

Table of Contents

For 1 Timothy 3

READ THE APPROPRIATE CHAPTER Page 32

READ AND DISCUSS EACH VERSE AND TRANSLATION AMONG YOUR GROUP (1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER THREE). Page 33

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS (1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER THREE). Page 39

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR DISCUSSION AMONG YOUR GROUP (1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER THREE). Page 40

I TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3

In Your Group Read 1 Timothy chapter three (aloud) in a modern translation or read it in the King James Version (below). As a Group, Discuss the general content of the chapter.

THE LETTER OF 1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3 King James Version

1 TIMOTHY 3: [1] This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. **[2]** A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; **[3]** Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; **[4]** One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; **[5]** (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) **[6]** Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. **[7]** Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. **[8]** ¶ Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; **[9]** Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. **[10]** And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. **[11]** Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. **[12]** Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. **[13]** For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. **[14]** ¶ These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: **[15]** But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. **[16]** And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP: Read and Discuss each verse and translation along with the “Additional Information” in each box provided.

**1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3
VERSES 1-3**

1 Timothy 3: 1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. [2] A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; [3] Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; (King James Version)

¹It is a true saying that if someone wants to be an elder, he desires an honorable responsibility. ²For an elder must be a man whose life cannot be spoken against. He must be faithful to his wife. He must exhibit self-control, live wisely, and have a good reputation. He must enjoy having guests in his home and must be able to teach. ³He must not be a heavy drinker or be violent. He must be gentle, peace loving, and not one who loves money. **(New Living Translation)**

¹It is true that anyone who desires to be a church official wants to be something worthwhile. ²That's why officials must have a good reputation and be faithful in marriage. They must be self-controlled, sensible, well-behaved, friendly to strangers, and able to teach. ³They must not be heavy drinkers or troublemakers. Instead, they must be kind and gentle and not love money. **(Contemporary English Version)**

If anyone wants to provide leadership in the church, good! But there are preconditions: A leader must be well-thought-of, committed to his wife, cool and collected, accessible, and hospitable. He must know what he's talking about, not be overfond of wine, not pushy but gentle, not thin-skinned, not money-hungry. (verses 1-3) **(The Message)**

¹It is a true saying that if a man wants to be a pastor he has a good ambition. ²For a pastor must be a good man whose life cannot be spoken against. He must have only one wife, and he must be hard working and thoughtful, orderly, and full of good deeds. He must enjoy having guests in his home and must be a good Bible teacher. ³He must not be a drinker or quarrelsome, but he must be gentle and kind and not be one who loves money. **(The Living Bible)**

[1] This is something you can trust: “If a man wants to be an overseer, he desires a good work.” **[2]** An overseer: must be above suspicion, must be a faithful married man, must be sensible, must have self-control, must be organized, must love people enough to invite them into his home, must be a good teacher, **[3]** must not be addicted to wine, must not be a violent man, must be gentle, must be peaceful, must not love money. **(The Simple English Bible)**

Additional Information: In this chapter the qualifications for pastors and deacons are given. It is of utmost importance that leaders be qualified to teach and set an example for the rest of the believers.

In the New Testament the words overseer, elder, pastor, and bishop are used interchangeably to describe the same men (See Acts 20:17, 28; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-2). Bishops, pastors, overseers, elders are responsible to lead, preach and teach (1 Tim. 5:17), help the spiritually weak (1 Thess. 5:12-

14), care for the church (1 Peter 5:1-2), ordain other leaders (1 Timothy 4:14) and be an example to God's people (1 Peter 5:3).

(Verse 1) – “Bishop” is the Greek word *episkope* meaning oversight, overseership, office, charge. (The overseer or presiding officer of a Christian church). (See 1 Tim. 5:17, 1 Thess. 5:12, Heb. 13:7). (Thayer's Lexicon).

(Verse 2) – “Blameless” means that no valid accusation of wrongdoing can be made against him. This is the overarching requirement for a pastor. (MacArthur Commentary, p. 1785).

