

Study Guide to Alexander Strauch's
Paul's Vision for the Deacons
Chapters 3-4

Read Chapter 3: Deacons, Assistants to the Elders

Q: In Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3:1-13 Paul closely associates the overseers and deacons. What, according to Strauch, are some of the implications of this close association?

A: _____

Q: Study the word “deacon.” What are some of the meanings of this particular word?

A: _____

Q: How did this chapter impact your overall understanding of the office of deacon?

A: _____

Read Chapter 4: Assisting the Elders with the Care of God's Church

NOTE: I am convinced that there is a connection between the events of Acts 6:1-7 and the later formation of the office of deacon. Here's why:

1. The verb *diakoneo* is found in verse 2.
2. The congregation was involved in the choosing of these men.
3. These men had to meet certain requirements.
4. The apostles laid their hands on them in some kind of commissioning ceremony.

I agree with Strauch's earlier position in his book *Biblical Eldership*,

Even though the seven are never called deacons, Luke's account of their appointment is indispensable to the study of deacons. When Luke later refers to Philip in Acts 21:8, he calls him "one of the seven", not one of the deacons. As always Luke is accurate in his use of terminology. The seven were not called deacons. That does not mean, however, that there is no connection between the Acts 6 account and the later development of the deaconship. Although there is not an exact correlation, there is a connection; Acts 6 provides a dynamic, apostolic example that later leaders could follow and adapt to their own situations. So Luke does not refer to the seven as deacons because they were not called deacons in the sense of the later, specialized meaning of the word. *The seven were a prototype of the later deaconship*" (pg. 278).

Q: What are some of the differences between Acts 6:1-7 and the later passages that deal directly with the office of deacon?

A: _____

Q: When deacons assist the elders, what are they allowing the elders to focus on? How might this work out in real life?

A: _____

Q: At the end of this chapter, Strauch wrote that elders and deacons can experience conflict. What can be done to reduce this? How can these offices experience unity?

A: _____
