

ALL SCRIPTURE [IS] GIVEN BY  
INSPIRATION OF GOD, AND [IS]  
PROFITABLE FOR DOCTRINE, FOR  
REPROOF, FOR CORRECTION, FOR  
INSTRUCTION IN RIGHTEOUSNESS:

2TIMOTHY 3:16


# THE OFFICE OF DEACON



DEACONS were ordained in the apostolic churches soon after the day of Pentecost.



We have the history in Acts 6:1–6 of the election and ordination of seven deacons in the church at Jerusalem.



When **the epistle to the Philippians** was written, there was a class of officers in the churches in Philippi, distinct from Bishops, and called *deacons*:

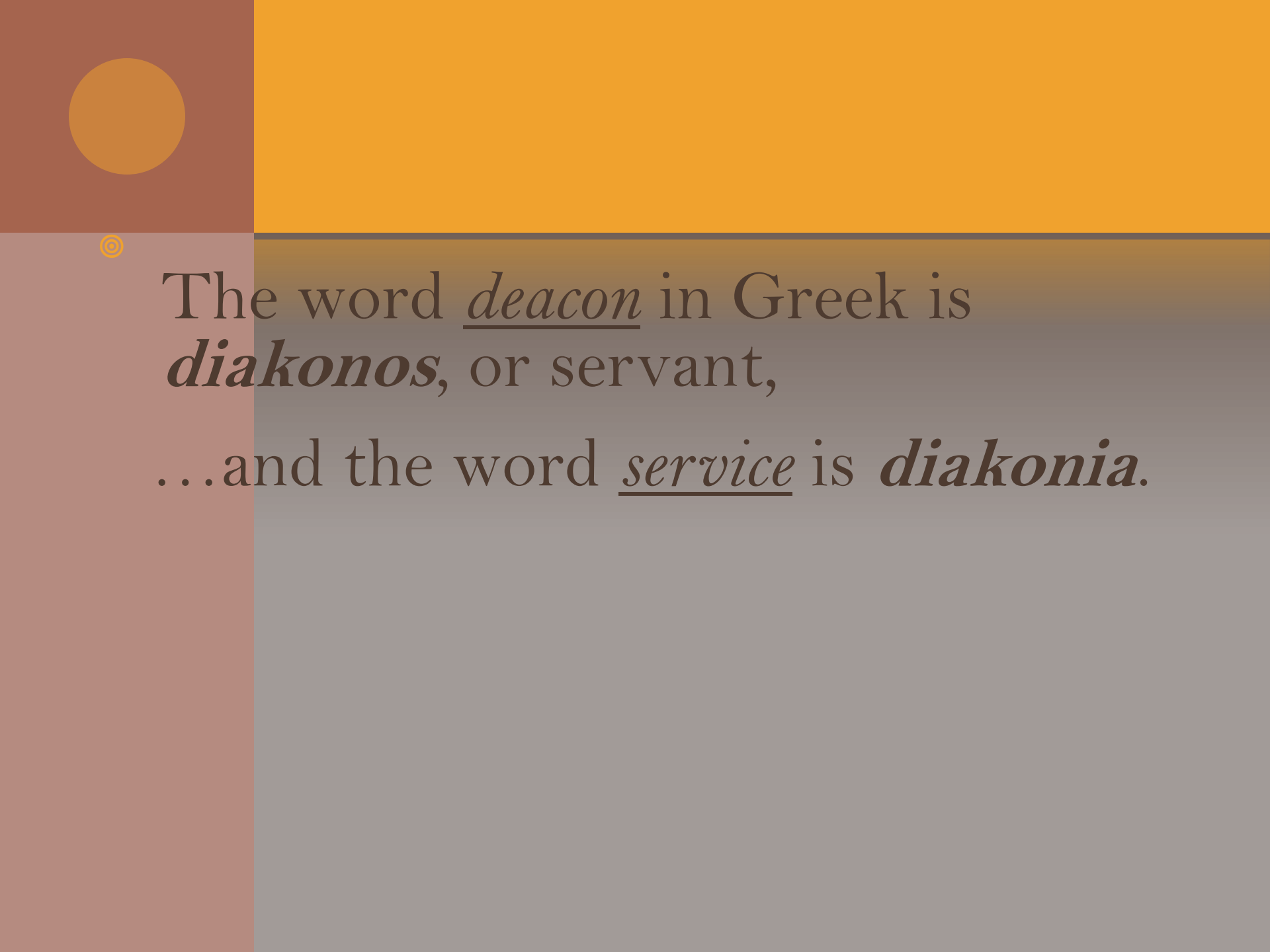
this epistle is addressed “to all the saints . . . with the bishops and *deacons*.”



They are mentioned in 1 Tim. 3: 8, 12,  
13, as standing officers of the Church.



Jesus is our Model “diakonos”



The word deacon in Greek is *diakonos*, or servant,  
...and the word service is *diakonia*.





In the New Testament, a *diakonos* was

- ☉ a person who was led and empowered by the Holy spirit
- ☉ to meet the needs of another person
- ☉ or group of persons in the body of Christ or in the local community.



Our Lord Jesus was declared by the Father to

become the suffering servant of Isaiah 40-42:

*“Behold My Servant [**diakonos**, in the  
Septuagint, which is the Hebrew Old  
Testament translated into Greek], whom I  
uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights...”  
(42:1).*

\* But Jesus called them [*the disciples*] [to him], and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: [*diakonos*]

And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

For even the Son of man came not to be ministered [*diakonia*] unto, but to minister [*diakonia*] and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:42-45)



- © All Christians are called upon to serve [*diakonia*] one another in love (Galatians 5:13).



Timothy and Titus was sent to  
different New Testament churches to  
set in order or reorganize the  
leadership and membership



Among the things to be set in order  
were the “bishops” (episkopos), and  
the “deacons” (*diakonos*):



[1 Tim. 3:8] *“Likewise must the deacons be grave.”*

- © The manner in which the deacons are referred to here, in a letter of instructions to Timothy, whose duty it was to set in order in the churches the things that were wanting, is almost, if not altogether, equivalent to a command to all congregations to choose them and have them ordained.



*Deacons* must have been a known and established class of ecclesiastical officers at that time as “bishops;” for they are mentioned exactly in the same way.



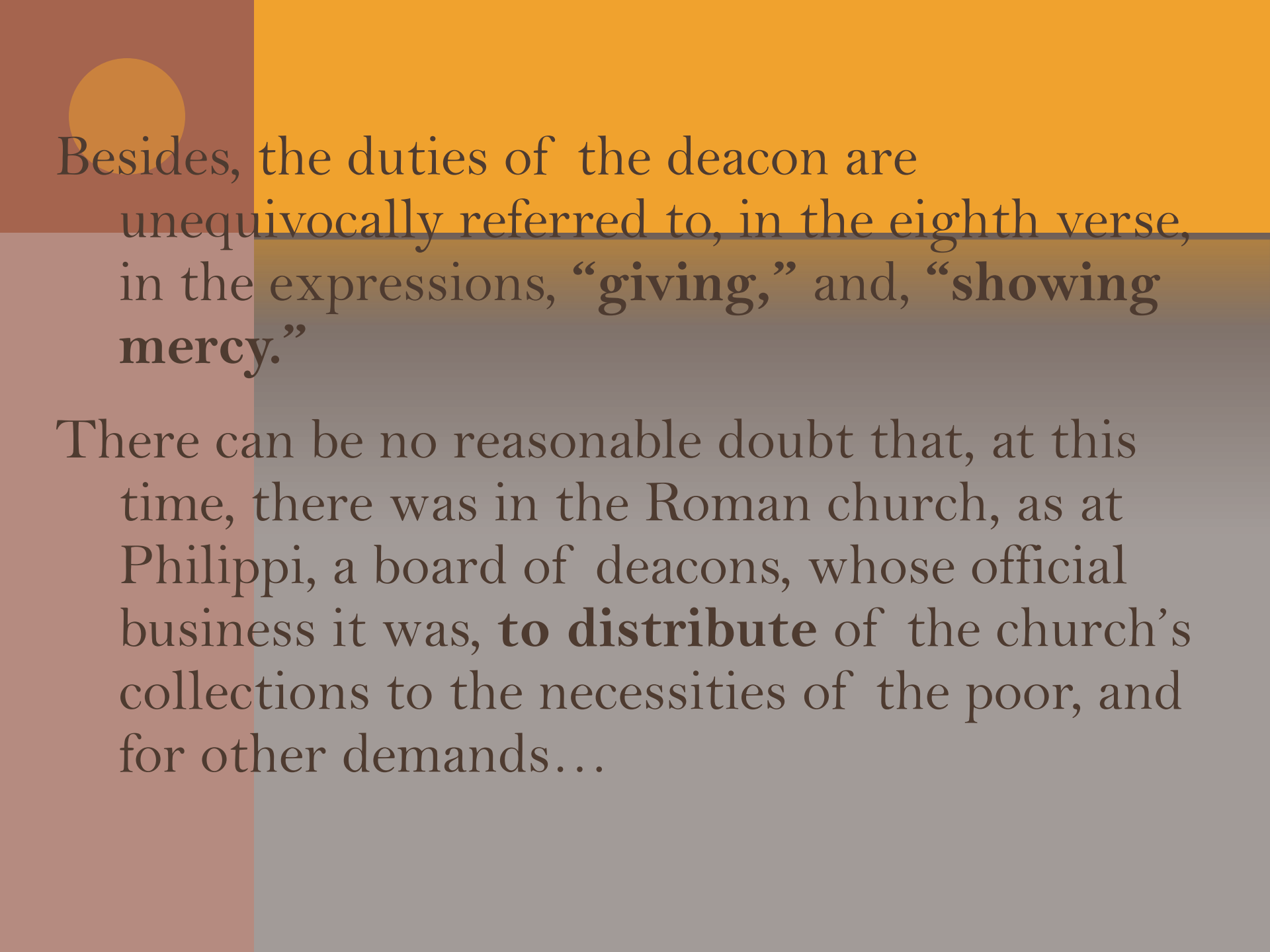


There are plain reference to this office of  
deacon, as an established function in the  
Church in other epistles.




In Rom. 12:6-7, Paul exhorts the deacon, with the other ecclesiastical officers:

“having, then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry (*diakonian, the deaconship*), let us wait on our ministering (*on the diakonia, on the deaconship*).

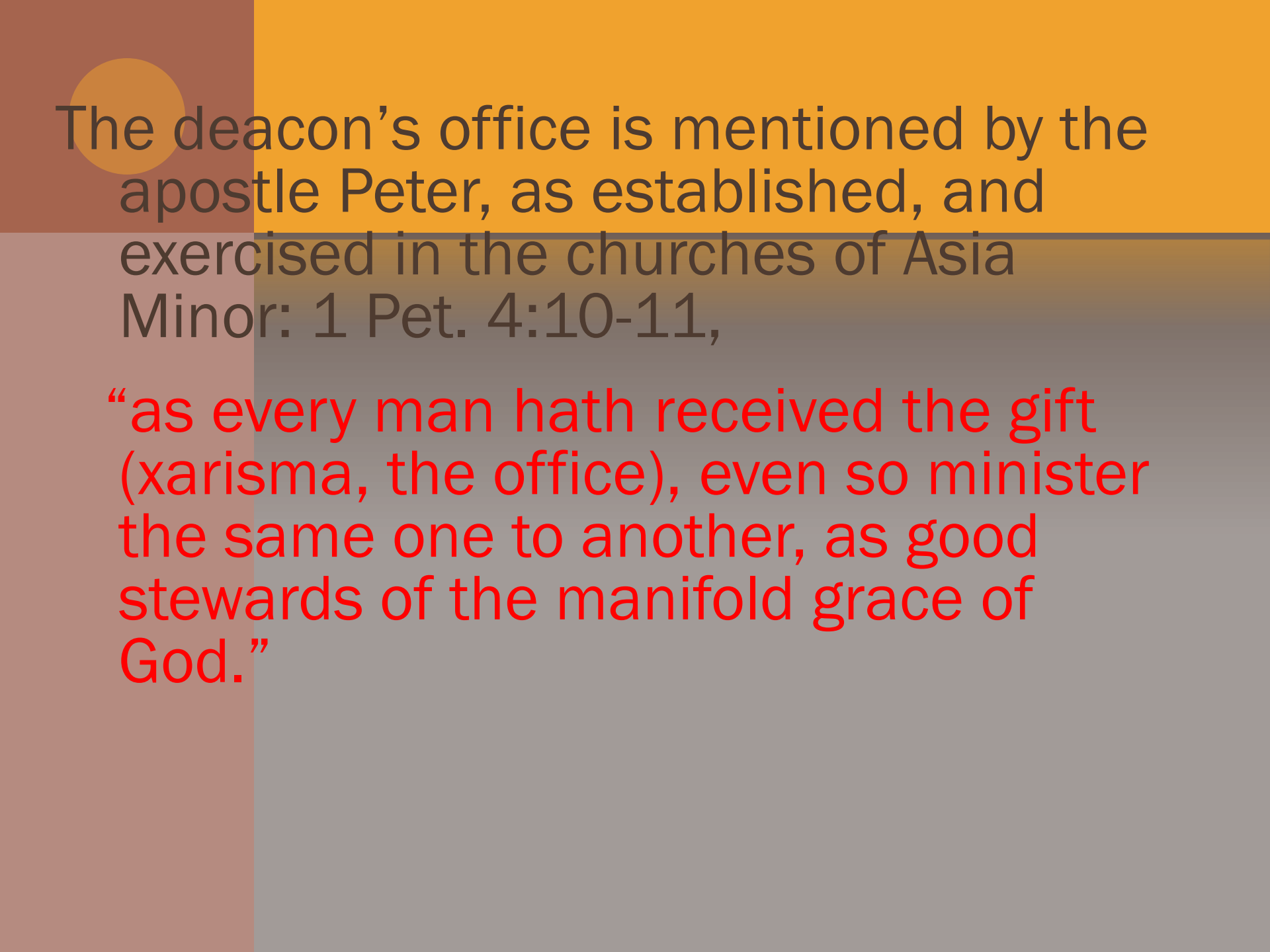


Besides, the duties of the deacon are unequivocally referred to, in the eighth verse, in the expressions, “**giving,**” and, “**showing mercy.**”

There can be no reasonable doubt that, at this time, there was in the Roman church, as at Philippi, a board of deacons, whose official business it was, **to distribute** of the church’s collections to the necessities of the poor, and for other demands...

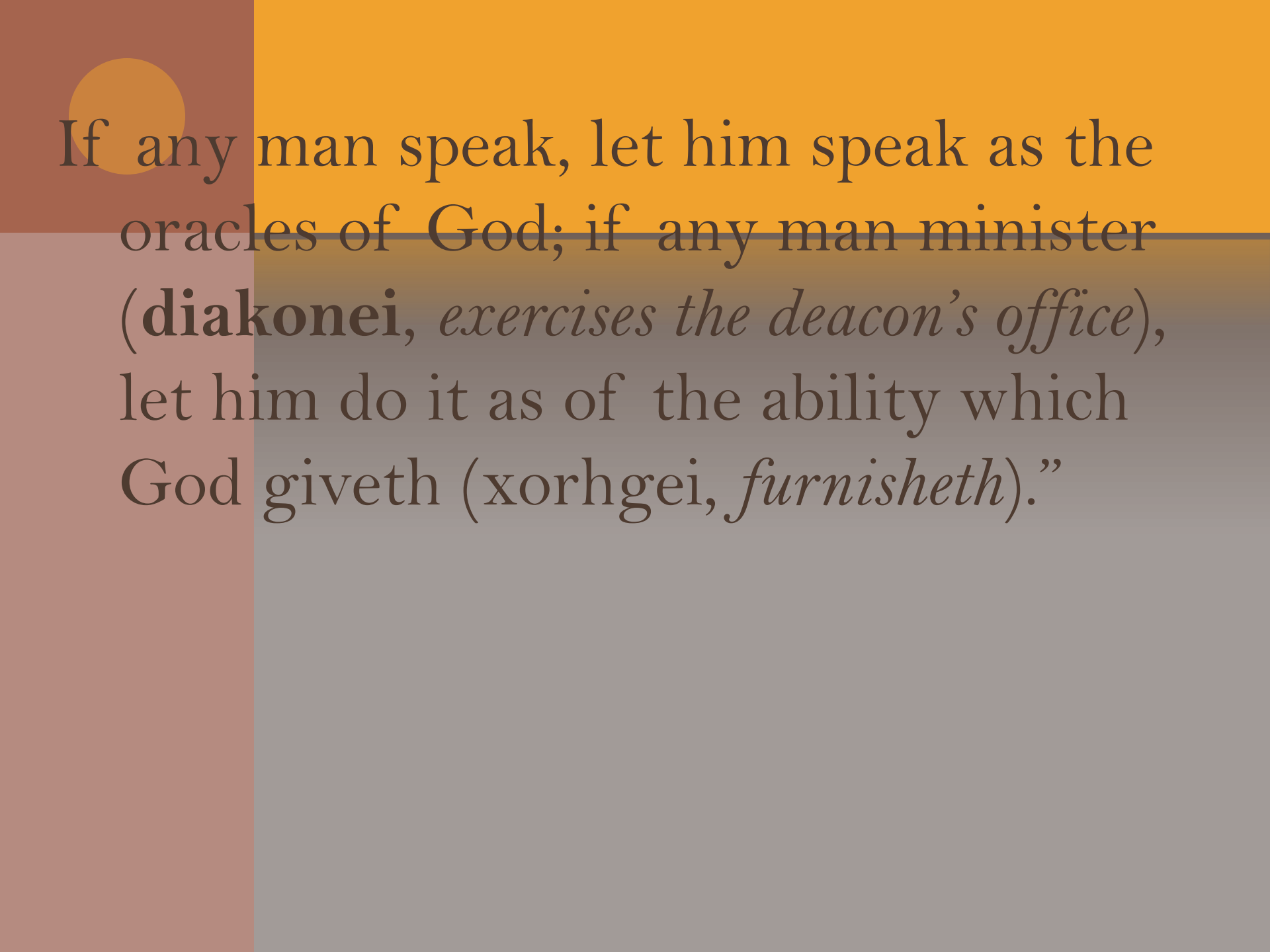


© The same apostle, in 1 Cor. 12:28, enumerates *deacons*, with the other officers “set in the Church,” under the denomination of “**helps**,” for they were originally instituted, as we learn from the account of the choice of the first deacons, in Acts 6, **to be *helps*, or *assistants*** to the apostles in the work of distributing the Church’s collections.