“The husband of one wife.” Literally the Greek means a “one-woman man.” The issue is not the marital status, but his moral and sexual purity. (Ibid., p. 1785).

1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3

VERSES 4-5

1 Timothy 3: [4] One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; [5] (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) (King James Version)

[4] He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. **[5]** (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) **(New International Version)**

⁴ He must be a good family leader, having children who cooperate with full respect. ⁵ (If someone does not know how to lead the family, how can that person take care of God's church?) **(New Century Version)**

He must handle his own affairs well, attentive to his own children and having their respect. For if someone is unable to handle his own affairs, how can he take care of God's church? (verses 4-5) **(The Message)**

He must have proper authority in his own household, and be able to control and command the respect of his children. (For if a man cannot rule in his own house how can he look after a church of God?) (verses 4-5) **(Phillips Translation)**

[4] He must be a man who manages his own family well and brings his children up to obey him and be well-behaved: **[5]** how can any man who does not understand how to manage his own family have responsibility for the church of God? **(Jerusalem Bible)**

He must be one who manages his own household well and wins obedience from his children, and a man of the highest principles. If a man does not know how to control his own family, how can he look after a congregation of God's people? (verses 4-5) **(New English Bible)**

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1 TIMOTHY 3
VERSES 6-7

1 Timothy 3: [6] Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. [7] Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (King James Version)

⁶An elder must not be a new Christian, because he might be proud of being chosen so soon, and the Devil will use that pride to make him fall. ⁷Also, people outside the church must speak well of him so that he will not fall into the Devil's trap and be disgraced. **(New Living Translation)**

He must not be a new believer, lest the position go to his head and the Devil trip him up. Outsiders must think well of him, or else the Devil will figure out a way to lure him into his trap. (verse 6-7) **(The Message)**

⁶The pastor must not be a new Christian because he might be proud of being chosen so soon, and pride comes before a fall. (Satan's downfall is an example.) ⁷Also, he must be well spoken of by people outside the church—those who aren't Christians—so that Satan can't trap him with many accusations and leave him without freedom to lead his flock. **(The Living Bible)**

He must not be a convert newly baptized, for fear the sin of conceit should bring upon him a judgment contrived by the devil. He must moreover have a good reputation with the non-Christian public, so that he may not be exposed to scandal and get caught in the devil's snare. (verses 6-7) **(New English Bible)**

[6] A church leader must not be a new Christian. A new Christian might become proud and fall into sin which is brought on by the devil. **[7]** A church leader must be respected by people who are not Christians so nothing can be said against him. In that way, he will not be trapped by the devil. **(The New Life Testament)**

1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3
VERSES 8-10

1 Timothy 3: [8] ¶ Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; [9] Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. [10] And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. (King James Version)

⁸In the same way, deacons must be people who are respected and have integrity. They must not be heavy drinkers and must not be greedy for money. ⁹They must be committed to the revealed truths of the Christian faith and must live with a clear conscience. ¹⁰Before they are appointed as deacons, they should be given other responsibilities in the church as a test of their character and ability. If they do well, then they may serve as deacons. **(New Living Translation)**

[8] In like manner the deacons [must be] worthy of respect, not shifty and double-talkers but sincere in what they say, not given to much wine, not greedy for base gain [craving wealth and resorting to ignoble and dishonest methods of getting it]. **[9]** They

must possess the mystic secret of the faith [Christian truth as hidden from ungodly men] with a clear conscience. **[10]** And let them also be tried and investigated and proved first; then, if they turn out to be above reproach, let them serve [as deacons]. **(The Amplified New Testament)**

[8] Deacons, too, must be men who are worthy of respect, not saying one thing and then saying the opposite to someone else. They must not be drinkers of much wine, and must not be greedy for money, especially for money gotten by ignoble or dishonest means. **[9]** They must not only continue to believe the truths revealed to us by the Great News, but they must also have a clear conscience, by living by what those truths reveal and command. **[10]** These men should first be tested in less responsible positions in the church; and only then, if no problems are found with their lives and service, should they be allowed to serve as deacons. **(The Last Days Bible)**

Additional Information: (Verse 8) – “Deacon” is the Greek word *diakonos* and has the idea of one who runs errands, an attendant, a waiter. (Strong’s Lexicon). A “**deacon**” was one who by virtue of the office assigned him by the church, cares for the poor and has charge of and distributes the money collected for their use. A “**deaconess**” was a woman to whom the care of either poor or sick women was entrusted. (Thayer’s Lexicon).

