

1 Timothy 3.8-13 Qualified Deacons

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[0 : 00] In 1 Timothy 3.15, we see why Paul wrote to Timothy.! He said, If I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

So, how the church ought to conduct itself includes the two offices in the church. And last week, we looked at chapter 3, verses 1 to 7 on the office of elders.

And an elder's work is to care for the church by ruling and by teaching. Now, as the elders do their work, the church will have spiritual needs, but the church will also have arise physical, tangible needs.

And as the needs arise, the elders won't be able to take on every task of both ruling and teaching. And the spiritual needs, as well as the physical, tangible needs.

And to do so, to take on, for the elders to take on every task, would take them away from their work of ruling and teaching, or as it is, to take them away from the ministry of the word and prayer.

[1 : 14] Now, both tasks are good, and both tasks are necessary. But the question that we have today before us is, who should be primarily consumed with which task?

Let's take a look. So, in 1 Timothy, today we will look at, in chapter 3, verses 8 to 13, but we will begin by reading the whole chapter of 1 Timothy, chapter 3.

This is a faithful saying. If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, but covetous, sorry, not covetous, one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence.

For if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God? Not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride, he fall into the same condemnation of the devil.

Moreover, he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. Likewise, deacons must be reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

[2 : 47] But let these also first be tested, then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. Likewise, their wives must be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.

Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly, but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up in glory.

Lord, we thank you again for your word and that we have divine testimony. We pray that as we seek to sit under the ministry of the word, that you would illuminate your word to us and that you would help us to grow in truth, that you would bless the preaching of the word, I pray that you would use me, and I pray that you would also bless the hearing of the word and understanding, and that you would make your word effectual to the hearers.

[4 : 19] We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So in chapter 3 this morning, we'll be looking specifically at verses 8 to 13, so keep your finger there because we're going to work through it and unpack the meaning behind what it says.

But what is going on in this text is that the church is called, the church is to call only qualified men to the office of deacon for the care of the church's tangible needs.

So we will consider the office of deacon and we'll consider the qualifications of deacons. So first of all, the office. There are today two church offices.

Last week we looked at verses 1 to 7, which spoke of bishop. The word for bishop is, it refers to the same office throughout scripture as overseer, as elder, or as we would call a pastor.

All of these refer to the same office of overseer, of elder. The second one being of deacons. Now, there's two passages in the New Testament that speak specifically of the office of deacon.

[5 : 35] What are they being? Philippians 1.1. Philippians 1.1 is addressed by saying, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi with the bishops and deacons.

Now, the word in Philippians 1.1, as well as the same word in 1 Timothy 3, that refers to the office of deacon. In Greek, the Greek word is diakonos.

Now, you probably hear that, and you see the transliteration. You think, oh, okay, that makes sense. You think, this Greek stuff's pretty easy. So from here on in, when I say deacon, you're going to see diakonos, and you're going to think, this is all Greek to me.

So diakonos, diakonos, the word means one who serves. Or it can mean, or it means one who gets something done as an assistant.

So remember that, that a deacon, diakonos, is one who serves, or one who gets something done as an assistant. That's the work done by a diakonos, by a deacon.

[6 : 42] Now, it's, while in 1 Timothy 3, and in Philippians 1.1, it uses that word for the office. It's not the only time the New Testament uses what the Greek word is, which we get, deacons.

The lexical form of it, of diakonos. Now, in Matthew 20, 28, says this, just as the Son of Man, now if you're familiar with that title, remember, we'll come back to this, but remember, when, when Matthew was written, the book of Revelation hadn't been written.

So, when this was actually spoken, Matthew narrates the account that happened. What actually happened was spoken. When Jesus used the title, Son of Man, their understanding of it would have come from the Old Testament, specifically of Daniel 7.

So there's much significance in what he's saying when he says, just as the Son of Man, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life a ransom for many.

