

STUDY 1

DIAKONOS

The Greek

There are a number of Greek words used in the Bible which speak about serving. The word deacon is not a translation, but a transliteration of the Greek word *diakonos*. *Diakonos* means *to run on errands, to attend, to execute the command of another* [John 2:5].

The word doesn't always refer to someone who fulfils the role of a local church deacon.

Christ the Deacon [Luke 22:26-27]

Christ, the Creator of the Universe, gladly humbled Himself to the place of a diakonos. In Romans 15:8 Christ is described as the one who came to serve the Jews. He tells His followers in Matthew 20:28 and Mark 10:45 that He came to earth to *minister* rather than to be ministered to. In Luke 12:37 Christ tells His followers that He will serve them in the Kingdom to come.

Paul the Deacon [Acts 20:24]

Paul functioned as a diakonos in a number of ways. By sending *relief* from other churches to the believers in Judea during a famine [Acts 11:29-30, 12:25, Romans 15:25, 2Cor 8:4, 19-20, 9:1, 12-13]. He was a *minister* of the Gospel [Eph 2:7, Col 1:23-25, 2Cor 3:6, 5:18]. He was a *minister* to the churches [2Cor 4:5, 11:8]. He was a *minister* to the Gentiles [Rom 11:13]. He was a *minister* of God [2Cor 6:4, Tim 1:12] Paul saw himself as nothing but a *minister* [1Cor 3:5].

Other Deacons

- ◇ Rulers of nations are the ministers of God [Rom 13:4]
- ◇ Phoebe ministered in the church at Cenchrea [Rom 16:1]
- ◇ Tychicus was a faithful minister [Acts 20:4, Eph 6:21, Col 4:7, 2 Tim 4:12, Titus 3:12]
- ◇ Epaphras was a faithful minister [Col 1:7, 4:12, Phm 1:23]
- ◇ Timothy was a minister whose scope developed over time [1Thess 3:2, 1Tim 4:6, 2Tim 4:5]
- ◇ The household of Stephanas was devoted to ministering to others [1 Cor 16:15]
- ◇ Erastus, Onesiphorus and Onesimus ministered to Paul [Acts 19:22, 2Tim 1:18, Phm 1:13]
- ◇ Archippus was to fulfil his God given ministry [Col 4:17]
- ◇ Angels ministered to Christ and continue to minister to Christ's people [Matt 4:11, Heb 1:14]
- ◇ The Old Testament prophets were ministering to us as they wrote and spoke [1Peter 1:12]
- ◇ Every member of the body is to be involved in ministering [Eph 4:12]

The Office of Deacon

All of the above references have spoken of deacons in a general sense. The New Testament also teaches that there is a position or office of a deacon within the local church body [Phil 1:1, 1Tim 3:10, 13].

The heart of Christ is to serve others and the heart of the Christian must be the same. We are all to be deacons; men and women who eagerly run to serve others practically and spiritually.

Only a believer with the heart of a deacon should ever be put into the office of a Deacon.