
Sermon Notes

March 14, 2021

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

Dignified Deacons 1 Timothy 3:8-13

“How May I Serve You?”

- ❖ Consider the interaction that occurs between those dining at a restaurant and the servers who wait on them
 - the person assigned to your table has a big impact on whether your dining experience is pleasant or not
 - what makes an effective server?
- ❖ The original responsibility given to deacons in the NT was waiting on tables and serving meals! (Acts 6:1-4)
 - elders serve the church by devoting themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word
 - deacons serve the church by taking care of people’s material needs in a spiritual way

Dignified

- ❖ The Biblical qualifications for deacons are centered on character
 - God is more concerned with who deacons are than what deacons do
 - charity and compassion are key characteristics

- ❖ *Dignified* in v. 8 parallels *above reproach* in v. 2
 - a life worthy of respect both within and outside of the church
 - understanding the seriousness of life and not making light of serious matters
- ❖ What does a *dignified* life look like?
 - not *double-tongued* (talking out of both sides of your mouth)
 - not *addicted to much wine*
 - not *greedy for dishonest gain* (e.g. Judas)

Wholehearted Believers

- ❖ Those serving as deacons must have no doubts about the reliability of Scripture and the truths of Christianity
 - *the mystery of the faith* = “How will God deal with the sin of His people and save sinners?”
 - this question is answered in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ
- ❖ Deacons must have a clear conscience that they are upholding and living out the reality of the faith
- ❖ Although deacons do not have the same teaching authority as elders, they do teach by their example and by the words of counsel and comfort they share with those who are sick, bereaved or in other seasons of need
- ❖ The church is always to be on the lookout for those who are growing and serving in any capacity and be aware of those who may be qualified to serve as deacons

Family Life

- ❖ Deacons who serve as singles are committed to a life of sexual purity... deacons who serve as marrieds are faithfully committed to their spouse physically, emotionally, and spiritually
- ❖ Requirements for women (v. 11)
 - Paul's use of the word, *likewise* suggests that husbands and wives might minister together side by side as deacons or that there might be both a male and female contingent of deacons or that a mixed group of men and women might serve together in this role
 - women are also to be dignified, monitor their words, control their tongues and be sober-minded, faithful and trustworthy in all things
 - the distinguishing feature between overseers and deacons needs to be kept in mind
 - overseers lead by teaching and protecting the flock
 - deacons lead by serving the flock in practical ways
- ❖ Deacons must exercise good stewardship over their children, financial resources, material possession and everything associated with their households

Those Who Serve Well

- ❖ *A good standing*
 - the expanding of a good reputation?
 - in the eyes of God? (James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:6)

❖ *Confidence in the faith*

- a growing awareness of God's love for you and for those whom you serve
- a growing confidence among those who are being served leads to assurance, peacefulness, and stability among God's people
- ❖ Pray for, encourage, and continue to show your deacons the respect and appreciation they deserve
- ❖ The role of deacon is the position in the life of the church that most closely resembles the servanthood of Jesus Christ
 - Mark 10:43-45, Luke 22:27
 - deacons serve others because Jesus first served them

Personal Application

1. After considering these verses, how can you better pray for, support, and/or encourage those who serve our fellowship as deacons?
2. Are you aware of anyone in our flock who meets the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 who might be equipped and able to serve our congregation as a deacon? If so, speak to one of our current leaders or a member of the Nominating Committee to offer your suggestion.