

## 1Tim 3:

### King James Version

- 8 Likewise [*must*] the deacons [*be*] grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;  
9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.  
10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being [*found*] blameless.  
11 Even so [*must their*] wives [*be*] grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.  
12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.  
13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

### American Standard Version

- 8 Deacons in like manner [*must be*] grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;  
9 holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.  
10 And let these also first be proved; then let them serve as deacons, if they be blameless.  
11 Women in like manner [*must be*] grave, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things.  
12 Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling [*their*] children and their own houses well.  
13 For they that have served well as deacons gain to themselves a good standing, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

### New American Standard Bible (1977)

- 8 Deacons likewise [*must be*] men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain,  
9 [*but*] holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.  
10 And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.  
11 Women [*must*] likewise [*be*] dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.  
12 Let deacons be husbands of [*only*] one wife, [*and*] good managers of [*their*] children and their own households.  
13 For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

There is much confusion today amongst pastors and the Christian community around the English term “deacon” as it is used in the English translations. The term can carry any one of a few meanings, depending on the context of the subject or the grammar, the Greek variant, (e.g., diakonos, diakoneo) and different meanings within each of these variants.

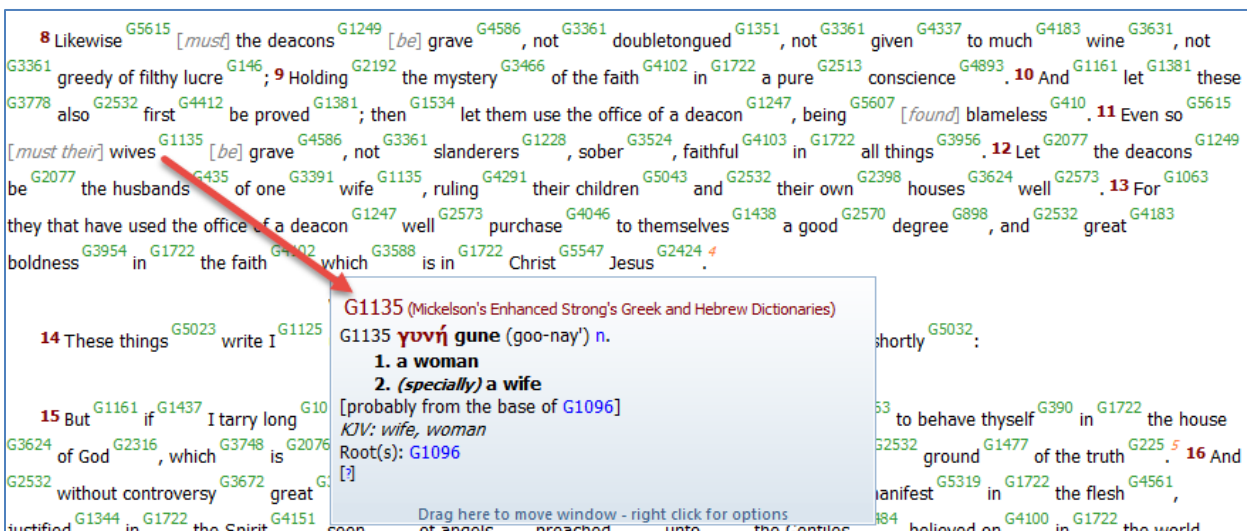
8 Likewise [*must*] the deacons [*be*] grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; 9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. 10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being [*found*] blameless. 11 Even so [*must their*] wives [*be*] grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. 12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. 13 For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly. 15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church, of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. 16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

**G1249** (Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries)  
G1249 **δῆκονος** *diakonos* (dee-ak'-on-os) *n.*  
1. an attendant, a servant  
2. (genitive case) a waiter (at table or in other menial duties)  
3. (specially) a male Christian serving in a specific function and post (i.e. tending the widows and the poor, teaching, pastoring, etc)  
[probably from an obsolete *diako* "to run on errands"]  
KJV: deacon, minister, servant  
Compare: G1377  
[?]

**G1247** (Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries)  
G1247 **διακονέω** *diakoneo* (dee-ak-on-eh'-o) *v.*  
1. to be an attendant, to wait upon (menially or as a host, friend)  
2. (figuratively) to serve as a teacher  
3. (technically) to act as a Christian steward (deacon)  
[from G1249]  
KJV: (ad-)minister (unto), serve, use the office of a deacon  
Root(s): G1249  
[?]