There's a lot in that one verse, in that one sentence, and a Puritan would probably take a year-long series to unpack that one verse. But, where it says, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, can you guess what the Greek word is for that verb?

[8 : 16] Diakoneo, which stems from the same lexical form of diakonos, the verb versus the noun.

So, you could say, just as the Son of Man did not come to be deaconed, but to deacon, and to give his life a ransom for many.

So, the word, what's at the root of the word is to serve. And here, in Matthew 28, it's not referring to the office, it's referring to the action. The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.

So, the word, as it's used from the Greek, diakonos, it can refer to either a function, or it can refer to an office. For example, in Matthew 28, just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, it's as the function.

Whereas, in 1 Timothy 3, 8-13, the word serves as the office. So, what does the office of deacon mean?

If you're taking notes, I would take note of this. This, the church office of deacon is an approved official assistant to the overseers.

[9 : 30] So, while the function of a deacon is serving, the church office of deacon is approved, approved by the church, an approved official assistant.

So, while everyone in the church would and should and could serve in some capacity, though they are serving doesn't mean they're a deacon. So, the office particular of deacon is an approved official assistant to the overseers.

we're going to unpack that more and there's significance to that to understand also then what the office of deacon isn't, which some have forced it to become.

That's, it's not a division of sides. So, if the office of deacon is an approved official assistant to the overseers, it's not, they're, the deacon is helping, is assisting by getting things done, by, by serving to take that off the responsibility of the elders.

So, it's not a matter of you have your deacons over in this corner and you have your elders over in this corner, you stay in your corner, you stay in your corner and make sure you don't come into my lane.

[10:46] That's, that's not at all what the office of elder and deacon should look like. whether the deacon is an approved official assistant to the overseers and that's for a purpose.

We're going to get to that purpose. But first, I want to direct your attention to the background to the office of deacon or the background to the work of deacon that sets in motion what we now have as the office of deacon.

So, keep your finger here, we're going to come back, but turn over to Acts chapter six. Acts chapter six.

Now, in those days when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution.

So, I'm going to pause there and just focus on what's going on here. So, there's a complaint.

There's disunity amongst the believers, amongst those who are becoming disciples of Christ.

There's disunity in the church.

[11:59] There's unharmonie. There's a complaint against the Hebrews, the Hebrew speaking to the Jews by the Hellenists who would be Greek speaking. So, there's disunity between those who speak Hebrew and those who speak Greek.

And we know, having worked through Ephesians, that the dividing wall between ethnicities has been abolished in Christ. And in the church, there is no difference between Jew and Gentile, but all is one in Christ.

So, there's disunity and there's a lack of harmony because the Hebrew speaking widows are being favored over the Greek speaking widows in the church, in the daily distribution.

So, here we have ourselves a need, a physical, tangible need. The widows who are incapable of providing for themselves need the help of the church and the distribution of it is the service towards them, a physical, tangible need, and it needs attention because there's disunity.

So, it needs attention. Let's see what happens. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables.

[13:16] Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith in the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles, and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them.

So, they had a need, and I want to point out something more about the significance of that need.

Look back at chapter two. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and what?

So, we have here two needs. The need of the word of God and the need of serving tables. Now, if you had a Greek Bible in front of you where it says serving tables, that word serve, what word do you think is there?

Diakonos, or diakoneo, to serve. So, while we don't have the office at this point, this is the backdrop that gets the office or the work set in motion.

[14:37] There's the need of the word, and there's the need of the physical tangible requirements, but in order for those who are occupied with the ministry of the word and prayer to be committed to their office, to their work, they can't take on both.

So, from that need, qualified men are chosen to serve tables in order that here the apostles, but there are no apostles today, but so that elders can give themselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.

So, you can see the significance of the work of the deacon or the role of the deacon. It's in order to facilitate the furthering of the ministry of the word so that those who are in the ministry of the word aren't taken away from it.

