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## *Diakonia* in the New Testament: A Dialogue with John N. Collins

**Author:** [Paula Gooder](#)

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The word ministry is widely used, though difficult to define. Within the New Testament, ministry most often translates diakonia. For many years scholars were agreed that diakonia meant humble service but the work of John N. Collins has challenged this. This article seeks to evaluate Collins's work and to ask what his study contributes to an understanding of 'ministry' within the New Testament. There are no substantial problems with Collins's interpretation of diakonia and its cognates. Most occurrences of the word in the New Testament mean 'the carrying out of a commissioned task' than the more traditional 'humble service'. This can offer some help in the understanding and shaping of ministry within the church today.



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