1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3

VERSE 11

1 Timothy 3: [11] Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. (King James Version)

[11] In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. **(New International Version)**

[11] No exceptions are to be made for women – same qualifications: serious, dependable, not sharp-tongued, not overfond of wine. **(The Message)**

[11] Their wives should share their serious outlook, and must be women of discretion and self-control – women who can be thoroughly trusted. **(Phillips Translation)**

[11] The same rules apply for the women who serve as helpers. They must be women whom everybody respects, and not the kind who gossip. And they must be women who never drink too much, and who can be trusted at all times. **(New Testament in Everyday American English)**

[11] In the same way, the women must have the respect of other people. They must not be women who talk evil about other people. They must have self-control and be women who can be trusted in everything. **(The Easy-to-Read Version)**

[11] The wives of church helpers must be careful how they act. They must not carry stories from one person to another. They must be wise and faithful in all they do. **(The New Life Testament)**

**1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3
VERSES 12-13**

1 Timothy 3: [12] Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. [13] For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. (King James Version)

¹² Church officers must be faithful in marriage. They must be in full control of their children and everyone else in their home. ¹³ Those who serve well as officers will earn a good reputation and will be highly respected for their faith in Christ Jesus.

(Contemporary English Version)

Servants in the church are to be committed to their spouses, attentive to their own children, and diligent in looking after their own affairs. Those who do this servant work will come to be highly respected, a real credit to this Jesus-faith. (verses 12-13)

(The Message)

Deacons should be men with only one wife, able to control their children and manage their own households properly. Those who do well as deacons earn for themselves a proper standing, as well as the ability to speak freely on matters of the Christian faith. (verses 12-13) **(Phillips Translation)**

[12] Servants must be faithful, married men. They must lead their children and their homes well. **[13]** The men who serve well as servants will win for themselves a very good position. And they will be more confident about the faith of Christ Jesus.

(The Simple English Bible)

[12] A deacon must be the husband of only one wife, and must manage his children and household well. **[13]** Those who have served well as deacons gain great respect, and great confidence that their faith in Christ Jesus is genuine. **(The Last Days Bible)**

**1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3
VERSES 14-15**

1 Timothy 3: [14] ¶ These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: [15] But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. (King James Version)

[14] Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, **[15]** if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. **(New International Version)**

¹⁴ I hope to visit you soon. But I am writing these instructions, ¹⁵ so that if I am delayed, you will know how everyone who belongs to God's family ought to behave. After all, the church of the living God is the strong foundation of truth. **(Contemporary English Version)**

¹⁴ I am writing these things to you now, even though I hope to be with you soon, ¹⁵ so that if I don't come for a while, you will know what kind of men you should choose

as officers for the church of the living God, which contains and holds high the truth of God. **(The Living Bible)**

[14] At the moment of writing to you, I am hoping that I may be with you soon; [15] but in case I should be delayed, I wanted you to know how people ought to behave in God's family – that is, in the Church of the living God, which upholds the truth and keeps it safe. **(Jerusalem Bible)**

1 TIMOTHY CHAPTER 3

VERSE 16

1 Timothy 3: [16] And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. (King James Version)

¹⁶ Here is the great mystery of our religion: Christ came as a human. The Spirit proved that he pleased God, and he was seen by angels. Christ was preached to the nations. People in this world put their faith in him, and he was taken up to glory.

