

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

1) 02 June 2019.....1Timothy 1..... Entrusted
 2) 09 June.....1Timothy 2..... On Mission
3) 16 June.....1Timothy 3..... Setting the Example
 4) 23 June.....1Timothy 4..... Staying the Course
 5) 30 June.....1Timothy 5..... Being Responsible
 6) 07 July.....1Timothy 6..... Lasting Investments
 7) 14 July.....2Timothy 1..... Confidence
 8) 21 July.....2Timothy 2..... Focused
 9) 28 July.....2Timothy 3..... Diligent
 10) 04 August.....2Timothy 4..... Enduring
 11) 11 August.....Titus 1..... Living with Opposition
 12) 18 August.....Titus 2..... Living with Integrity
 13) 25 August.....Titus 3..... Living to Do

INTRODUCTION

- In this chapter Paul provides the general qualifications required for church elders, deacons, and even for their wives
- Job descriptions for elders and deacons are not defined here. Paul just illuminates the character of elders, deacons, and their wives

Passage	Comments
1Timothy 3:1-13	<p>Elder and Deacon Qualifications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v1. "This is a faithful saying..." – Paul uses this "faithful saying" 5x (1Tim 1:15; 3:1; 4:9; 2Tim 2:11; Titus3:9) to highlight a significant teaching or concept • v1. "...if any man desires/aspires to the office of an elder, it is a commendable desire." – In fact, everyone – male & female, young & old, should aspire to mirror the attributes or qualifications of a spiritually mature elder whether they are qualified to be one or not • Are there exceptions? Can an Elder or Deacon be single or a widower? Can an elder/deacon have a sordid past before getting saved? Can an elder/deacon be divorced & remarried or married to a divorcee? Can they be women? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ The qualifications are common sense guidelines to ensure the church has stellar examples to follow ♦ Churches have the liberty to invoke additional requirements. E.g., An elder should not have a debt problem; or an addiction problem, etc.
Why Must Elders & Deacons be a cut above the rest?	<p>It looks like Elders & Deacons need to be as perfect examples of righteous men as possible WHY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this even possible? • The only big difference between Elders & Deacons is Elders have more spiritual/biblical depth and maturity • God is not looking for perfect men, but holy (righteous & obedient) men, proven men, unrepachable men, men of highest ethics & integrity, spiritually mature men, praying men, disciplined men, Spirit-filled men, men of the Word <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Men who have no reproach, even from those outside the church. No one can say, "I know what you did one Summer when no one wasn't looking" ♦ They don't have any skeletons in the closet ♦ ...and they are men. Consider this: What would men be good for if women fulfilled these roles as well? • BUT, some may say, Honest John, a former addict, thief, murderer, adulterer, homosexual, or child molester is a new creature in Christ, old things are passed away & all things are new, is surely qualified to be an elder or deacon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Honest John, with his past behind him, may be a great S/S teacher, a missionary, an evangelist, or seminary professor, but he may not be qualified to be a church elder/deacon because of some past sins, especially sexual sins, sins which are of the body 1Cor 6:18 ♦ Elders & Deacons must fight immorality of all sorts inside & outside the church, and they cannot be tainted with it, else it is hypocrisy. God wants pure men who have to rebuke others..... Eph 5:3, 1Tim 5:20-22

Passage	Comments
3:14-16	<p>The Church is a Living Organism, Not a Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v15. Paul sees the church as more than just a building to hold a worship service in, but as a living organism (church of the LIVING God) with the purpose to be a pillar of truth for society • So how do thousands of churches around the world, with many having different beliefs about the Bible function as a single organism of truth? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Answer: God's Word must be central • v16. Paul provides a quote from an early creed, which gives credence to churches being established soon after the Lord's crucifixion and resurrection

Position	Comparison Qualifications	Passage(s)
Elder	Self-control	1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8
Elder	Hospitable	1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8
Elder	Able to teach	1Tim 3:2; 5:17; Titus 1:9
Elder	Not violent, but gentle	1Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7
Elder	Not quarrelsome	1Tim 3:3
Elder	Not a lover of money	1Tim 3:3
Elder	Not a recent convert	1Tim 3:6
Elder	Not overbearing	Titus 1:7
Elder	Not quick-tempered	Titus 1:7
Elder	Loves what is good	Titus 1:8
Elder	Upright, holy	Titus 1:8
Elder	Disciplined	Titus 1:8
Deacon	Sincere	1Tim 3:8
Deacon	Tested	1Tim 3:10
Deacon	Full of the Spirit and Wisdom	Acts 6:2
Elder / Deacon	Above reproach (blameless)	1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6-7 1Tim 3:10
Elder / Deacon	Husband of one wife (adultery-free)	1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6 1Tim 3:12
Elder / Deacon	Temperate	1Tim 3:2; Titus 1:7; 2:2 1Tim 3:11 (wives)
Elder / Deacon	Respectable	1Tim 3:2;
Elder / Deacon	Dignified	1Tim 3:8
Elder / Deacon	Not "addicted" to wine	1Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7
Elder / Deacon	Not "addicted" to much wine	1Tim 3:8
Elder / Deacon	Manages his own family well	1Tim 3:4; 1Tim 3:12
Elder / Deacon	Sees that his children obey him	1Tim 3:4-5; Titus 1:6 1Tim 3:12
Elder / Deacon	Good reputation with outsiders	1Tim 3:7
Elder / Deacon	Good reputation	Acts 6:3
Elder / Deacon	Doesn't pursue dishonest gain	Titus 1:7; 1Tim 3:8
Elder / Deacon	Holds to the truth	Titus 1:9; 1Tim 3:9
Wives	Dignified	1Tim 3:11
Wives	Not malicious gossips	1Tim 3:11
Wives	Temperate (controlled-behavior)	1Tim 3:11
Wives	Faithful in all things (including marriage)	1Tim 3:11 cf 1Tim 5:9-10



