

Deacons and Diakonia in Early Christianity

The First Two Centuries Edited by Bart J. Koet, Edwina Murphy and Esko Ryökäs

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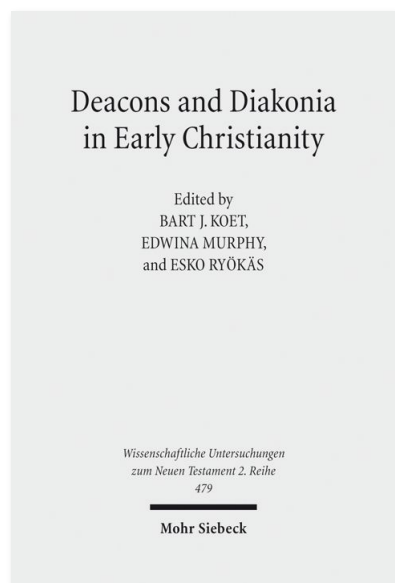
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In German-speaking countries, the role of the diaconate has been strongly influenced by nineteenth-century ideas of diakonia as service towards the poor. As important as the social initiatives stemming from this perspective have been, in order to correctly understand deacons and diakonia in the early church, we must go back to the sources. For this volume, focused on the first two centuries of Christianity, scholars from a range of backgrounds consider the use of diakonos and related words in the New Testament and extra-biblical sources, both Christian and otherwise. These texts reveal what deacons actually did, helping us to understand the past and giving guidance for the present, particularly in ecumenical discussions concerning the ministry.

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