So, while there's a need for physical and tangible needs, there's even something more beyond that. It's for the advancement of the spread of the word of God, the advancement of the spread of the gospel.

So, they're serving their diakoneo, to serve, it's serving tables, it's serving the Lord's table, the pastors, the congregational meals, and the poor.

[16:02] So, there is a need to serve in helping the widows. There's disunity and it needs attention. attention. But there's also a need for attention to be given to the ministry of the word of God so you can see the problem.

And those who are overseers, those who rule and teach, cannot do it all. So, when those who are called to the ministry of the word are able to commit themselves fully to the work, what are the results?

we have it in the text before us. By the serving of a deacon, enabling those who are able to commit themselves to the ministry of the word, are able to commit themselves to the word, what's the result through the full commitment to the ministry of the word?

Well, let's keep reading. Look at verse 7. Well, let's go back to 6. Whom they set up before the apostles and when they had prayed, they laid hands on them. Then the word of God spread and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.

So you can see there's a much bigger picture than just the physical tangible needs, that it also facilitates the furthering of the kingdom of God in the ministry of the word. Then the word of God spread and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly.

[17:36] So having looked at the two church offices, let's briefly look at the duty of the office of deacon. Where elders care for the spiritual needs of the church through ruling and teaching, deacons care for tangible needs or physical needs by serving.

So the deacon's care for the tangible needs of the church includes care of elders, that they are able then to be able to commit themselves to the ministry of the word, care of the building, care of finances, care of members, care of the poor and the needy, and care of missions.

It's quite broad for the work of the deacon and the care of the church. So that brings us to our second point, and I'll have you turn back now to 1 Timothy.

Our second point is that the church is to call only qualified men whose character demonstrates the work of grace. Now as I read that, you probably think that sounds familiar, that sounds a lot like the qualifications in verses 1 to 3 of the work of elders.

And you're not wrong, and there are a lot of similarities in the qualification of a character for someone to be put into the office. There is one main difference, which we will look at as well.

[18:59] But because there's so much similarity in the character, we're not going to spend as much time as we did last week. So you can feel free to go back to last week's sermon if you'd like a more fuller understanding of the words and the character qualification.

But as it concerns deacons, the qualifications. Now in our text, excuse me, in verse eight, it says likewise deacons must be.

Notice deacons and specifically in writing about deacons, he said, God's paramount concern is not with buildings or programs, but with the moral and spiritual character of those who lead his people. You can find probably the most elaborate church building with marble and gold and whatever else they pour into the church building, but it could be spiritually dead inside.

The priority isn't the building itself for the programs, but the moral and spiritual character of those who lead his people. Deacons must be. If they don't have the qualifications that follow, then they don't fill the office.

[20:32] Now, as I said, you don't have to be a deacon to serve in some way, but at the same time, also just by serving is not what's in mind with the office of deacon.

It's an approved official, assistant, and serving for the care of the tangible needs of the church. So, with the qualifications for the character of the deacon, we're going to look at his personal faithfulness, his doctrinal faithfulness, his proven faithfulness, his domestic faithfulness, and then rewarding faithfulness.

So, first of all, if you'll look at verse 8, his personal faithfulness. reverent, so we're going to just quickly look at the words and really just what they mean.

We're not going to spend too much time on them. So, reverent, he must be reverent, or you might say grave. That is, he's worthy of respect, or he's worthy of honor, he's noble, he's dignified, or he's serious.

These are all words taken out of BDAG, which is a lexicon of Greek. So, in other words, he takes God seriously, he takes Christianity seriously, he takes the word of God seriously, he takes church seriously, he takes the commandments of God seriously, and he takes the needs of the church seriously.

[22 : 03] If he doesn't take these things seriously, how can he be entrusted with the care of the church, which is the church of the living God. Next, it says not double-tongued.