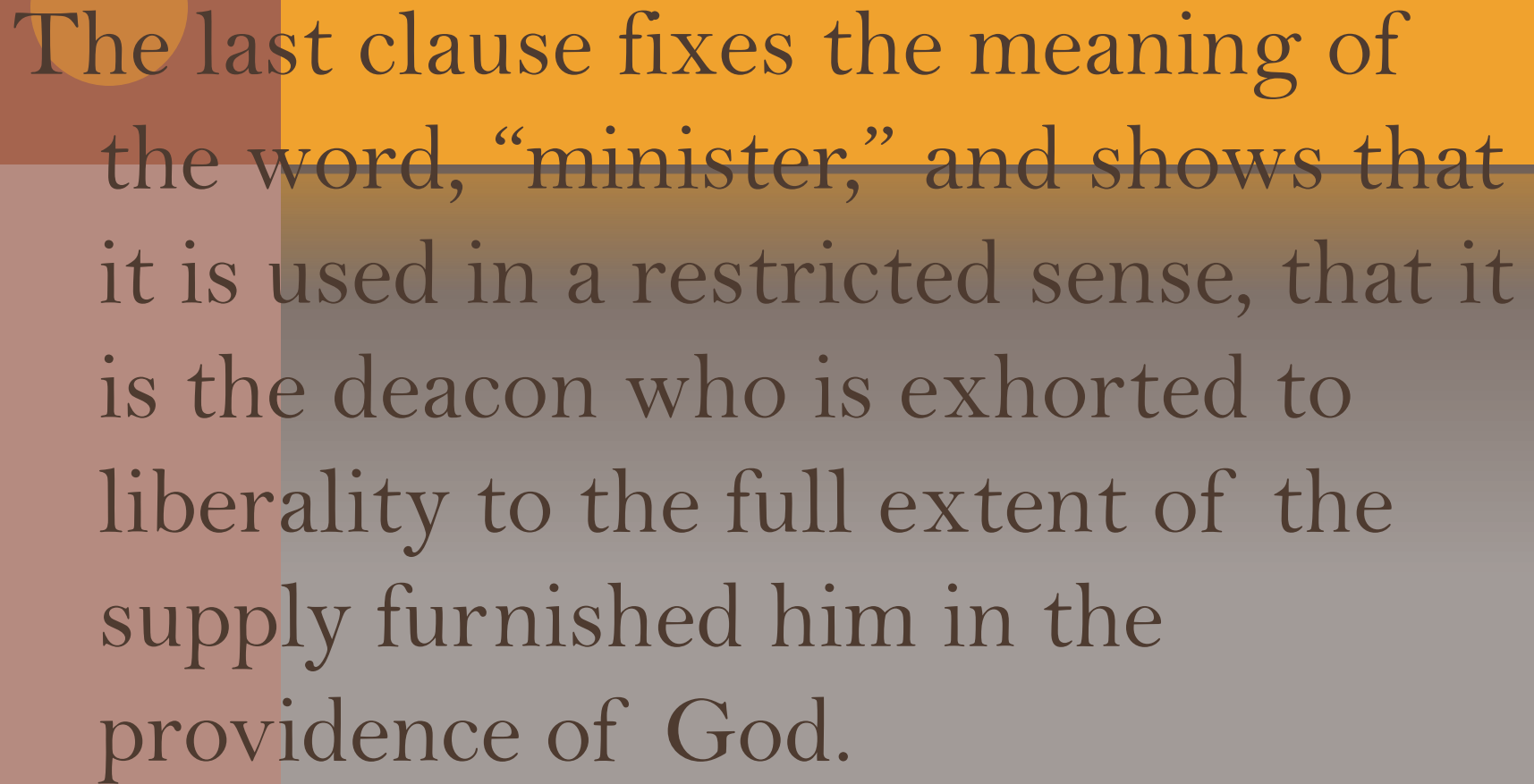


The deacon's office is mentioned by the apostle Peter, as established, and exercised in the churches of Asia Minor: 1 Pet. 4:10-11,


“as every man hath received the gift (xarisma, the office), even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”



If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister (**diakonei**, *exercises the deacon's office*), let him do it as of the ability which God giveth (**xorhgei**, *furnisheth*).”




The last clause fixes the meaning of the word, “minister,” and shows that it is used in a restricted sense, that it is the deacon who is exhorted to liberality to the full extent of the supply furnished him in the providence of God.



© It is equally plain, that in 1 Tim. 3,  
“the deacon” is an officer of the  
Church, distinct from the bishop or  
presbyter.





© When “he that ministereth,” is mentioned in Rom. 12, and 1 Pet. 4, as one who performs duties entirely different in their character from those of the exhorter and the speaker, and these duties are “giving” and “showing mercy,” we at once discover a distinct office – the

**diaconate.** Reed, R.C., “The Deacon,” *The Union Seminary Magazine* 15.2 (1903): 215-224.



# THE DEACON

## In the Early Church

BY REV. R. C. REED, D. D.,

*Professor of Ecclesiastical History and Polity, Columbia*

*Theological Seminary, Columbia, S. C.*

Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples [unto them], and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.

Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men *of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom*, whom we may appoint over this business.

But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.  
etc.—(ACTS 6:3-5).

And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, *a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost*, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch:

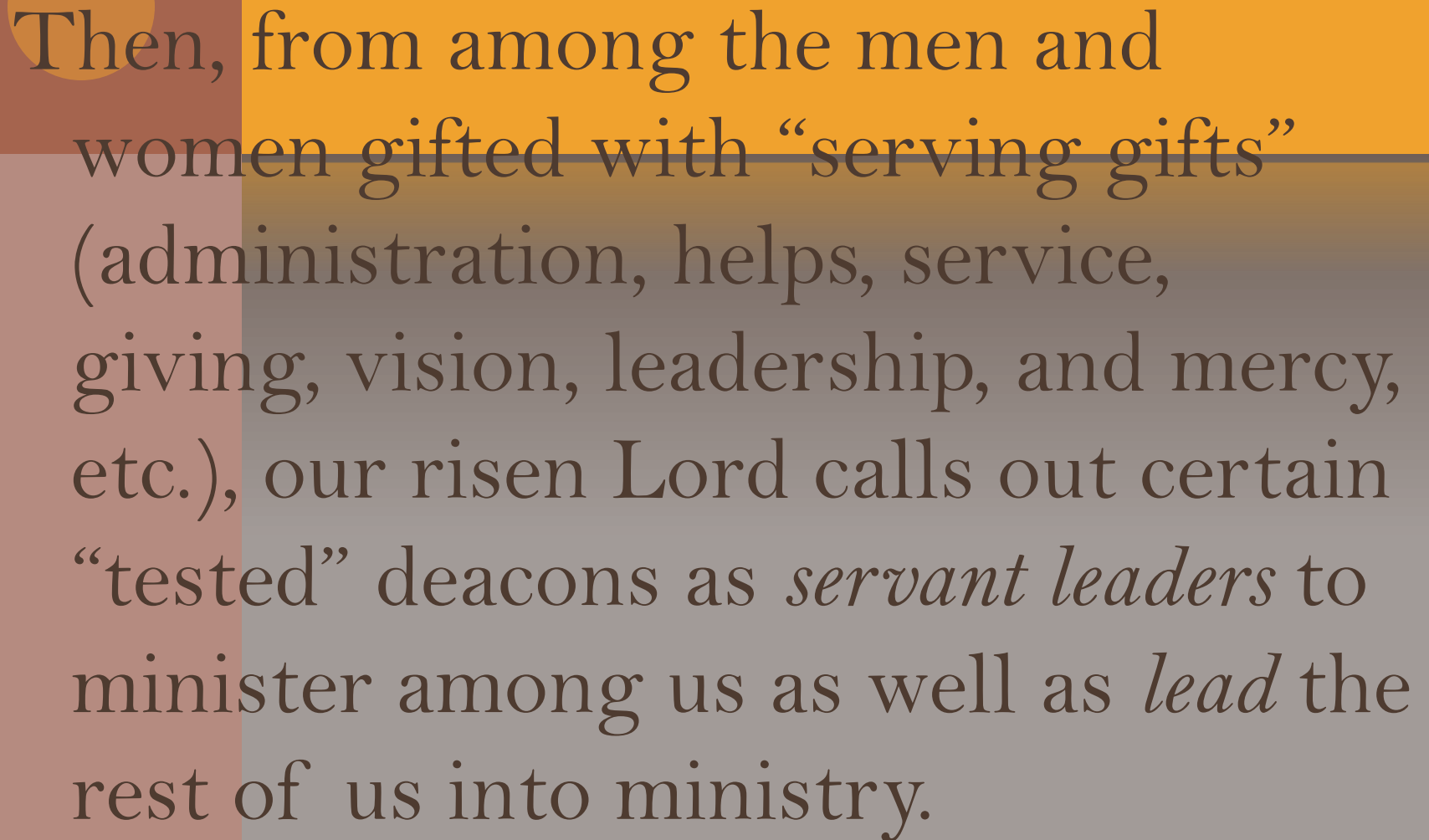
Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid [their] hands on them.

And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

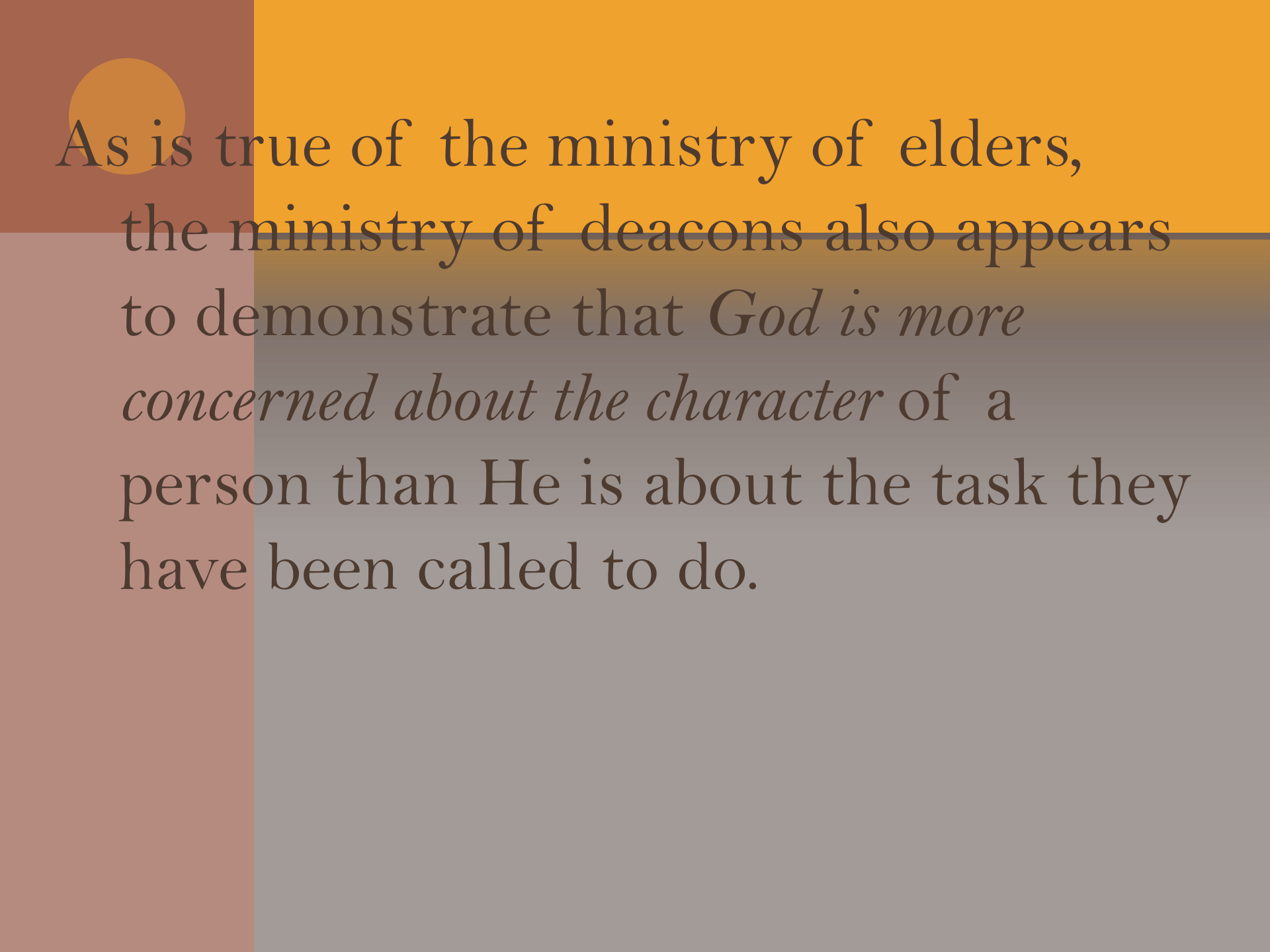
And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people. ACTS 6:3-5).



# The Characteristics of Deacons



Then, from among the men and women gifted with “serving gifts” (administration, helps, service, giving, vision, leadership, and mercy, etc.), our risen Lord calls out certain “tested” deacons as *servant leaders* to minister among us as well as *lead* the rest of us into ministry.




As is true of the ministry of elders,  
the ministry of deacons also appears  
to demonstrate that *God is more  
concerned about the character* of a  
person than He is about the task they  
have been called to do.



A list of characteristics for deacons  
can be found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.



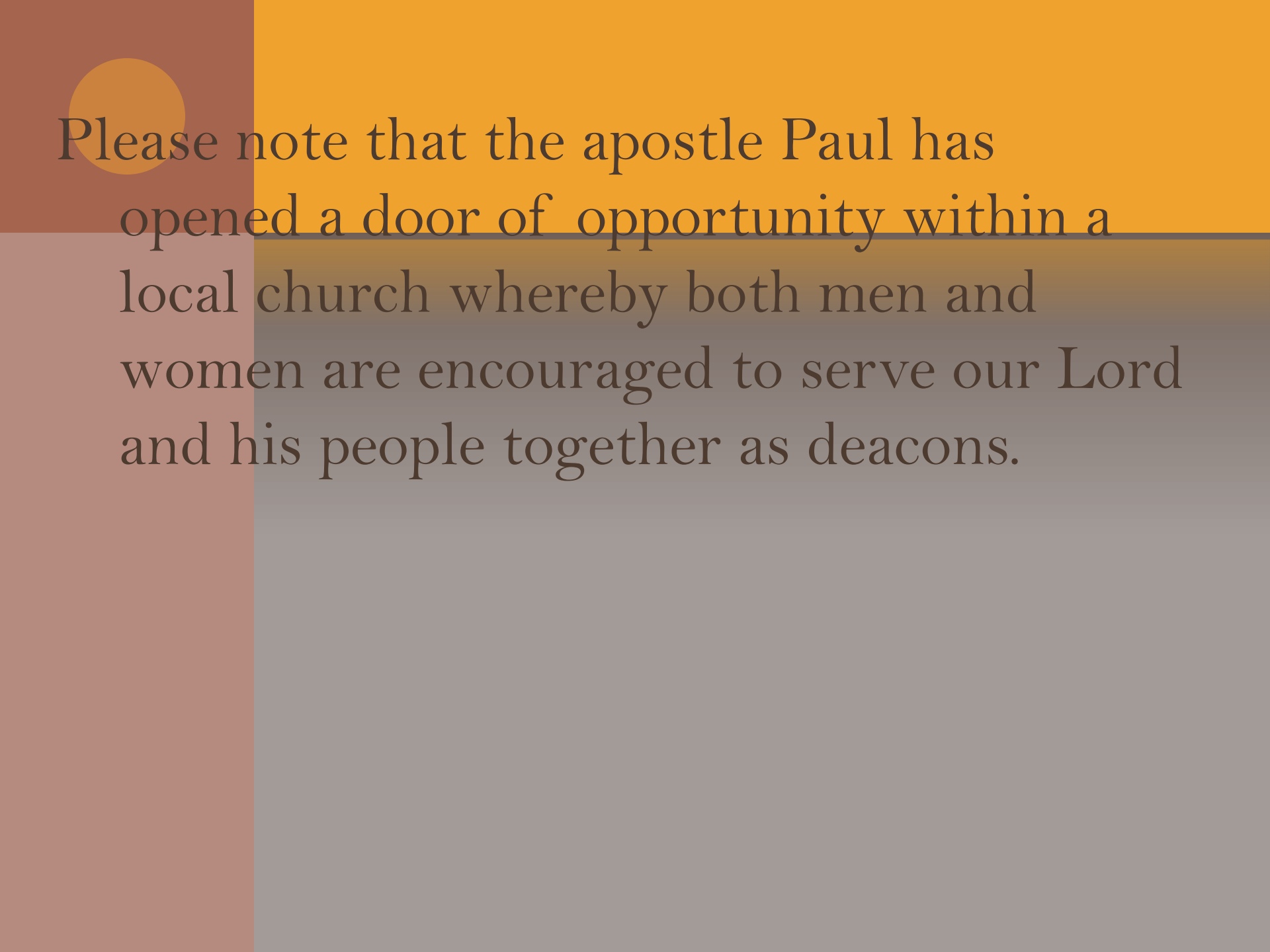
- © Likewise [must] the deacons [be] grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;
- © Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.
- © \_And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being [found] blameless.
- © Even so [must their] wives [be] grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

- 
- © Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.
  - © For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.



© These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

© But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.



Please note that the apostle Paul has opened a door of opportunity within a local church whereby both men and women are encouraged to serve our Lord and his people together as deacons.

It is clear that in this context the apostle has in mind that *certain women can be called into the ministry of deacons out of a variety of lifestyles:*

1. married wives,
2. widows,
3. single women,
4. or even the wife of an elder or deacon who has already been tested in the ministry of serving.

