



DAVID D. IRELAND
PASTOR • AUTHOR • CONSULTANT

THE CHURCH LIFE SERIES

THE MINISTRY OF THE DEACON

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE DEACONS TO SERVE THE LOCAL CHURCH

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Published by IMPACT Publishing House
Montclair, New Jersey, U.S.A. 07042
DavidIreland.org
1.800.850.6522

Printed in the United States of America

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Ireland, David D., 1961 —

The Ministry of the Deacon / David D. Ireland.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-9627907-4-5

1. The Ministry of the Deacon — United States.

I. Title.

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Scripture marked KJV is taken from the King James Version of the Bible.



Dear Friend:

Congratulations! You have been invited to become a candidate for formal preparation for the ministry of a deacon. Both the invitation and the occasion to go through this specialized training course are privileged opportunities.

The invitation comes as a result of your Presbytery—the body of elders at your church—selecting you based on your past and present ministry to the congregation. The acceptance of the invitation formalizes your candidacy to the position of a deacon. Accepting the invitation to participate in this class does not automatically mean that you will be ordained. It simply means that we hope to assist you in qualifying for the esteemed and humble position. However, your character, family life, ministry, and quality of relationship with Christ must undergo full scrutiny according to the scriptural requirements, so that no reproach is brought to your family, church, or the gospel.

This 10-week course is aimed at guiding you through an intentional training process which will culminate in a clear decision toward your candidacy as a deacon. The Church's love and commitment toward you is not dependent on you being ordained, but rather on our appreciation of God bringing you into our lives.

Enjoy the course! May you discover God's will regarding your involvement in this sacred office of service to the church. Now, the process to qualify for the ordained position of a deacon begins.

Our King Cometh!

Rev. David D. Ireland, Ph.D.
Christ Church
Lead Pastor

Acknowledgements

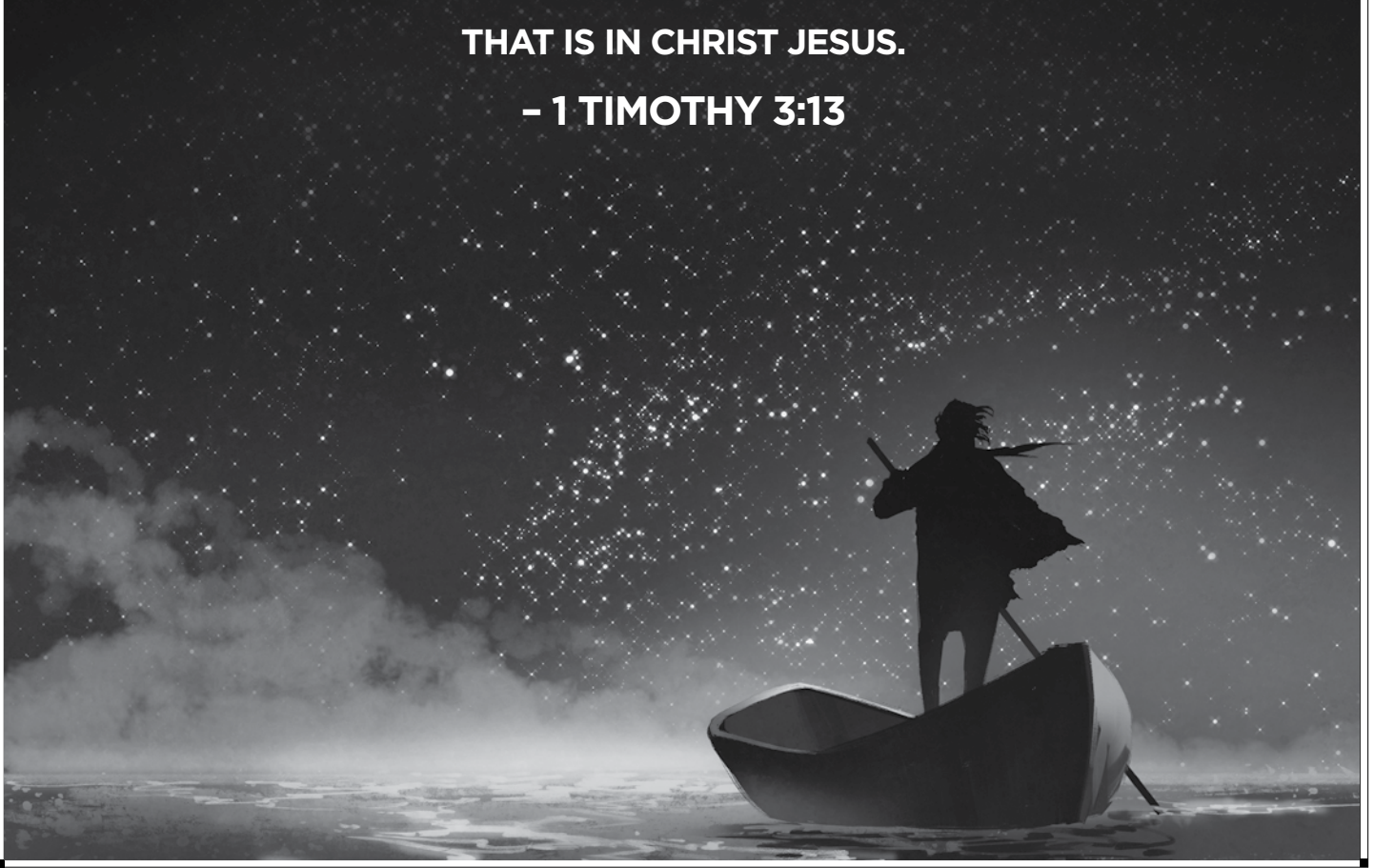
I am grateful to my congregation for allowing this deacon's training course to be used in improving the quality of ministry to the larger body of Christ.

