

1 Timothy 3:8-13 Likewise Deacons

Series 1 Timothy

Reading 1 Timothy 3:8-13

For the last couple of weeks we have been looking at elders. As we leave the area of elders and enter that of deacons, I would like to remind everyone that these are the qualities of a mature Christian. This is an area that each person should be striving to be like and to be a part of. This lesson isn't just for those that are going to be our leaders, but for all of us as an example of a successful Christian. Having said that there are also some object qualifications that we see which exclude some people. It is to be a man, and it is to be a mature man with children who show by their lives the quality of his teaching. This isn't to say that a man who doesn't have children is wrong, but that the importance of the position requires a demonstration from the person's life that a single man cannot give. Lastly there is also the quality of being apt to teach. This is a gifting, by Jesus Christ, for the church. Men gifted to preach and teach the word of God. This doesn't mean working to improve this skill is wrong, but it does mean that a man who doesn't have this gift is most probably not called to lead the church. Now we are going to move into deacons. They have many of the same qualities, but with a different direction. Join us as we look at this section.

- 1 Timothy 3:8 – Likewise Deacons...
 - This was obviously a commonly-known position. It is missing the one requirement of “apt to teach.”
 - Doesn't mean that there isn't a knowledge of God, but only that this individual isn't gifted with the skills to teach.
 - We are all to be sharing the gospel and disciplining others. That is the call of Christ to work for Him. It is the confessing of Christ before men. Each of us has these opportunities that God brings to us.
 - It is what we normally think of when we think of deacons. Those that help in the administration of the Church in a physical sense.
 - It was probably much more needed in the early Church.
 - The loss of everything to follow Christ. Excommunicated by friends and family, ostracized by business, left to starve...
 - No social nets – insurances, unemployment, welfare, disability, retirement pensions...
 - Difficulty of life without modern conveniences. No running water, plumbing, small homes, no central heat. No hospitals...
 - No cars or bikes... Imagine trying to minister with food to a group of widows spread out.
 - 1 Timothy 5:3-15 deals with the status of widows. (Older men marrying younger women).
 - 7 verses on Elders – 12 on widows.
 - Unsaved families and spouses... Acts 6 with the appointing of the 7 men.
 - Acts 6:3-4 “³ Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of *good* reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; ⁴ but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”
 - The scope of the problem – 7 men... The requirements – good reputation and full of the Holy Spirit and Wisdom.
 - This is not a position in which we put a business leader because of his money!
 - This requires service, it is hard work, and there are costs to being faithful. / rewards
 - Reverent – dignified, grave, honest. Holding a sacred trust.
 - Not double tongued. Hypocrites. Having two faces. A Sunday face and Business face. A public face and a home face.
 - Matthew 6:24 “No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

- What is the single thing we are pursuing? So easy to get side tracked.
 - Bucket of marbles – What is dropped is the non-romantic ones.
- James 1:5-8 “⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. ⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. ⁸ A double minded man is unstable in all his ways.”
- Not given to much wine (quantitative) – His life is under control. A little more liberty. Not a teacher who is handling the word of God and needs to be on guard.
- Not greedy of money – Obviously an elder shouldn’t be either, but here is a man that will be administering the offerings of the church. Paying bills, helping the sick, the widows. He is most likely a business man that has been proved. I don’t know that the church was a ‘help’ center, for those who had relief, there was work required.
- Vs. 9 – Holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.
 - Committed to the Word of God. Holding fast to the word of truth.
 - (Deu 11:22) “For if you carefully keep all these commandments which I command you to do-- to love the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, and to hold fast to Him” -- 3 more ref. In Deu and Joshua.
 - (1Co 15:2) “by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain.”
 - (2Ti 1:13) “Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”
 - (Heb 4:14) “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession.”
 - (Heb 10:23) “Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.”
 - The world will try to strip us of our belief. They mock, ridicule, educate, tempt, reward... 4 times in Revelation 2 and 3, the churches are encouraged to remember, repent and to hold fast.
- 1 Timothy 3:10 “But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless.”
 - Tested – Similar to elders, these are men proved faithful. We can ask men to serve for short durations and try them.
 - Blameless – provably faithful. Money has an accounting. Time.
- 1 Timothy 3:11-12 “¹¹ Likewise *their* wives *must be* reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things. ¹² Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well.”
 - This position requires a wife as well, with the same requirements that an elder had.
 - Leviticus 21:6-7 “⁶ They shall be holy to their God and not profane the name of their God, for they offer the offerings of the LORD made by fire, *and* the bread of their God; therefore they shall be holy. ⁷ They shall not take a wife *who is* a harlot or a defiled woman, nor shall they take a woman divorced from her husband; for *the priest* is holy to his God.”
 - Yet only here does it give any requirements for a wife. She was to be involved in the work.
 - This was a work of the home. Both in her home and in other homes, with a significant portion of the work being with women. The wife is under her husband, but a major part of the ministry.
 - Titus 2:3-5 “³ the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things-- ⁴ that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, ⁵ *to be* discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”
- 1 Timothy 3:13 “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.”
 - Stephan

- Many will not come in to listen, but we meet with them as we reach out, to the church, showing the love of God. We become known for standing with the Lord and we are asked to share, to pray, to stand for God by friends and family.
- The position of deacon in those days, gave opportunities that we are missing today, and yet we have our own opportunities to share, by standing and living for God in our families and with our neighbors.

We still have many of the same opportunities today. There are people in need and we can step in helping with wisdom and care to bridge a gap: Letting the love of Christ shine. Think of the parable of the good Samaritan. He helped an unknown person, from the other side, who was a persecutor of his people. Yet he did what he could and left with no thought of reward. May we stand out for the Lord in the same way.

Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be in abide with each of you.