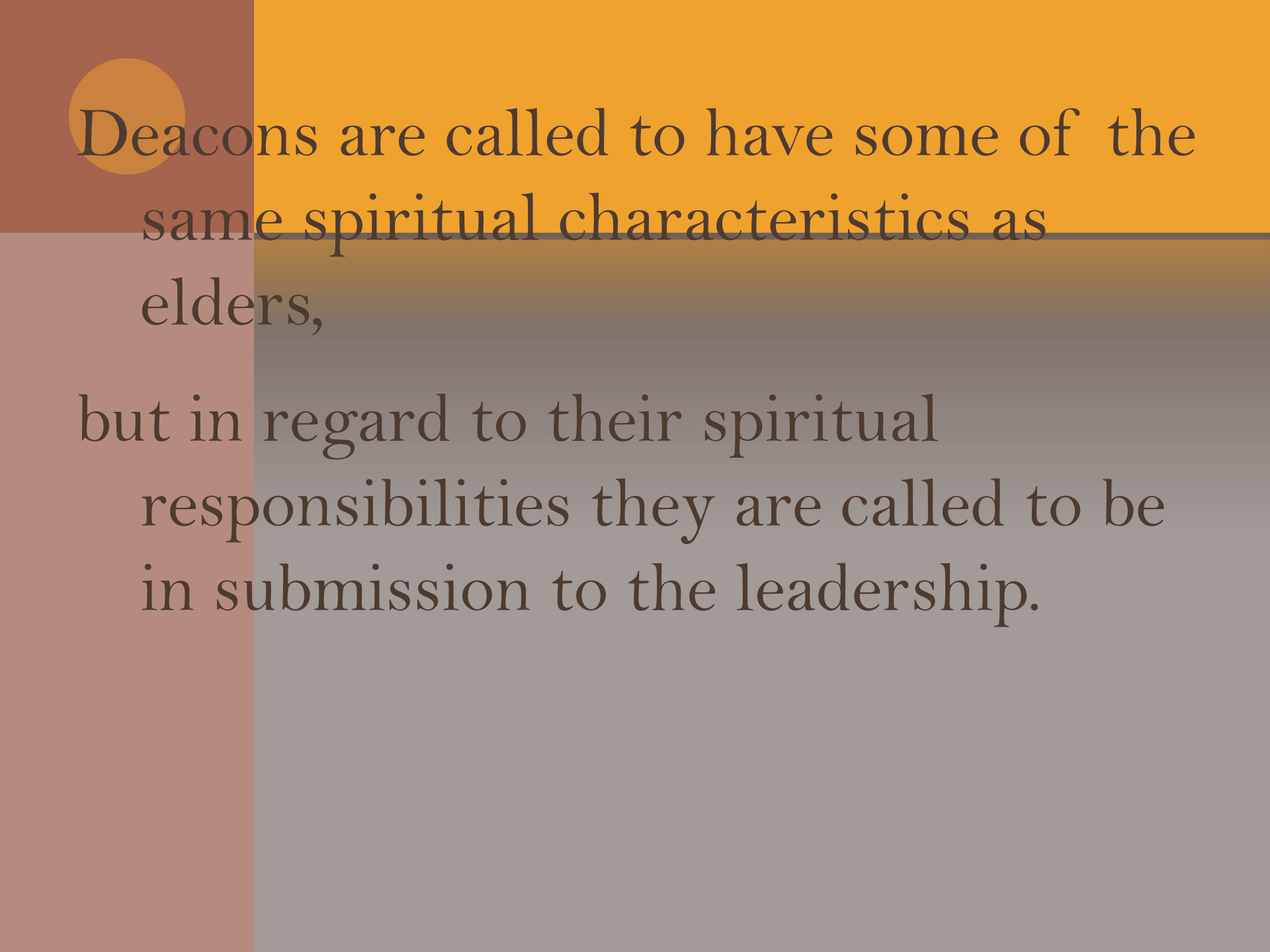


Paul wrote earlier to the Romans of a  
“tested” deacon:

*“I commend to you our sister **Phoebe**, who is a servant [diakonos], of the church which is at Cenchrea; that you receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and that you help her in whatever matter she may need of you: for she herself has also been a helper of many, and of myself as well.” (Romans 16:1-2)*



# The Importance of Deacons



Deacons are called to have some of the same spiritual characteristics as elders,

but in regard to their spiritual responsibilities they are called to be in submission to the leadership.





# The Responsibilities of a Deacon



The word deacon (*diakonos*) indicates  
servant and service.



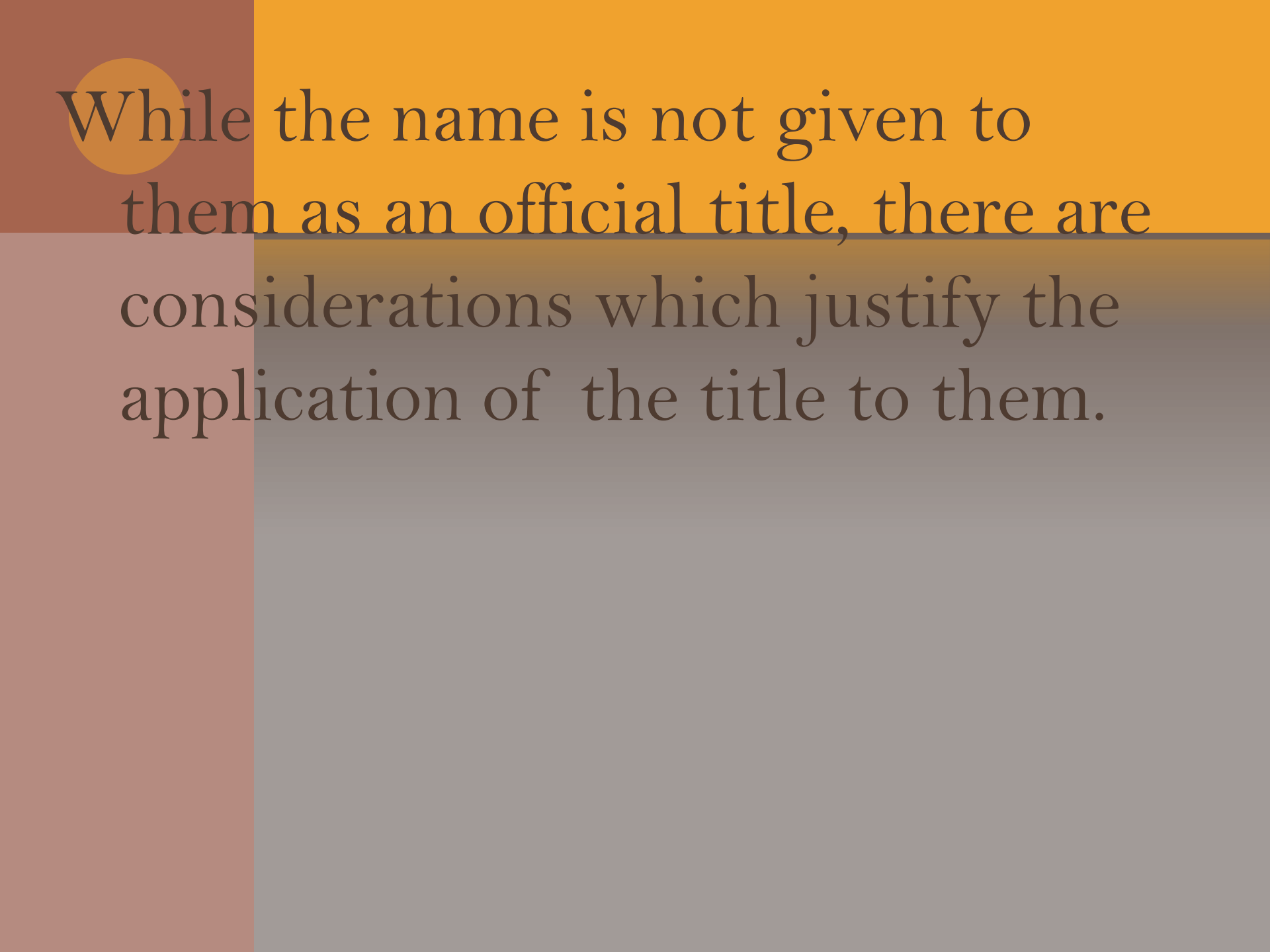
Some of those ministries will fall in line  
with our Lord's word in Matthew 25:35-  
36:

*“For I was hungry, and you gave Me something  
to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me drink; I  
was a stranger, and you invited me in; naked,  
and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you  
visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to  
Me.”*

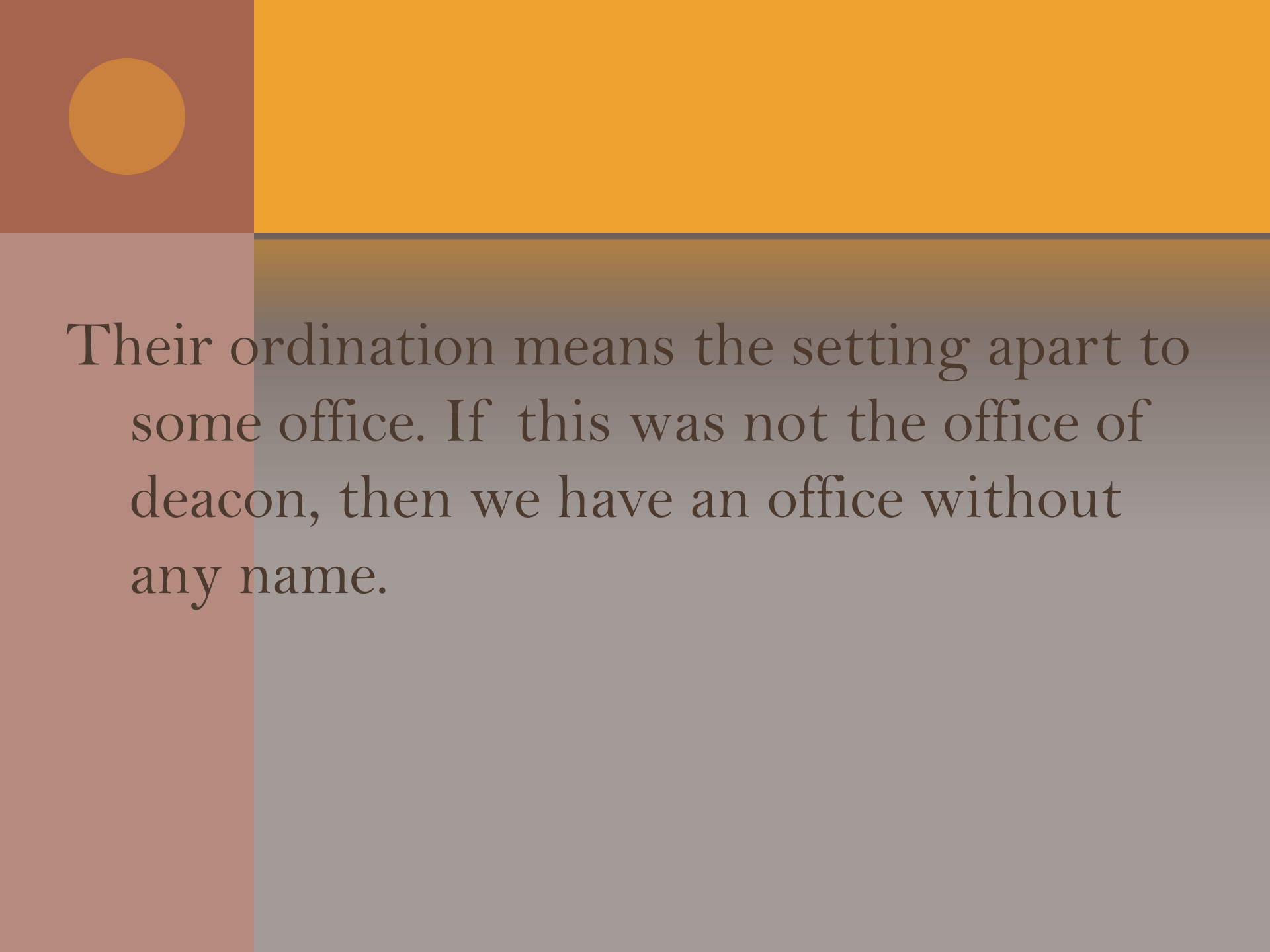


# Its Origin.

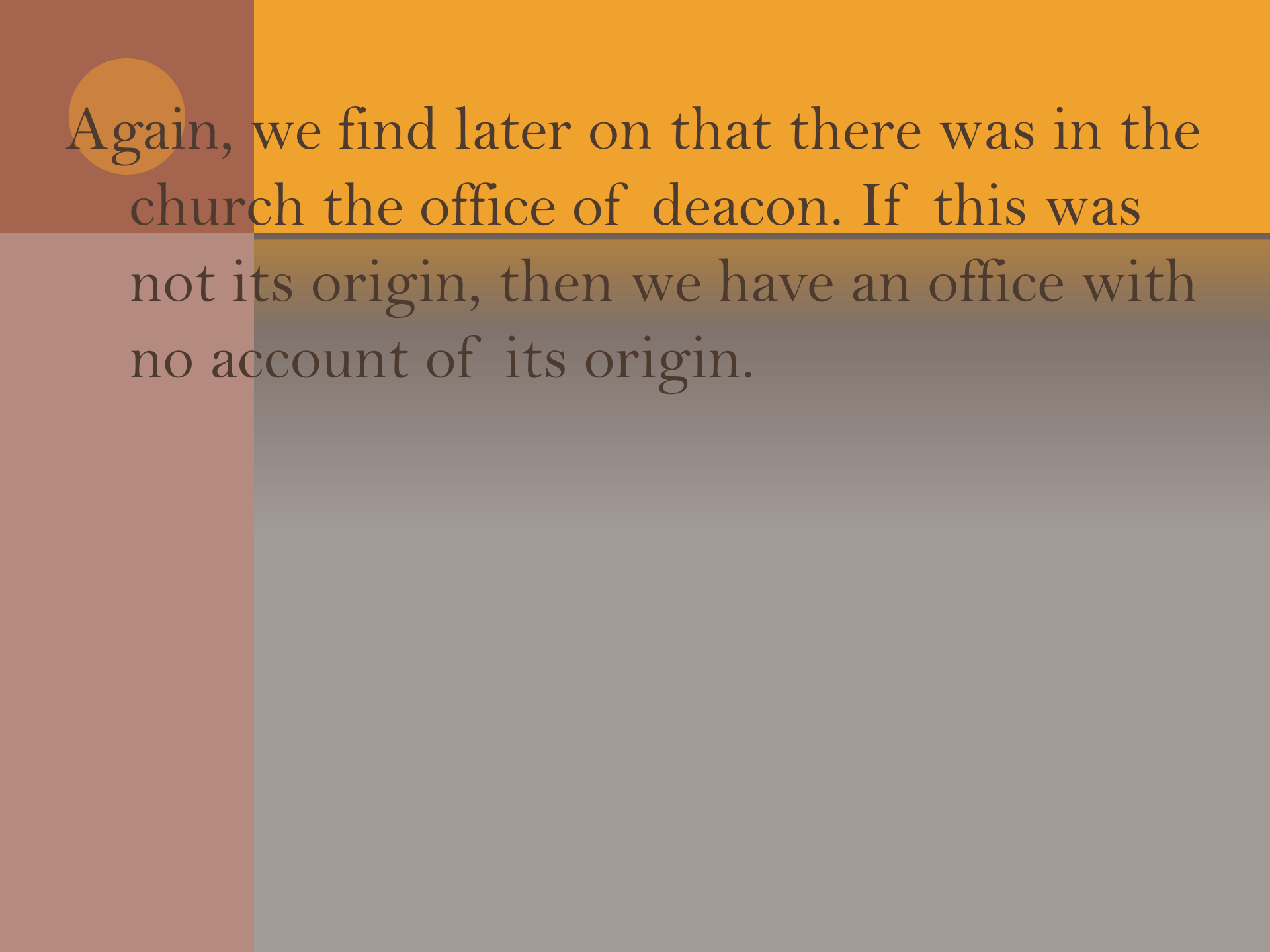
This is described to us in the sixth chapter of Acts. The seven men chosen by the multitude and ordained by the apostles were the first deacons.



While the name is not given to them as an official title, there are considerations which justify the application of the title to them.



Their ordination means the setting apart to some office. If this was not the office of deacon, then we have an office without any name.



Again, we find later on that there was in the church the office of deacon. If this was not its origin, then we have an office with no account of its origin.

There is the further consideration that the early church, with one consent, regarded the office of deacon as having its origin in the appointment of the seven.





# Functions of the Office.



Agreeing on the origin of the office, it is strange that all branches of the church should not agree on its functions. These seem to be pointed out so plainly in the account of the appointment of the seven as to leave no room for difference of opinion.



Our bishops are apostolic bishops,  
and our deacons are apostolic  
deacons.



The *diaconate* had its origin in a twofold source.

- ◎ First, there were destitute persons in the church to be cared for;
- ◎ and second, the church made provision to care for them.

The office of the deacon was created as an effective agency by which the church might minister to the necessities of its poor. “The poor ye have always with you, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good.” Hence the permanence of the office.

