

The word "serve" is διακονεῖν, from διακονέω.

The word "tables" is τραπέζαις from τράπεζα. This word has two basic meanings: (1) a table the table on which food is placed; (2) the table or stand of a money changer.

verse 3 -- "But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task."

The words "of good reputation" translate μαρτυρουμένους, from μαρτυρέω, which in the middle and passive means "well reported of, accredited, attested, approved."

The word "task" is χρείας, from χρεῖα. This word has two meanings: (1) necessity, need; (2) duty, business, task.

verse 4 -- "But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word."

The word "ministry" is διακονία.

Notice: The same word (διακονία) is used to refer to the serving of daily food (verse 1) and the communication of the Word (verse 4). Both of these actions are service to God, and both minister to the needs of the saints; the former to their physical needs; the latter to their spiritual needs. These first "deacons" are placed in charge of looking after the physical or temporal needs of the saints.

Third, the continuing need for persons to superintend the ministry to the widows and the poor. of the church, together with other temporal responsibilities of the church

I Timothy 5:3-10, 16 -- "Honor widows who are widows indeed; but if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family, and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God. Now she who is a widow indeed, and who has been left alone has fixed her hope on God, and continues in entreaties and prayers night and day. But she who gives herself to wanton pleasure is dead even while she lives. Prescribe these things as well, so that they may be above reproach. But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. Let a widow be put on the list only if she is not less than sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saint's feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work . . . . If any woman who is a believer has dependent widows, let her assist them, and let not the church be burdened, so that it may assist those who are widows indeed."