view, it was more important for them to be engaged in prayer and study of God's Word than it was to be taken care of these other duties.

So, that was kind of our first exposure, our first creation of deacons. And we still have deacons today and we still do various tasks and chores in the church. There's a quote that I use this at Chandler's Ordination too, but I like it a lot, so I'm going to use it again.

[ 1 : 34 ] The evangelist, Dwight Moody, was very hardworking, had a reputation for being a really hard worker. But he said, it's better to put ten men to work than to try to do it all yourself.

And, you know, our pastor, if anybody could do it all himself and is able and capable and has the energy, our pastor could do it. But having twelve deacons to help with those responsibilities is a wonderful thing.

So, that's why we have a deacon staff and we take care of a lot of the things so that our pastor is free to study the Word and do the things that he does. Okay?

So, what does it mean to be ordained? It means to be set apart for his petition. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

[ 3 : 39 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 6 : 09 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 8 : 39 ] to pray also for our pastor that he may lead with vision and grace guided by God. I charge you to pray for the unity of this church body that together we can shine as a light to the community and bringing glory to God.

Church, your deacons are a reflection of your faithfulness as well. Support them well and remember together we can advance the kingdom of Christ just as we have been called to do.

I will give the charge to the deacons. This is all deacons. I charge you deacons to inspire faithful ministries of service to one another to the community and to the world.

Remind us that the Lord requires us to act justly and to be and to love mercy and to walk humbly with God. It's Micah 6a.

Teach us to be merciful and to seize new opportunities to worship God with offerings of wealth, time, and ability. realize that the benevolence is a quality of our life in Christ and not merely a matter

of financial assistance.

[10:38] Therefore, minister to the rich and the poor alike, both within and outside of the church. Lay our opportunities for giving us, giving and service, and use the church's resources discerningly.

Be compassionate to those in need and treat them with dignity and respect. Hold and trust all sensitive matters confined to you.

Encourage with words that create hope in hearts and with deeds that bring joy into their lives. be prophetic critics of waste, unjust, and selfishness in our society and be sensitive counselors to victims of such evils.

Let your lives be about reproach. Live as examples of Christ Jesus. Look to the interest of others and in all ministries help us participate in the renewing of all things even as we anticipate its completion when God's kingdom comes.

Let's pray. Dear Lord, I'd like to ask you to watch over us and guide us and bless these ones that are being ordained.

[12:09] And dear Lord, be with the congregation as they prepare to pray for us and guide us and be with the deacons as we go through that we may lean on each other and become a stronger body.

In Jesus' name I pray. Now, Ordination Council met on November 13th with 11 ordained members. Present and duly questioned the candidates concerned their understanding of the scriptures and their service ministry. It was the unanimous decision to recommend both candidates for ordained in today's service and I so move.

All right. I want to thank you. I'm loud. Eric, you got the iPad there.

You're going to turn me down a little. Okay, cool. I think this is loud because I came up here earlier and it was turned off and y'all were trying to get me set but the mic wasn't on. That's on me.

[13:25] If something goes wrong in the service, guys, just know it's my fault. Okay? It's never the tech's fault. It's never, it's my fault. I promise. Just know that. Anyways, I'm here and excited to give the charge to Jason and to Austin, the two candidates for deacon service.

I'm thankful for both of you. I'm thankful for getting to know you over the past year and couple months and to serve alongside you already and I'm excited to serve alongside you in the future. And I also want to thank Stephen and Jeff and Ronnie for speaking in this ordination service already.

I hope that you as a congregation were encouraged and strengthened by the words from Jeff and deacons. I hope that you feel empowered from Ronnie's words there as well. Now I'm going to turn my attention to Jason and Austin.

The rest of you are just going to listen. Okay? But this is to you. And I'm going to give you a charge, but before I do that I want you to understand something about the blessing that God offers to you, in fact promises to you, if you serve faithfully as deacons.

In 1 Timothy 3 verse 13 it says, For those who have served well as deacons acquire a good standing for themselves and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

[14:42] So that's a conditional promise. It's two promises, two guarantees, but they're conditional. If you serve well as a deacon, and that doesn't just mean now at the beginning of your time as a deacon, but it means faithfully in the long haul that you end well.

