

## Female Deacons

1 Timothy 3:11 - NCBC, February 3, 2019

Main Point: **God designed church leadership to appropriately include women.**

- **Why** is this important for us?
  - Ensure God's Word drives our practice
  - Affirm God's role for women in ministry
  - Expand elders' development of women
- **What** are the two church leadership offices?
  - Elders – plurality of shepherds/pastors
  - Deacons – submissive ministry leaders
- **Who** is a biblical deacon?
  - Those exemplifying spiritual maturity (1 Tim 3:8-13)
  - Those appointed by the elders (Acts 6:3)
  - Either men or women (1 Tim 3:11)
  - Why 3:11 is women vs. wives?
    - No mention of elders' wives in vv. 1-7
    - "Likewise" structural marker seems to indicate another kind of leader category
    - No pronoun "their" in original text
  - Answering objections to 3:11 = Women?
    - 1 Tim 3:11 difficult order? But possible
    - 1 Tim 3:12 – Husband of one wife? But common idiom for marital faithfulness/purity
    - 1 Tim 2:11-12 – women not permitted to teach or govern? But deacon is submissive leadership role by definition, contra elders
    - Acts 6:3-5 prototype deacons were men? But Romans 16:1 and church history
- **Where** do we see female deacons?
  - Phoebe in Romans 16:1
  - Early Church history
  - Across wide breadth of church ministry

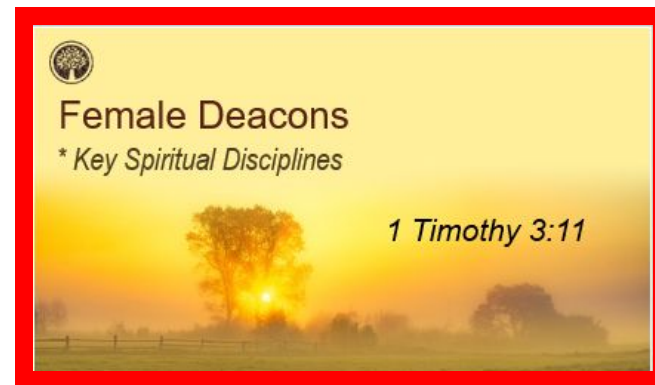
- **How** should women serve as deacons?
  - With exemplary character of 1 Tim 3:11
  - Fully submissive to their elders' authority
  - Not exercising governing or teaching authority over men (1 Tim 2:11-12; 1 Cor 14:33-35)
  - Appropriately honoring male and female complementarity

Application: **Humbly pray for godly women to excel yet more in our church's ministry according to God's design.**

### Opening Announcements:

- Biblical Counseling & Discipleship Training Conference at Bethany Community Church – March 1-3 \*\*Don't miss this!!
- Believer's Baptism - 2<sup>nd</sup> service

<<Yet Not I but through Christ in Me>>



All the glory to God alone. Jesus lives in me.

Thank you for singing to God and to one another in our worship together. I pray that those life-giving lyrics will

lodge deep in your mind this week – *Yet not I but through Christ in me.*

Christ is revealed most clearly to us through the Holy Scriptures – so let's open our Bibles to **1 Timothy**.



If you don't have a Bible today, simply raise your hand and we'd be delighted to give you one. You may take this Bible home as our gift to you, or simply return it to the back table at the end of the service.

I'm still enjoying that lyric we just sung together:

*With every breath I long to follow Jesus  
For He has said that He will bring me home  
And day by day I know He will renew me  
Until I stand with joy before the throne*

The longer I follow Jesus, the sweeter He becomes. 27 years ago today, on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1992, God convicted me of my sin and gave me the grace of repentance to become a Christ-follower by faith. I don't know how you handle your spiritual birthday, but as I look back over the

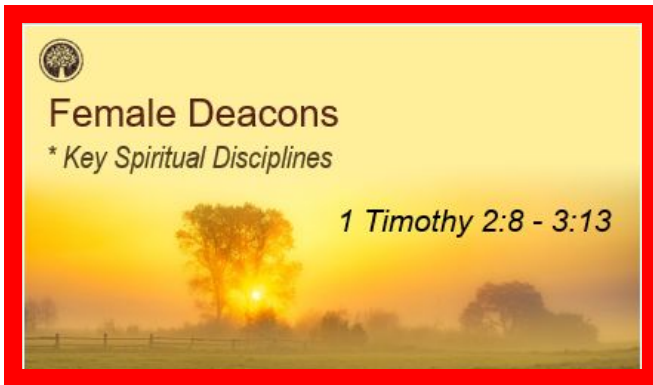
last 27 years of walking with Jesus this morning – I see my own sin and failures covered in the constant renewing of God's Spirit. Day by day, I know He will renew me until I stand with joy before the throne!