What that means is not somebody who is insincere, but being of the same resolve with different people. So, in other words, not saying one thing with one group of people, but saying another thing with another group of people, or not affirming perhaps something in doctrine with the elders, but then arguing or practicing against it with the people.

And these qualifications that we see, they're quite important because the office of deacon is quite an influential office, considering the tangible needs and the example given in Acts 6 of widows, to be serving the needs of the tangible physical needs of people is to be involved in their lives, and they're going to be confronted with probably a lot of either questions, trials, or difficulties such as poverty, and you wouldn't want somebody who either doesn't take it seriously or who is insincere with the word to be influential, particularly in areas of need where people are suffering in various trials.

things. So not being insincere, not being double-tongued, because that would ruin trust and undermine credibility. Next, in proven faithfulness, he must not be given too much wine, that is, he must be self-controlled, he must be sober, not greedy for money.

A deacon will be entrusted and involved with the church's finances, with the church's charities. So somebody who is greedy for money cannot be trusted with finances.

[24 : 00] So those being the personal faithfulness, it then goes on to speak of his doctrinal faithfulness. Notice in verse 9, it says, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

That is, he does not only believe sound doctrine, but that he is also holding to it in conduct. That is, doctrine according to godliness. While there is not the requirement of being able to teach, because it will not be in the same capacity of an elder who rules and teaches, he still yet must hold to the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience, both in doctrine and in practice.

Now, notice it says the mystery. What does that mean, the mystery? Does that mean something that we don't know? Well, the mystery refers to something that was once hidden, but is now revealed in full detail.

An example would be in Ephesians how the inclusion of the Gentiles into the kingdom of God was a mystery before the coming of Christ, while it was made known in shadow, it fully came to light in Christ.

But the mysteries of the faith are those things which are not known to us by nature, but are revealed by God's word and scripture. So it's not mystery in the sense of we'll never know, but it's that which is by the light of faith.

[25 : 31] So by nature, we know that there is a God, and you see that everywhere you go in the world, is that there is an understanding that there is a God. But nature itself doesn't teach who that God is, being a triune God, it doesn't teach how to approach that God who is holy and just and righteous, nor does nature itself teach us how to worship God.

For those things, there's a mystery by nature, so we need special revelation, that is, we need the word of God, the word of God written. So what is written, who God is, how we may approach God, and how God is to be worshipped, must be held to with a pure conscience by those who hold the office of deacon.

So to be even considered for the office, they must be demonstrable in his character. Now you'll notice that in these character requirements, it does not require apt to teach, which was a qualification for elders.

Why was it a qualification for elders, but not for deacons? It doesn't mean, because it's not a requirement for deacons, it doesn't mean that they can be unresolved in their understanding of the word and of theology.

And being unresolved, tossed by every wind of doctrine, rather he must be doctrinally faithful, because his preoccupation won't be primarily the ministry of the word.

[26 : 57] So it's not, it doesn't have the weight of being apt to teach, but he still must be sound, excuse me, and doctrinally faithful. So personal faithfulness, doctrinal faithfulness, next we see his proven faithfulness in verse 10.

It says, but let these also first be tested. It's not that somebody becomes a deacon in order to test them to see how faithful they are in it, but let them also first be tested.

That is, let them be observed, examined, and proven faithful first. A trial period to see if the church is unified in the man's provenness after being tested, after testing.

So let them, let these also first be tested, then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. So the congregation, being aware of the qualifications, I write, so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, so they know the qualifications, and knowing the qualifications, having tested him, they have found that he meets the qualifications.

Then let them serve as deacons, being found blameless. So personal faithfulness, doctrinal faithfulness, proven faithfulness, and then next we see domestic faithfulness in verses 11 to 12.

[28 : 21] Now, in this section, in verse 11, it says their wives must be reverent, not slanders, temperate, faithful in all things. A couple things.

It says their wives must be. This is another necessary qualification. This is non-negotiable. Now, while the man might demonstrate all the faithfulness required for the qualifications, if his wife doesn't meet the qualifications, then he's not qualified, or not yet qualified, to enter the office of deacon.

