

THE REWARDS OF A DEACON (1 Timothy 3:13)

I. Incentives are often found in scripture,

- A. Matthew 19:27-30.
- B. 2 Timothy 4:6-8 - Paul thought it right to strive for the crown.
- C. Revelation 2:10.
- D. Matthew 25:31-46 - serving Jesus in this life brings reward.
- E. Jesus often used appealed to various areas of life to motivate one to serve:
 - 1. Self-respect;
 - 2. Fear;
 - 3. Love for God or fellow man;
 - 4. Our desire for true greatness;
- F. There is nothing wrong with a man desiring the office of a deacon in hopes of a reward.
 - 1. It must be remembered he is not to be greedy of filthy lucre.
 - 2. In other words, the reward he desires is not to be earthly gain.
 - 3. The reward he is seeking is one that is spiritual and not physical.

II. Some things the reward is not.

- A. Some say that the office of a deacon is a step into the office of an elder.
 - 1. No doubt that a deacon who serves well and meets the qualifications for an elder should be selected by the congregation to be an elder some time in the future.
 - 2. The elders would know his work ethic as would the congregation.
 - 3. For this reason, if they grow into men who are qualified to be elders they should be selected.
 - 4. However, there are reasons why Paul is not saying the office of a deacon is an automatic stepping stone into the eldership:
 - a. What Paul is stating is simply the reward of a deacon for serving well in that office.
 - b. Nowhere in scripture is there the inference that if you do well in one role you will automatically be given another role.
 - c. A deacon may never become qualified to be an elder and yet still serve well as a deacon.
- B. Some teach that Paul is saying you get increased influence as a deacon who ministers well.
 - 1. It is true that through excellent service in any area we may increase the scope of our influence.
 - 2. But nowhere does Paul say you gain more influence by serving well.
 - 3. It is possible, but is not a definite by-product.
- C. Some teach that deacons will receive greater rewards in heaven.
 - 1. Service rendered on earth is definitely rewarded in heaven as Matthew 25 teaches.
 - 2. However, Paul mentions nothing about heaven in this text.

3. Everything that is mentioned as a reward is to be gained here on earth.

III. The rewards of a deacon.

- A. The first reward is that they “purchase to themselves a good degree.”
 1. The word “purchase” literally means, “to bring around oneself, to acquire for oneself.”
 2. The word “degree” means “step” or “grade of dignity.”
 3. Vines says it has to do with a stage in a career or a standing.
 4. The deacon that serves well gains a good standing among the congregation.
 5. He is well thought of by the members and eldership.
 6. By doing his job well, he may be able to rise to greater service in the church.
 7. At the least, he will be well respected by the congregation for fulfilling his role well.
- B. The second reward is he will have “great boldness in the faith.”
 1. “Boldness” means “frankness in speech, confidence.”
 2. Listen to this sentence about the word: “The word particularly denotes the unwavering, fearless, and unhesitating confidence of faith in communion with God...it removes the fear and anxiety which characterize man’s relation to God. It comes as a result of the ground of guilt being set aside and manifests itself in undoubting confidence in prayer.”
 - a. The deacon who serves well will grow spiritually every day.
 - b. By that growth he will have confidence in his relationship with God.
 3. Paul says the boldness is “in the faith.”
 - a. The gospel is the meaning of this phrase.
 - b. The carrying out of his duties well will bring about an increase in his faith in the gospel message.
 - c. He will know what he is doing is right and good before God and have confidence that such is the case.
 4. Thus, the reward is greater confidence in the truthfulness of the gospel gained through carrying out the duties of a deacon.
- C. Therefore the reward is twofold in this life - respect from the congregation and greater confidence in the gospel message.

Much of this material was taken from James D. Bales book “The Deacon And His Work.”