*To this I hold, my hope is only Jesus  
All the glory evermore to Him  
When the race is complete, still my lips shall repeat:  
Yet not I, but through Christ in me!*

May God continue to increase our humble dependence upon Christ together through our worship.

This morning we continue studying *Key Spiritual Topics* by focusing on the role of women in ministry, specifically answering why we believe women should serve as deacons in the local church.

The majority of our focus will be on **1 Timothy 3:11** – just one verse Paul wrote to Timothy around 63 AD. Timothy was pastoring the Ephesian church, and **1 Timothy 3:11** gives instruction on the necessary spiritual maturity of female deacons. Since the surrounding context is so instructive, let's begin reading in **1 Timothy chapter 2 verse 8**.



Please stand in honor of the public reading of God's Word. Reading Paul's instructions to the young Ephesian pastor from the **ESV** translation. **1 Timothy 2:8:**

*<sup>8</sup> I desire then that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands without anger or quarrel; <sup>9</sup> likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire, <sup>10</sup> but with what is proper for women who profess godliness—with good works. <sup>11</sup> Let a woman learn quietly with all submissiveness. <sup>12</sup> I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve; <sup>14</sup> and Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor. <sup>15</sup> Yet she will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith and love and holiness, with self-control.*

**3** *The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup> Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup> not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup> He must*

*manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, <sup>5</sup> for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? <sup>6</sup> He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.*

*<sup>8</sup> Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. <sup>9</sup> They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup> And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. <sup>11</sup> Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. <sup>12</sup> Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. <sup>13</sup> For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.*

Thus reads God's Word. You may be seated.

### **Let's Pray.**

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This morning my aim is simple. I desire to humbly teach from God's Word why the elders of this church believe that,



God designed church leadership to appropriately include women.

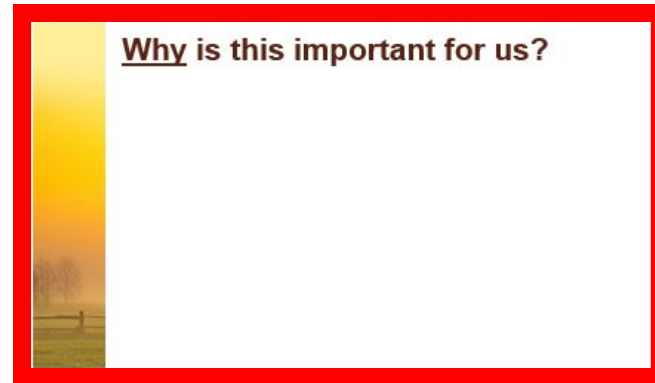
I'm well aware that this topic has the potential to excite strong emotions in many of us, so please know I've prayed for you. All of us have past experiences and traditions that inform our posture towards this topic. And yet I'm also very confident that all of us want our faith in God's Word to inform our ministry understanding and practice more than fear or tradition. So I humbly ask that you keep your Bibles open, and prove yourself humble Bereans<sup>1</sup> – no matter whether you end up agreeing or not with my conclusions in the end.

This won't be a typical sermon for New Castle. Today I teach, more than preach. I fully recognize that many godly people disagree with my present convictions on this matter. This is not a question that should divide Christian brothers and sisters. This is not a salvation issue at all.

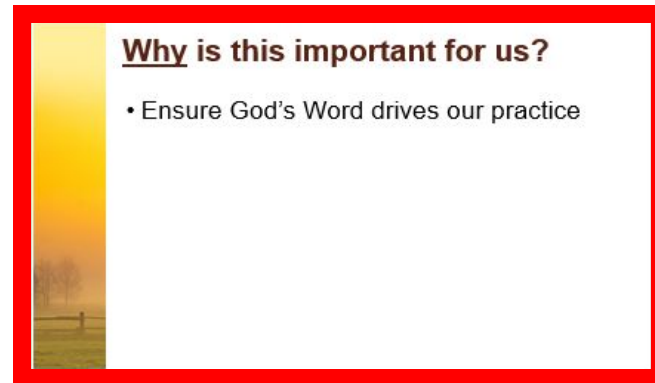
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<sup>1</sup> Acts 17:11  
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So then, perhaps it's reasonable to ask right from the start,



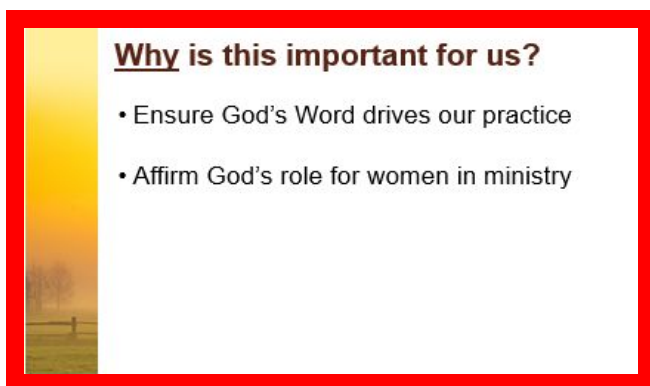
Why is this sermon important for us? Why is it even necessary to talk about something that can be so emotional and possibly even divisive for our church family?