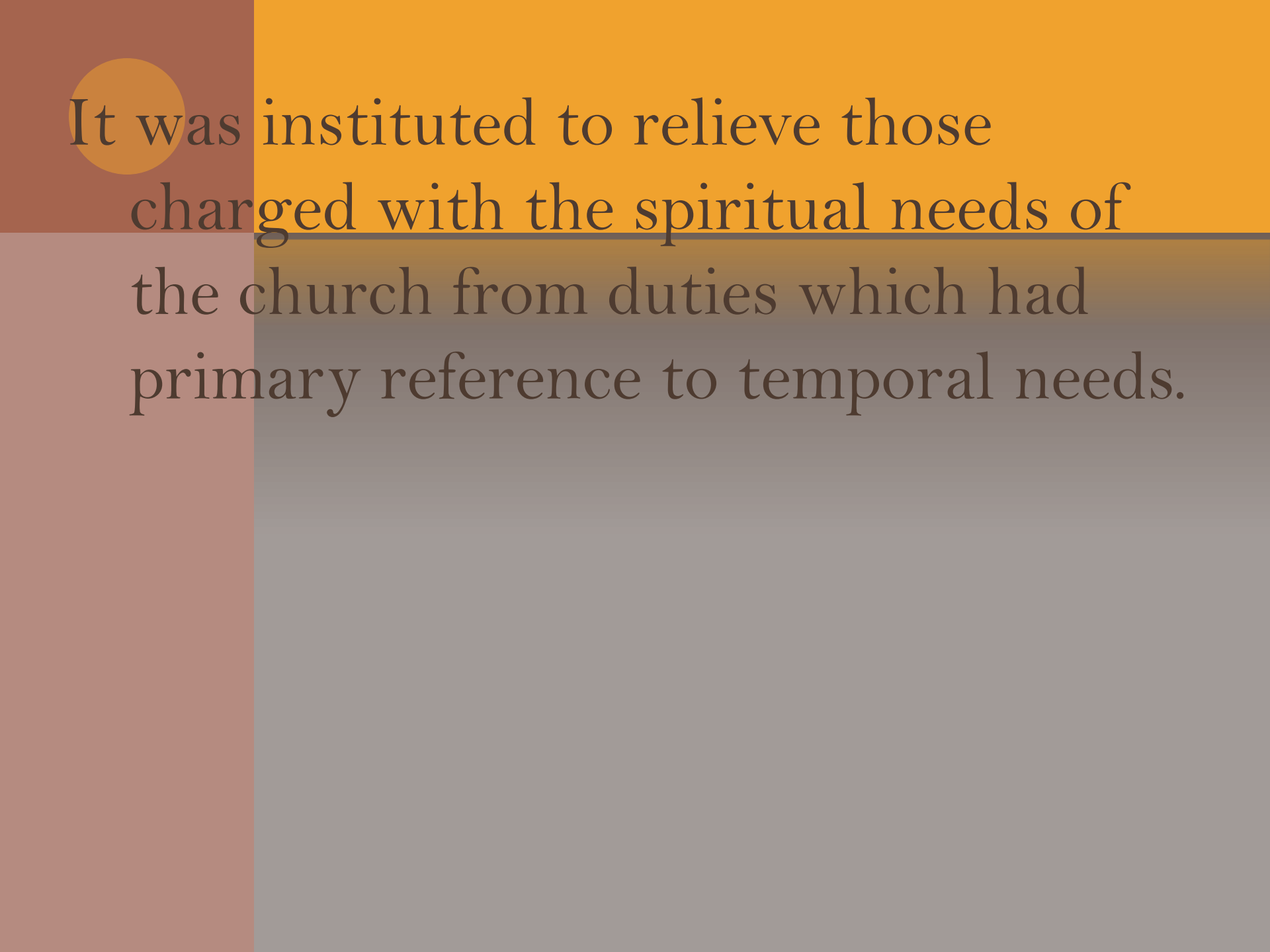


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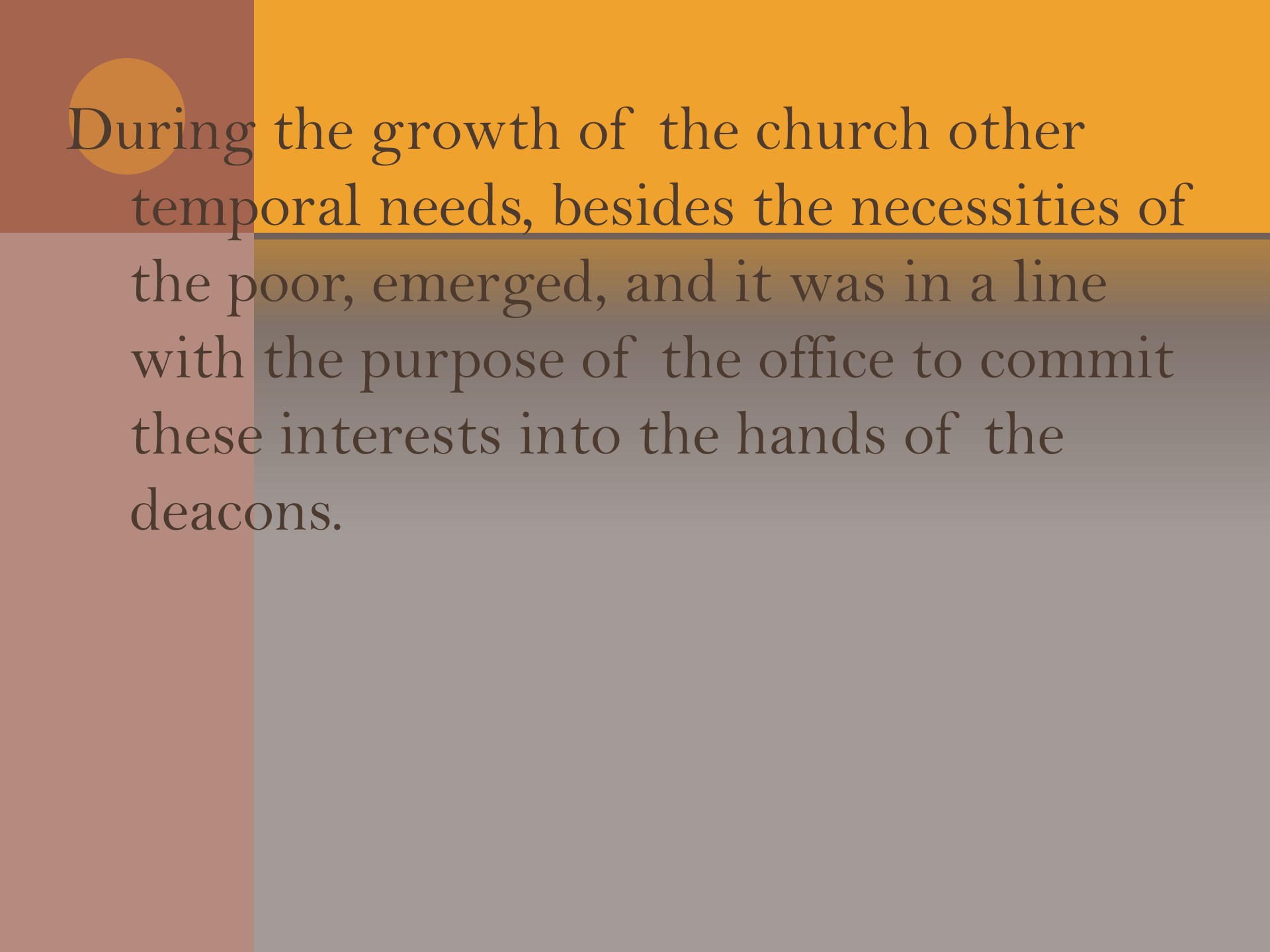


Has True Holiness congregations  
enlarged the scope of the deacon's  
office?

Yes, but has not changed the nature of  
its functions.

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It was instituted to relieve those charged with the spiritual needs of the church from duties which had primary reference to temporal needs.



During the growth of the church other temporal needs, besides the necessities of the poor, emerged, and it was in a line with the purpose of the office to commit these interests into the hands of the deacons.

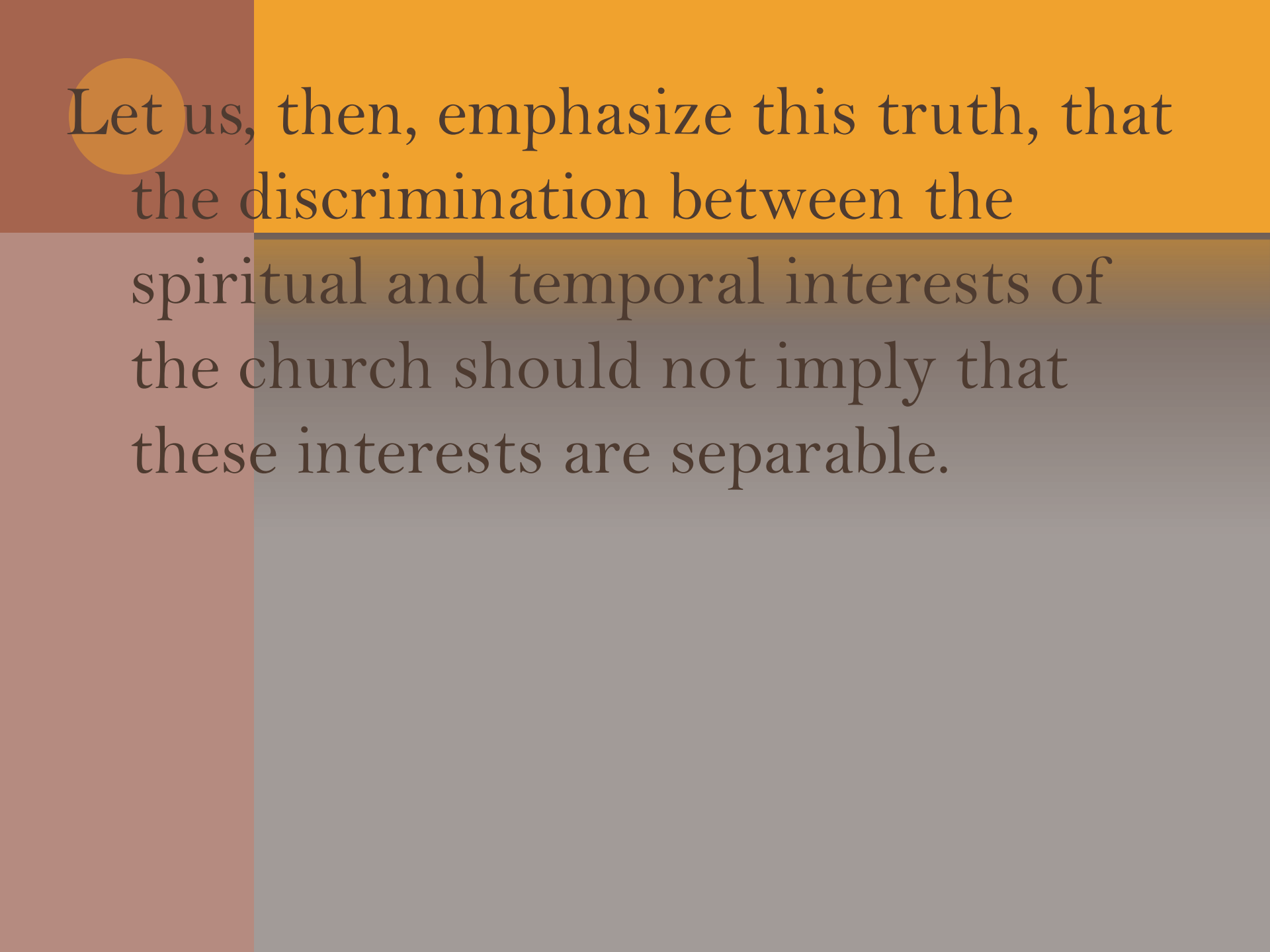




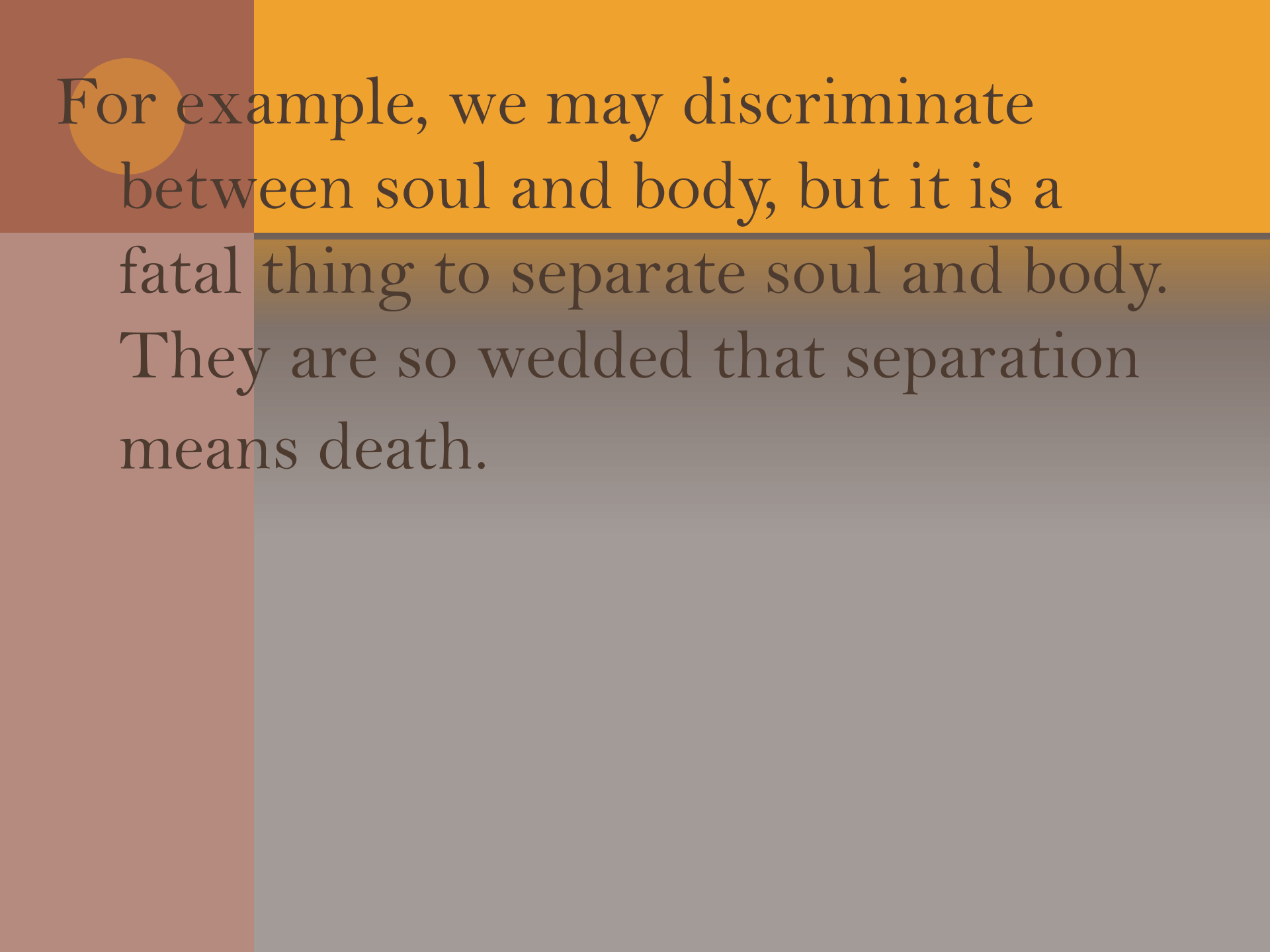
# Importance of the Office of Deacon

The discrimination between the spiritual and the temporal needs of the church may make the impression that these are separable, and that the spiritual are immeasurably the more important.

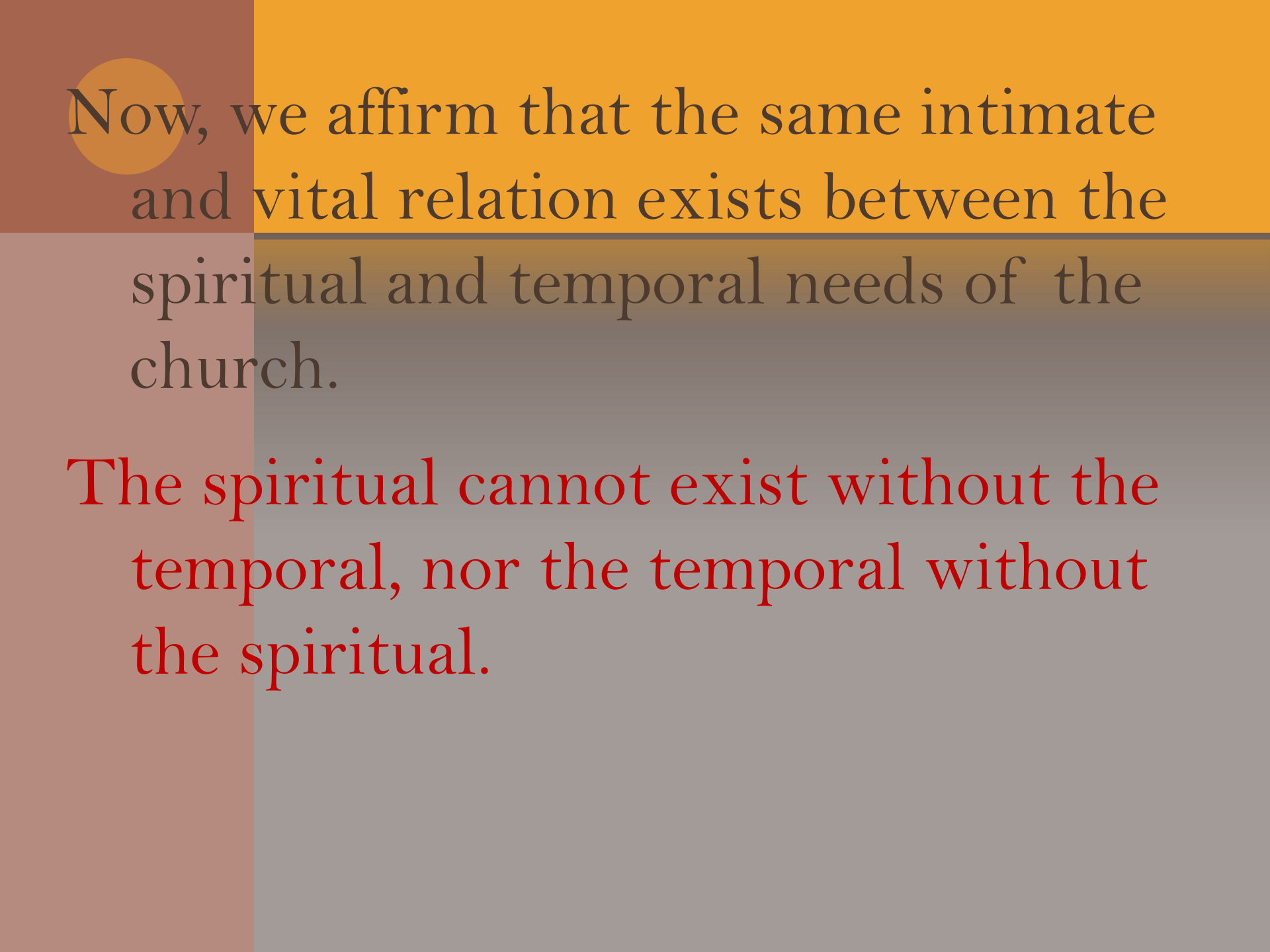
Unfortunately, this impression will give rise to the view that the office of deacon is quite unimportant, and that almost any kind of a Christian man is good enough to fill it.



Let us, then, emphasize this truth, that the discrimination between the spiritual and temporal interests of the church should not imply that these interests are separable.



For example, we may discriminate  
between soul and body, but it is a  
fatal thing to separate soul and body.  
They are so wedded that separation  
means death.



Now, we affirm that the same intimate and vital relation exists between the spiritual and temporal needs of the church.

The spiritual cannot exist without the temporal, nor the temporal without the spiritual.

# The apostles ministered primarily to the spiritual needs.

By the blessing of God,

- ☉ their ministry awakened the sense of brotherhood,
- ☉ quickened the sentiments of sympathy and compassion,
- ☉ and thus created the provision for the temporal.



Preacher and deacon are coworkers,  
and their ministries interact with  
each other.

(Their ministries interact with each other.)