You start well and you finish well and you do well in the middle. Alright? This is a conditional promise and the promise is that you will acquire a good standing. That means publicly people will think highly of you, not too highly, not more highly than they ought to, I promise you that, but they will think highly of you.

And it also is a promise that you'll receive a great boldness in the faith. You'll have a great confidence in your faith in Jesus Christ. That is a promise, and I want you to understand this, a promise that is not given to pastors, it's not given to children's ministers, it's not given to worship leaders, it's given to deacons, very specifically, and that's interesting because Paul lists the qualifications for overseers or elders or pastors and then lists the qualifications for deacons.

And he doesn't give that promise for the elders or the pastors. Now there's other promises there in God's word, especially if you go over to 1 Peter chapter 5 for the elder, but here in this moment the focus is on the blessing that's promised to you as deacons if you serve well.

And I want you to think about why would that be? Why would there be a promise of encouragement, a promise of strengthening for you as deacons? I think that that's the reason for that is found in the

purpose and the calling of a deacon.

[16:18] So we've been working through the church words series here on Sunday mornings, and today's church word is servant, which is fitting because the word that we translate as deacon in Greek is diakonos.

Now you get to participate. Everybody say diakonos. One, two, three. That's on me. I'll count to three then say it. One, two, three. That's a fun word to say. That's the only reason I wanted you to do it.

Diakonos. That word is translated 20 out of the 29 times it's used. It's translated as servant, not deacon. In fact, it's only translated as deacon three times.

There's other words that are translated. This is the Christian standard translation, just Bible translation, just so you know. There's other words that can come out of that, but anyways, the two that we use most often are servant and deacon.

Three uses, three times it's listed as translated as deacon. Two of them are found in 1 Timothy chapter 3, and one is found in Philippians chapter 1. That's important because when you see the word deacon in scripture, understand that this is a claim about an office.

[17:28] God has ordained in the local church two offices, the office of pastor or elder and the office of deacon. And so it's a special calling. It's a special calling. But you also see that the office of deacon is designed to be an office of a servant.

You're called to be a servant. And what does that mean? Well, it means that you'll consider others as more important than yourself. You'll love the church who nominated you and voted you into deacon ministry by serving them faithfully.

You'll be the last in line. You'll be the first to arrive to set things up. You'll take down chairs and put chairs back up and take down tables and put tables back up.

Jason, you might paint some walls, man. You know? You'll do all sorts of things. This is what being a servant is. You'll make sure that your church family has what they need by serving them well.

The calling of a deacon is to lead by example in the church through serving well. All Christians are called to serve. Okay? As Jeff already pointed this out, we're all called to serve. There's no doubt about it.

[18:29] But the office of deacon is a public office in the local church where an individual or individuals are set apart for public service, for faithful service.

This means that you should set the example for service in this church by the way that you serve. Deacons are called primarily to serve to the church's, the individual's physical needs, not primarily the spiritual needs.

By accepting this role of deacon, you will be judged by your service to the Lord Jesus Christ and his church. And it's important that you understand these things as you enter into this ordination, being set apart for this role.

It's also important that you accept this role with the heart of Jesus Christ. In Mark chapter 10, verse 42 through 45, Jesus talked about what it looks like to be a leader.

And he described it differently than the people of the world would have ever expected. Jesus called them over and said to them, you know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in high positions act as tyrants over them.

[19:35] But it is not so among you. On the contrary, whoever wants to become great among you will be your servant. And whoever wants to be first among you will be a slave to all.

For even the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many. If Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, came and took the position of a servant, he calls us to do the same.

So we have to accept the role, the calling of the deacon office in the spirit of the spirit of Jesus Christ, with the same mind of Christ.

The deacon doesn't look for power as the Gentiles do, as Jesus mentioned. He looks for people in need. The deacon doesn't look for authority, he looks for opportunities to serve. Jesus set a high bar for serving, and that's exactly why this blessing is so beautiful.

This blessing that you're promised is so beautiful. Just to remind you, you're promised a good standing and great boldness in the faith if you serve well as a deacon. Your purpose, okay, your purpose as deacons is to strengthen the people of God as they seek to grow closer to him.