First, I believe it is important for our church to study God's design for female deacons at this time, to **Ensure God's Word drives our practice.**

For many years now New Castle Bible Church has employed women in roles of significant ministry leadership. While we haven't formally recognized Teresa Krause, or Sharon Carey, or Connie Johnson as deacons – the reality is that each of these women already serve alongside our elders and deacons in significant positions of ministry leadership within our church. We desire for God's Word to govern how we structure and practice spiritual leadership – more than just precedent or convenience.

Second, it's important to discuss this topic in order to,



**Why is this important for us?**

- Ensure God's Word drives our practice
- Affirm God's role for women in ministry

**Affirm God's role for women in ministry.** In this age of rampant feminism, churches like ours who hold firm to the clear biblical teaching of distinct gender roles often get accused of being chauvinistic or oppressive to women. And regrettably, some who share our doctrinal convictions have fairly earned that accusation!

Yet the Scripture clearly values women and elevates them from historical oppression.<sup>2</sup> Both male and female bear God's image.<sup>3</sup> Both men and women receive the gift of God's Spirit at the moment of regeneration,<sup>4</sup> and are given ministry in the church.<sup>5</sup> The priesthood of believers applies equally to both men and women.<sup>6</sup>

The New Testament testifies boldly to the effective ministry of women like Phoebe,<sup>7</sup> Priscilla,<sup>8</sup> Joanna,<sup>9</sup> Mary,<sup>10</sup> Lydia,<sup>11</sup> Junia,<sup>12</sup> and more. It is good and right for us to teach and affirm God's design for women in ministry.

Finally this is a timely topic for our church as our,

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<sup>2</sup> I.e. 1 Timothy 2:11 was radically counter-cultural and positive towards women in Paul's day!!

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 1:27

<sup>4</sup> Ephesians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13

<sup>5</sup> Galatians 3:28; Ephesians 4:15-16

<sup>6</sup> 1 Peter 2:9

<sup>7</sup> Romans 16:1-2

<sup>8</sup> Also known as Prisca – Acts 18:1-3, 18, 26; Romans 16:3-5

<sup>9</sup> Luke 8:2-3

<sup>10</sup> Acts 1:12-14; Romans 16:6

<sup>11</sup> Acts 16:14, 40

<sup>12</sup> Romans 16:7

### Why is this important for us?

- Ensure God's Word drives our practice
- Affirm God's role for women in ministry
- Expand elders' development of women

Elders desire to expand our leadership development to include women going forward. We are so excited about our leadership development process God is using here to raise up future elders and deacons for His church. Historically, our elders have focused most of our discipleship on raising up men for spiritual leadership. However we believe God's design for female deacons encourages us appropriately invite both men and women into our deacon development process.

Yet we don't want to start publicly inviting women into this development process without having the integrity to honestly teach our biblical convictions on female deacons first. Whether or not you end up agreeing with our conclusion today, we desire to be very clear that we are moving forward based on our best understanding of the biblical text.

Therefore I am teaching today to ensure God's Word drives our practice, to affirm God's role for women in ministry, and allow us to expand the elders' development of women as deacons with integrity and biblically-informed consciences.

Now let's begin with a quick review of,

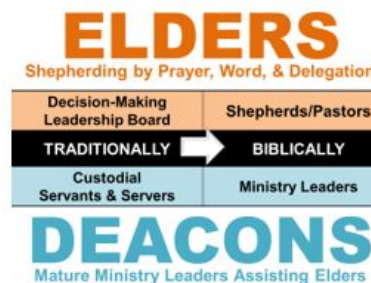
### What are the 2 leadership offices?

What are the two church leadership offices that we find in Scripture?

Biblically there are two distinct offices of spiritual leadership within the local church: Elders and Deacons.

### What are the 2 leadership offices?

*Philippians 1:1*  
Paul and Timothy,  
servants of Christ Jesus,  
To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons:  
Grace to you...



For example, Paul starts out his letter to the church in Philippi with the greeting,

*...To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the overseers and deacons...*

There you see both leadership offices mentioned in the same verse – overseers (or pastors/elders) and deacons.

For a more in-depth study about each of these offices, I'd refer you back to the sermon I preached on “Biblical Elders” in January 2016, and a sermon I preached on “Biblical Deacons” in February 2017.