**An effective ministry of the Word** will increase the benevolences of the church;

**An effective administration of the benevolences** will render still more effective the ministry of the Word.





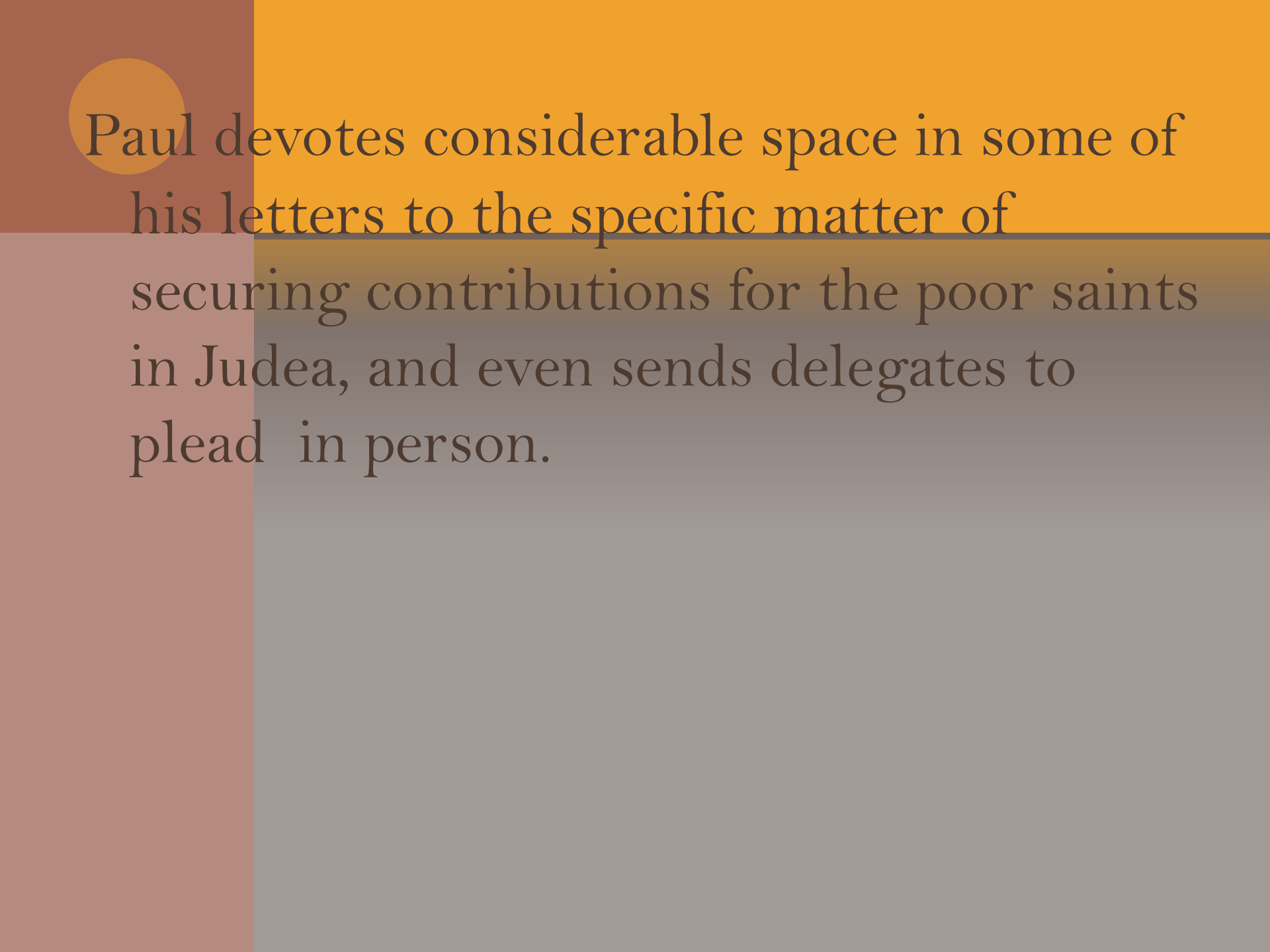
# The Result of Setting the church in Order



Following immediately the appointment of the seven, we read that “the Word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.”



Putting good and wise men over the work of distribution **brought order out of confusion**, and increased the power of the church. It is very evident that a tender concern for the “necessity of the saints” was a marked characteristic of the apostolic church.



Paul devotes considerable space in some of his letters to the specific matter of securing contributions for the poor saints in Judea, and even sends delegates to plead in person.



Such expression was proof that so far as the Gentiles were concerned, the “middle wall” was broken down, the long-standing, inherited prejudice was gone.

This sharing in carnal things, growing out of sharing of spiritual things, was one of the phenomenons produced by the gospel. It had a remarkable effect on those outside the church.

Hence in the church of that day, the **office of diaconos**, which was charged with the administration of the church's gifts was an office of great importance.

Those who occupied that office had a position of vast influence and of commanding power.



Were they men of high social  
standing?

*There is no suggestion of that in scripture.*



Were they men of ample means?

*There is no statement to this effect.*





Successful business men ?

*It is not so “designated.”*



“Wisdom” if specified, and probably  
this means sanctified common sense.  
*But social, intellectual and business  
qualities are all subordinated to spiritual  
qualities.*




(Time for Reflection)

Suppose the Early Church Chose  
Unqualified Deacons

*What do you think would have happened?*



# A DIGNIFIED LIFE



Let's return to 1st Timothy for the qualifications of deacons, where the Bible teaches that a deacon must have a dignified life

(1 Tim. 3:8), **a sound doctrine** (1 Tim. 3:9-10) and **a stable family** (1 Tim. 3:11-12).

**The apostle begins by saying a deacon's life must be worthy of respect:**

“Likewise [must] the deacons [be] grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre” (1 Tim. 3:8).

Paraphrased...

“Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain”



**This is not the way the world  
usually chooses its leaders.**

The virtues listed in First Timothy  
has little to do with talents or  
abilities.

They are not the kinds of credentials  
that show up on most résumés.

Instead, the biblical qualifications  
have to do with a person's morals.

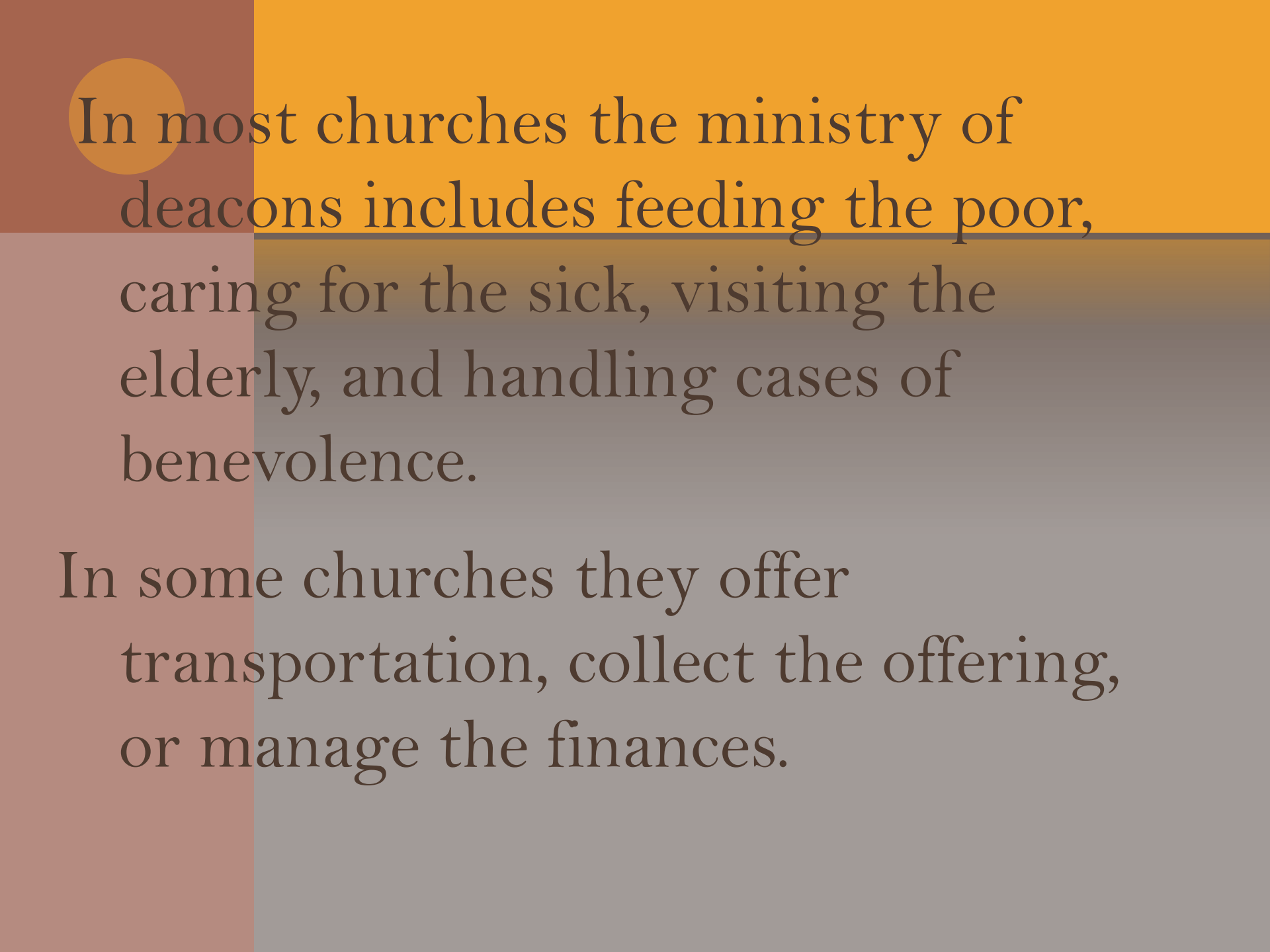




**God is more concerned with who  
deacons are than what they do.**



The Bible's emphasis on character gives churches some flexibility in deciding what deacons do, as long as their ministry is charitable and compassionate.




In most churches the ministry of deacons includes feeding the poor, caring for the sick, visiting the elderly, and handling cases of benevolence.


In some churches they offer transportation, collect the offering, or manage the finances.



In an urban neighborhoods they  
may help keep the building  
secure.



Whatever deacons do, the Bible  
leaves the church to decide; the  
Bible only dictates how they are  
to behave.



Most importantly, a deacon's life  
must be “dignified,” or worthy of  
respect.


This has to do with diaconal behavior,  
and is similar to the guideline that  
elders must be “above reproach” (1  
Tim. 3:2).

Deacons are to carry themselves with  
dignity and gravity.

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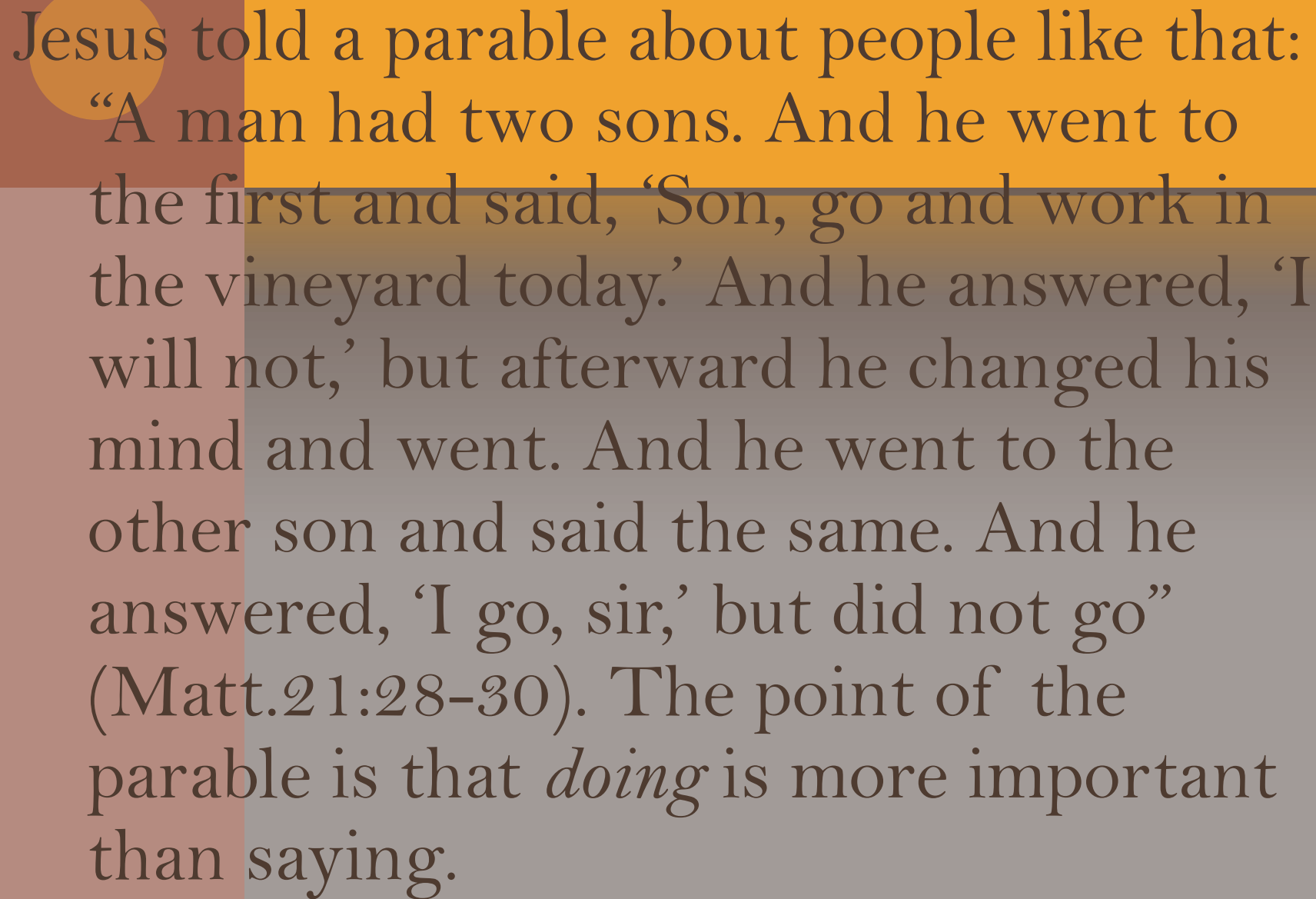
**They must be respectable both  
inside and outside the church.**





Deacons must not be “double-tongued”  
(*dilogous*; 1 Tim. 3:8).

- ⊙ Deacons must not engage in double-talk.
- ⊙ The word of a deacon ought to be one of the strongest guarantees in the church.
- ⊙ People both inside and outside the church must be able to take deacons at their word.



Jesus told a parable about people like that:  
“A man had two sons. And he went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work in the vineyard today.’ And he answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind and went. And he went to the other son and said the same. And he answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but did not go” (Matt.21:28-30). The point of the parable is that *doing* is more important than saying.



But neither one of the man's sons  
would have made a good deacon.

Deacons must do what they say they  
will do. They cannot be two-faced.



Another reason deacons must be careful what they say is because they know so much about people's private affairs.



They had to find out the needs of individuals, among the members of the congregation, and to converse and to sympathize with them.



Deacons must not be “addicted to much wine” (1 Tim. 3:8). He does want his people—especially his officers in his church—to be sober.



The next qualification is fiscal.

Deacons are not to be “greedy for dishonest gain” (1 Tim. 3:8). Like their elders, they must not be in love with money (see 1 Tim. 3:3).

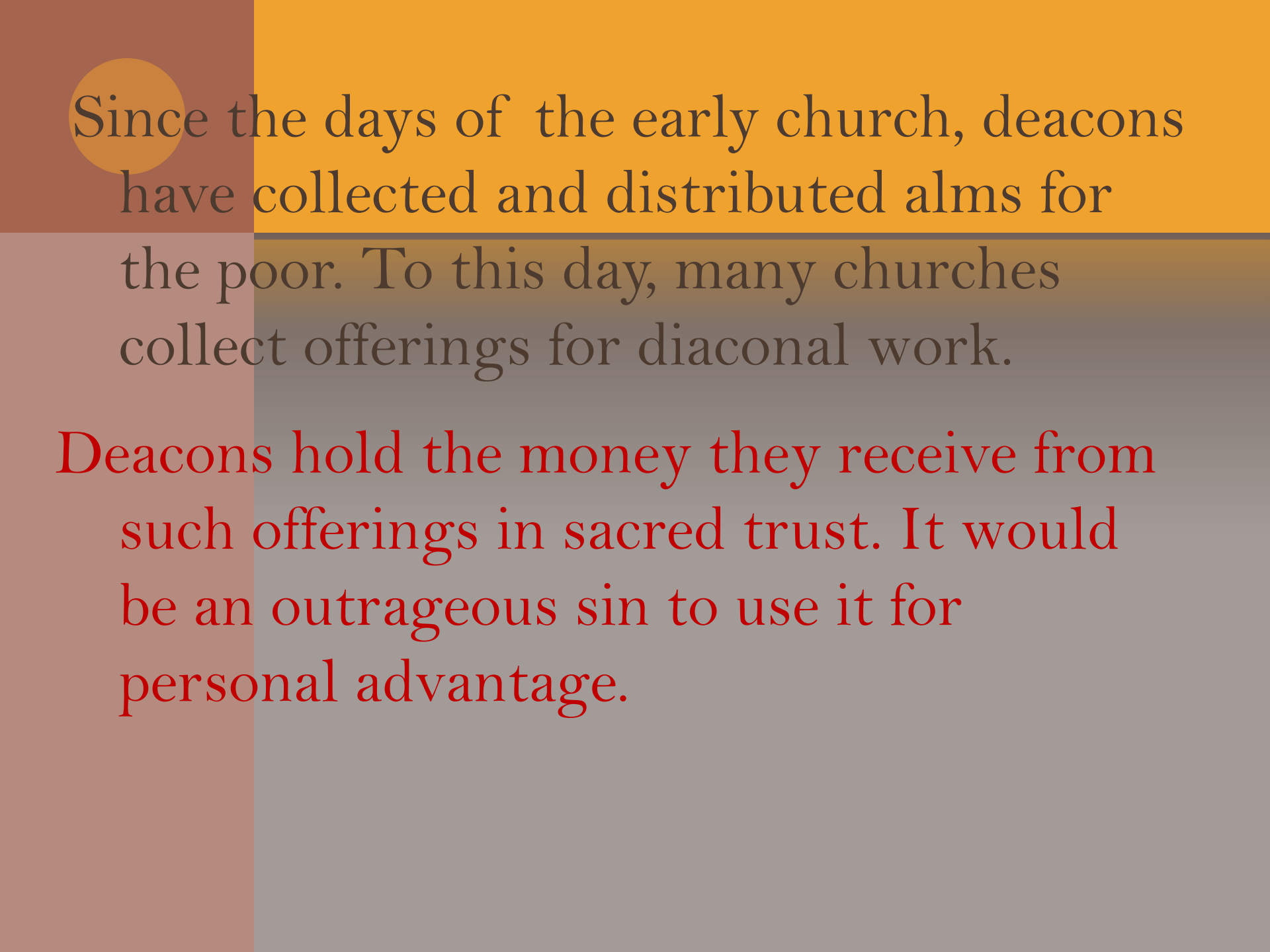


The reason for this is obvious.

