

1 Timothy 3:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Analysis

For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree (οἱ γὰρ καλῶς διακονήσαντες βαθμὸν ἔκυρτοῖς καλὸν περιποιοῦνται, hoi gar kalōs diakonēsantes bathmon heautois kalon peripoiountai)—'those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing.' Diakoneō means to serve, minister. Bathmos means step, standing, rank—good reputation or position. Peripoieō means to gain, acquire, obtain for oneself.

And great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus (καὶ πολλὴν παρρησίαν ἐν πίστει τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, kai pollēn parrēsian en pistei tē en Christō Iēsou)—'and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.' Parrēsia means boldness, confidence, freedom of speech—especially before God and others. Faithful service produces spiritual confidence.

Those who serve faithfully as deacons gain two rewards:

1. good standing/reputation in the church,
2. increased spiritual confidence in their faith.

Humble, faithful service over time builds both credibility with people and boldness with God. This isn't worldly ambition but spiritual maturity—proven character produces assured faith.

Historical Context

In the Greco-Roman world, advancement came through wealth, patronage, or political maneuvering. The church operates differently—advancement comes through faithful service. The deacon who serves humbly gains something better than worldly status: spiritual confidence and church-wide respect. This encourages faithful servants—your labor isn't in vain but produces genuine spiritual rewards.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. What 'good standing' do faithful deacons gain—how is this different from worldly status?
2. How does faithful service produce 'boldness in the faith'—what's the connection?
3. What encouragement does this verse offer to those serving in practical, unglamorous roles?

Interlinear Text

τῇ	γὰρ	καλῶς	διακονήσαντες	βαθμὸν
which	For	well	they that have used the office of a deacon	degree
G3588	G1063	G2573	G1247	G898
ἐαυτοῖς	καλὸν	περιποιοῦνται	καὶ	πολλὴν
to themselves	a good	purchase	and	great
G1438	G2570	G4046	G2532	G4183
παρόργησίαν				boldness
				G3954
ἐν	πίστει	τῇ	ἐν	Χριστῷ
in	the faith	which	in	Christ
G1722	G4102	G3588	G1722	G5547
				Jesus
				G2424

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 25:21 (Faith): His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

Hebrews 6:10 (Parallel theme): For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister.

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