But for review now, remember that elders are the God-appointed<sup>13</sup> shepherds<sup>14</sup> who exercise spiritual authority<sup>15</sup> over the local church's teaching<sup>16</sup> and governance<sup>17</sup> together.<sup>18</sup> When we taught on this before, we debunked any tradition that sees elders as a group of “who's who's” men who functionally serve as faithful decision makers in a house of representatives to balance the pastor's power. Biblical elders are pastors. No matter whether they are on staff or volunteer. Biblical elders are Bible teachers and prayer warriors.<sup>19</sup> Biblical elders are men of exemplary character.<sup>20</sup> Biblical elders shepherd by prayer, teaching, and delegation.<sup>21</sup>

On the other hand, Biblical Deacons are the mature ministry leaders in the church who assist the elders. The

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<sup>13</sup> Acts 20:28

<sup>14</sup> 1 Peter 5:1-5

<sup>15</sup> 1 Peter 5:2

<sup>16</sup> 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:9

<sup>17</sup> 1 Timothy 3:5; Acts 20:28

<sup>18</sup> Titus 1:5

<sup>19</sup> Acts 6:4

<sup>20</sup> 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9

<sup>21</sup> Ephesians 4:11

deacon role, by definition, is a submissive role – for it is exercising leadership gifts under the authority and direction of the elders.

Therefore contrary to tradition, the biblical ministry of deacons is not limited to buildings and grounds. A deacon is not merely a faithful doer. They are ministry leaders.<sup>22</sup> From the very first “prototype deacons” in **Acts 6**, deacons serve to influence the rest of the church towards greater godliness according to the elders' vision.

Now these definitions of elders and deacons are important, since some of us grew up in Deacon-led churches. In other words, the elders were called deacons. And the deacons may have been called trustees, or something like that. So please understand – when I teach this morning that God has designed for women to be deacons, I'm speaking about this role of spiritually mature ministry leaders who assist the elders and lead in submission to the church's elders. As we are going to discuss more in a minute, the Scriptures are clear that the office of biblical eldership is reserved to men.<sup>23</sup>

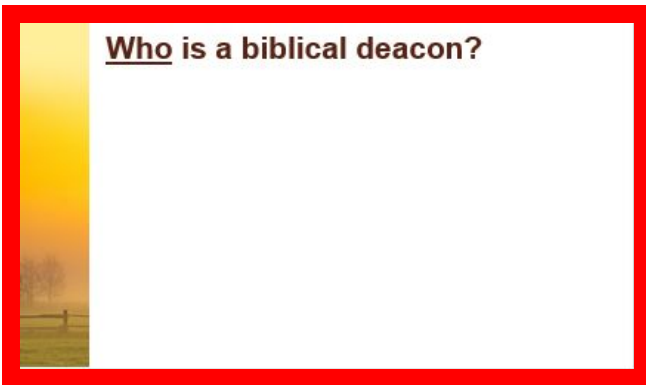
This also explains why I don't recommend creating a third leadership office called deaconesses. From Scripture I understand there to be just 2 leadership offices in the church: elders who are men only, and deacons who may be male or female.

So now let's dive further into this question of,

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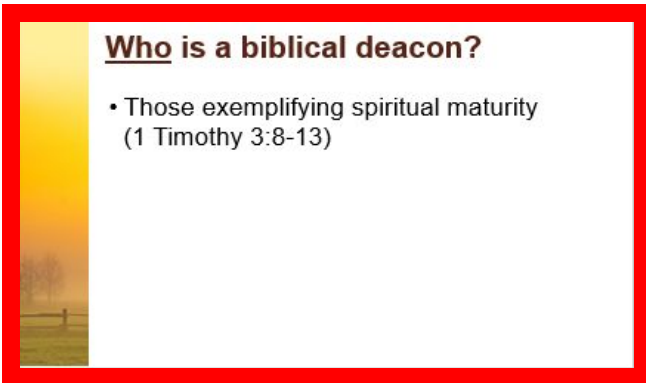
<sup>22</sup> Philippians 1:1

<sup>23</sup> 1 Timothy 2:11-12; 1 Corinthians 14:33-35



Who is a biblical deacon? Who may serve as a deacon according to Scripture?

First, Scripture is very clear that deacons must,

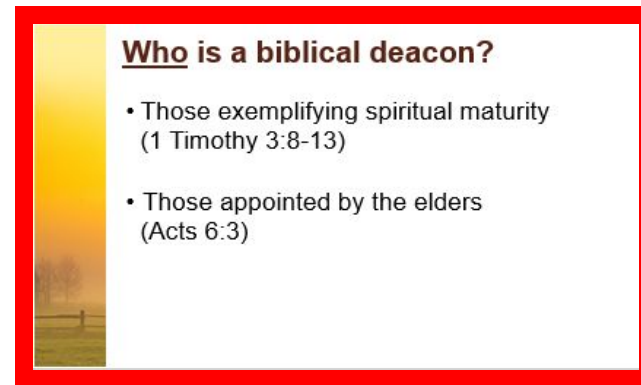


**Exemplify or model spiritual maturity.**

The leadership qualities that we read in **verses 8-13** of **1 Timothy 3** are simply the qualities of spiritual maturity which all believers should aspire to. All deacons must be first tested, and proven to be blameless in **verse 10**. Their mouths, manners, and motives must be submitted to God's Spirit in **verses 8 and 11**. They must know and

understand the Gospel enough to defend it. In **verse 12** they must exhibit spiritual maturity in the home just as much as in the church house.