Verse 12 helps to clarify the surrounding text. The grammatical structure of the sentence points only to men as deacons: “Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife . . .” The King James Version takes into consideration this context by using the “wife” translation of the Greek term “gune” in verse 11. The ASV and NASB versions use the broader English translation for “gune” –woman. Regardless of the translation (“woman” or “wife”) verse 11 points to an additional requirement: a deacon’s wife is to also be of good character. This makes sense in that a Deacon, being male, would be accompanied by his wife when tending widows and other women.



Regardless of translation, Paul does not explicitly refer to women as Deacons in verse 11. Paul, in verse 11, is referring to the conduct required of the Deacons (“in like manner” and “likewise”) that women who serve in the church are to assume. If Paul meant to communicate that women are to be Deacons, why would Paul single them out and compare them to men Deacons?

In any case, the reference to women in verse 11 does not explicitly state that women should or could serve in the office of Deacon. That meaning would come about only by reading into the verse what is not there or by a sloppy application of grammatical rules when reading these verses.

If we believe that the Bible’s structure and grammar is every bit inspired by the Holy Spirit as the words that are used, then the overall grammatical structure of verses 8 – 13 must be respected. Collectively, they do not include women as Deacons.

Furthermore, in light of 1 Tim 2:12 – 14 and the pattern set forth in the practices of the apostles in Acts 6, verse 11 cannot mean that women are available to hold the office of Deacon in the church.

## 1Tim 2:

### King James Version

- 11 Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.
- 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.
- 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve.
- 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

### American Standard Version

- 11 Let a woman learn in quietness with all subjection.
- 12 But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness.
- 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve;
- 14 and Adam was not beguiled, but the woman being beguiled hath fallen into transgression:

### New American Standard Bible (1977)

- 11 Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness.

**14** And [*it was*] not Adam [*who*] was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression.

The temptation to rationalize away these reasons must be avoided.

The bottom line is that the EBBC Elders seized the Deacons' authority as a technicality to, in their eyes, allow women to be named deacons. This is disingenuous and, more importantly, it is not scriptural.

Women certainly have a meaningful place for service and can serve the church in the broader term of “deacon” under the direction of men Deacons appointed by the elders, consistent with 1 Tim 2, 1 Tim 3, and Acts 6.

**1 Timothy 2**

They are not permitted to teach

They shall be saved, notwithstanding the testimonies of

**1 Timothy 2**

9 In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; **10** But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. **11** Let the woman learn in silence, with all subjection.

**They are not permitted to teach**

**12** But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor **13** For Adam was first formed, deceived, but the woman being deceived was in

**They shall be saved, notwithstanding the testimonies of**

**15** Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing

**G5292** (Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries)  
**G5292 ὑποταγή** **hupotage** (hoop-ot-ag-ah) **n.**  
**1. subordination**  
 [from **G5293**]  
*KJV: subjection*  
 Root(s): **G5293**  
 [?]

**G2271** (Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries)  
**G2271 ἡσυχία** **hesuchia** (hay-soo-khee'-ah) **n.**  
**1. (as noun) stillness, i.e. desistance from bustle or language**  
 [feminine of **G2272**]  
*KJV: quietness, silence*  
 Root(s): **G2272**  
 [?]

Press SHIFT key and move mouse over popup to keep visible

Women who are pushing to become Deacons are inconsistent with the character they are prescribed in scripture. They must be lovingly and politely rebuked.

A woman with a proper godly heart and disposition will have a desire to serve and will be satisfied to serve in whatever capacity presents, regardless of title.

As much as a woman might want the position of authority in the church, she must exercise the self-control characterized in 1 Tim 2:15:

The screenshot shows a Bible software interface with 1 Timothy 2:15 open. The text reads: "15 Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and holiness with sobriety." A red arrow points from the word "sobriety" to a pop-up dictionary window for G4997. The dictionary entry for G4997 (Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries) is for **σωφροσύνη** *sophrosune* (so-fros-oo'-nay) n. The definitions listed are: 1. soundness of mind, 2. (literally) sanity, 3. (figuratively) self-control. Other information includes [from G4998], KJV: soberness, sobriety, and Root(s): G4998. A second pop-up window for G1135 (γυνή *gunē* (goo-nay') n.) is also visible, defining it as 1. a woman, 2. (specially) a wife, with KJV: wife, woman and Root(s): G1096.

Brian Fuller’s reference to Phoebe in Romans 16:1 to justify women deacons in the church is also in error. The term *servant* is rooted in the Greek word, *diakonos*, the same word used for the English translation, *deacon*. As we’ve already seen, *diakonos* has a range of meanings, depending on context. Romans 16:2 clarifies Phoebe’s services as an “assistant” to Paul and others in the use of the term, “succourer.” She is not characterized as one who is in a leadership capacity where men in the church are under her teaching or under her authority. Paul does not contradict his writings of 1 Tim 2:12 or Acts 6.