Well, we'll come back to the reason for that. But let's go back in verse 11. It says their wives must be. Now, last week in verses 1 to 7, we looked at how the office of elder is for man, and it carries over into it some of what is taught in chapter 2.

And that is from creation, God's order from creation is that he made man as head and woman as helper, that sin has flipped or inverted God's order, and that culture follows the flipped order, the course of the world, but God is restoring order in Christ, and that the church is to be a refuge from the curse, not a return to the curse.

So this carries through into chapter 3. Now, some churches that are liberal, they are finding ways to try to argue against primarily chapter 2, verse 12, but then all of God's order in Genesis 2, by putting women in pulpits as pastors, which is contrary to clear didactic teaching in Scripture, and ultimately it's a rejection of the sufficiency and authority of God's word, and it's not an insult to the intellectual capacity of a woman, because both men and women are made equally in the image of God in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, but it's not based on human academics or excellence by which the church operates, but it's by the Spirit of God, whom the Spirit of God uses as the means to accomplish

[30 : 49] God's purposes. So in liberal churches, if we want to call them churches, they are doing away with that for elders, and also the same with that of deacons.

Now there are some less liberal churches that think that where it says likewise their wives, they're interpreting that word as saying deaconesses, likewise women deacons.

So is that what is being specified here, and why or why not? It's problematic to interpret that way, so deacon, the word deacon, you know, this Greek stuff's pretty easy, right?

It's all Greek to me. It's diakonos. That's not the word here. It doesn't say likewise diakonos. diakonos. The word that's used for their wives is it's actually the infinitive of gune, which is guneikos, which means either wife or woman.

Now, this Greek stuff that we thought was easy starts to get a little bit more complicated because it's not like you can take one word in Greek and get the English version of it and then it's going to perfectly translate.

[32 : 16] It doesn't work that way at all. The word glossed into English could mean many different things depending on many other things, whether it's lexically determined or whether it's well, there's a number of things.

So you can't just take one word and it always means that word. But this word that we have here for likewise their wives, it can mean either wives or women. It doesn't say deacons, it says either wives or women.

So how do we know does it mean wives or does it mean women? Well, first of all, taking the flow of the context from chapter two, well, specifically in verse 12, God's order from creation before the fall is for man as head and woman as helper.

And that carries through into elders and it carries through into deacons and their wives or likewise their women to change the office there to the office of a deaconess would totally change the structure of this whole section because it's speaking of male deacons and their qualifications and there's extensive qualifications and then to say and then also there's this office of women and

they've only got a small amount of qualifications and then we're going to go back to male deacons and their qualifications it just it structurally and lexically doesn't work furthermore practically it doesn't make sense for a deacon to be serving with the needs of people in the church let's say there's a widow somebody who doesn't have a husband who is poor and has needs and a deacon is to go to her house to help with that needs what is appropriate that he takes somebody else's wife and the two of them go by themselves to this woman who is by herself or that a man take his wife to avoid any scandal being portrayed towards the church so their wives must be reverent not slanders temperate faithful in all things as a deacon's wife there will be a requirement for a deacon's wife to assist him in his work she will be exposed to personal and perhaps even embarrassing things of people's lives so she herself must have qualifications that she can be trusted as well so she must be reverent likewise taking these things seriously and respectable to be entrusted with these personal aspects of people's lives not slanders the word here for slanders is diabolos if you've heard that word before it's a title given to the devil so he's saying a deacon's wife can't be a little devil must not be malicious gossipers for them to be helping people in the works of mercy again it will be it'll include them being entrusted with people's personal and possibly even embarrassing information that others wouldn't be entitled to so there's a level of trust there a deacon's wife wives must be temperate not given to excess not indulgent not but rather being self controlled they must be faithful in all things they must be honest and trustworthy and these are qualities of a proverbs 31 woman who is trustworthy now you'll notice sorry

