

Official or Semiofficial Servant

διάκονον – servant, helper

^{NAS} **Romans 16:1** I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchræ...

Can a woman serve in an official or semiofficial capacity within a church? Y N

διακόνους – deacons, helpers

^{NAS} **Philippians 1:1** Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons...

Define the recipients of Paul's letter:

The saints in Christ Jesus: _____

Overseers: _____

Deacons: _____

διακονία – serving, διακονεῖν – serve,

διακονία – ministry

^{NAS} **Acts 6:1** ...a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily servicing of food.² And 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."³ But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."⁵ And the statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip...⁶ And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.

That passage shows a general division of tasks. The apostles generally cared for the people's _____ (spiritual) while Stephen and the others cared for the people's _____ (physical).

Διακόνους – Deacons, Helpers

Διάκονοι – deacons, helpers

^{NAS} **1 Timothy 3:8** 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.

Regarding the passage above and this whole brochure, what are the key characteristics of a deacon? _____

The passages in this brochure are from the New American Standard Bible, The Lockman Foundation, 1977.

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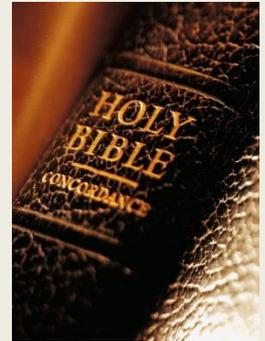
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A Word Study of

ΔΙΑΚΟΝΟΣ

NT Translations Include:

- ➔ Servant
- ➔ Attendant
- ➔ Waiter
- ➔ Agent
- ➔ Minister
- ➔ Helper
- ➔ Deacon



Introduction

Many churches today have members who are called "elders" and "deacons." This brochure is a study of the Greek NT usage of the word "διάκονος," which is *sometimes* translated "deacon." As you read / study, compare the function of your "deacons" with how the term is used in the Bible?

What about your "elders"? Make a comparison by seeing this brochure: A Word Study of πρεσβύτερος and ἐπίσκοπος (search for "elder").

The Definitions of διάκονος

1. servant (Matt. 20:26; 22:13, attendant; Mk 9:35); specifically waiter (John 2:5, 9). Agent (Rom. 13:4, minister; Gal. 2:17).
2. helper of people who render service as Christians:
 - a. **In the general service of God, Christ, or other Christians** (2 Cor. 6:4; 11:23; Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:23, 25; 1 Tim. 4:6).
 - b. **In official or semiofficial capacity** (Rom. 16:1; Phil. 1:1, deacon; 1 Tim. 3:8, 12). (Thayer, Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament)

Note: With Greek nouns, four separate forms/cases of words (with different word endings) are used to express *different functions*:

- Nominative = *subject* (ος, οι)
- Genitive = *possession* (ου, ων)
- Dative = *indirect object* (ω, οις)
- Accusative = *direct object* (ον, ους)

A Study of διάκονος

διάκονος – servant

^{NAS} **Matthew 20:26** “...whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant...” A διάκονος takes action according to the needs of others!

διάκονος – servant

^{NAS} **Mark 9:35** “If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all, and servant of all.”
How does a person function as a servant of ALL? _____

διακόνοις – servants, waiters

^{NAS} **John 2:5** His mother said to the servants, “Whatever He says to you, do it.”

How did Mary want the servants at the wedding feast to respond to Jesus?

διάκονοι – servants, waiters

^{NAS} **John 2:9** And when the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom...

What was the primary action of the servants? *thinking speaking acting*

διάκονός – minister, servant, agent

^{NAS} **Romans 13:4** for it is a minister (servant – NIV) of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister (servant – NIV) of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil.

Look up Romans 13. Who is the minister / servant / agent? _____

Who is “it” serving? _____

Who is working through “it” “to you for good”? _____

General Servant of God, Christ, Others

διάκονοι – servants, helpers

^{NAS} **2 Corinthians 6:4** but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses...

διάκονοι serve God by serving others; could such service be very difficult? Yes No

διάκονοι – servants, helpers

^{NAS} **2 Corinthians 11:23** Are they servants of Christ? ...I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.

Christ calls His servants to do _____ will no matter what – even when the results are much w_____, s_____, p_____, and _____!

διάκονος – minister, servant, helper

^{NAS} **Colossians 1:25** Of this church [body of Christ] I was made a minister (servant – NIV) according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the *preaching* of the word of God...

What does the body of Christ include?

believers non-believers both

Note the features of Paul’s position as a διάκονος; his position is:

- From _____.
- To preach the _____ of _____.
- For the _____ of the _____ living in Colosse.

διάκονος – servant, minister, helper

^{NAS} **1 Timothy 4:6** In pointing out these things [false teachings] to the brethren, you will be a good servant (minister – NIV) of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

What are constant sources of nourishment for a διάκονος? _____

What does he point out? _____