My staff is also to be praised for their review and feedback of the manual.

SERVING AS A DEACON

FOR THOSE WHO SERVE WELL AS DEACONS
GAIN A GOOD STANDING FOR THEMSELVES
AND ALSO GREAT CONFIDENCE IN THE FAITH
THAT IS IN CHRIST JESUS.

- 1 TIMOTHY 3:13



COURSE OVERVIEW

One of the most valuable ministries in the local church is that of a deacon. To ready a person for ordination, this course outlines an intentional process that covers four critical areas in a candidate's spiritual life: **1)** Bible Knowledge; **2)** Local Church Commitment; **3)** Relational Connection; and **4)** Development as a Spiritual Leader. A description of the four phases is as follows.

Part 1: Bible Knowledge

The person who desires to be a deacon must know aspects of the Bible that are commensurate with an ordained position. A working knowledge of the qualifications of a deacon, understanding of church government, and even a familiarity with the doctrine of church discipline are all parts of this course.

Part 2: Local Church Commitment

In order to effectively serve a congregation, a deacon must be wholly committed to the church's vision, the congregation, the presbytery, and the lead pastor. This commitment goes beyond words or spontaneous emotional reactions. Time must be used as one of the barometers to test the sincerity of the candidate's love and dedication to the Lord's house and His people.

Part 3: Relational Connection

To be effective as a deacon, one has to be relationally connected to the local church, existing diaconate (body of deacons), presbytery, and staff personnel. Informal social times will be created to allow the pastor time to connect relationally with the candidates, and they in turn, with the critical leaders of the local church.

Part 4: Development as a Spiritual Leader

To serve the church, a deacon needs to have a strong life of prayer, sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, and the ability to discern the times and the seasons of the local ministry in which he or she is a member. This dimension of the training is aimed at sharpening the spiritual senses of the potential deacon so that he/she becomes an asset to the spiritual life of the local church.

COURSE CONTENT

In order to fully understand the course's intent, the below information clarifies the training expectation one ought to have as a candidate.

Prerequisites

Prior to the start of class, two things must occur for each candidate: **1)** an application must be completed and turned in to the teaching pastor assigned to the course; and **2)** a personal interview must occur with one of the associate pastors to ensure that you meet candidacy requirements. The interview is informal though it captures a formal sharing of the heart about your qualifications, character, and commitment to the possible ministry of a deacon.

Course Length

The course consists of ten (10) classes, each lasting for 60 minutes.

Course Reading

Strauch, A. (1992). *The New Testament Deacon*. Littleton, CO: Lewis & Roth Publishers. The entire book should be read by the end of the seventh week, which represents three weeks prior to the close of the course. If followed, the schedule below will guarantee the timely completion of the required reading.

Finish By Week 2	Pages 1-43
Finish By Week 3	Pages 44-79
Finish By Week 4	Pages 80-111
Finish By Week 5	Pages 112-131
Finish By Week 6	Pages 132-153
Finish By Week 7	Pages 154-159

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all ten (10) classes with a punctual arrival. If more than one class is missed, the student will not be able to continue the training course. Thereafter, the student will be considered as a future candidate for diaconate training the next time the course is offered. This expectation of attendance and punctuality is extended to the two informal times of fellowship which will be included in the overall course.

Fellowship Opportunities

In order to effectively serve the local church as a deacon, meaningful relationships should be sought and developed. There are two (2) fellowship (social) opportunities beyond those structured in the classroom dynamics. A calendar will be distributed outlining the schedule and the type of social venue selected to serve for building relationships.