I should say you perhaps remember you have noticed that in the qualifications for an elder the elder's wife is not mentioned in verses 1 to 7 in his qualifications but yet the character qualifications of a deacon is a requirement for an elder for the man to be qualified the reason for that is because an elder's wife doesn't function in the work of an elder that is there's no there's no biblical office of an elder's wife there's no wife pastor there's she doesn't assist her husband in the ruling and teaching of the church there's no office of elder's wife there's no there's no office of a elder couple or a couple elder you'll see that in some more liberal churches where they'll have pastors mister and missus but that is not the office of an elder there's no such thing in the bible as co-pastor couples that would be in contradiction to 1st timothy chapter 2 and god's order from creation which was inverted by sin is carried along by culture but is being restored in christ and the church which is the house of the living god is to be a refuge from the curse a refuge from culture which follows the curse and not a return to the curse elders wives don't assist in the work of pastoring of ruling and teaching but deacons wives on the other hand they do assist their husband the deacon in the work of serving moving on in domestic faithfulness it says the husband of one wife again not to dwell on this too much we spent more time on this last week in the qualification of an elder it doesn't mean that somebody who has been widowed and remarries is not qualified it doesn't mean that somebody who was lawfully divorced and remarried isn't qualified because he in his lifetime has had two wives what it means is one wife at one time that he's faithful a one woman man that he is chaste and faithful what he's getting at is that if he is not faithful within his marriage how can he be entrusted to be faithful with the trust of the church and it says also ruling their children and their own houses well so it's not somebody who is absent in the home but that is ruling the home and only ruling can be done well and it can be done poorly but ruling well that is he is above reproach in marital relationship above reproach in fatherly leadership of children and above reproach and supervision of the household in other words the question to ask is you can't expect somebody's children to be sinless because this is a fallen sin cursed world rather the question to ask is does he deal with his family issues biblically

[39 : 19] I want to quote Alexander Strzok again a deacon candidate needs to show good management of those who live or work under his leadership he is to maintain harmony in the home his household must be stable and not be on the verge of collapsing because of mismanagement we wouldn't want the church to collapse because of mismanagement so we can predict these things through the household management of the person being considered for the office of deacon and then lastly we have rewarding faithfulness now while I have put this in the section of the qualifications it's not a qualification of somebody to be considered for a deacon but rather it's more a demonstration of why the qualifications are important as those qualifications carry through as the deacon does the work of a deacon now notice in verse 13 it says for those who have served well as deacons so already serving as a deacon obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ

Jesus most of the work so with an elder most of the work that an elder done maybe not most of but a lot of it is noticed the ministry of the word is noticed whereas most of the work of a deacon goes unnoticed a lot of behind the scenes work is done but for those who have served well behind the scenes those who have served well work going unnoticed deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus this is much encouragement which is given to those who serve in the work of deacons that having served not only having been proved faithful to be put in the office of deacon but that faithfulness which was demonstrated beforehand is carried through as a deacon for those who served well as deacons and in a good standing because they've been tested and proven faithfulness of character and a demonstration of the fruit of a reoriented life walking worthy of the calling of a

Christian not only approved and affirmed by the church but also demonstrated through the faithful serving as a deacon for the furthering not only for the help of the tangible!