Deacons handle some of the finances of the church, often in secret.







Since the days of the early church, deacons have collected and distributed alms for the poor. To this day, many churches collect offerings for diaconal work.

Deacons hold the money they receive from such offerings in sacred trust. It would be an outrageous sin to use it for personal advantage.



By definition, a deacon is someone who serves, not someone who helps himself.



In the use of money, as in the use of words and alcohol, a deacon must lead a dignified life.



# A SOUND DOCTRINE

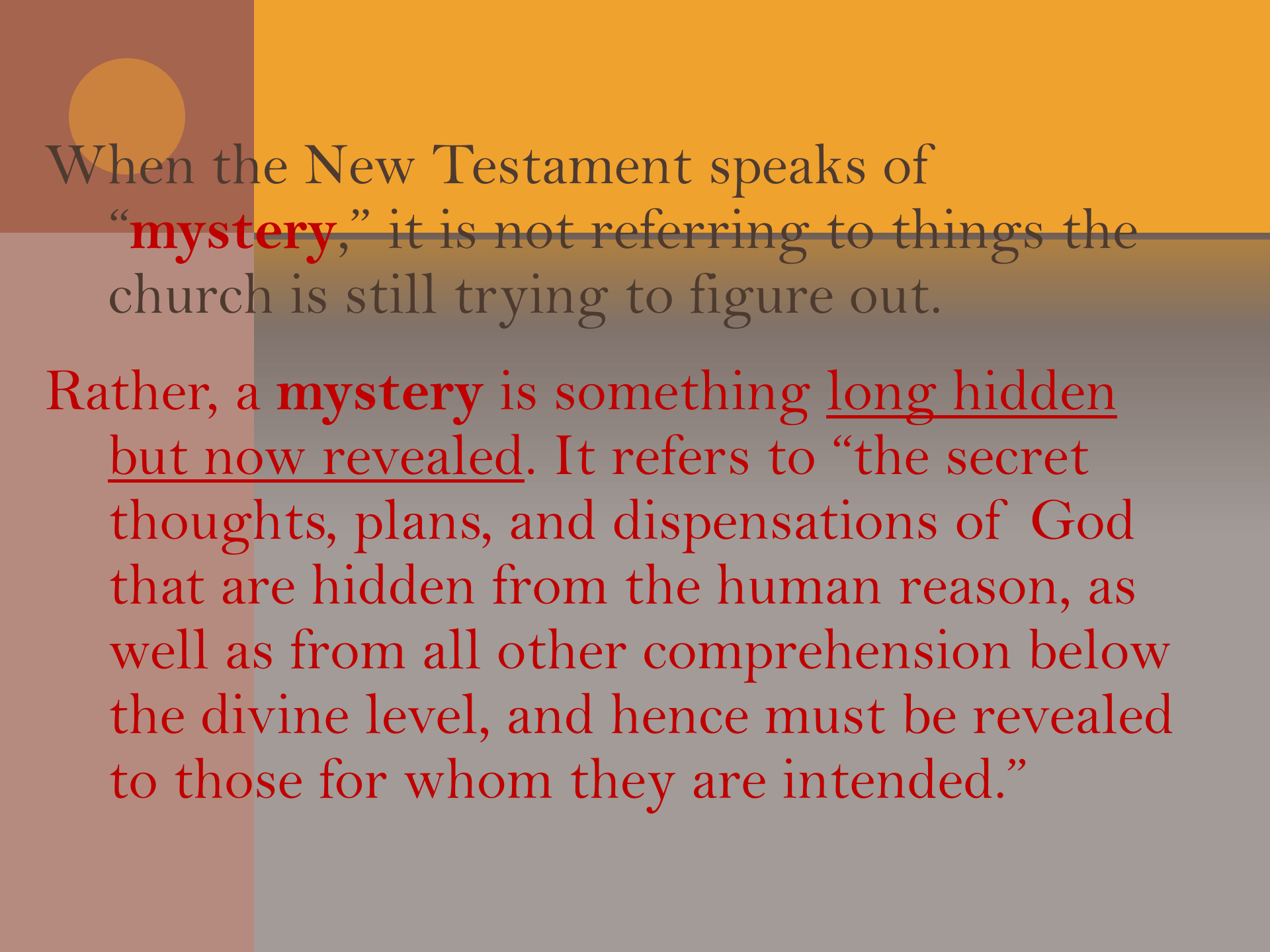


Qualifications for service begin with  
conduct, but that is not where they  
end.



Deacons must have sound doctrine as well as dignified lives:

“They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience” (1 Tim. 3:9). In other words, deacons must be biblical in their doctrine and practice.



When the New Testament speaks of “**mystery**,” it is not referring to things the church is still trying to figure out.

Rather, a **mystery** is something long hidden but now revealed. It refers to “the secret thoughts, plans, and dispensations of God that are hidden from the human reason, as well as from all other comprehension below the divine level, and hence must be revealed to those for whom they are intended.”

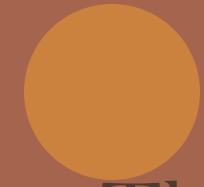
What are some of the mysteries or deep truths of the faith?

**They are the basic doctrines of Christianity:**



For example:

- © the Eternal Godhead
- © That humanity sinned against God and has thereby come under judgment.
- © That Jesus Christ is both God and man.
- © That God created the heaven and earth




- © That Jesus gave his life as an atoning sacrifice when he died on the cross for sins.
- © That everyone who believes in the Son by the power of the Spirit receives eternal life.
- © And that these mysteries are revealed in the Bible, which is the infallible Word of God.



Deacons are teachers.



What are some of the ways that  
a deacon may teach?

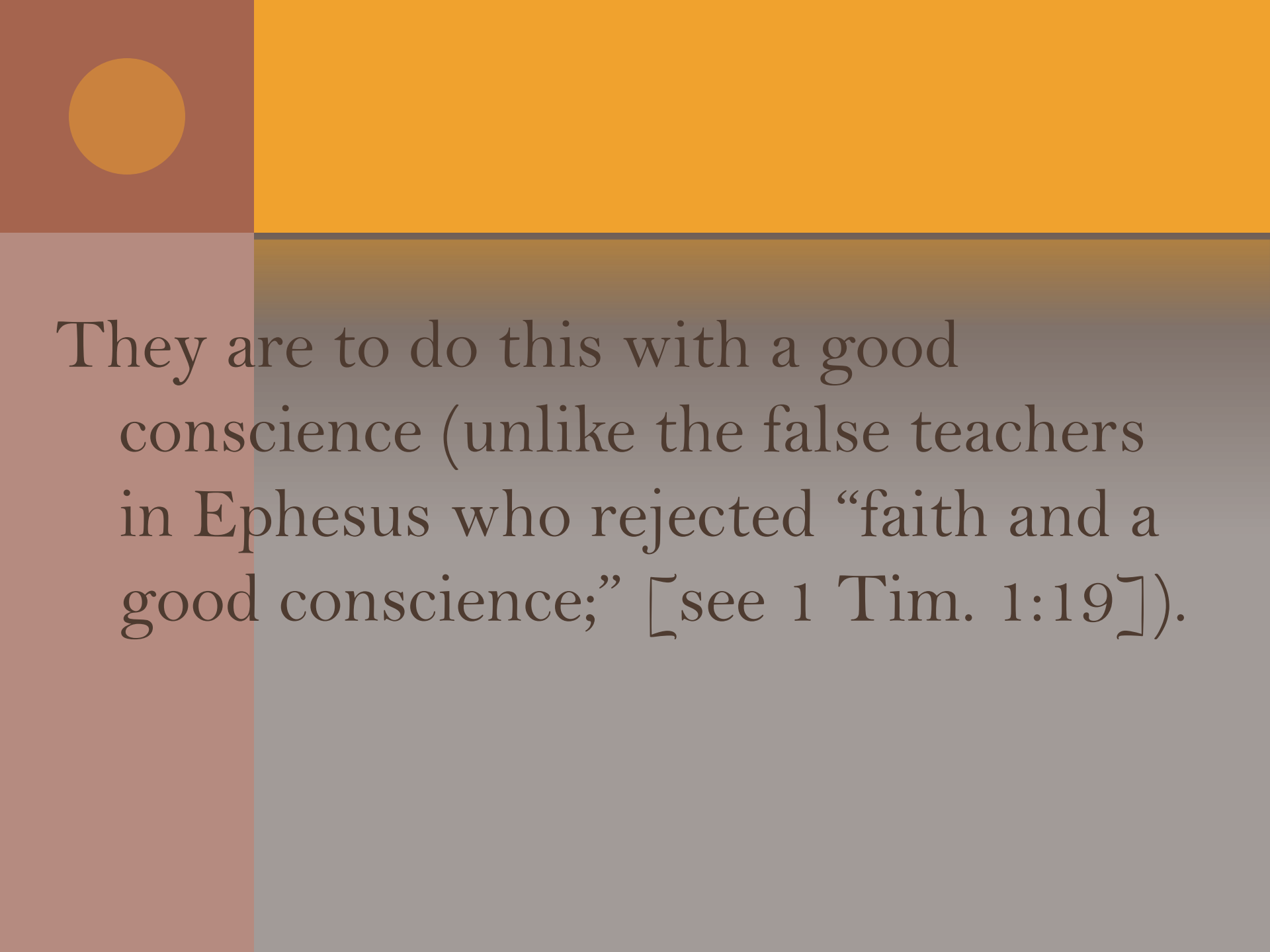
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- © When deacons visit prisoners or the sick they bring spiritual encouragement.
  - © Often they teach people how to manage their personal affairs in a biblical way, especially their finances.
  - © Deacons also teach others how to serve.
  - © They do not have to accomplish all of the mercy ministry themselves, but they are responsible to make sure that it all gets done.

© Then deacons must be ready to evangelize. The first deacons, like

© Stephen and Philip (Acts 7–8), were great evangelists. So whenever deacons help the poor, they do it in the name of Jesus Christ, with a testimony of his saving power.



Otherwise, the church becomes just another social service. To carry out their ministry of discipleship and evangelism, deacons must hold on to the deep truths of the faith.



They are to do this with a good conscience (unlike the false teachers in Ephesus who rejected “faith and a good conscience;” [see 1 Tim. 1:19]).





The best way to find out if deacons are sound in their doctrine is to examine them before they take office:

“And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless” (1 Tim. 3:10).



The fact that deacons must be tested proves that their role in the church was official. The Bible gives freedom by not specifying how such officers are to be examined.



**Scrutiny is mandatory**, according to the standards listed in the bible.

Often, deacons prove their worth by serving in other ministries.

This is a universal principle of Christian ministry: the way to prepare for greater service is to be diligent in some lesser service.



Most churches have a procedure for identifying and ordaining deacons.

In True Holiness, deacons are nominated by their pastors and acknowledged by the church membership, examined by the elders and other fellow deacons, then presented for ordination.




But however it is done, a deacon's life and doctrine must be approved. Deacons may only serve in the church if their soundness and respectability are beyond question.



# A STABLE FAMILY



The rest of the qualifications for  
deacons are domestic.

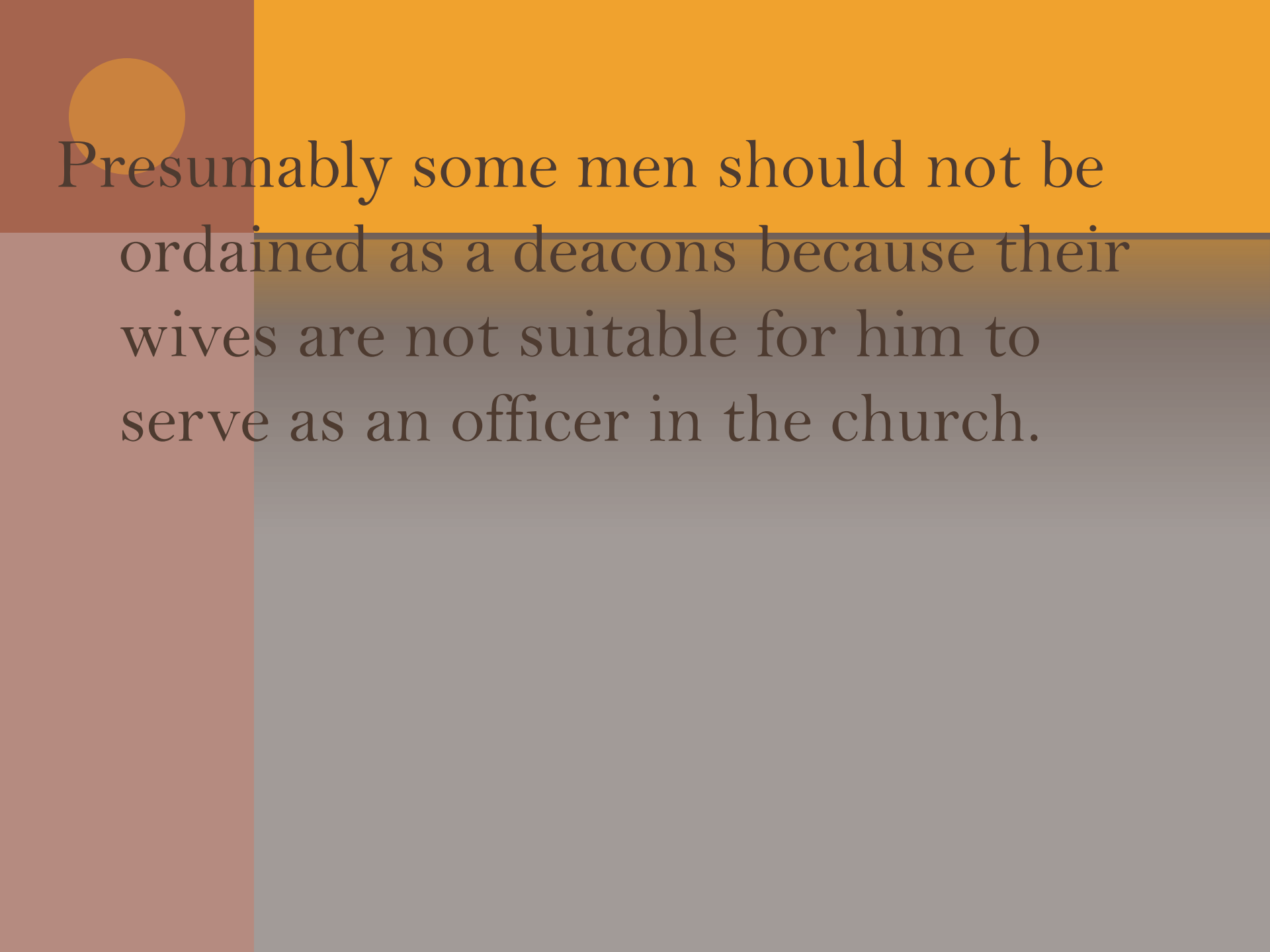


If they are married, deacons must have stable families: “Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well” (1 Tim. 3:11-12).





Marvin Vincent wisely observes that a deacon's wife “would sustain an active relation to his office, and by her ministries would increase his efficiency, and by frivolity, slander, or intemperance, would bring him and his office into disrepute.”

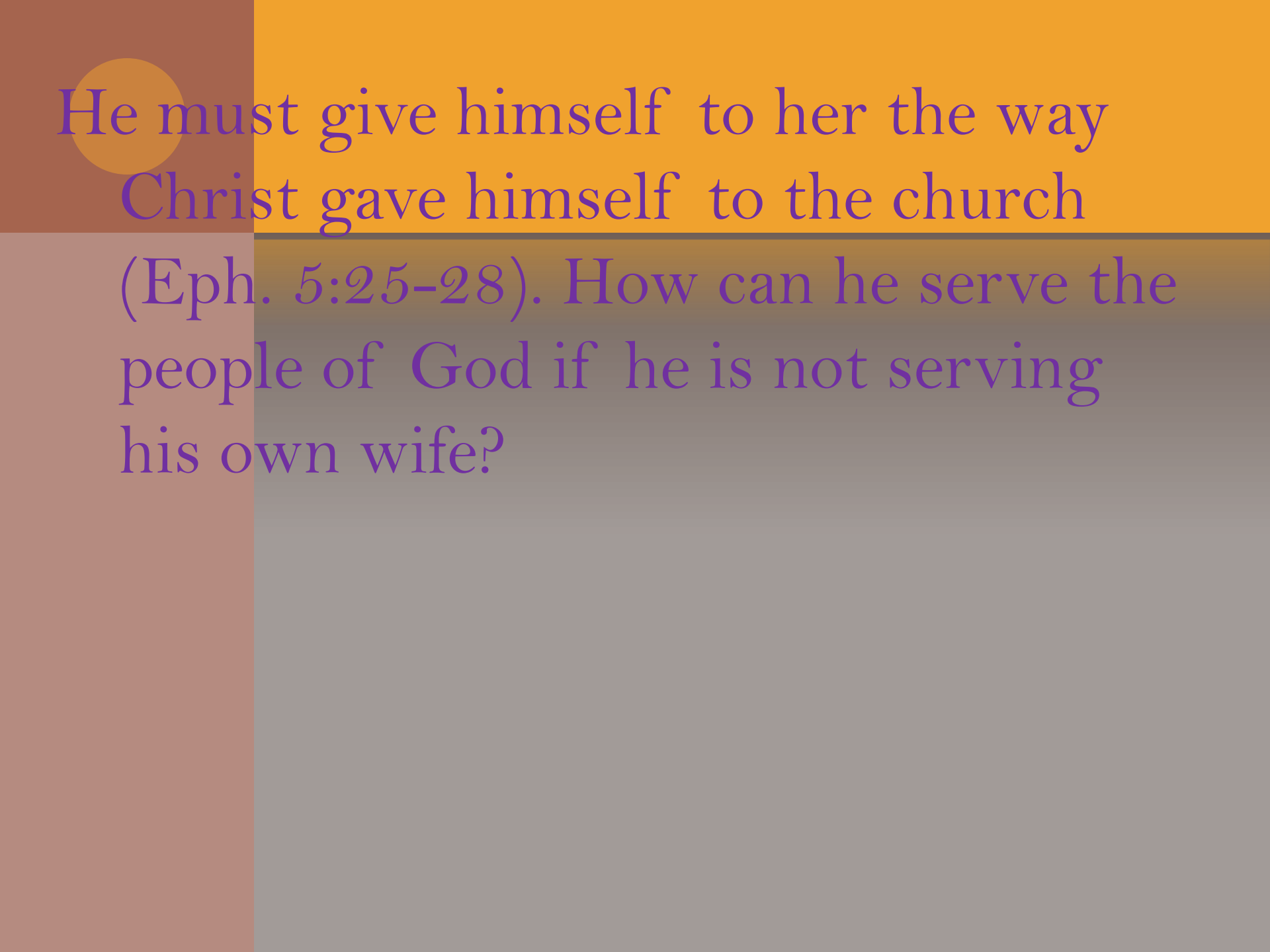


Presumably some men should not be ordained as a deacons because their wives are not suitable for him to serve as an officer in the church.



