

widows in Jerusalem

2. Philip is recognised as a preacher of the word who did miraculous signs so that people paid attention to his preaching

3. How would you encourage Deacons to aim for Philips calling? Is this what all Deacons should do?

*“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

*John 13:35*

1. Christians are primarily to care for each other. Non-Christians are meant to see this and so choose to become Christians

2. Seeing the emphasis Christians should place on service how could we serve other people?

3. Given that there is an organised group of people to serve in the church how could they best serve?

4. Do you think this is a task that could be seen as an outreach task?

5. How could deacons be used to reach out to people who don't know God?

# DISCOVERING THE BIBLE

LESSON 42

WHAT DO DEACONS DO?

*“...just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”*

*Matthew 20:28*

1. Jesus's attitude in life was to serve. The word to serve in Greek is diakoneo

2. In what way has Jesus served you?

*“Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.”*

*1 John 2:6*

1. If Christians are authentic they will live the same kind of life Jesus did

2. We ought to serve as Jesus did

*“ After this, Jesus traveled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; Joanna the wife of Cuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means.”*

*Luke 8:1-3*

1. Jesus and the disciples were working to proclaim God's word

2. Along with the disciples were women who had been cured of

illnesses

3. These were all supported by a further group of women
4. The word for support in Greek is diakoneo
5. Christians in general serve and support each other
6. How could we support other Christians? How could we support non-Christians?

*“In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”*

*Acts 6:1-4*

1. The Twelve used to wait on tables to serve the needy. As a result they found they were neglecting the ministry of the word of God. This new arrangement allowed the Twelve to minister as God had originally called them. The word we use for ‘ministry’ is derived from the word diakoneo. A minister is designed to be a servant.
2. The task of serving at tables was delegated to a team of Spirit-filled men who were wise.

3. The church was growing at this time
4. Christians in general are not absolved from service because a specific function was given to a certain group
5. The focus here is on caring for people
6. How could we express such care in Great Britain?

*“Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.”*

*1 Timothy 3:8-12*

1. Deacons are not primarily selected for their practical skills
2. Why is their spirituality such an issue? Why should our Deacons be spiritual as well as capable?

*“Those who had been scattered preached the word wherever they went. Philip went down to a city in Samaria and proclaimed the Christ there. When the crowds heard Philip and saw the miraculous signs he did, they all paid close attention to what he said.”*

*Acts 8:4-6*

1. Philip was one of the seven original deacons. Here he has been separated from those who were caring for the