So biblical deacons are those who model spiritual maturity, and second,



**Those who are appointed by the elders.**

**Acts 6** demonstrates how the apostles appointed 7 men to effectively serve all the Greek widows across the known church, without distracting the apostles from Bible teaching and prayer. Practically then, we understand deacons to be those spiritually mature members whom the elders appoint for whatever duration would be necessary.

This has very practical implications for church deacons. Their term in office should be however long their ministry leadership is required. Also by definition, the deacons are not a separate governing body from the elders. Deacons are the elders' assistants – those who lead ministry in submission to the elder's vision and authority. Therefore while church ministry benefits from team leadership, it



seems unwise for deacons to organize themselves into a deacon board separate from the elders whom they are focused on serving. It is far better for the deacons to serve on the same teams as the elders who are giving oversight to that part of the church’s ministry – thereby eliminating the risk that the deacons become a separate governing body in competition with the plurality of elders.

Now **1 Timothy 3:11** is the main reason we believe that biblical deacons can be,

**Who is a biblical deacon?**

- Those exemplifying spiritual maturity (1 Timothy 3:8-13)
- Those appointed by the elders (Acts 6:3)
- Either men or women (1 Timothy 3:11)

Either men or women.

So let’s read this verse again, and then walk through all of its questions together so you can understand why our elders have come to the studied conclusion that **1 Timothy 3:11** is Paul giving instruction to Timothy about female deacons in the Ephesian church.

**3:11 = Women vs. Wives?**

**ESV** *Their wives likewise* must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.

**NASB95** *Women must likewise* be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.

Greek word “**Gyne**” can be rightly translated as:  
**Woman/Female/Wife**

11 Their wives likewise  
Πρωτόκλας, δεσποτάς, γυνή, δεσποτάς, B, 1135, 5615, 934, 64.16

In the ESV **verse 11** reads,

*Their wives likewise* ... Yet the NASB translates, *Women likewise*...

The difference in translation is due to the fact that the original Greek word can convey both meanings. All good Bible translations use footnotes at this point – no matter how they translate the word – to let readers know that the original word can legitimately be translated as either women or wives. In other words the context must determine which meaning Paul intends when he used the word “**gyne**” in **verse 11**.

If Paul meant wives, then he’s giving extra qualifications for deacon’s wives in **verse 11**. If Paul meant women, then he is giving specific qualifications for female deacons in **verse 11**.

While we would obviously respect those who disagree, we humbly believe the context leans towards women instead of wives, primarily because Paul made

### 3:11 = Women vs. Wives?

- No mention of elders' wives in 1-7

No mention of elders' wives in vv. 1-7.

It would seem unlikely and unnecessary for Paul to specifically address deacons' wives when he didn't address elders' wives in **verses 1-7**.

Further, Paul's repeated use of the word "likewise" as a

### 3:11 = Women vs. Wives?

- No mention of elders' wives in 1-7
- "Likewise" structural marker seems to indicate another kind of leader category

structural marker seems to indicate another kind of leader category. The "likewise" in **verse 11** refers back to the "likewise" in **verse 8**, which refers back to the "likewise" in **verse 1**. Since we know from **chapter 2 verse 12** that women cannot serve as elders, we should

not expect to see women referenced in the list of elder characteristics in **verses 1-7**. Then after Paul discussed deacons in **verses 8-10** without mentioning their wives, he uses another "likewise" to specifically address female deacons.

Finally we lean towards the interpretation of women vs. wives,

### 3:11 = Women vs. Wives?

- No mention of elders' wives in 1-7
- "Likewise" structural marker seems to indicate another kind of leader category
- No pronoun "their" in original text

Since there is **No pronoun "their" in original text**. If Paul really was trying to refer to the deacon's wives, grammatically he would have included the pronoun.

Admittedly it's an interpretative judgment call. But for these 3 strong reasons, we believe it is best to understand Paul to be describing the necessary character qualities of female deacons.

## Objections to 3:11 = Women?

Now of course there are objections to this interpretation that we need to address.

First,

## Objections to 3:11 = Women?

- 1 Tim 3:12 – Husband of one wife? But common idiom for marital faithfulness/purity

doesn't **1 Timothy 3:12** require deacons to be the **Husband of one wife**? Doesn't this same phrase which is back in **verse 2** for elders require deacons to be men?