[ 20 : 51 ] Your purpose is to edify the people of God. Your calling is to serve faithfully to that end, with that in mind. The reason that you'll acquire such a great blessing if you do this well is because in this role, you live the most like Christ Jesus.

Jesus, the church will hold you in high regard if you prove faithful because in your service, you show them the love of Christ. You'll be more bold in your faith because in your service, you grow closer to Christ.

Let me say that last part in another way here. If you want to live more like Christ so that you can serve like Christ, you must pursue Christ.

If you pursue him faithfully so that you can serve with his heart, you will gain a boldness in the faith that is unmatched. Does that make sense? Good. This promised blessing flows from your intimate relationship with Christ and your imitation of Christ.

That's what a deacon looks like. An intimate relationship with Christ and one who imitates Jesus. Now that we have the purpose and the calling and the blessing straightened out, I'm going to give you five commands.

[ 22 : 04 ] And these are not Joseph's commands. I don't pick and choose commands to give you. These are from scripture. I want you to understand that. And they're important for you to live by. It's important that you live by these commands, these charges, not only in your public service to the church, but in your private life as well.

You see, the interesting thing about the qualifications for elder and pastor and for deacons is that these qualifications are not limited to what people see on a Sunday morning or Wednesday night. Now, these qualifications have to do with your entire life. And the reason for that is if you fail to live up to these qualifications, once you are appointed to an office, you bring reproach to the church of Jesus Christ.

And none of us want to do that. So we have to live faithfully. You have to live faithfully. You have to pay attention to the qualifications for a deacon and pay attention to the expectations and responsibilities of a deacon and live faithfully so that God is glorified and the church is strengthened.

So here are five charges that I want to give you. Number one, be servants to those in need. Be servants to those in need. The first set of deacons were appointed to serve because there was a group of people in the church who were being underserved.

[ 23 : 18 ] They needed help. The Hellenistic Jews, the widows, were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food and the apostles couldn't keep up with everything. So they called for extra servants.

Enter deacons. They were appointed to serve those who had need. You must always remember that your first call as a deacon is to be a servant. Number two, be defenders of the faith.

One of those seven men who were set aside to serve, who were appointed to serve, of those seven, we hear a lot about two of them as they go on. The first one is Stephen. Okay?

Stephen was a young man. He was full of faith and the Holy Spirit. He also performed signs and wonders. So maybe if y'all could just start that too, that'd be great. He was full of faith and the Holy Spirit.

As a deacon of the church, as a servant of the church, he saw part of his responsibility to be a man who defended the faith from outside attacks. And it cost him his life.

[ 24 : 15 ] Stephen was the first Christian martyr. He's remembered, though, not only as the first Christian martyr, he's remembered as a man who was faithful in his defense of the gospel.

Deacons are to be the first line of defense. So guard the truth and defend the faith. Number three, be evangelists who share the faith. The other of those seven who we hear a lot about as the story of Acts unfolds is Philip.

Philip is an evangelist. In fact, later in Acts, Philip is called Philip the evangelist. It's a great nickname, by the way. Maybe you can be Jason the evangelist or Austin the evangelist. That'd be awesome. He went on mission trips and shared the gospel before Paul and Barnabas made it cool to do that.

Okay? He went to Samaria and he famously shared the gospel with an Ethiopian eunuch on the road to Gaza. Be like Philip. Be a man who's willing to follow the spirit of God and share the gospel to those who need to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Number four, be standards before others in living the faith. In Acts 6, the first set of qualifications for deacon ministry is given. The apostles told the people to select seven men who had a good reputation, were full of the spirit and wisdom, and were willing to be appointed to serve.

[ 25 : 26 ] That last one, by the way, kind of gets overlooked sometimes as a qualification. You have to be willing to be appointed to serve, and both of you are, and I'm thankful for that. But you were nominated on and voted on by this church, I hope, because they recognized at least these rudimentary, fundamental qualifications in you.

This church looks to you as an example in the faith. So you must maintain your good reputation, you must grow in your wisdom, and set an example for the believers through your service and love for Jesus Christ.

