

Servants-Deacons

The English words Servant and Deacon are rooted in the Greek word *diako* which means to run errands. As used in the New Covenant Scripture, the terms are used in the context of running errands for God; and to serve the *ekklesia*, the church.

The terms here are to be contrasted with *pais* (*paheece*) which is the Greek word for household servant, a King's servant, boy, maid and also a term used for a young child or servant (boy, girl). In Matthew 12:18, *pais* is used to refer to Messiah when quoting Isaiah 42:1 in that Messiah is the *servant*, (*pais*) of God to bring Salvation to the world. This same term is used again in Acts 3:13, 26, 4:27, 30 when referring to Messiah Jesus; Luke 1:69 and Acts 4:25 for King David; to Israel in Luke 1:54 and to the boy Jesus in Luke 2:43.

The *diakoneo* (*dee-ak-on-eh'o*) and its variations all refer to servants and their work on behalf of the one they serve. These terms (defined below) appear in over 100 verses and have been translated as deacon in 5 verses, once in Philippians 1:1 and four times in 1 Timothy 3, where we are told this represent the qualifications for the singular office of Deacon. Upon an exegete of these terms, to proclaim 1 Timothy 3 as qualifications for a singular office called Deacon is to miss the God inspired point that *diakonos* refers to a "class" of servants that may hold multiple offices within the church. Please see the study on [Church: Forms and Practices](#) for a fuller study on this and other key points of Scripture. Let's examine the definitions and uses in Scripture below.

Definitions

1247 διακονέω diakoneo (dee-ak-on-eh'-o)

from [1249](#); *to serve, minister:—*

NAS-administered (1), administration (1), cared (1), contributing...support (1), do...the serving (1), employ...in serving (1), minister (3), ministered (2), ministering (3), servant (1), serve (4), serve as deacons (1), served (2), served as deacons (1), serves (5), services...rendered (1), serving (4), take care (1), wait (1), waited (3).

AV-minister unto 15, serve 10, minister 7, misc 5; 37

1) to be a servant, attendant, domestic, to serve, wait upon

1a) to minister to one, render ministering offices to

1a1) to be served, ministered unto

1b) to wait at a table and offer food and drink to the guests,

1b1) of women preparing food

1c) to minister i.e. supply food and necessities of life

1c1) to relieve one's necessities (e.g. by collecting alms), to provide take care of, distribute, the things necessary to sustain life

1c2) to take care of the poor and the sick, who administer the office of a deacon

1c3) in Christian churches to serve as deacons

1d) to minister

1d1) to attend to anything, that may serve another's interests

1d2) to minister a thing to one, to serve one or by supplying any thing

1248 διακονία diakonia (dee-ak-on-ee'-ah)

from [1249](#); n f; TDNT-2:87,152; { See TDNT 186 }

NAS-ministries (1), ministry (19), mission (1), preparations (1), relief (1), serve (1), service (7), serving (2), support (1).

AV-ministry 16, ministrations 6, ministering 3, misc 9; 34

1) service, ministering, esp. of those who execute the commands of others

Servants-Deacons

- 2) of those who by the command of God proclaim and promote religion among men
- 2a) of the office of Moses
- 2b) of the office of the apostles and its administration
- 2c) of the office of prophets, evangelists, elders etc.
- 3) the ministrations of those who render to others the offices of Christian affection esp. those who help meet need by either collecting or distributing of charities
- 4) the office of the deacon in the church
- 5) the service of those who prepare and present food

1249 δῆκονος diakonos (*dee-ak'-on-os*)

probably from an obsolete diako (to run on errands, cf 1377) n, **m/f**; a *servant*, *minister*:— an attendant, i.e. (genitive case) a waiter (at table or in other menial duties); specially, a Christian teacher and pastor (technically, a deacon or deaconess):—deacon, minister, servant.

NAS-deacons (3), minister (7), servant (10), servants (9).

AV-minister 20, servant 8, deacon 3; 31

- 1) one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master, a servant, attendant, minister
 - 1a) the servant of a king
 - 1b) a deacon, one who, by virtue of the office assigned to him by the church, cares for the poor and has charge of and distributes the money collected for their use
 - 1c) a waiter, one who serves food and drink

For Synonyms see entry 5834 & 5928

Scriptures

Matthew 4:11

Then the devil *left Him; and behold, angels came and *began* to **minister** <1247 diakoneo> to Him.

Matthew 8:15

He touched her hand, and the fever left her; and she got up and **waited** <1247 diakoneo> on Him.

Matthew 20:26

"It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your **servant** <1249 diakonos>,"

Matthew 20:28

just as the Son of Man did not come to be **served** <1247 diakoneo>, but to **serve** <1247 diakoneo>, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Matthew 22:13

"Then the king said to the **servants** <1249 diakonos>, 'Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

Matthew 23:11

"But the greatest among you shall be your **servant** <1249 diakonos>."