## The deacon himself must be “the husband of one wife” (1 Tim. 3:12).

- ◎ This standard has to do with marital fidelity.
- ◎ It does not mean that bachelors are ineligible for the office of deacon, but it does mean that a deacon is a one-woman man.
- ◎ If he is unmarried, he must maintain sexual purity. If he is married, he must be monogamous.

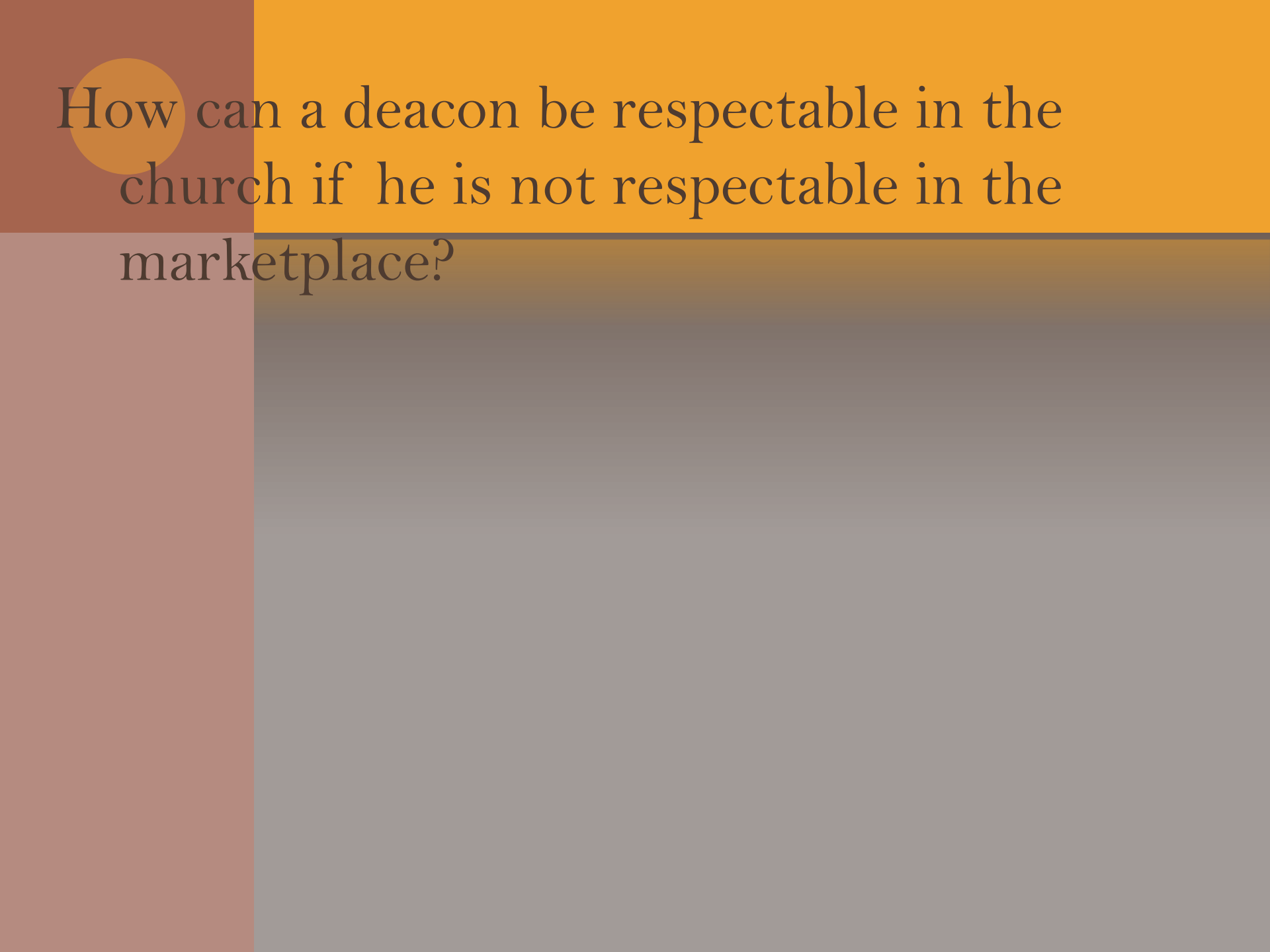


He must give himself to her the way  
Christ gave himself to the church  
(Eph. 5:25-28). How can he serve the  
people of God if he is not serving  
his own wife?




**In addition to being a good husband,  
a deacon must be a good father.**

Again, this does not mean that men without children may not serve as deacons. It does mean that deacons are to discipline their children with love.



How can a deacon be respectable in the church if he is not respectable in the marketplace?



The reason for these high standards is that the church is “the household of God” (1 Tim. 3:15).

Therefore, one of the best ways to tell if a man is ready to be a deacon is to see how he conducts his own household.

© Is he devoted to his wife?

© Does he nurture his children?

© Does he care for his colleagues?

© Is the name of Jesus Christ exalted in his home and at his workplace?

© A man who cannot manage his own household well will bring disorder to God's house.





# WHAT ABOUT FEMALE DEACONS?



The diaconal ministry of women is certainly present elsewhere in the Bible.

New Testament women frequently carried out diaconal ministry, in the broad sense of the word.



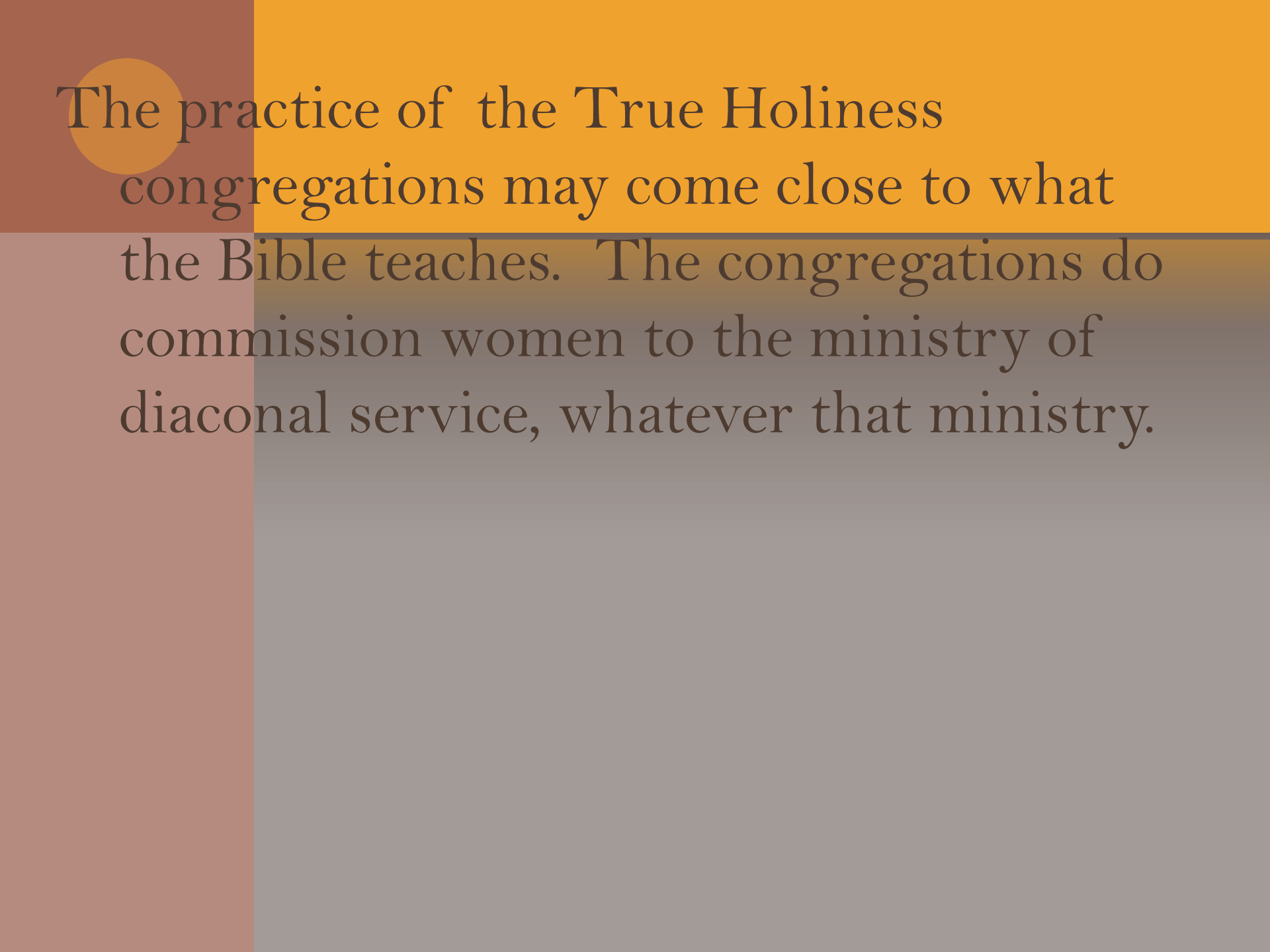
- © Consider Dorcas, who was “full of good works and acts of charity” (Acts 9:36).
- © Or Lydia, who clothed the Philippians in purple (16:11-15).



- © Or Tryphena and Tryphosa, women described as “workers in the Lord” (Rom. 16:12).
- © Or especially Phoebe, who was “a patron of many” and is identified as “a servant of the church at Cenchreae”—literally, “a deaconess” (Rom. 16:1-2).

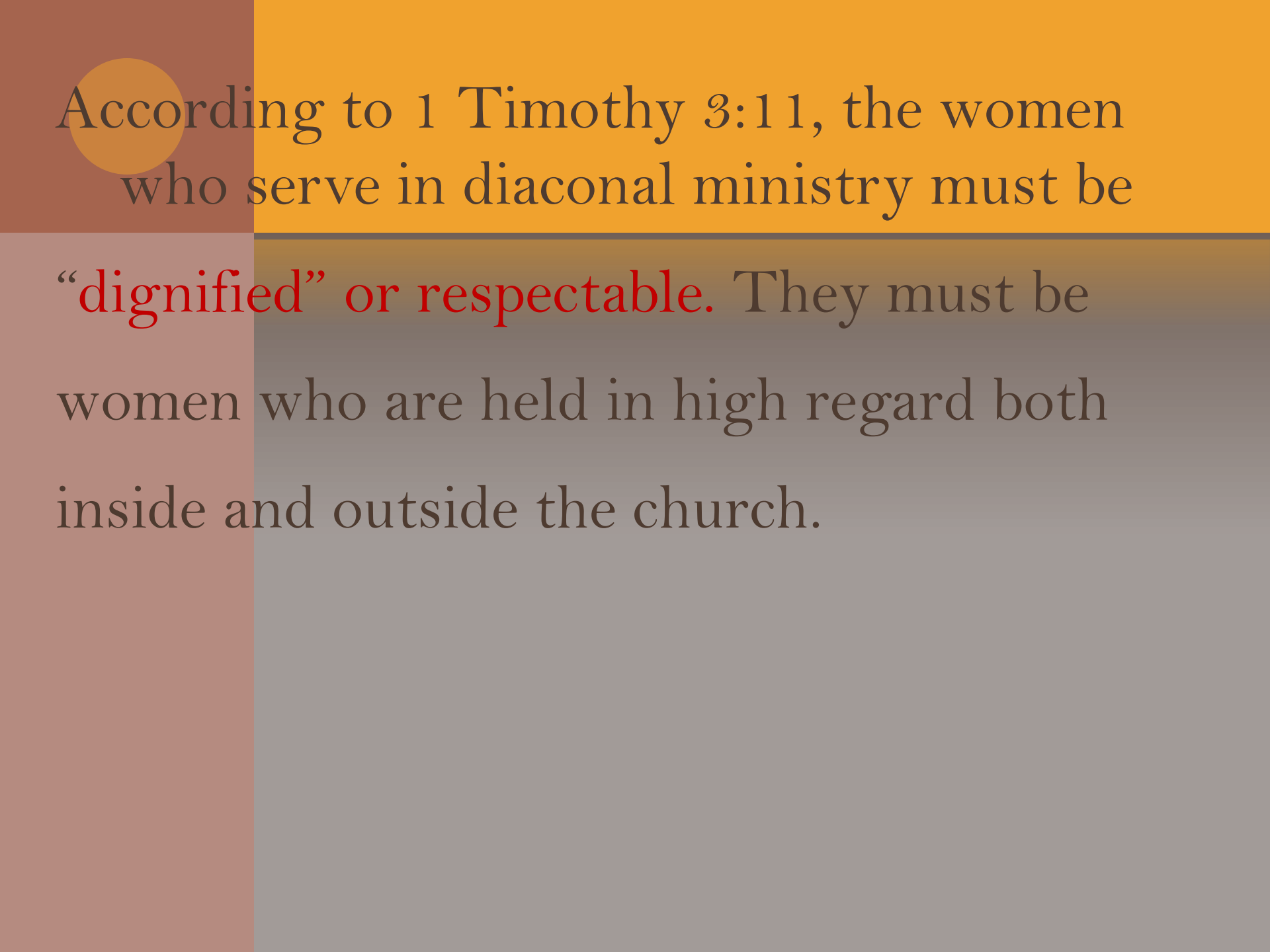
© To summarize, many New Testament women carried out diaconal ministry and one, at least, was called a “deaconess,” even if she was not ordained as an officer of the church.

© The obvious conclusion is that, whatever title they are given, women must be deeply involved in the mercy ministries of the church.



The practice of the True Holiness  
congregations may come close to what  
the Bible teaches. The congregations do  
commission women to the ministry of  
diaconal service, whatever that ministry.

If women are to serve, they must be qualified. **Therefore, they should display the characteristics described in 1 Timothy 3:11.** Thus the biblical instructions for the women echo what has already been said to the men. **The wives of deacons (or deaconesses) are to be “dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things” (1 Tim. 3:11).**

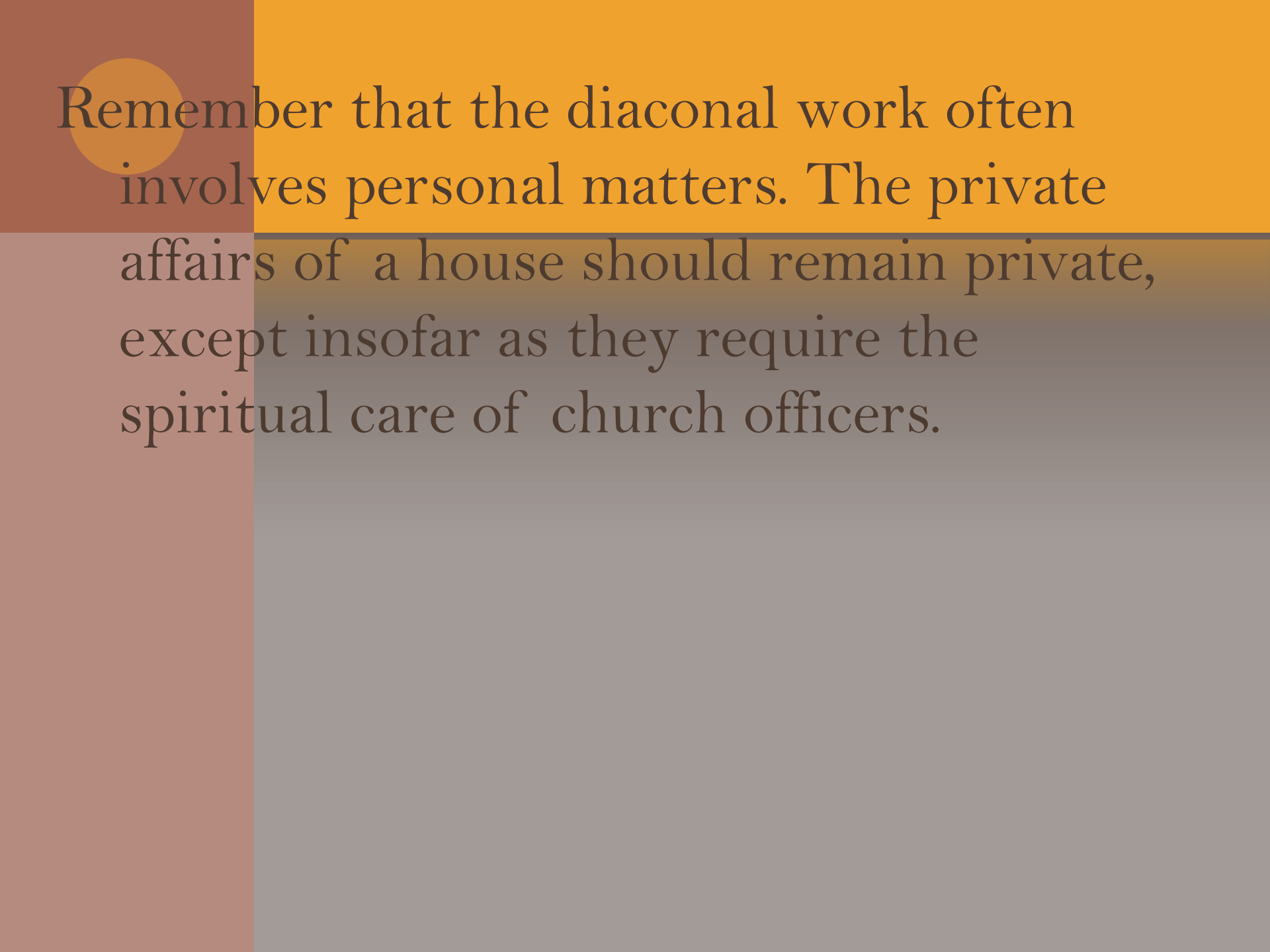


According to 1 Timothy 3:11, the women  
who serve in diaconal ministry must be

“dignified” or respectable. They must be  
women who are held in high regard both  
inside and outside the church.



They must not be “slanderers” (*diabolous*)—  
a word for malicious talk or false  
accusation that is sometimes used of the  
devil himself (e.g. Rev. 12:9-10). The  
reason for this qualification has been  
mentioned already.