(Contemporary English Version)

¹⁶It is quite true that the way to live a godly life is not an easy matter. But the answer lies in Christ, who came to earth as a man, was proved spotless and pure in his Spirit, was served by angels, was preached among the nations, was accepted by men everywhere, and was received up again to his glory in heaven. **(The Living Bible)**

[16] And everyone must agree that our religion has a great secret to make known about “the One who appeared with a human body. The Spirit has declared him to be without sin, and the angels have seen Him. The news about Him has been spread among the nations, People all over the world have come to believe in Him, and He has been taken back up to heaven to live in glory and honor.” (New Testament in Everyday American English)

[16] We openly acknowledge that the mystery of our relationship to God is profound: God came in a human body, was shown to be righteous by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was proclaimed among the Gentiles, was believed on in the world, was taken up into glory. (The New Translation)

[16] And no one can dispute the fact that the mystery – as to why God has so graciously done so much for His people – is indeed great: God appeared to us in a human body. He was proved to indeed be the Son of God by the way the Holy Spirit worked thru Him. Angels were present and testified at His conception, His birth, His resurrection, and His ascension into Heaven. He has been proclaimed as the Saviour who came to redeem people in all nations. In spite of the wickedness of the human heart, great numbers of people throughout the world have come to believe in Him. Then the triumphant Son of God was received back up into Heaven as His followers watched Him go. (The Last Days Bible)

Additional Information: “Mystery” is the Greek word *mysterion* and does not mean mysterious but a secret that is now being known.

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

(1 Timothy Chapter 3)

Instructions for Group Leader: Do not let the group read the following questions and answers. The leader of your group should ask the group the following questions and encourage the group to discover the answers by going to the appropriate Scriptures. **Discuss and answer (as a group) the questions correctly by using the Scripture(s). Turn to 1 Timothy Chapter 3.**

1. **Read 1 Timothy 3:1-3.** The qualifications of pastors are: a. a good reputation. b. faithfulness to his wife. c. to be self-controlled, sensible and well-behaved. d. to be hospitable. e. to be able to teach. f. to be kind, gentle and not love money. g. all of the above.
2. **Read 1 Timothy 3:4-5.** Other qualifications for pastors are: a. to be a good family leader. b. not to be addicted to alcohol. c. all of the above.
3. **Read 1 Timothy 3:6-7.** Other qualifications for pastors include: a. He must not be a new Christian. b. He must have a good reputation with the non-Christian public. c. all of the above.
4. **Read 1 Timothy 3:8.** Deacons do not have any qualifications in order to serve the church. True or False.
5. **Read 1 Timothy 3:8-10.** Deacons qualifications are similar to those of a pastor. True or False.
6. **Read 1 Timothy 3:10.** Deacons should be tested in less responsible positions in the church before they are allowed to be in the office of a deacon. True or False.
7. **Read 1 Timothy 3:11.** Deacon's wife's or Deaconess should have similar qualifications such as: a. being women that everyone respects. b. not being gossips. c. being women of discretion and self-control. d. women who never drink to much. e. women who can be thoroughly trusted. f. women who are faithful. g. all of the above.
8. **Read 1 Timothy 3:12.** Deacons must be faithful in marriage, attentive to their children and diligent in looking after their own affairs. True or False.
9. **Read 1 Timothy 3:14-15.** One of the reasons that the Apostle Paul wrote this letter to Timothy was to relay to everyone who belongs to God how they should conduct themselves in God's household (that is, His family). True or False.
10. **Read 1 Timothy 3:16.** God appeared to us in a human body. True or False.

11. **Read 1 Timothy 3:16.** The Spirit declared Jesus to be without sin. True or False.

12. **Read 1 Timothy 3:16.** Angels never saw Christ. True or False.

13. **Read 1 Timothy 3:16.** Jesus the Christ was preached among the nations and believed upon. True or False.

14. **Read 1 Timothy 3:16.** Jesus the Son of God was received back up into Heaven as his followers watched Him go. True or False.

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