

# 1 Timothy 3:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

## Analysis

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**Likewise must the deacons be grave** (Διακόνους ὡσαύτως σεμνούς, Diakonous hōsautōs semnous)—deacons likewise must be 'dignified, serious, worthy of respect.' Diakonos means servant/minister; these are church officers who serve alongside elders, handling practical ministry (Acts 6:1-6).

**Not doubletongued** (μὴ διλόγους, mē dilogous)—literally 'not two-worded,' not saying one thing to some people and another to others. Deacons must be trustworthy and consistent in speech. **Not given to much wine** (mē oinō pollō prosechontas)—not devoted to excessive drinking. **Not greedy of filthy lucre** (mē aischrokerdeis)—not pursuing dishonest gain.

Since deacons often handled church finances (distributing to widows, managing benevolence), financial integrity and truthfulness were essential. The qualities parallel elder requirements but emphasize practical trustworthiness over teaching ability.

## Historical Context

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The diaconate emerged in Acts 6 when Hellenistic widows were neglected in daily food distribution. Seven men 'of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom' were appointed to serve tables, freeing apostles for prayer and teaching. By Paul's time, deacons were established church officers. In Ephesus, they likely managed relief funds, hospitality, and practical care—roles requiring impeccable honesty.

## Related Passages

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**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

## Study Questions

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1. How does 'double-tongued' (saying different things to different people) undermine church unity?
2. Why do practical service roles require the same character qualifications as teaching roles?
3. In what ways might deacons be tempted toward financial impropriety in handling church resources?

## Interlinear Text

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Διακόνους	ὡσαύτως	σεμνούς	μὴ	διλόγους	μὴ	οἶνω
must the deacons	Likewise	be grave	not	doubletongued	not	wine
G1249	G5615	G4586	G3361	G1351	G3361	G3631
πολλῷ	προσέχοντας	μὴ	αἰσχροκερδεῖς			
to much	given	not	greedy of filthy lucre			
G4183	G4337	G3361	G146			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Philippians 1:1** (Parallel theme): Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

**1 Timothy 3:3** (Parallel theme): Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

**Titus 2:3** (Parallel theme): The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

**1 Timothy 5:23** (Parallel theme): Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities.

**Leviticus 10:9** (Parallel theme): Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations:

**Psalms 52:2** (Parallel theme): Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully.

**Psalms 5:9** (Parallel theme): For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is very wickedness; their throat is an open sepulchre; they flatter with their tongue.

**Psalms 12:2** (Parallel theme): They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak.

**1 Timothy 3:12** (Parallel theme): Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

**James 3:10** (Parallel theme): Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.