Topic	Comments
Elder Selection Process	Originally, Elders were selected by Apostles or by Apostolic emissaries such as Timothy and Titus, and they were selected from within the current church body of believers. They were not brought in from the outside, because elders had to know their sheep. Then the Elder selection process would be self-perpetuating by qualified Elders selecting other qualified Elders from within the church body...assuming churches groomed their people effectively. Congregational-ruled churches (most SBC's) relax this stipulation. The danger from this is "Privates then select their next General." Throughout Scripture, Generals always pick Generals: Moses picked Joshua; Apostles selected Elders; then Elders would select Elders.
Deacon Selection Process	Originally, Apostles had the congregation identify qualified deacons after giving them the qualification criteria; then the Apostles would anoint/confirm the men for service through praying & laying on of hands Acts 6:1-6 (assuming the men identified in Acts 6 were deacons) This process would continue, with Elders replacing the Apostles as church overseers of spiritual/doctrinal guidance, and Deacons addressing the physical needs
Elder/Deacon Correctional Process	Since Elders commission Elders and Deacons, then it stands to reason Elders should be the ones to carry out disciplinary action for a violation of a qualification, such as sexual misconduct or other severe accusation. Charges against Elders should not be frivolous 1Tim 5:19
Challenges for the Modern Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Today, there is a plethora of elder roles depending on the church type – Pastors, Bishops, Priests, Elders, and some churches still retain the title of Apostles • Selection process of Elders and Deacons also varies depending on a church's by-laws • College degrees have replaced character testing in some churches. Or a "good 'ol boy" network develops. • And, as some churches compromise Scripture and adopt more liberal leanings, church leadership is becoming inclusive of all sexes and sexual orientations
Lessons from Jeremiah and Ezekiel on How NOT to Shepherd God's People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jer 10:21 <i>The shepherds have become stupid and have not sought the LORD; Therefore they have not prospered, and all their flock is scattered.</i> • Jer 50:6 <i>My people have become lost sheep because their shepherds have led them astray.</i> • Eze 34:2 <i>Woe, you shepherds who have been feeding yourselves! You need to be feeding the flock?</i> • Eze 34:8 <i>My flock has become food for all the beasts of the field for lack of a shepherd, and My shepherds did not search for My flock, but rather the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock;</i>
A Lesson on Bad Sheep	But what if the sheep are the problem? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeremiah 22:22 [God will remove] <i>all your shepherds... Then you will surely be ashamed and humiliated because of all your wickedness.</i> • Hoshea 4:16 <i>Since Israel is stubborn like a stubborn heifer, can the LORD shepherd them like a lamb in a large field? [rhetorical answer is NO]</i>
The Good Shepherd is coming	Yet, God still promises to protect His people and give them the leaders needed as seen from the OT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jeremiah 3:15 <i>I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you knowledge & understanding</i> • Jeremiah 23:4 <i>I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing</i> • Eze 34:12 <i>I will care for My sheep and will deliver them from all the places to which they were scattered.</i> • Eze 37:24 <i>My servant David (Jesus) will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes</i>

Topic	Comments
What does "Husband of One Wife" mean? (1Tim 3:2; 3:12; Titus 1:6)	<p>We know what Scripture says, but what does it mean?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literally, it means "a one-woman man" • Conservatively, it conveys a man who is not in an adulterous relationship (he is not divorced & remarried, and he is not married to a wife who was divorced) Mat 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Lk 16:18 • Also, consider that the wife of an elder or deacon should fit the qualifications noted for a faithful widow as being the "wife of one husband" or a "one-man woman" 1Tim 5:9-10
	<p>BUT what if we can't find qualified men to be Elders & Deacons?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is better to go with a few qualified men vs having a hoard of unqualified men who will eventually cause or be unable to biblically deal with major problems later Jeremiah 12:10 • Consider merging with another church to strengthen each other • Fix your discipleship problem! If we are not grooming men to be Elders & Deacons, then we have failed the Great Commission. It is a shame when churches have to bring a stranger in to lead them. <p>What happens to a church if they have "good ol' boys" as Elders and Deacons, or worse?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the Corinthian church, whom Paul called a big bunch of babies who were struggling with each other 1Cor 3:1-3 • Consider the Church at Galatia where Paul said, "you foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you into false doctrine?" ... Gal 3:1-3 • Consider 5 of the 7 churches in Revelation 2-3 who were about to lose their "candlesticks" for not dealing with immorality and doctrinal issues, deadness, lack of love, and luke-warmness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Thyatira is the Scariest Church. Jesus praised that church for her love, faith, patience, and service, and for her latter works being greater than her former works – BUT they tolerated immorality amongst the leadership. The price to be paid was that Jesus, Himself, was going to strike their children dead. <p>Question #1: Where is the younger generation these days? Many churches are aging churches with few young people. Is this what it means to strike the children dead in our days?</p> <p>Question #2: Is the leadership tolerating immorality amongst itself and/or within the church? We may need to fix some things before we see young people coming into church once again.</p> <p>And what does this mean, "Deacons must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear or pure conscience" 1Timothy 3:9</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In brief, they take their faith seriously. They are not undisciplined. • They know what is at stake & they are ready to "fight the good fight"

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- Though many in church may not qualify to be elders or deacons, yet everyone can share in and support the work of elders and deacons, & even emulate the spiritually mature characteristics of elders and deacons, which yields its own blessings in one's life time

NEXT WEEK: 1Timothy 4. Paul stresses the need to "pay close attention" to sound doctrine so people can be saved, both from Hell & from deception

