

## Study 4- 1 Timothy

### Read 1 Timothy 3:1-13

Though the church is an organism, a living and growing body united to Christ, the church is also an organization. In fact, every organism has to be organized or it will die. The human body is a living organism, but it is also a highly organized machine. If the local church is to do its task effectively, it must have leadership, with results in good organization. The terms “pastor,” “elder,” and “bishop” refer to the same office. Elder is a word that simply means an older, mature person. In the early church, pastors were chosen from the mature men of the fellowship. Bishop means “overseer.” The local pastor, then, was an elder in terms of spiritual maturity, and an overseer in terms of ministry.

“Blameless” does not mean sinless; rather, it means “without reproach.” Since moral laziness was a serious problem in those days, the pastor was required to have but one wife; that is, there had to be no question as to his marriage standards. “Vigilant” means “temperate,” referring to sober judgment and action. “Sober” indicates seriousness of purpose and self-control. “Good behavior” should be translated “orderly”; it suggests a well-ordered life and testimony. The pastor must not be money-hungry; he must have patience toward the sheep; he must not be contentious and he must be free from greediness, putting Christ and the church first in his life. The pastor should be the head of the household, and he should have his children under control. He must not be a new convert; if he is, Satan may puff him up with pride and he will fall into sin. The pastor must have good testimony even among the unsaved.

“Likewise” indicates that God has equally important standards for the deacon, for he is to work with the pastor in guiding the affairs of the church. A “double-tongued” person is a tale-bearer, one who says one thing to one person and another thing to another person, trying to win the favor of both. Church leaders must be people who keep their word. Some translate vs.11 as “deaconesses”; the word is probably “wives.” In any event, these standards applied also to the deacons wives. Note that both pastors and deacons are to be proved before given the office. The deacon’s office is to be used, not just filled. Church officers who are faithful will acquire a good standing before God and men, and are able to further the work of Christ.

### Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7

No church can operate for long without a qualified leadership team. Paul here, sets down general guidelines for choosing people capable of doing the job. No one of course is perfect. But Paul laid out some fairly intense qualifications for those who would desire to become part of the church’s leadership. If character has tended to count for less and less in secular leadership, it continues to count a great deal in those who would hold office in the church. It is certainly not for everybody, especially the calling to teach. As another author in Scripture reminds us: “not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly” (James 3:1).

1. Paul used the phrase “faithful saying” in 1 Timothy 1:15, 3:1, 4:9. What is the point of this phrase? How is it used each time it appears?

2. Paul used the following terms to establish qualifications for those who want to become overseers in the church: “husband of one wife,” “temperate,” “selfcontrolled,” “respectable,” “hospitable,” “able to teach,” “not given to drunkenness,” “not violent but gentle,” “not quarrelsome,” “not a lover of money,” “manages his own family well,” “not a recent convert,” “has a good reputation with outsiders.” How does each qualification help make a better leader?

3. Why would it be important for an overseer to “having his children in submission with all reverence”?

4. Paul’s comment in 1 Timothy 3:5 is often ignored today, with unfortunate results. What do you think is the connection between managing a family and managing a church well? Why do you think this connection is so often ignored?

5. Why is it important for an overseer to have a “good reputation” with outsiders?

6. New converts become mature enough to serve in a leadership role by learning from more mature believers. A mature Christian must take a new convert under his wing and “show him the ropes.” (The things which you have learned and received and heard and saw in me these do. And the God of peace will be with you. Phil. 4:9) There are more new believers who desire such a relationship than there are mature believers willing to give of their time. What dangers could a young convert be exposed to if he were given a leadership role within the church?

Read 1 Timothy 3:8-13 and answer the following questions.

7. 1 Timothy 3:8-10 lists several qualifications for becoming a deacon. Reverent (worthy of respect), Not double tongued, Not given to much wine, Not greedy for money, Holding the mystery of the faith, Pure conscience, Blameless. Discuss and note the importance of each one.

8. 1 Timothy 3:11 lists several qualifications for the wives of deacons. Reverent (worthy of respect), Not slanderers (not backbiting talkers), Temperate (showing self-restraint), Faithful (in all things). Discuss and note the importance of each.

9. Paul says that deacons who serve well, “obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith.” Why do you think this is? Does this only apply to deacons, or to others as well? Explain