

Elders lead by serving. Deacons lead by serving. Discuss the difference.

Elders and deacons will most likely have a different skill set. Describe the distinct skill set of each.

Who do you know who personifies the skill set of a deacon?

1) Godly servants are essential to the mission of the church. (Acts 6:1-7)

Read Acts 6:1-7. Describe what the atmosphere would have been like in such a rapidly growing but young church? Do you think their policies and systems of ministry were very mature?

What are the two primary responsibilities of the senior leaders mentioned in this verse? What happens in a church when the pastors/elders neglect these two responsibilities? What happens when they are freed up to prioritize these responsibilities?

What are some of the practical areas that need attention in the church? Who should get these assignments? Who should not get these assignments?

2) Godly servants are Christ-like in character. (v.8)

The character qualities of elders and deacons are the same. How would a failure in the following areas disrupt the mission of the church?

Which of the following areas are you most susceptible to? Describe a time when you blew it in one of these areas and the damage it created.

- **Dignified** – worthy of respect, not treating serious things lightly.
- **Not double-tongued** – consistent in what he says, not a malicious gossip.
- **Not addicted to much wine** – noted for their self-control and clear thinking.
- **Not greedy for dishonest gain** – does not look to money to satisfy heart hunger.

3) Godly servants are gripped by the gospel. (v. 9)

- **Hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience** – loves the power of the gospel, holds to clear convictions based on biblical knowledge.

“The faith” is not a generic term for belief. It is a term that describes the body of doctrinal truth that we believe as Christians.

Is the gospel still a mystery to you? It should be! Not a mystery in the sense of not understanding it. But a mystery why God would be so gracious to include you and how amazing Jesus is! Do you ever get bored when the preacher presents the basic truth of the gospel? How has the weight of the gospel affected you this week? Is the gospel still changing you? How?

4) Godly servants are tested and proven. (v. 10)

- **Tested first** – He has demonstrated faithfulness in lesser responsibilities with excellence.
- **Morally blameless** – No one can raise an accusation that can be justified.

Describe the first time you served in ministry. Where you scared? Did you feel under prepared?

How did God use simple acts of service to prepare you for greater and more complex ministry?

Describe a time when you failed the test. Did you later pass the test with excellence?

5) Godly servants are completely supportive. (v. 11)

- **Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things**
– His wife does not have a track record of dividing loyalties in the church.

Is your spouse supportive of your service at church?

Does he/she wish you would serve God more or less than you?

Does your spouse have more or less confidence in your ability than you?

6) Godly servants are focused on family. (v.12)

- **Husband of one wife** – single-minded devotion to one woman over time.
- **Managing their children and their own households well** – His family is the proving ground that others will follow his spiritual influence.

What have you done in the last twelve months to specifically strengthen your marriage? How much time and money have you spent specifically on building intimacy in your marriage. How often do you get away from other responsibilities to focus on oneness with your spouse? If you find yourself lacking in this, make plans to attend The Art of Marriage at Harvest on March 20-21.

Do you feel like you need help with parenting? Consider taking your questions to an older couple for advice.

7) Godly servants are aware of their reward. (v.13)

Faithful service always produces two things -- good standing and great confidence.

Good standing can mean “next step”. What steps of service have you taken recently to contribute to the mission of the church? What next steps do you need to take next? What is holding you back?

Do you have great confidence that you saved and in the will of God? Has your lack of service contributed to your lack of confidence?

Additional Scripture

- Romans 12:1
- Galatians 5:13
- 1Corinthians 9:19
- 2Corinthians 4:5
- Matthew 25:21
- Titus 2:9-10