



## **SOJOURN LEADERSHIP | DEACONS**

## Introduction

Deacons within Sojourn are servant-leaders recognized for their service, their leadership, and their character. They must meet the requirements of 1 Timothy 3:8-13 *and* they must be functionally serving as a leader in the ministry area for which they have been called. After being asked and prayerfully accepting, a deacon candidate will enter a training process with their direct ministry leader.

The deacon process is designed to provide uniformity as to how Sojourn calls, equips, and releases its leaders. While there is uniformity to the process, each ministry leader – at his own discretion – should apply appropriate training according to the ministry area.

## Outline

The deacon process contains four learning stages, a contextualization stage, and a final assessment. Each stage has clearly stated objectives, pre-work (usually consisting of reading supplements), and assignments.

Gospel Centrality   A Foundation of Deacons	
<b>Objectives</b>	- To have a clear understanding of the gospel - To clearly articulate the gospel
<b>Read</b>	- <i>All of Life is Repentance</i> , a paper by Tim Keller - <i>The Centrality of the Gospel</i> , a paper by Tim Keller
<b>Assignment</b>	- Write (one page) <u>or</u> discuss a summary of the gospel - Recite the gospel to a minimum of 3 people

Gospel Qualifications   A Theology of Deacons	
<b>Objectives</b>	- To understand the scriptural qualifications of deacons - To understand God's purpose for deacons
<b>Meditate</b>	- 1 Timothy 3:8-13 - Acts 6:1-6
<b>Read</b>	- <i>Elders &amp; Leaders</i> , an excerpt by Gene Getz - <i>A Display of God's Glory</i> , a paper by Mark Dever
<b>Assignment</b>	- Write (one page) <u>or</u> discuss your reflections, personal insights, and thoughts on the importance of the office of deacon

<b>Gospel Service   The Practice of Deacons</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To understand the role of elders and deacons together</li> <li>- To understand the role of deacons within the local church at large</li> </ul>
<b>Read</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>What is the Role of Deacons?</i> and <i>What is the Relationship of Elders and Deacons?</i>, excerpts by Benjamin Merkle</li> <li>- <i>Process Managing – Church Size</i>, a paper by Tim Keller</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Write (one page) <u>or</u> discuss a “dream” ministry job description</li> </ul>

<b>Gospel Ministry   The Work of Deacons</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To understand the prospective deacon’s gifts, skills, and desires</li> <li>- To assess the prospective deacon’s theological competency</li> <li>- To understand ministry contextualization</li> </ul>
<b>Complete</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading and/or discussion of specific ministry contextualization</li> <li>- Leadership Assessment</li> <li>- Theological Questionnaire</li> </ul>

<b>Final Assessment</b>	
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To lovingly come alongside a prospective deacon and assess their readiness for gospel ministry expressed through the role of a deacon</li> <li>- To assess the character of a prospective deacon</li> </ul>
<b>Interview(s)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Conducted with ministry leader and two (2) deacons</li> </ul>
<b>Installation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Upon successful completion, a prospective deacon will be brought before the church for installation</li> </ul>

## **Examining Questions for Deacon Candidates**

### **Questions for Men and Women:**

After prayerful reflection of the Scriptures (Acts 6:1-7, 1 Timothy 3:8-13), prayer and self-examination, and discussion with your spouse (if applicable), please answer the following questions:

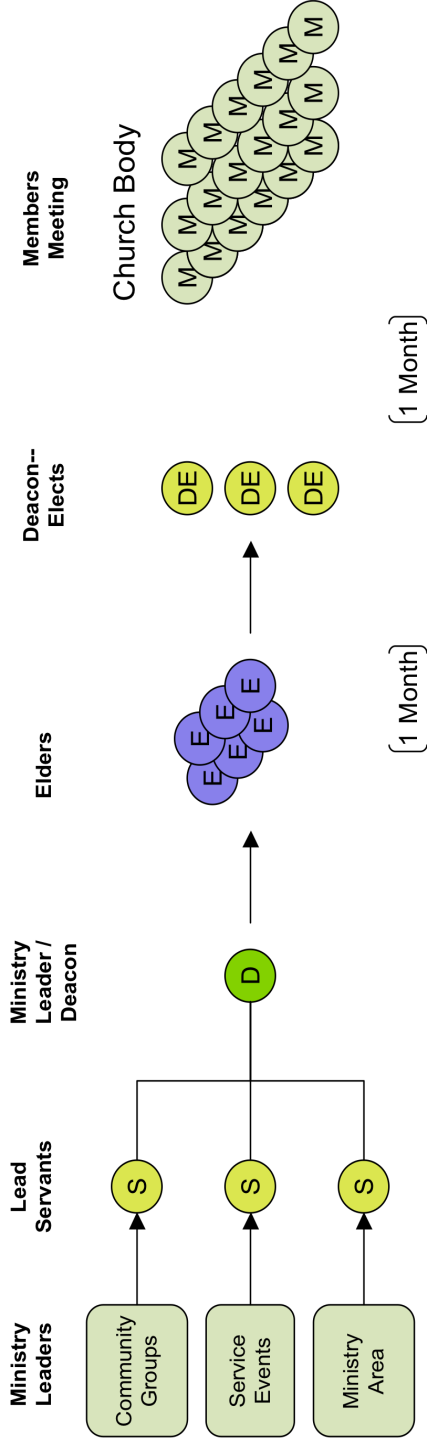
1. How long have you been a member?
2. What Scripture addresses deacons/what are the evidences of the work of servant/deacons in Scripture and what did they do?
3. After reflecting on the biblical qualifications of deacons found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, assess how your heart and life compare to these qualifications.
4. Are there any sinful struggles overwhelming you right now in your individual life and / or with others that would keep you from serving as a deacon at this time and bring dishonor to the office of deacon, and more importantly, bring dishonor to the gospel?
5. Are you dealing with sexual sin? Lust/Internet problems? Is this systemic/habitual or is it occasional? If married, have you confessed this struggle with your spouse?
6. How are your finances? Are you in debt? How much? How many credit cards? Is it student debt or lifestyle choices-debt?
7. How long do you plan to live here in Louisville at Sojourn? (this is important for seminary people)

### **Questions for a Married Men and Women Considering the Office of Deacon**

After prayerful reflection of the Scriptures (Acts 6:1-7, 1 Timothy 3:8-13) discussion with your husband (if applicable), prayer and self-examination, please answer the following questions:

1. How is your marriage
2. How have you grown as a result of being a husband/wife?
3. What does your husband/wife think about the decision to serve as a deacon at this time?
4. How might this decision to serve as a deacon impact your responsibilities as a husband/wife?

# Sojourn Deacon Development Process



## 1. Identify

- Ministry leader identifies a person who is a pace-setting servant & exhibits qualities in 1 Tim. 3:8-12.
- Ministry servant is given increased responsibilities in respective area.

## 2. Train

- Ministry Leader / Deacon trains lead servant(s) in the how & why of ministry
- Lead servant reads & studies recommended books for ministry area.
- Lead servant rises to the challenge of greater responsibilities to plan, manage, and lead ministry efforts.

## 3. Review

- Ministry Leaders submit names of lead servants to become deacons.
- Elders review list of lead servants & inform church ⇒ deacon-elects
- Church members have opportunity to raise questions or concerns about deacon-elects with elders.

## 4. Approve & Recognize

- Elders approve deacons
- At Member Meeting, the church recognizes and gives thanks for new deacons & commissions them through prayer.