Number five, be faithful in supporting the pastor. A little bit odd for me to ask that of you, but I want you to understand that I am not the best at asking for help.

Right, Jeff? Amen. I'm not the best at asking for help, but I readily admit that I need it. The apostles asked for seven men to be appointed so that they could be free to focus on what they were called to focus on, which was the ministry of the word and prayer.

I need you to serve well so that I'm free and able to focus on the ministry that God's called me to, which is the ministry of the word and prayer and my own service to this church. I'm asking you to serve me, and I'm promising that I will serve you.

[ 26 : 41 ] The joy of this relationship between the pastor and the deacon, and yes, it is a joyous relationship between the pastor and the deacon, okay? I don't care what you've heard at other churches. We have outstanding men who serve here as deacons, and as a pastor, I'm so thankful for each of you.

But the joy of this relationship between the pastor and the deacon is that if we serve each other well, we will both, we will all serve the church better. So please join me faithfully in that endeavor. If you do these things well and you live a qualified life and continue to serve faithfully, you will receive the promised blessing from 1 Timothy 3, which is that you'll acquire a good standing for yourself and a great boldness in the faith in Christ Jesus.

I want that for you more than anything. So serve well to the glory of God. God. At this time, I'm going to ask for, I'm going to ask some questions, and this is, I'm going to first ask questions to the deacons, and each of the deacons, all of you will respond, active, inactive, it doesn't matter if you're ordained, I want you to respond.

I'm going to ask for questions and affirmations, and so after I ask my questions, if you feel so led, respond by saying we do, and then after that, church, I'll let you know. I'll ask one church to the congregation, and if you feel so led, you can also respond in like manner.

[ 28 : 07 ] Okay? So, deacons, do you believe the word of God is complete, infallible, and the only rule of faith and practice?

We do. Do you accept the responsibility of the office of deacon with this congregation and promise to faithfully perform all the duties? We do. Do you promise to promote the unity and purity of this church?

We do. Church, I'm going to ask you one question now, and if you feel so led, respond in like manner. Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive these brothers as deacons?

Do you promise to support them with respect, encouragement, and cooperation as they seek to faithfully serve the Lord and the congregation in the office of deacon? We do.

All right. I'm going to pray for us, and then Jason, Austin, I'm going to have you guys sit in these chairs, and if you're ordained, then please line up. This is not for everybody yet.

[ 29 : 06 ] At the end of the service, we'll have Jason and Austin up here, and you can come by and say a word of encouragement to them. But if you're ordained, then I'm going to ask you to line up, and your spouses can join you. Mindy and Blair, if y'all want to come up and stand behind Austin and Jason, try to pick your husband.

They look so similar. It's hard to... Thank you for laughing. Okay. I'm going to pray for us, and then we'll have the time of laying on of hands.

And church, what I'm going to ask of you during this time is that you bow your heads and spend time praying for them and for their families as they embark in this deacon ministry through the process of this ordination.

Okay? All right. Let me pray for us, and then men, let's line up. Okay? Men and wives. Lord Jesus, thank you for who you are. Thank you for this calling that you've placed on the lives of Austin and Jason.

Lord Jesus, I pray that you would bless them. I pray that you would strengthen them. God, we pray that you also would empower them to fulfill the duties and to live faithfully as men set apart, men called to serve your church and your people.

[ 30 : 14 ] Lord, we pray also that you would give to them the promised blessing that was given in 1 Timothy chapter 3. Lord, we know that this office of deacon, the calling and the responsibility is only able to be fulfilled faithfully if you, by your spirit, lead and guide.

And so, God, we pray that you would do that now. Lord, as we enter this time of laying on of hands, I pray that you would move in this place. I pray that you would encourage Jason and Austin and their spirit, that they would be strengthened and prepared to lead from this point forward in this church.

We love you. We praise you. And we pray all of these things in Jesus' holy and precious name. Amen. All right. Y'all have a seat. Men, let's line up.

And if you, wives, if y'all would come stand with them. And then wives of you ordained men, if y'all want to come up and pray with Blair and Mindy, I know that they would appreciate it so y'all can also join. Thank you.