Matthew 25:44

Servants-Deacons

"Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not **take care** <1247 diakoneo> of You?'

Matthew 27:55

Many women were there looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee while **ministering** <1247 diakoneo> to Him.

Mark 1:13

And He was in the wilderness forty days being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were **ministering** <1247 diakoneo> to Him.

Mark 1:31

And He came to her and raised her up, taking her by the hand, and the fever left her, and she **waited** <1247 diakoneo> on them.

Mark 9:35

Sitting down, He called the twelve and *said to them, "If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and **servant** <1249 diakonos> of all."

Mark 10:43

"But it is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your **servant** <1249 diakonos>;

Mark 10:45

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be **served** <1247 diakoneo>, but to **serve** <1247 diakoneo>, and to give His life a ransom for many."

Mark 15:41

When He was in Galilee, they used to follow Him and **minister** <1247 diakoneo> to Him; and *there were* many other women who came up with Him to Jerusalem.

Luke 4:39

And standing over her, He rebuked the fever, and it left her; and she immediately got up and **waited** <1247 diakoneo> on them.

Luke 8:3

and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who were **contributing to their support** <1247 diakoneo> out of their private means.

Luke 10:40

But Martha was distracted with all her **preparations** <1248 diakonia>; and she came up *to Him* and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me **to do all the serving** <1247 diakoneo> alone? Then tell her to help me."

Luke 12:37

"Blessed are those slaves whom the master will find on the alert when he comes; truly I say to you, that he will gird himself *to serve*, and have them recline *at the table*, and will come up and **wait** <1247 diakoneo> on them.

Luke 17:8

Servants-Deacons

"But will he not say to him, 'Prepare something for me to eat, and *properly* clothe yourself and **serve** <1247 diakoneo> me while I eat and drink; and afterward you may eat and drink'?"

Luke 22:26

"But *it is* not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the **servant** <1247 diakoneo>.

Luke 22:27

"For who is greater, the one who reclines *at the table* or the one who **serves?** <1247 diakoneo> Is it not the one who reclines *at the table*? But I am among you as the one who **serves.** <1247 diakoneo>

John 2:5

His mother *said to the **servants** <1249 diakonos>, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

John 2:9

When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the **servants** <1249 diakonos> who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter *called the bridegroom,

John 12:2

So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was **servicing** <1247 diakoneo>; but Lazarus was one of those reclining *at the table* with Him.

John 12:26

"If anyone **serves** <1247 diakoneo> Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My **servant** <1249 diakonos> will be also; if anyone **serves** <1247 diakoneo> Me, the Father will honor him.

Acts 1:17

"For he was counted among us and received his share in this **ministry** <1248 diakonia>."

Acts 1:25

to occupy this **ministry** <1248 diakonia> and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place."

Ac 6:1-2

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily **servicing** <1248 diakonia> of food. 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** <1247 diakoneo> tables.

Acts 6:4

"But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the **ministry** <1248 diakonia> of the word."

Acts 11:29

And in the proportion that any of the disciples had means, each of them determined to send a contribution for the **relief** <1248 diakonia> of the brethren living in Judea.

Acts 12:25

Servants-Deacons

And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their **mission <1248 diakonia>**, taking along with them John, who was also called Mark.

Acts 19:22

And having sent into Macedonia two of those who **ministered <1247 diakoneo>** to him, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while.

Ac 20:24

"But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the **ministry <1248 diakonia>** which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

Ac 21:19

After he had greeted them, he began to relate one by one the things which God had done among the Gentiles through his **ministry <1248 diakonia>**.

Romans 11:13

But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my **ministry <1248 diakonia>**,

Romans 12:7

if **service <1248 diakonia>**, in his **servicing <1248 diakonia>**; or he who teaches, in his teaching;

Romans 13:4

for it is a **minister <1249 diakonos>** 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 <1249 diakonos>** of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.

Romans 15:8

For I say that Christ has become a **servant <1249 diakonos>** to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God to confirm the promises *given* to the fathers,

Romans 15:25

but now, I am going to Jerusalem **servicing <1247 diakoneo>** the saints.

Romans 15:31

that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my **service <1248 diakonia>** for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;

Romans 16:1

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a **servant <1249 diakonos>** of the church which is at Cenchrea;

1 Corinthians 3:5

What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? **Servants <1249 diakonos>** through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave *opportunity* to each one.

1Corinthians 12:5

And there are varieties of **ministries <1248 diakonia>**, and the same Lord.