The screenshot shows the text of Romans 16. A red arrow points from the word "succourer" in verse 2 to a pop-up dictionary window for G4368. The dictionary entry for G4368 (Mickelson's Enhanced Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionaries) is for **προστάτις** *prostatis* (pros-tat'-is) n. The definition listed is: 1. a patroness, i.e. assistant. Other information includes [feminine of a derivative of G4291], KJV: succourer, and Root(s): G4291. The background text of Romans 16 is visible, including verses 1 through 6.

The book of Isaiah has an excellent example of God’s rebuke when women are placed in “authority over man.” Isaiah also cites the pride that is at the root of those women who seek such positions:

**Isa 3:12** O My people! Their oppressors are children, And *women rule over them*.

O My people! Those who guide you lead you astray, And confuse the direction of your paths. NASB

**Isa 3:16** Moreover, the LORD said, “Because the daughters of Zion are proud, And walk with heads held high . . .” NASB

The reasons given by Pastor Brian at the 11/13/2016 meeting for the polity/governance changes at EBBC are:

1. be compliant with Biblical instruction, i.e., be obedient
  - How will this be accomplished:
    - Move away from a Deacon-Trustee polity
    - Establish an Elder – Deacon polity consistent with Scripture
    - Sans deaconesses – the term “deaconess” is not found in Bible.
2. to correct the confusion and tension between the current governance bodies –the deacons and trustees

Below, I cite the biblical view regarding deacons:

1. There is an authoritative office of “Deacon” in the church
  - a. It is an office of authority .
  - b. It is an office of appointment.
  - c. It complements the Elders, it does not overlap.
  - d. Its primary purpose is to relieve the Elders of responsibilities that distract them from “feeding the flock” spiritually.
  - e. It is an office of service to the flock.
2. The use of “deaconess” is a term of convenience, is entirely appropriate to use, and does not contradict scripture.

Acts 6 offers evidence of what the apostles practiced in their time. It was important to free the elders from temporal duties so that they could focus on the spiritual –i.e., feeding the flock spiritually. Brian Fuller’s opinion of Acts 6 as a “directive” (versus a “prescriptive”) passage relegates it to a lesser influence on the character and practice of EBBC polity is not consistent with other, more prominent, Biblical scholars. Brian has conveniently discounted the Apostles’ practices of Acts 6 to serve his own agenda of getting women into the office of Deacon.

What does the Biblical model of polity look like? Acts 6:1 – 7 is polity in practice.

**Acts 6:1** Now in these days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. **2** And the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not fit that we should forsake the word of God, and serve tables. **3** Look ye out therefore, brethren, from among you seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. **4** But we will continue stedfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the word. **5** And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus a proselyte of Antioch; **6** whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them.

Based on Acts 6, there are two designated groups of men who lead and care for the body:

1. The apostles
2. The seven

Acts 6 models the offices of Elders and Deacons:

- Apostles/Elders: The apostles prioritized their mission and work to “continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the ministry of the Word” by off-loading temporal “servant” responsibilities to other men.
  - The 7/Diacons: Because “widows were neglected in the daily ministration,” “seven men of good report, full of the Spirit and of wisdom” were appointed “over this business.”
    - The three requirements that the apostles set forth, (1) men of good report, (2) full of the Spirit and (3) of wisdom, were not arbitrary. They were required in order for the seven to take full responsibility of managing the temporal needs of the body and relieve the apostles of those duties. These responsibilities included assessing the needs, planning how to meet those needs, and directing others to make it all happen.
- As far as the three requirements:



- “Men of good report” were needed to have credibility and trust with the body – “the saying pleased the whole multitude.”
  - Men who were “full of the Spirit” would possess the disposition required to serve.
  - Men “of wisdom” were needed to know how to assess, plan, and direct. These are all important qualities needed of leaders –Christian leaders.
- The appointment of deacons was not casual. Their appointment was sanctioned by the apostles, assigning them the responsibility and giving them the authority to minister to the temporal needs – “they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them.”

