

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Romans 16:1-2.**
- B. This is the fourth in a series of 7 lessons on God's Woman of Valor.
- C. Tonight, **God's Woman of Valor: The Xian Deaconess.**

I. THE OFFICE OF DEACONESS?

- A. I do not believe that Paul was instituting the office of a deaconess in 1Tim. 3:11. Why?
 - 1. No special paragraph is used by Paul in speaking of the qualifications of a deaconess like he did with elders and deacons.
 - 2. Because the comments of 3:11 are interjected into the paragraph about deacons it would seem that the service deaconesses give the church is as assistants who render auxiliary help.
 - 3. If there was to be an office of deaconess why is it nowhere specifically stated in the NT?
 - 4. If the "women" of 1Tim. 3:11 are to be deaconesses why aren't they called deaconesses?
 - 5. The reference of Rom. 16:1, 2 does not prove that Phoebe held office in the church.
 - 6. It is not necessary to prove that there was an office of deaconess in order to prove that there were women who the church selected to do special work for the church.
- B. When one looks at the passage in Rom. 16 about Phoebe, she is to be seen as a worker in the church that deserves full acceptance by the brethren. Due to the fact she has helped others, the church in Rome should do whatever they can to help her, for she is deserving. Whiteside said of Paul's statement here, "it does not prove she occupied an official position. ...we let our minds run into officialdom too much."
- C. Rather than trying to make a deaconess one who may hold official office, one should put the qualities found in 1Tim. 3:11 and say these were the things in Phoebe's life that caused Paul to call her a deaconess.

II. THE CHRISTIAN DEACONESS IS... **DIGNIFIED.**

- A. See **1Tim. 3:11a.**
- B. The, KJV says she must be *grave*. It is the same word used in 3:4 speaking of how elders should be ruling their households. The word is used again in 3:8 to define the overall behavior of a deacon.
- C. To be dignified or grave means:
 - 1. Free from excessive levity of character.
 - 2. Free from unnecessary frivolity and fickleness.
 - 3. To be serious and sober-minded; but not severe, stern, or morose.
 - 4. To have a good degree of self-respect and good behavior.
 - 5. All of this should inspire others with respect for her as a person.
- D. A deaconess is a person who is able to realize the seriousness of life and be able to behave in a proper way no matter the circumstances.
- E. Foolishness in life, behavior, money, clothing, etc., is not characteristic of being grave.

III. THE CHRISTIAN DEACONESS IS... **NOT A GOSSIP.**

- A. See **1Tim. 3:11b.**
- B. And notice, that Paul said, not a *malicious* gossip. The deaconess is not out to talk negatively about people. Their speech is positive and encouraging.
- C. Paul spoke of the change in behavior once a person becomes Xian, for all brethren. All falsehood and lying are to be put away (Eph. 4:25-27).
- D. Combine these words w/those of Jas. 3 concerning the tongue being a cause of evil (Jas. 3:6-10; 4:7).

E. Women of valor know the worth of speech that is properly seasoned and do not gossip (Eph. 4:29).

IV. THE CHRISTIAN DEACONESS IS... TEMPERATE.

A. See [1Tim. 3:11c](#).

B. To be temperate means to have a clear perspective and a correct spiritual orientation. The woman of valor (who serves as a deaconess) does not lose her physical, psychological, and spiritual orientation. She remains steadfast, and clear headed.

C. You might say this person is “calm, cool, and collected” (1Th. 5:6, 8).

V. THE CHRISTIAN DEACONESS IS... FAITHFUL IN ALL THINGS.

A. See [1Tim. 3:11d](#).

B. Two important ideas here:

1. To be faithful one must--be trustworthy.
2. To be faithful one must--reach her potential for serving God.

C. The woman of valor is to be trustworthy. She must be able to be counted on to keep her word and do the things she has been asked to do. Those needing help will look to such a one because they know they can count on her to come through and do whatever is necessary.

D. To reach one's potential takes a little stretching. One must try to excel in many different things to find the areas of life where she is the most talented.

E. As the parable of the talents would teach us, the two servants who used their opportunities to do good to the maximum were blessed by the master. The same holds true with God; we must learn to use our talents, abilities, and opportunities to the maximum (Mt. 25:14-30; Rev. 2:10).

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

A. God needs faithful women to do His will.

B. To become a deaconess of the church, God's woman will:

1. Learn to serve whenever, and wherever necessary.
2. Be dignified.
3. Not be a malicious gossip.
4. Be temperate.
5. Be faithful in all things.

C. Next lesson: God's Woman of Valor--The Woman of Valor [1].

D. To become a woman of valor, one must obey X.

E. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.