

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AN EFFECTIVE DEACONATE MINISTRY IN A  
LOCAL BAPTIST CHURCH

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## ABSTRACT

This research work assessed the significance of an effective deaconate ministry in a local Baptist church in the contemporary time. It looked into the relevance, importance and roles of the ministry of deacons in a local church, especially in the Baptist denomination. The biblical bases for the office of deacons in a church, historical developments and functions of deaconate ministry in the church at large, qualifications for effective deaconship, relevant factors that hinder and promote an effective deaconate ministry, types of deacons are areas of focus for this research work. One hundred respondents were sampled for the study. Simple random sampling technique was used to give equal opportunities of representation in the survey. The data was collected through questionnaire and personal interviews and were analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentage distribution. It was discovered that a number of churches do not have deacons, that churches do not have enough deacons compared to their population. Also, adequate training, job description and sound pastoral leadership is needed to enhance deaconate ministry. Among many other things recommended by the researcher is that deaconate ministry is needed in the church as the pastor(s) cannot adequately carry out all ministerial duties in a church. But that adequate training and orientation be given to those who will be deacons both before and after their ordination to afford them the requisite knowledge for the success of their assignment. Besides, to enhance effective deaconate ministry in churches, people should be appointed and assigned responsibility according to their giftedness and potentials. An effective deaconate ministry of a local church will of no doubt bring about the growth of a church and God's kingdom at large.

## 5.2 Conclusion

The position of a deacon is such that requires living a life of standard that is worthy of emulation. There are required standards for the office of a deacon that qualifies one for the office and characterizes the life of the one that holds such position. The position of a deacon on its own is a role model for office holders and as such it is expected that the one who is a deacon must be a role model to members of the church and the community where he/she finds him/herself. The deacon carries out his service unto the Lord and the people he has been chosen to lead by the kind of life he lives. The people expect the deacon as a helper of the ministry of the pastor in a church to be near-flawless.

With this general acceptable biblical standard for effective deaconate ministry in any church, especially in a Baptist congregation any form of deviation from this ground will not produce desirable fruit or outcome. This research is an attempt to consider the role that all the stakeholders have to play to make deaconate ministry of a

local Baptist church effective. It means that the effectiveness of deaconate ministry is not only the responsibility of deacons as the case may be. But that of church family as whole, starting from church members who must be armed with correct understanding of what this ministry is all about and who can be nominated for sensitive church responsibility. And also the church pastor who must lead the way in providing appropriate leadership for deacons to follow, coupled with provision of necessary leadership trainings both before and after ordination of deacons for effective performance.

### 5.3 Recommendations

In order to make use of findings and maximize the information obtained through this research work, the researcher hereby makes the following suggestions and recommendations. Churches:

1. Should endeavor to have or maintain a commensurate number of serving deacons with church population for ministry effectiveness.
2. Churches must not compromise biblical and acceptable standards for effective deaconate ministry in the contemporary time.
3. Churches should have clear cut job descriptions and responsibilities for their deacons, drawn according to their areas of giftedness and potentials.
4. Church members should be properly educated about their responsibilities and those of the deacons when deacons are to be appointed.
5. Church pastors and deacons as the only two offices recognized by Baptists in line with New Testament teaching should see and treat each other as partners in ministry.