Intro:
- as Dennis already announced, beginning the process of selecting deacons

- Jerry and Dennis planning to do their annual address to the congregation next Sunday morning, asked me to speak on deacons today

- this lesson: Selection and Qualifications of Deacons
  - note: photo by Rick Baughn

Deacons are an important part of the congregation
- deacons are a distinct group of men in the congregation
  - Phil. 1:1 elders, deacons, members

- deacons serve the congregation, under the oversight of the elders
  - 1 Tim. 3:8, 12 Greek word diakonos, (noun) translated “deacon” means servant
    - note: diakonos (servant) used of Christ, and all Christians

Acts 6:1-6 Work of deacons, and an example of selection
- story: selection of servants, distribute food to widows

- Acts 6:2 “serve” translated from diakoneo, verb for of diakonos
  - this is a good example of appoint men to the office of servant

- Acts 6:3 congregation selected men who met qualifications from among themselves, apostles appointed
  - our elders will give details on the exact expedient method we’ll use

- Acts 6:3 deacons put in charge
  - deacons are men the elders put in charge of prescribed duties
  - deacons function under the oversight of elders, as do all members

- Acts 6:6 example of ordination

- possible work of our deacons: treasury, yard & building, organization of Bible classes and material, organization of evangelistic efforts, teaching classes in and outside of the church, caring for needs of members, list is almost endless

Man must be tested before ordained a deacon
- 1 Tim. 3:10a tested (proved, KJV)

- qualifications are those the standard by which we test a man, before selecting and ordaining as a deacon
  - next, qualifications, broken down into major categories
Qualifications: moral and spiritual integrity – qualifications every Christian should meet

- 1 Tim. 3:8-10

- vs. 8 men of dignity (reverent, grave)
  - behave in a dignified and reverent way; therefore they are grave
    - everyone likes to have fun, but these men are serious about serious matters
  - these men are respected by others
    - therefore, they are trusted by others (e.g., $)
    - therefore, they are respected by others when they are in leadership roles to accomplish a work
  - note: a man's wife must also be dignified (reverent) for him to qualify as a deacon (1 Tim. 3:11)

- vs. 8 not double-tongued
  - don’t say one thing one to one person, and something different to another person
  - consistent and truthful
    - interaction with elders – even when make mistakes
    - interaction with members – get a straight story every time
  - sin for anyone to be double-tonged
    - would cause strife, contentions, and division
  - note: a man’s wife must also be dignified (reverent) for him to qualify as a deacon (1 Tim. 3:11)

- vs. 8 not addicted to much wine (not given to much wine)
  - lit. “not holding the mind” therefore he is not holding his mind to much wine
  - not one who doesn’t even has his mind on partaking of much wine, which results in drunkenness and impaired judgment
  - 1 Cor. 6:12 Christians shouldn’t be addicted to anything
    - illus.: not obsessed with worldly things – video games

- vs. 8 not fond of sordid gain (not greedy for money, not greed of filthy lucre)
  - one who doesn’t try to make money illegally or in ways that hurt others (making money in mean ways)
  - one who is not disposed to using his position to make money (likewise elders; Tit. 1:17)
  - one who has not discredited himself with bad behaviors in attempting to make a profit

- vs. 9 holding the mystery of faith with a clear conscience
  - faithful to the gospel of Christ, and possessing a clear conscience
  - true to the gospel, and true to his conscience
  - Ja. 4:17 Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

- vs. 10 beyond reproach (blameless)
  - a sustainable charge of sin can’t be brought against him
  - has a good track record of faithfulness, correcting mistakes when they are made - no one is perfect
Qualification: Lawfully married to a faithful wife – qualifications all Christian women should meet
- 1 Tim. 3:11-12 husband of one wife

- some translations “wives” and some “women”
  - Greek denotes a woman of any age, whether married or not
  - context used to determine whether woman married or not
  - 1 Tim. 3:11-12 context here necessitates “wives” here, since a woman could not be qualified, deacon must be husband of one wife

- Why might it be important to have a wife? — same as elders
  - not tempted when working with others, widows and other women
  - have a wife that can help when working with other women
  - have a confidant and sounding board
  - note: those who do not have these experiences are not any less a Christian, just not experienced or have the necessary station in life – illus.: elder and wife dies, not less of a person but station in life changed

Qualifications: Deacon’s wife
- vs. 11 dignified (reverent)
  - behave in a dignified and reverent way; therefore they are grave
  - like their husbands (vs. 8)

- vs. 11 not malicious gossips (not slanderous)
  - lit. “she-devils” the devil is the chief slanderer, therefore a woman who slanders is a she-devil
  - gossip: habitually reveals personal or sensational facts to hurt others; rumor or report of an intimate nature
    - rumor spreader
    - someone often talking about others
  - slander: utter false charges or misrepresentations to hurt others, to defame and malign
  - a wife who is engaged in slander and gossip is not only in sin, but also committing strife and division
    - she will destroy her husband’s work
    - she will bring the whole church down if she’s not stopped

- vs. 11 temperate (sober)
  - one who is sober and moderate, in full control of herself
  - as with elders (vs. 2)

- vs. 11 faithful in all things
  - mature Christian, faithful in all she does
  - she is capable of supporting and helping her husband, not a hindrance to him
Qualifications: Deacon’s management of his home – all Christians should be good managers of their homes
- one of most significant differences between elder and deacon is family – elder “must” have children who are Christians (Tit. 1:6)

- vs. 12 husband of one wife
  - must be lawfully married – qualifications for wife in vs. 11

- vs. 12 must have children
  - use of the plural “deacons” with “children” and “households” indicates that a deacon is qualified with any number of children – one or more
    - note context: similar to “managers” and “households” – one deacon, one household
  - note qualification of elders: an elder (singular) must have believing children (plural)

- vs. 12 good manager of children and household
  - reveals the man’s track record as a manager
    - that he has the skills to be a good manager in the congregation
  - illus.: Acts 6:1-6 the deacons who managed the food for widows
  - note: those who do not have these experiences are not any less a Christian, just not experienced for this task - experienced for other tasks in the church - e.g., Paul, John Mark, Timothy, Titus, others

A deacon’s reward
- 1 Tim. 3:13
  - high standing and great confidence in the faith – similar to elders
  - their work is not without reward, and they could be confident in that reward

- Matt. 23:11-12 (Jesus) ”But the greatest among you shall be your servant. Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.
  - a person may not meet a particular qualification, perhaps because not had those experiences in life, but we can all serve God to the best of our ability (illus.: Paul)

Summary / Inv.
- prayer
  - inv.: qualities we all strive for