

- I. The Deacon's Mature Christian Character:
 - A. Dignified (3:7, 2; Acts 6:3)
 - B. Not Double-Tongued (3:8, 2)
 - C. Not Addicted (3:8, 3; 5:23; Titus 2:3; Eph 5:18; Prov 23:29-35)
 - D. Not Greedy (3:8, 2-3; 6:9-10)
- II. The Deacon's Faith (3:9)
- III. The Deacon's Testing (3:10, 6; 5:22)
- IV. The Deacon's Family (3:11-12)
- V. The Deacon's Reward (3:13)

“As in the home, so in the church, for both spheres are to reflect God’s creative design and are dignified by Christ. The church, made up largely of families, is to be conducted by the same principles that are to govern the home. For the church is ‘God’s household’ (1 Tim 3:15), so that the one who does not manage his own household well should not preside over God’s as an overseer or deacon (1 Tim 3:5, 12; Tit 1:6).”—Andreas Kostenberger

“The correct sense here is not quantitative but qualitative. The man is truly a one-woman man. There are no other women in his life. He is totally faithful. He does not flirt. There are no dalliances.” —R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell

Reflection and Application Questions (for personal reflection and family conversation):

1. Are the qualifications for elders and deacons optional? Do they differ from what is required of all Christians?
2. What kind of qualifications are required for a deacon? Why?
3. Why is it necessary for church leaders to be good leaders of their families?
4. What does it mean for a man to be mature and tested? Why is this necessary for a deacon?

From the OPC Form of Government:

The office of deacon is based upon the solicitude and love of Christ for his own people. So tender is our Lord's interest in their temporal needs that he considers what is done unto one of the least of his brethren as done unto him. For he will say to those who have ministered to his little ones: "I was hungry, and ye gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me; I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

In the beginning the apostles themselves ministered to the poor, but subsequently, in order that they might be able to devote themselves wholly to prayer and the ministry of the Word, they committed that responsibility to others, having directed the people to choose men of good report, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom. Since the days of the apostles the church has recognized the care of the poor as a distinct ministry of the church committed to deacons.

The duties of deacons consist of encouraging members of the church to provide for those who are in want, seeking to prevent poverty, making discreet and cheerful distribution to the needy, praying with the distressed and reminding them of the consolations of Holy Scripture.

If they are to fill worthily so sacred an office, deacons must adorn sound doctrine by holy living, setting an example of godliness in all their relations with men. Let them walk with exemplary piety and diligently discharge the obligations of their office; and "when the chief shepherd shall be manifested," they "shall receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away."

The OPC Vows for Ruling Elders and Deacons:

- (1) Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
- (2) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?
- (3) Do you approve of the government, discipline, and worship of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church?
- (4) Do you promise to seek the purity, the peace, and the unity of the church?
- (5) Do you accept the office of ruling elder (or deacon) in this congregation and promise, in reliance on the grace of God, faithfully to perform all the duties thereof?

The congregation's vow: Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive this brother as a ruling elder (or deacon), and do you promise to yield him all that honor, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord, to which his office, according to the Word of God and the constitution of this Church, entitles him?