Literally this phrase is "one-woman man." And it's a linguistic idiom for marital faithfulness or purity. It isn't emphasizing the person's gender any more than it is requiring an elder or deacon to be married, or not to remarry after the death of a spouse, etc. In other words,

the point of this phrase is not the gender of the person, but their purity and faithfulness to their marriage vows.

Perhaps the strongest objection we encounter is the argument,

## Objections to 3:11 = Women?

- 1 Tim 3:12 – Husband of one wife? But common idiom for marital faithfulness/purity
- 1 Tim 2:11-12 – women not permitted to teach or govern? But deacon is submissive leadership role by definition, contra elders

from **1 Tim 2:11-12** that clearly teaches that women are not permitted to teach or govern in the church. We clearly affirm God's design for the church to be led by a plurality of biblically qualified men. We believe only men can be pastors or elders. But remember, the deacon office is a submissive leadership role by definition. Deacons don't have to be "apt to teach" or to "govern God's church" like elders are required to do in **verses 2 and 5**.

As long as we understand deacons to serve under the spiritual of authority of biblical elders, **1 Timothy 3:11** does not violate the teachings of **1 Timothy 2:11-12** or **1 Corinthians 14:33-35**.

Others may object based on the fact that,

### Objections to 3:11 = Women?

- 1 Tim 3:12 – Husband of one wife? But common idiom for marital faithfulness/purity
- 1 Tim 2:11-12 – women not permitted to teach or govern? But deacon is submissive leadership role by definition, contra elders
- Acts 6:3-5 prototype deacons were men? But Romans 16:1 and church history

The prototype deacons first introduced in **Acts 6:3-5** were men. But of course Acts is descriptive at that point, and not prescriptive. And both **Romans 16** and early church history seems to give evidence that female deacons were commonly recognized in the churches.

So with this understanding of **1 Timothy 3:11**,

### Where do we see female deacons?

Where do we see women serving as deacons?

First, and most clearly, Paul writes in

### Where do we see female deacons?

- Phoebe in Romans 16:1

**Romans 16:1,**

*I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant [it's the Greek word for deacon] of the church at Cenchreae, that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.*

Most commentators agree that whenever the word *diakonos* is used directly with a specifically named church, it is best to understand it as the official office of deacon. So Phoebe was a deaconess. And the reality of female deacons like Phoebe is confirmed by the strong witness of,

### Where do we see female deacons?

- Phoebe in Romans 16:1
- Early Church History

#### Early Church history.

Although church history is not authoritative, the clear witness of the early church shows women being publicly ordained as deacons to perform many valuable functions within the church. The earliest mention of female deacons I found was in 111 AD – during the same generation who lived with the apostles – where two deaconesses are recorded as being arrested for being Christians.<sup>24</sup> Evidences of active female deacons is common in writings from the second, third, and fourth centuries.<sup>25</sup>

I also find it interesting that in **Romans 16**, and throughout the witness of church history, female deacons are seen as serving,

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<sup>24</sup> V. M. Sinton, “Deaconess,” ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 262.

<sup>25</sup> See the recommended resource, *Deaconesses: A Historical Study* by Martimort for a very detailed study of all the historical evidence for female deacons throughout history.

### Where do we see female deacons?

- Phoebe in Romans 16:1
- Early Church History
- Across wide breadth of church ministry

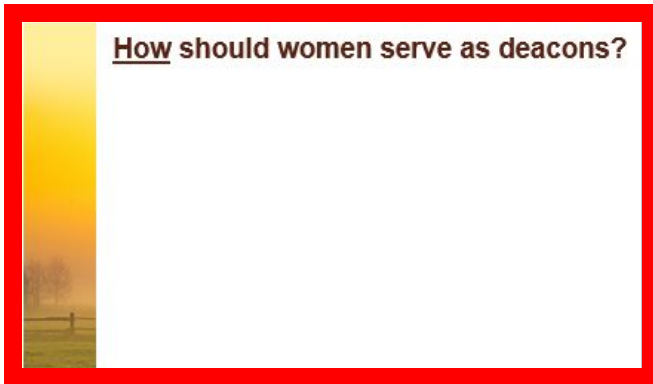
#### Across a wide breadth of church ministry.

In many of the early church writings, the authors were clear to note that the deaconesses were not to teach or govern men, and they were not considered among the clergy. Yet they were officially ordained to be active in evangelizing women and preparing them for baptism, serving in compassion ministries, visiting the sick, exercising generosity and piety, serving as ushers and doorkeepers in the church, etc.