#### Conclusions & Observations from Acts 6:

- The apostles clearly wanted to be free of all the temporal “servant” duties in order to commit their full effort to the Spiritual ministry of the flock –to feed His sheep spiritually. There is nothing that says the apostles retained any portion of the temporal responsibilities of planning, directing or otherwise.
- Verse 7 calls out the “end-game” of giving the seven the responsibility of serving the temporal needs of the body. In other words, the result of holding to this model is: **7 And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.**
- It was clear to the body who the seven were and what authority they had. The seven were formally appointed these positions. If someone had a temporal need, they knew who to go to: the seven, who were given authority by the apostles to address the need. To appoint the seven without granting them the authority would not have served the purpose intended (of off-loading the responsibilities from the apostles) and would have set the seven up for failure.
- Those selected were men, not women, because the nature of their duties required assigning them authority. Appointing women would have contradicted the principle so clearly stated in 1 Tim 2:12.
- Those that argue that Acts 6 does not apply to deacons fail to acknowledge the primary purpose for the appointment of the seven – to allow the elders to commit their time and energy to the spiritual development of the body. The apostles’ actions, not their words, are relevant here. Whether the assignment of the seven was short-term vs. long-term; the fact that the seven chosen had Greek names; or the lack of the term “deacon” in the passage –these arguments are inconsequential to the real purpose of their appointment . . . which is to allow the apostles (elders) to commit their time and energy to the spiritual development of the flock.

#### Regarding EBBC’s changes:

1. EBBC’s desire to change must be wholly compliant. Not only should the governing bodies of the church be renamed, but their responsibilities must be aligned with 1 Tim and Acts 6, and other scripture.
2. The changes made by EBBC are not biblical. The current structure will require the EBBC Elders to spend their time and thoughts in organizing and planning the work of the Deacons. This is contrary to the reason the apostles appointed seven men to serve the temporal needs of the body in Acts 6. In this passage, the apostles cited the importance of the work they were doing and appointed other men to the tasks of caring for the temporal needs of their followers. The apostles’ intent was to off-load the burden so they could devote their time to feeding the flock spiritually.

EBBC’s proposed division of responsibilities is not consistent with the Acts 6 example. EBBC Elders have seized the management aspect of serving the temporal needs of the church and are pre-occupied in directing the Deacons in execution.

This is a departure from Acts 6 in that it 1) requires the EBBC Elders to retain certain responsibilities that the apostles delegated to the seven; and 2) it leaves the EBBC Deacons “toothless” –i.e., they have the “responsibility” to serve the temporal needs of the body without the authority to assess, plan and direct. Therefore, the proposed structure will not address the confusion and tension that had existed in the old structure between the deacons and trustees.

EBBC leadership has deliberately manipulated the lines of responsibilities between the Elders and Deacons to the point where it no longer reflects the Biblical model.

3. Furthermore, it compromises the elders' ability to commit entirely to serving the Word. The extraneous tasks of planning and organizing for the church's temporal needs is exactly what the apostles were freeing themselves of in Acts 6.

**EBBC's elders should have a laser-like focus on their duty to feed the flock SPIRITUALLY. In their proper role, the Elders' will be occupied with at least six responsibilities:**

- 1) deep study of the Word;**
- 2) close communion and prayer with each other and the pastors;**
- 3) work with the pastors to assess the spiritual needs of the body and to prepare ministries, messages and studies to address those spiritual needs;**
- 4) minister spiritually to the widows, orphans, sick, and needy;**
- 5) handle disciplinary issues; and**
- 6) counsel individuals and families. This means they need to off-load anything that obstructs their ability to do these things. This includes delegating fully the temporal ministry to the Deacons.**

In the context of EBBC's historical "Deacon" role, the new Elders will have to loosen their tight grip on the temporal affairs of the church and occupy themselves with the spiritual and doctrinal health of EBBC and its body. The new Elders will need to be steeped in the Word, having command of not just the doctrinal pillars, but to know the nuances of scripture where people often err.

4. The office of Deacon is no less important, in part because it relieves the Elders to focus on the Spiritual state of the body. It is also an important part of EBBC's ministry.
5. Concern over the use of the term "deaconess" is ill-founded. Rather, it is an entirely appropriate term to use. There is nothing wrong with using a term not used in Scripture in our church as a matter of clarity and delineation. We readily accept the term "Trinity" as a convenient and compact way to describe the quality of God's persona. Employing the term "Deaconess" differentiates women servants of the church from the men servants. The terms signal a difference between men who are appointed and have authority and women servants who operate under the direction of the Deacons and Elders. It helps to avoid confusion within the church and will avoid misleading those external to EBBC who may draw incorrect conclusions of our doctrine and practices on polity.

The concern of the term "deaconess" is a manipulative ploy, making much ado about nothing.

6. This could have been an exciting point in the history of EBBC. Our obedience to scripture in our polity and how we operate would have resulted in growth of disciples at EBBC, as evidenced in Acts 6:7 *"And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith."*

**1Cor 14:33** for God is not [*a God*] of confusion, but of peace. As in all the churches of the saints, **34** let the women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but let them be in subjection, as also saith the law. **35** And if they would learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home: for it is shameful for a woman to speak in the church.