

1 TIMOTHY 3

WHAT LEADERS ARE LIKE

The Church at Ephesus was kind of a mess. They had been introduced to some false doctrine after Paul had left to minister to other churches in other cities. They had leadership issues that were so serious, Paul sent Timothy there to help put things back in order.

Paul says clearly in V15 that “*I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God.*”

Remember that this is the early days of the Church. In these days the church was not formally defined, governed, documented, or given books of policies and procedures.

The church had Elders and teachers... And sometimes a Pastor. It was an “All hands-on deck” situation where EVERYBODY had a role to play, and observers were few and far between.

Churches today have become more of an organization where 10% of the people do 90% of everything, and observers are abundant. I want to see this change this year at CCSV. SO... Get ready to join in serving the Lord AND one another, OK?

We are going to add some Elders and Deacons and Deaconesses this year – Who will they be? Listen...

1 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, **(Elder in Titus)** he desires a good work.

- Bishop = Church **leader**, **NLT**; Church **official** – **CEV**
- So, what are leaders like? Here goes...

2 A bishop then must be **blameless**, the **husband of one wife**, **temperate**, **sober-minded**, of **good behavior**, **hospitable**, **able to teach**; 3 **not given to wine**, **not violent**, **not greedy for money**, but **gentle**, **not quarrelsome**, **not covetous**; 4 **one who rules his own house well**, having *his* children in submission with all reverence

5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 6 **not a novice**, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil.

Blameless – A good reputation.

husband of one wife – 1 at a time. IE, not a cheater.

Temperate – have self-control. You cannot have a bad temper and be an Elder.

sober-minded – Be wise, have a good sense of wrong & right.

good behavior

hospitable

able to teach – At least able to teach a small group of people.

not given to wine - Or addicted to wine, OR TO ANYTHING!

not violent – Not ready to fight, bully, or even argue.

not greedy for money – Or greedy for ANYTHING! The people who counted the offerings in the Church that Lynette and I grew up in were called the “Trustees.” Leaders are trustworthy.

Gentle – Kind, sympathetic and benevolent.

not quarrelsome – IE, not given to useless debate.

not covetous – Wanting stuff because others have it.

one who rules his own house well – This is a tough one. Look, take care of your family first, THEN the church. Win your kids to Christ, then oversee the church. Earn the respect of your family, THEN come and tell us what to do...

not a novice - IF you are new around here, WELCOME! You WILL NOT be asked to lead until we know you.

WHY NOT?

7 Moreover **he must have a good testimony** among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

- My granddaughter, Kenna, just went through the hiring process of the VCFD to become a Fire Explorer. On the first day of her academy, they warned the future Explorers to go home and clean up their social media.
- They told these teens to drop friends who were partiers and pot smokers.
- They warned that they would be contacting their friends to ask what kind of citizens these teenagers were?
- I heard of one CEO who always interviewed his executive candidates just before lunch. She then asked the candidate to lunch and asked them to drive... What did she find out about them in their cars?

- Beloved, if you want to help lead the church, ANY church... Clean up your reputation and life, OK?

QUALIFICATIONS FOR DEACONS (AKA Ushers, Leaders)

- We DO NOT now have a formal Deacons board, but I want one.

Who are deacons? If you have EVER carried a table, chair, tablecloth, broom, shovel, mop, Paint brush, Coffee maker, or basket of communion cups, equipment, or cash – Raise your hand.

(I hereby deputize you as a deacon...IF... You meet these qualifications)

8 Likewise deacons *must be* **reverent**, (serious) **not double-tongued**, (Not liars) **not given to much wine, not greedy for money**,

9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

- NOT people given to wild stories and anecdotal faith... Like faith healers.
- One of our ladies was approached by a wild-eyed new believer in town – and she was talking about this “healer” in town who has people lining up to be healed by him. Our church member asked the young lady why the “healer” doesn’t head over to the hospital and help people out there?

10 But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* **blameless**.

- This is why good companies hire people on a probationary status. They say - Let us watch you for 90 days and see how many times you don’t show up. Let us track your work and reviews from people.
- How many of you have received an email recently from a business where you were a customer? They are testing their employees.
- LESSON – Be faithful!

THE “TWO-FER...”

11 Likewise, **their wives** *must be* reverent, not slanderers, (**not gossipers**) temperate, faithful in all things.

12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children

and their own houses well. 13 For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Can't you just hear the appreciation that the Apostle has for his faithful ministry partners in the Elders and Deacons? ME TOO!!!

THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS

14 These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;
15 but if I am delayed, *I write* so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

16 And without controversy (*without doubt*) great is the mystery of godliness: (*Smith – IE, God-likeness*)

- The mystery that men and women can become more and more Godly in their behavior!
 - AND... Aren't we happy that God is doing it?
 - Why are we SO dependent on Jesus to do this work? **BECAUSE...**

God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Conclusion - Believe in THIS Jesus and you will be changed!

Surrender to Him and He will call you to great things.

Make Him Lord and He will change your life!

Reject Him... And He will reject you for eternity.

Choose Him, and you will live with Him for all eternity!