physical needs of others but also for the furthering of the ministry of the word and support of the elders so in conclusion two concluding uses the first one is just simply that the office and work of the deacon it's not to be considered as a rung in a ladder which some churches see it that way and I think it's disappointing that they do because that's not at all what the office is it's not that you know well before we consider someone for an overseer for an elder we'll put him as a deacon and we'll test him as a deacon that's not at all what the work or the office of a deacon is for it's not a rung in a ladder to work your way up in a perceived hierarchy in the church nor is it a dualism of work like I said it's not that the deacons have the tangible needs and the elders have the spiritual needs and kind of you stay in your own sections and don't get in each other's way it's not like that at all and there probably will be some overlap for example if a deacon is helping in Acts 6 widows who are in need poverty is a trial and they're involved in different trials they're going to become aware of some spiritual need in some sense which the elders should be aware of so it's a working together not a dualism of work and it's also the work of a deacon is for the advancement of the kingdom through the ministry of the word in support of the elders but the work of office and work of deacon is a substantial and important work that usually goes unseen but it promotes harmony and unity remember in act six there was disunity and so their solution was it was what we now know as deacons the serving promotes harmony and unity in the church the office and the work of a deacon is a blessing to the church second concluding use that I want to make is the word deacon the office deacon is the one who serves and as I said that word is used as a verb in scripture in other ways not in reference to the office but to the work of serving and an example that

I gave was in Matthew 20 28 it says just as the son of man did not come to be deacon but to deacon and to give his life a ransom for many now I put that word in there as a verb but it's translated in your Bible as to serve the son of man did not come to serve but not come to be served!

[44 : 42] Son of man points them to something their understanding of that title son of man is a reference to Daniel 7 what does Daniel 7 say about the son of man Daniel 7 Daniel is speaking of a vision that he had and that in his vision he saw one like the son of man so here the title is used and behold one like the son of man coming with the clouds of heaven he came to the ancient of days and they brought him near before him then to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all people nations and languages get this should serve him his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and his kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed when Jesus as the son of man he is referencing himself as the one who is exalted on high given dominion and glory and kingdom whom all people will serve him that's the reference that he's specifying when he refers to himself as the son of man the son of man that all people should serve him did not come to be served but to serve you catch what's going on in that statement that he makes when he says just as the son of man did not come to be deacon but to deacon now

Jesus is coming it does serve as an example for us and that's a part of what I'm getting at in his example in serving but Jesus is coming doesn't merely stop at being an example Jesus is coming the son of God's coming is much more than just setting an example now in Daniel 7 13 to 14 what we have is a vision of the son's session that is the son of God having been exalted on high with all authority and all people serving him that's the image that we have here of the son of man that is his his session but he says the son of man did not come so he came the son came or this title the son of man came and

I want to focus on the significance of that he came to serve in the sphere of his session as what that title refers to being the son of man but first I want to read revelation 1 7 which gives us a fuller

picture of the son of man behold he is coming with clouds and every eye will see him even they who pierced him and all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of him even so amen I am the Alpha and the Omega the beginning and the end says the son of God and to understand the title son of man as it's referenced to here of the exalted!

Christ who is both the Alpha and the Omega who is the mediator between God and man who is the one who has ascended on high the one whom all people will serve that's the vision the understanding that we have of the son of man but yet it says he did not come to be served! but to serve! Why did he come? The coming of the son of man! the coming of the one who is exalted with all dominion and glory came not to be served but to serve!

[48 : 50] Now when we understand the son of God's emptying himself it's not that he divested himself of divinity it's not that he gave up or surrendered the attributes of God it's not that he gave up being omnipresent it's not that he gave up being almighty it's not that he gave up being eternal the trinity wasn't reduced to two and there was not a conversion it's not that the son of God was converted into human nature but the divine nature was united to the human nature the divine nature still being eternally infinitely almighty united to human nature and being united to human nature in of course we know as the incarnation that's what we celebrate at Christmas the coming of the son of God in the human form why did he come why did he come in human form he came to be not to be served but to serve how did he come to serve well his coming his incarnation the divine nature being united to the human nature being born of the virgin mary in a low condition he was born under the law and his life and ministry perfected obedience to the law that was a problem that remained outstanding up to that point nobody had perfected obedience and the requirement of a just and holy