Remember that the diaconal work often involves personal matters. The private affairs of a house should remain private, except insofar as they require the spiritual care of church officers.

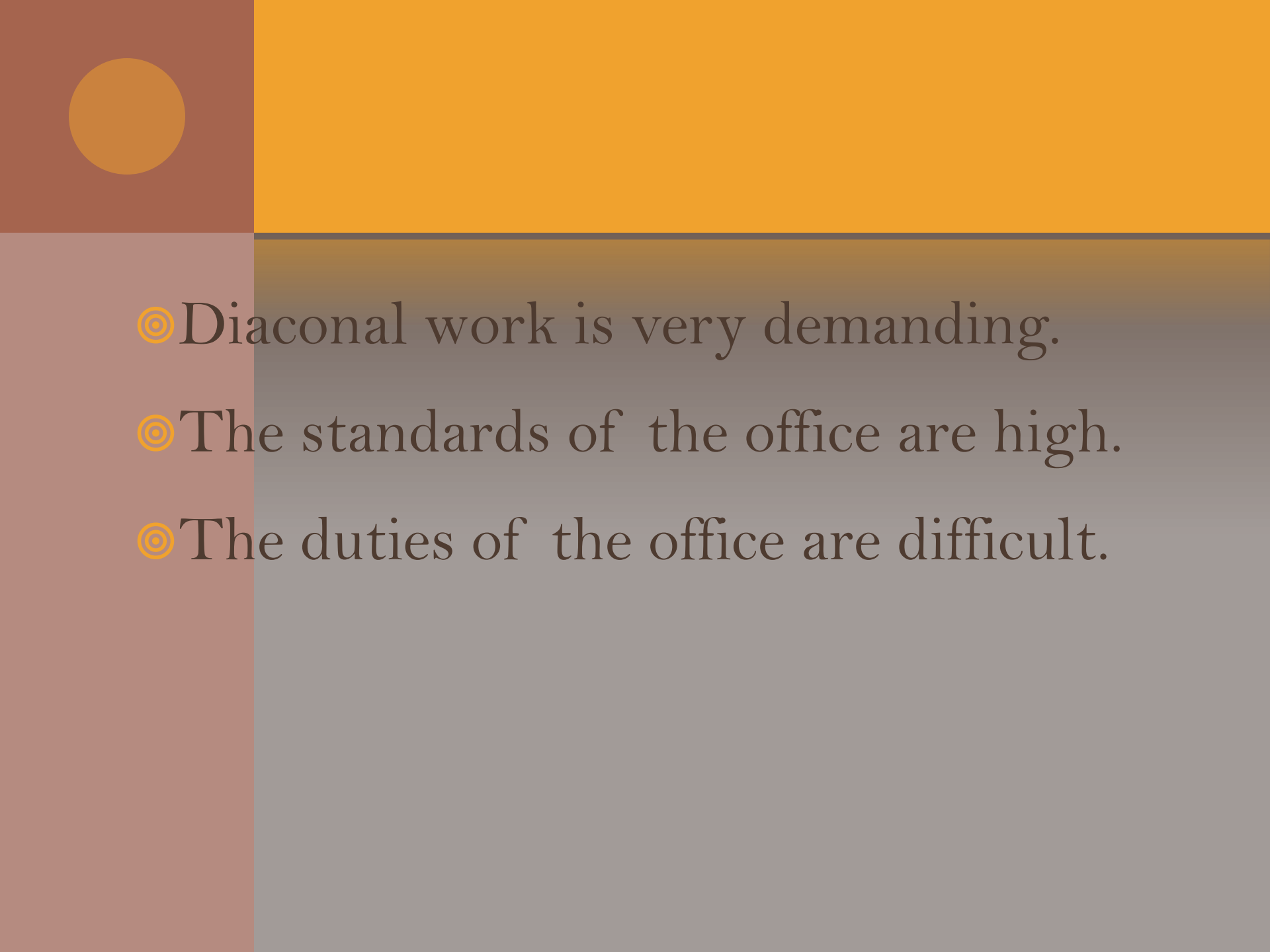
- © Women who serve must not be gossips.
- © To give a further qualification, they must be “sober-minded.” This refers not simply to alcohol, but to self-control in every area of life.
- © The wives of deacons and female deacons must not be self-indulgent in their use of food, clothing or possessions.

- © They must be stable emotionally.
- © And these women must be trustworthy, “faithful in all things.”
- © They must be utterly reliable and completely dependable.
- © They should “minister to those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to any who may be in distress.”

- © The ministry of such women is vital to the health of the church. If the problem with
- © feminist theology does not submit to divine order, and the traditional church has often failed to employ the gifts of women to their full biblical extent.



# A DEACON'S REWARD

- 
- ⦿ Diaconal work is very demanding.
  - ⦿ The standards of the office are high.
  - ⦿ The duties of the office are difficult.



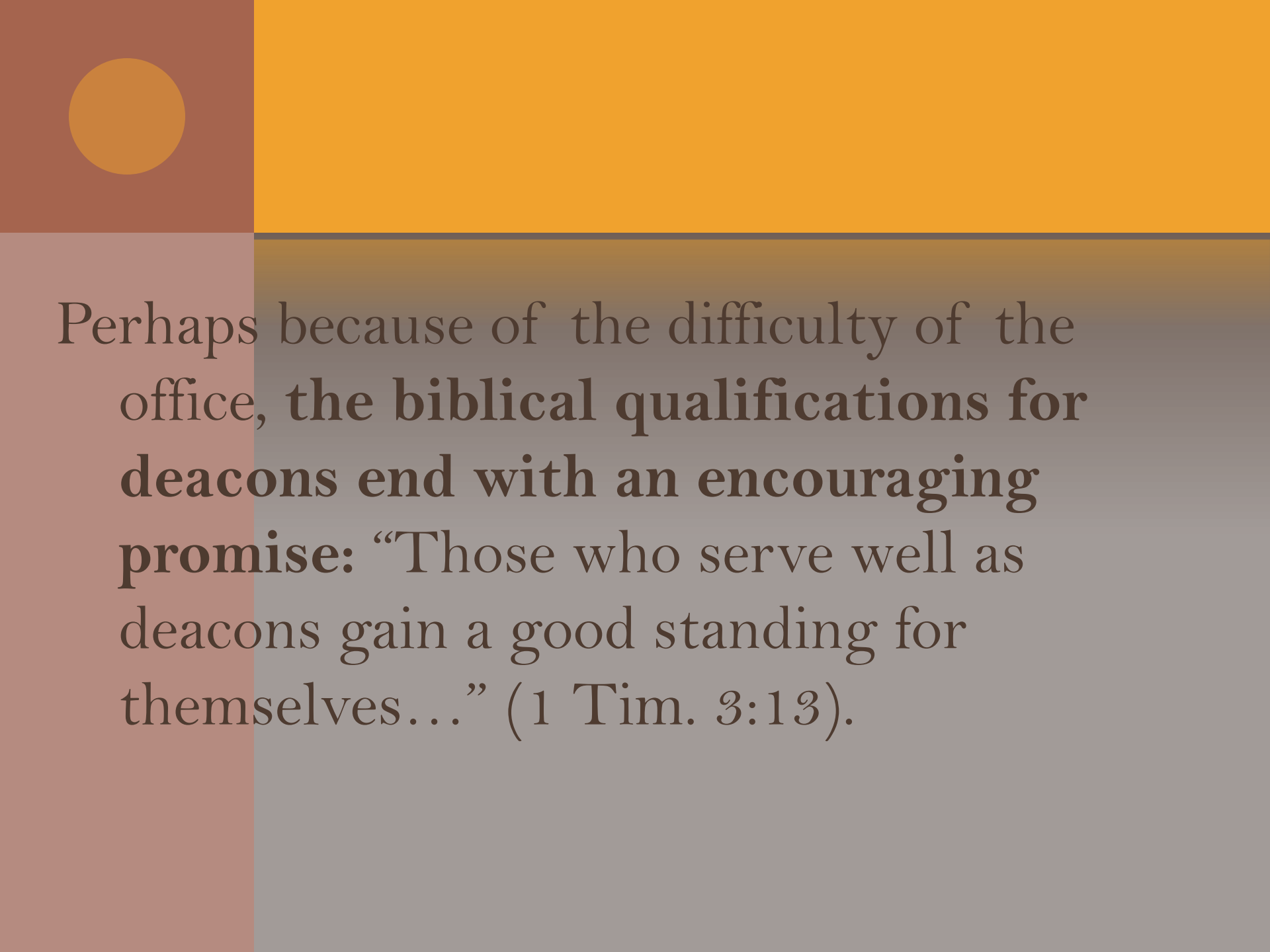
Sometimes deacons and deaconesses get tired of meeting the same needs over and over again.

Other times they are perplexed about what mercy means in a particular situation.





At times, they may become discouraged  
in their service.



Perhaps because of the difficulty of the office, the biblical qualifications for deacons end with an encouraging promise: “Those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves...” (1 Tim. 3:13).



Although much of a deacon's work is done in private, it is noticed and commended by God.



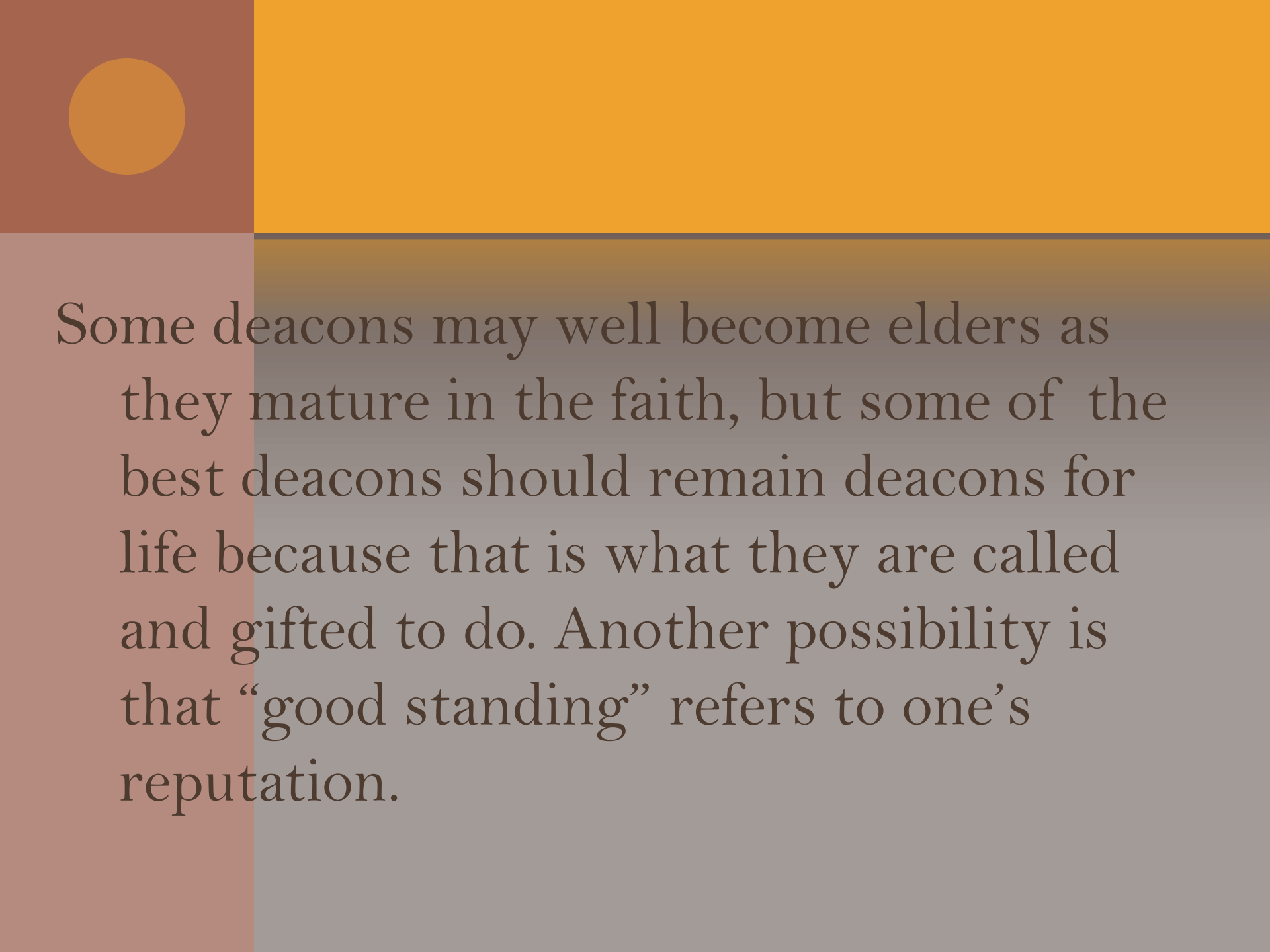
The word for “standing” (*bathmos*) is a word for a degree, rank, or grade.



Deacons are not elders-in training.



The diaconate is a separate office from the elder, having its own dignity and requiring its own gifts.



Some deacons may well become elders as they mature in the faith, but some of the best deacons should remain deacons for life because that is what they are called and gifted to do. Another possibility is that “good standing” refers to one’s reputation.



Thus, deacons who serve well gain spiritual influence in the church.





Or it may even refer to their standing before God. God gives honor to worthy deacons, both in this life and the life to come.



To this is added a second promise.

Deacons who serve well gain “great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 3:13). This confidence (*parresian*) is boldness or assurance.



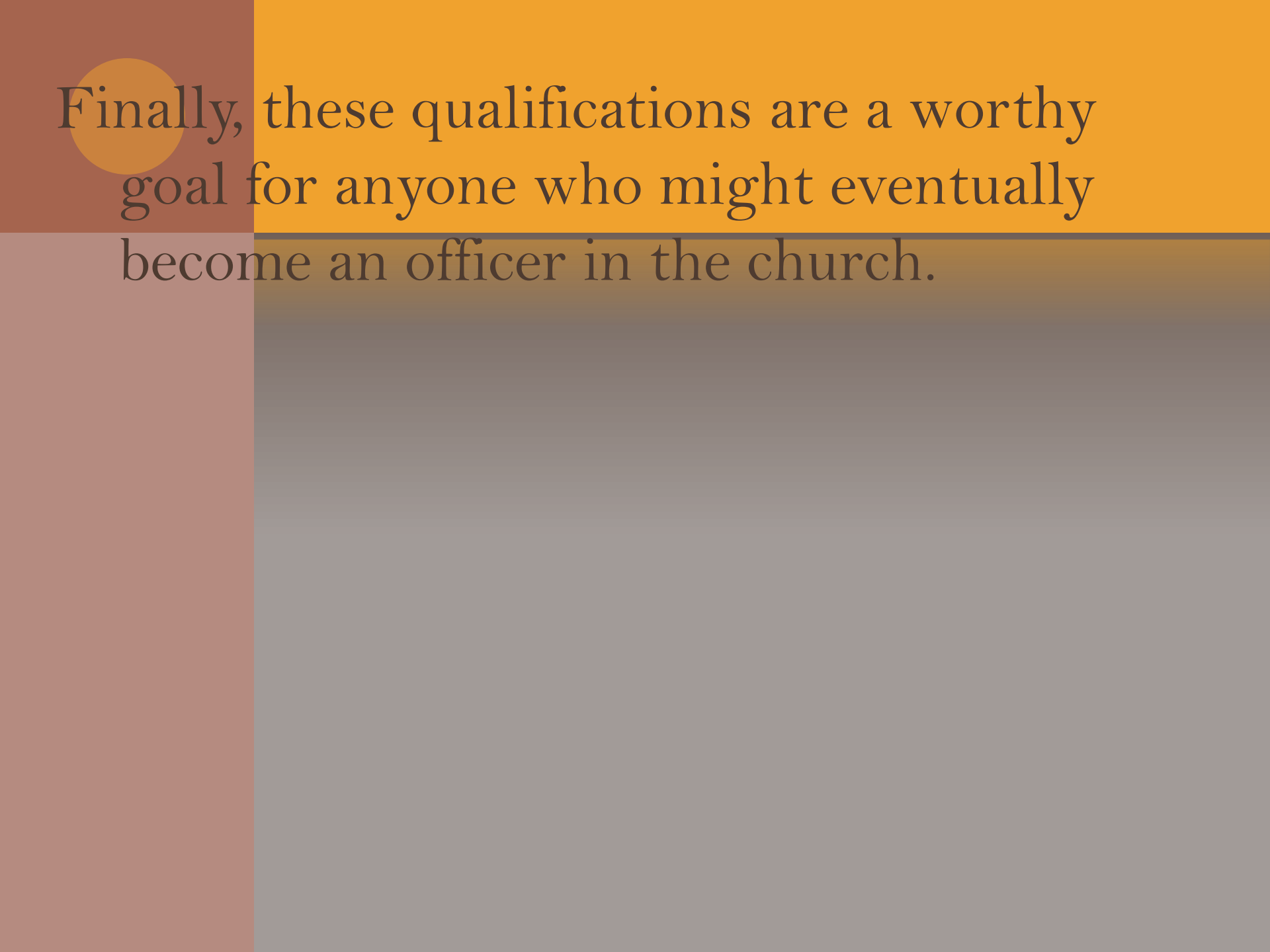
How will the list of qualifications in the bible help us examine those who aspire to be deacons?



First, they are a guide for the church. They help Christians know what to look for when it comes time for deacons to be nominated or elected.



Second, these qualifications are the divine standard for deacons. They are a reminder of how God expects them to behave and what he expects them to believe. They would be good for a deacon to post by the mirror or paste to the inside of a Bible.



Finally, these qualifications are a worthy goal for anyone who might eventually become an officer in the church.



Make yourself available to serve the Lord.

Ask the Holy Spirit to make your life dignified, your doctrine sound, and your family stable.

Even if you never become a deacon, your time will not have been wasted. The qualifications for deacons are simply the virtues of a Christian exercised to a best degree.




Remember that deacons serve because Jesus  
first served them.





**As T. F. Torrance has written:**

It is only in Jesus that we learn what *diakonia* really is; the loving service in mercy that looks for no reward beyond the knowledge that we do, what is commanded of us and looks for no thanks from those to whom mercy is extended,



but it is only because Jesus has made  
our cause His very own, sharing our  
existence in servitude and sharing  
with us His own life of love, that we  
may and can engage in this kind of  
*diakonia* in Him.

T. F. Torrance, "Service in Jesus Christ," in *Service in Christ*, ed. by James I. McCord and  
T. H. L. Parker (London: Epworth, 1966), 3.

P. G. RYKEN 1 Timothy-9-Qualifications for Deacons