Servants-Deacons

1 Corinthians 16:15

Now I urge you, brethren (you know the household of Stephanas, that they were the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have devoted themselves for **ministry <1248 diakonia>** to the saints),

2 Corinthians 3:3

being manifested that you are a letter of Christ, **cared <1247 diakoneo>** for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

2 Corinthians 3:6-9

who also made us adequate as **servants <1249 diakonos>** of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the **ministry <1248 diakonia>** of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how will the **ministry <1248 diakonia>** of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? For if the **ministry <1248 diakonia>** of condemnation has glory, much more does the **ministry <1248 diakonia>** of righteousness abound in glory.

2 Corinthians 4:1

Therefore, since we have this **ministry <1248 diakonia>**, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart,

2 Corinthians 5:18

Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the **ministry <1248 diakonia>** of reconciliation,

2 Corinthians 6:3-4

giving no cause for offense in anything, so that the **ministry <1248 diakonia>** will not be discredited, but in everything commending ourselves as **servants <1249 diakonos>** of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses,

2 Corinthians 8:19

and not only *this*, but he has also been appointed by the churches to travel with us in this gracious work, which is being **administered <1247 diakoneo>** by us for the glory of the Lord Himself, and *to show* our readiness,

2 Corinthians 8:4

begging us with much urging for the favor of participation in the **support <1248 diakonia>** of the saints,

2 Corinthians 8:20

taking precaution so that no one will discredit us in our **administration <1247 diakoneo>** of this generous gift;

2 Corinthians 9:1

For it is superfluous for me to write to you about this **ministry <1248 diakonia>** to the saints;

2 Corinthians 9:12-13

For the **ministry <1248 diakonia>** of this service is not only fully supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing through many thanksgivings to God. Because of the proof given

Servants-Deacons

by this **ministry** <1248 diakonia>, they will glorify God for your obedience to your confession of the gospel of Christ and for the liberality of your contribution to them and to all,

2 Corinthians 11:8

I robbed other churches by taking wages from them to **serve** <1248 diakonia> you;

2 Corinthians 11:15

Therefore it is not surprising if his **servants** <1249 diakonos> also disguise themselves as **servants** <1249 diakonos> of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

2 Corinthians 11:23

Are they **servants** <1249 diakonos> of Christ?—I speak as if insane—I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death.

Galatians 2:17

"But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we ourselves have also been found sinners, is Christ then a **minister** <1249 diakonos> of sin? May it never be!

Ephesians 3:7

of which I was made a **minister** <1249 diakonos>, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

Ephesians 4:12

for the equipping of the saints for the work of **service** <1248 diakonia>, to the building up of the body of Christ;

Ephesians 6:21

But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful **minister** <1249 diakonos> in the Lord, will make everything known to you.

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** <1249 diakonos>:

Colossians 1:7

just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful **servant** <1249 diakonos> of Christ on our behalf,

Colossians 1:23

if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a **minister** <1249 diakonos>.

Colossians 1:25

Of *this church* I was made a minister <1249 diakonos> according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, so that I might fully carry out the *preaching of* the word of God,

Colossians 4:7

As to all my affairs, Tychicus, *our* beloved brother and faithful **servant** <1249 diakonos> and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information.

Servants-Deacons

Colossians 4:17

Say to Archippus, "Take heed to the **ministry** <1248 diakonia> which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it."

1 Timothy 3:8

Deacons <1249 diakonos> likewise *must be* men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain,

1 Timothy 3:10

These men must also first be tested; then let them **serve as deacons** <1247 diakoneo> if they are beyond reproach.

1 Timothy 3:12-13

Deacons <1249 diakonos> must be husbands of *only* one wife, *and* good managers of *their* children and their own households. For those who have **served** <1247 diakoneo> well as **deacons** <1247 diakoneo> obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 4:6

In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good **servant** <1249 diakonos> of Christ Jesus, *constantly* nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.

2 Timothy 1:18

the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day—and you know very well what **services** <1247 diakoneo> he **rendered** <1247 diakoneo> at Ephesus.

1 Titus 1:12

I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into **service** <1248 diakonia>,

2 Titus 4:5

But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your **ministry** <1248 diakonia>.

2 Titus 4:11

Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for **service** <1248 diakonia>.

Philemon 1:13

whom I wished to keep with me, so that on your behalf he might **minister** <1247 diakoneo> to me in my imprisonment for the gospel;

Hebrews 1:14

Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render **service** <1248 diakonia> for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?

Hebrews 6:10

For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having **ministered** <1247 diakoneo> and in still **ministering** <1247 diakoneo> to the

Servants-Deacons

saints.

1 Peter 1:12

It was revealed to them that they were not **servicing** <1247 diakoneo> themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things into which angels long to look.

1 Peter 4:10-11

As each one has received a *special* gift, **employ it in servicing** <1247 diakoneo> one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever **serves** <1247 diakoneo> *is to do so* as one who is **servicing** <1247 diakoneo> 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.

Revelation 2:19

'I know your deeds, and your love and faith and **service** <1248 diakonia> and perseverance, and that your deeds of late are greater than at first.