God to stand before him his personal exact entire perpetual obedience which had not been accomplished there was a problem and nobody could by their own right by their own obedience by their own righteousness approach God instead of course was not obeying God which is sin and the second problem with this problem of sin is condemnation because God is holy righteous and just his judgment stands over all sin and all those who sin which is eternal condemnation and wrath son of God did not come to be served but to serve in his coming in his incarnation in his obedience he perfected obedience required and he suffered and he died as a substitute for the purpose of satisfying divine justice his dying as a substitute means in the place of another in the place of another that those whom are

God's people those whom are called into the body of Christ being God's people that their sins are paid in full by Christ divine justice has been satisfied there is no longer condemnation for our sins because we are in Christ so instead of standing before God with our sins between us our sins have been dealt with the penalty has been paid the price has been paid in full and have a full pardon of our sins and we only have a full pardon of our sins but we also have Christ's righteousness imputed to us that's accredited to us so it's not just a clean slate but we have the value of the righteousness of Christ in his life and his serving and his coming credited to us that we have a right standing before God by the righteousness of Christ not condemned by our sins this is the work of redemption this is why the son of man came this is why first

Timothy 1 15 says this is a trustworthy saying worthy of all acceptance Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief so this is the work of redemption which was authored by the father accomplished by the son and it is applied by the spirit so if you are not saved if you are not united to Christ if you are still under the condemnation of your own sins when this flesh the veil of this flesh is drawn away and we are before our maker our God our creator he is just he is holy and he will by no wise clear the guilty and if we try to stand before him based on our own righteousness which is nothing but a deficit a demerit we will be condemned according to our sins if we are united in Christ with Christ as our mediator we will have a full pardon of our sins justified being declared righteous because of

Christ's righteousness and that's the end of justification there is no need to maintain our justification by our works it's because of Christ's finished work on the cross he came to serve the son of man came to serve but the image that we have in Daniel 7 is not just ending with the son of man dying the vision that we have of the son of man is one of being exalted given dominion and glory and a kingdom that all people nations and languages should serve him his dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and in his kingdom the one which shall not be destroyed Christ the son of God came in human form obeyed suffered died raised from the dead ascended on high was exalted and there he is seated and there he reigns over all things and all things will be brought

into perfect subjection under him and all people will serve him so what does that mean for us again if if you are not saved the way to be united to

[54 : 45] Christ is by faith in him the Holy Spirit applies the work of redemption through the effectual call which involves the gospel and the Holy Spirit making the gospel effectual to the believer but how that works excuse me is by convincing us of our sin being being shocked and disturbed by our sin convincing us of our sin and misery and the condemnation of our sin but enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ enlightening the truth of the Son of God who came to serve Christ Jesus who came into the world to save sinners and enabling us and persuading us and enabling us to embrace the Lord Jesus Christ as freely offered in the gospel so the way of salvation is embracing the Lord Jesus Christ receiving Christ resting on Christ alone for salvation for justification by his righteousness believe on the Lord Jesus

Christ and you will be saved for those who are saved we ought to be filled with utmost! gratitude that the Son of man did not come to be served but to serve and having come to serve having come and purchased redemption having procured the people of God he's raised he's ascended he's seated on high our king reigns on high over all things with a universal reign and all things will be made right all things will be perfected and when the veil of this flesh is drawn away and we are brought before our maker we will be in Christ and we will be in his kingdom and we will have exceeding joy forever more let's pray Lord we thank you again for your word we thank you for the church which is the church of the!

the kingdom of God on earth and we thank you that you have given us in your word commands and direction that we know how we ought to conduct ourselves in the church of God and the promise that we see in your word that where there is a true church that there is Christ in our midst nourishing and feeding the people of God we pray that you would do so we pray that you would continue to illuminate our minds to enlighten our minds with your word as we go from here that we would continue to think about the things of your word that we would continue to think about the things of heaven and that we would be in awe that we would be an absolute wonder of your excellence of your essence of your attributes and of your wondrous works in creation pray that you would go with your people this week and that you would help us to be heavenly minded thinking of these things in Jesus name amen