

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

JULY 13TH-14TH, 2019 // 1 TIMOTHY

The church has a role to play. As a follower of Christ, you have a role to play. There are qualifications for ministry. Godly character isn't just for pastors.

OVERSEERS (1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7)

CHURCH STRUCTURE

The church is the body of Christ made up of a body of believers who follow the teachings of Jesus. It's a living organism and a living organization. For any church to be effective it must have mission, vision, leadership and structure.

- There need to be qualifications for all those in leadership, not just pastors.

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Phil. 1:1, "Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus: To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons."

- Paul gives us the makeup of the church: saints, bishops, and deacons.
- He just defined church as the people. **You are saints.**

THE NEW TESTAMENT PASTOR

Terms like Overseer, Elder, Bishop, in this context all refer to the same office. The word simply means a more mature person. Not just older, but more spiritually mature.

- **The Overseer was an elder in terms of spiritual maturity, and an overseer in terms of ministry.**

INTERCHANGABLE TITLES

Whether you say Elder, Overseer or Bishop, they are interchangeable titles. In Titus 1, Paul tells him to, "Appoint elders in every town." Some churches call them bishops. Today we use pastor based on the model of Christ as a shepherd. Pastors oversee spiritual direction and ministries of the church.

A NOBLE WORK

It's a noble task for those who want to be Overseers and Elders. The office of the pastor involves guiding, leading and serving the church. It's a position of servanthood.

- Whether we're talking about lead pastors or Overseers of small communities, Paul is asserting leadership is vital and there are essential qualifications.

PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- **Above reproach:** Doesn't mean sinless, but they have a good reputation.
- **Self-controlled:** Temperate.
- **Evidence of the Spirit:** Gal. 5:23. By the Spirit's influence and power, we are enabled to live a life that is controlled not by our nature, but by God's Spirit.
- **Sensible, respectable, hospitable.**
- **Not an excessive drinker.** We cannot be controlled by the Spirit while inebriated.
- **Not a bully, but gentle.** Arguing doesn't convince anyone.
- **Not quarrelsome, not greedy.**

FAMILY QUALIFICATIONS

- **Husband of one wife.** This was about being married to one woman, faithful to her in the covenant of marriage; having a pattern of honor, love and devotion.
- **Must manage his own household.** The home is a proving ground for his leadership potential in the church. Don't give away your God-given responsibility!

CHURCH QUALIFICATIONS

- **Can't be a new convert.** Character is built over time. A lifestyle of faithfulness and good character over time provides evidence of maturity. It doesn't guarantee maturity. The devil's issue was pride.
- **Pride is a sin that turned angels into devils. James 4 says, "God resists the proud."**
- **Must have a good reputation.** If someone has a bad reputation outside the church, the witness inside the church is damaged. Our daily life has to win the respect of outsiders. 1 Thess. 4:12
- **Able to teach.** This is about giving good instruction as well as faithful confrontation.

DEACONS (1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13)

WHAT IS A DEACON?

Paul describes the qualifications but doesn't give us their duties. Differing views in the church:

- Manage church property
- Supervise pastoral care
- **It actually means servant and almost always refers to someone in some form of ministry or service.**

TITLES OR RESPONSIBILITIES

These qualifications are for those in charge of ministry and service both inside and outside the church. **We call them Volunteers.**

- **Children's ministry volunteers, High School volunteers, those who lead lifegroups, and those who teach our classes.**

DEACON AND OVERSEER SIMILARITIES

Paul says, "likewise," as in similar to the Overseers. Deacons must be respected, not drink a lot, not be greedy, they must be tested to prove blameless, husband of one wife, manage their homes.

- These are qualifications for volunteering or leading in ministry but should be the mark of a Christian.

SERVANTS IN THE CHURCH

"**Holding the mystery of godliness**" is a warning against allowing into leadership those who aren't grounded in their faith or hold to strange doctrines.

- We have to ensure those in leadership roles have sound doctrine and theology that align with what the bible teaches.

MAJORS VS. MINORS

There are absolute truths that are foundational to the church.

- There is one true God, Jesus is God's Son, the Trinity, the inerrancy of scripture, among others.
- We must guard those truths. This is why we don't let just anyone teach or lead ministry.

WHY ADDRESS WIVES?

Vs. 11 mentions qualifications for wives or women. They also must be worthy of respect, not slanderers or gossips that are self-controlled and faithful. Why?

- Women are meant to serve as well as men, not in place of men.
- **This isn't a separate set of qualifications but being filled with the Spirit.**

GOD'S HOUSEHOLD (1 TIMOTHY 3:14-16)

REASON FOR WRITING

The church must have order. Elders, deacons/servants and members each have a responsibility to each other, the community and world.

- Paul wants us to know how to behave.
- The church is those who represent Christ in the world.

HOUSEHOLD OF GOD

The purpose of Paul's instruction was to encourage us to be responsible to the purpose for which Christ called the church. We are to conduct ourselves "**in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.**" Phil. 1:27

- The church should be a lighthouse to the world where truth can be found to the glory of God.

MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

The format is probably a hymn or creed used in worship they would've been familiar with. In fact, this is the second time Paul's used it in this chapter.

- "Mystery" in Paul's writings is a term that refers to something that was once hidden which is now revealed.

GODLINESS IS THE MESSAGE

To miss this message is to miss everything. Elders, deacons and saints can't be wishy washy on this subject. Settle the issue in your life; a relationship with Jesus and godliness is the only way to holiness.

- **A life in Christ should permeate everything we do.**

CHRIST ALONE

In short, the gospel is Jesus. Jesus came to earth, was crucified and vindicated by the Holy Spirit, seen by angels, preached, believed and was taken up in glory.

- **The message is Christ crucified and raised to life for the forgiveness of sins.**

CHARACTER MATTERS FOR EVERYONE

- Are you holding fast to the mystery of godliness? **Do we live in a way that Christ is our only hope?**
- Are you waiting for everyone else to do the work? **Is it just me, Corey, Dave, and all the employees? Are you leaving ministry up to the 'pros'?**
- Everyone in the church has a role. **Since you're the church, what role are you playing?**
- Integrity, godliness, actions matter. **These qualifications for elders, deacons and saints all come from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.**