In other words, just as the biblical emphasis on deacons is more on who they are, rather than what they do... for us here at New Castle Bible Church, we would see female deacons serving across a very wide breadth of NCBC’s ministry leadership – however appointed by our elders. As long as our female deacons were submitted under the spiritual authority of our elders, we could envision them leading all kinds of ministries including but not limited to, women’s Bible studies, women’s discipleship/counseling ministries, teaching elective classes, nursery & children’s ministries, outreach, prayer ministries, music, communications, hospitality, etc. We would see both men and women deacons helping to

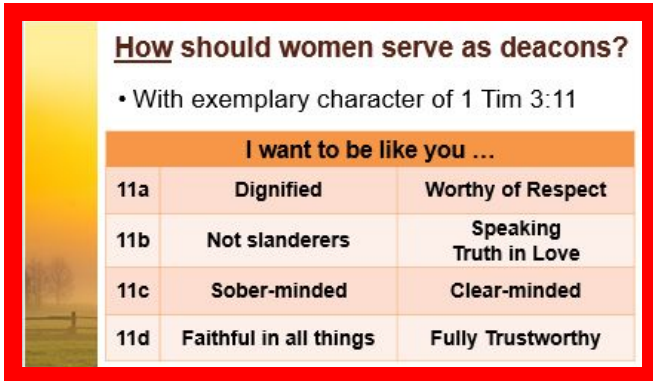
serve our church family communion, serving as ushers, and just generally using their God-given gifts however possible to assist our elders in leading our church family towards greater joy in Christ.

So then,



How should women serve as deacons?

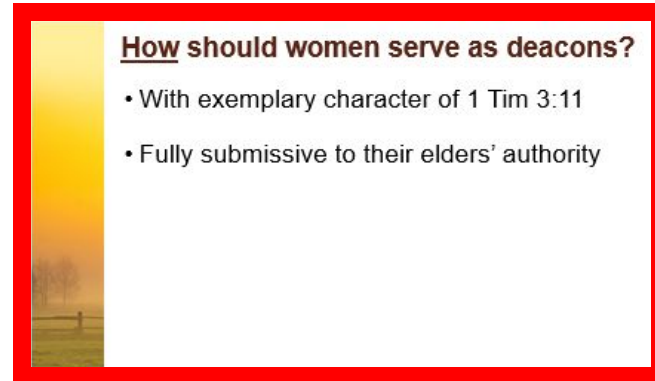
First, as is the point of our text in **1 Timothy 3:11**,



With exemplary character.

It takes spiritual maturity to lead others well while remaining joyfully submissive to your own authority.

Female deacons must have Spirit-controlled lives, lips, and logic. They must be women who are full trustworthy – proven stewards of God’s grace.



Second, these women must be **Fully submissive to their elders’ authority.**

By definition, the deacon is a ministry leader who is fully submitted to the plurality of elders. Therefore all men and women who serve as deacons must seek to joyfully serve the elders’ united interest within the church in eager submission and deference to the elders’ leadership.

Third, female deacons must take care to,

### How should women serve as deacons?

- With exemplary character of 1 Tim 3:11
- Fully submissive to their elders' authority
- Not exercising governing or teaching authority over men (1 Tim 2:11-12; 1 Cor 14:33-35)

Never exercise governing or teaching authority over men.

**1 Timothy 2:11-12** and **1 Corinthians 14:33-35** are very clear. God has designed into the very creation order distinct male and female roles. These verses clearly teach that the final spiritual authority is given to a plurality of God-called men. God *does not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man*. Rather, female deacons are to be peaceable, godly, and dignified in every way.<sup>26</sup>

Always,

### How should women serve as deacons?

- With exemplary character of 1 Tim 3:11
- Fully submissive to their elders' authority
- Not exercising governing or teaching authority over men (1 Tim 2:11-12; 1 Cor 14:33-35)
- Appropriately honoring male and female complementarity

Appropriately honoring male and female complementarity.

In other words, the way male and female deacons relate to each other should be guided by a sense of shared value and equality in essence, but distinction in roles as found in God's household model of leadership. Humility and submission are the marks of all deacons.

I do pray that this study has helped you better understand our biblical conviction that,

#### Main Point

**God designed church leadership to appropriately include women.**

God designed church leadership to appropriately include

<sup>26</sup> Compare 1 Timothy 2:2 with 2:11-12  
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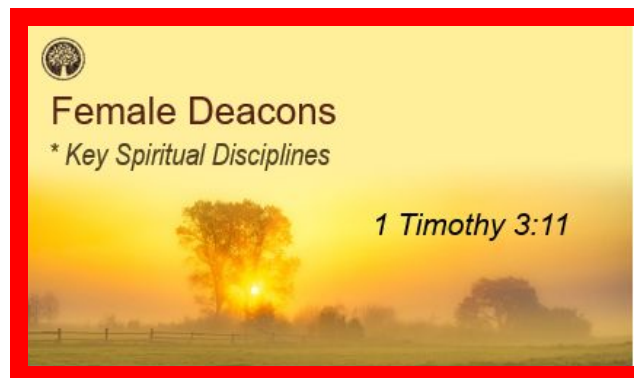
women.

