

Qualifications for Church Leadership

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-13 (19)

1 TIMOTHY: DUTIES AND ORDER IN THE CHURCH, [1 Timothy 2:1-3:13](#) The Deacons of the Church, [1 Timothy 3:8-13](#)

[\(1 Timothy 3:8-13\)](#) **Introduction:** this passage discusses the second officer of the church, the deacon. The office of deacon is so important that the qualifications required are just as high as those demanded of a minister or bishop. In this day and time, when worldliness, immorality, and lawlessness are running so rampant, the qualifications for deacons need to be studied, heeded, and guarded ever so diligently.

In Scripture these two broad classifications of ministry are described as “**word**” and “**deed**” ([Romans 15:18](#); [Colossians 3:17](#)).

[Romans 15:18 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁸ For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by **word** and **deed**,

[Colossians 3:17 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁷ Whatever you do in **word** or **deed**, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

In [Acts 6](#), Luke defines these classifications as the “**ministry of the Word**” ([v. 4](#)) and the “**servicing of food**” ([v. 2](#)).

[Acts 6:4 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴ "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

[Acts 6:2 \(NASB\)](#)

² So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables.

Peter defines them as **speaking** and **servicing**, which is the same as **word** and **deed**. He writes,

[1 Peter 4:11 \(NASB\)](#)

¹¹ Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

In both cases, **speaking** or **servicing**, God is the source of power, the One who receives glory from what is done.

Some people are strong in both **word** and **deed**. For example, Scripture says that Moses and Jesus were “**mighty in deed and word**” ([Luke 24:19](#); [Acts 7:22](#)).

[Luke 24:19 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁹ And He said to them, "What things?" And they said to Him, "The things about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people,

[Acts 7:22 \(NASB\)](#)

²² "Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.

But most of us are stronger in one area than the other (although we must not neglect our weaker area of spiritual development). We must understand that the work of Jesus Christ demands both kinds of people. Both are essential to the work of God.

Those who are strong in word tend to be teachers, preachers, writers, counselors, shepherds, or students. For example, Apollos was mighty in the Word. Luke describes Apollos this way:

[Acts 18:24-25 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁴ Now a Jew named Apollos, an Alexandrian by birth, an eloquent man, came to Ephesus; and he was mighty in the Scriptures.

²⁵ This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he was speaking and teaching accurately the things concerning Jesus, being acquainted only with the baptism of John;

[Acts 18:28 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁸ for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.

People who are strong in **deeds**, on the other hand, tend to be administrators, organizers, doers, helpers, supporters, builders, ministers of mercy, and givers. **Stephanas** and his family, **Onesiphorus**, **Phoebe**, **Onesimus**, and the women who contributed to our Lord's ministry were all recognized in the New Testament for their loving service to others, not their speaking ministry ([1 Corinthians 16:15](#); [2 Timothy 1:16-18](#); [Romans 16:1](#); [Philemon 10-13](#); [Luke 8:3](#)).

Of **Onesiphorus**, Paul writes, "... when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me, and found me—the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day—and you know very well what services [**diakoneō**] he rendered at Ephesus" ([2 Timothy 1:17-18](#)).