We desire to publicly ground our practice in an honest study of the Word of God. If you disagree with our conclusion, we can humbly respect you for that. We recognize many godly people differ on this matter, and pray all of us can pursue humility and unity together as we carefully form our convictions based on God's Word more than on tradition or fear. Please feel free to counsel with any of our elders as we all desire to excel yet more for God's glory in this church. And please,



Humbly pray for godly women to excel yet more in our church's ministry according to God's design.

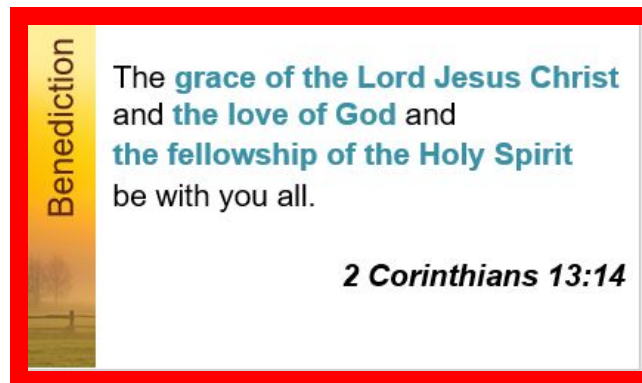
May New Castle Bible Church be a people who excels yet more at equipping and empowering our sisters to joyfully serve God according to His good design within our church family – all under the spiritual care and authority of our God-given elders.



Let's pray.

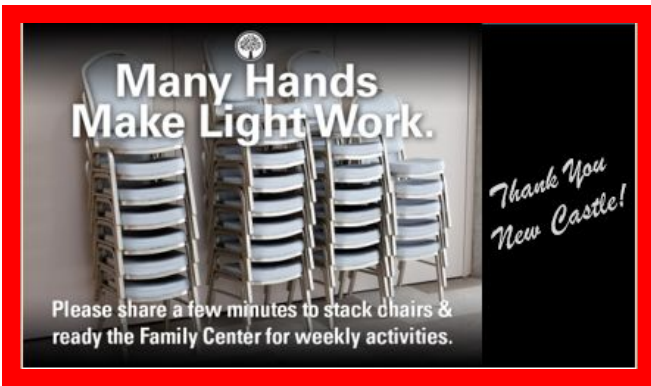
<<All To Us>>

Let's pray our benediction together as we dismiss.



*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
2 Corinthians 13:14*





## **Recommended Resources on Female Deacons:**

- Matthew 20:25-28
- Mark 10:42-45
- Luke 22:24-27
- Acts 6:1-7; 18:1-3, 18, 26
- Romans 16:1-2
- Philippians 1:1-2
- 1 Timothy 3:8-13, 5:22
- Titus 2:3
  
- <https://jamedders.com/why-have-women-deacons/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/books/50-crucial-questions-about-manhood-and-womanhood>
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/thabiti-anyabwile/im-a-complementarian-but-women-can-be-deacons/>
  
- Women in the Church, Kostenberger & Schreiner
- Evangelical Feminism & Biblical Truth, Grudem
- Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, Grudem & Piper
- Deaconesses: A Historical Study, Martimort
- Elders and Leaders, Getz
  
- “What is a Biblical Elder?” sermon preached by Pastor Kevin 1-31-2016
- “What is a Biblical Deacon?” sermon preached by Pastor Kevin 2-12-2017

## **Growing Deeper: Life Group Questions**

1. The qualities of spiritual maturity presented in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 ought to be a growing reality for all believers. As you meditate on what spiritual maturity looks like, how could you prayerfully pursue growth in these areas yourself?
2. What traditions or practices have you experienced throughout your life regarding women’s roles at church? How do these experiences influence how you approach passages like 1 Timothy 2:11-12, 3:11, and 1 Corinthians 14:33-35?
3. Read 1 Timothy 3:11. Discuss and explain why you believe this verse is speaking of deacon’s wives or female deacons?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 4:6. Explain how God’s glory is affected when a local church puts more limitations upon women’s roles in the church than the Scripture affords? Or when the church ignores biblical limitations on women’s roles?
5. Read 1 Timothy 2:8-15. What are the grounds for God’s design of distinct gender roles within the church? What does it mean for women to be “quiet?” (c.f. 2:2)
6. Compare 1 Timothy 2:12 with 1 Timothy 3:2 and 3:5. What two elder qualities mentioned in 3:2 & 3:5 are not repeated in the deacon qualities listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-13? What leadership roles does God limit to the male gender from these texts?