

# Bethany Bible Study & Discussion



## I Timothy Part-4 (chapter 3) KJV

1.31.2024

## Chapter 3

### Qualifications of Leaders | Mystery of Godliness

**QUALIFICATIONS OF ELDERS (1-7):** Who is a bishop? Should there be one or multiple leaders? What are the 16 desired qualities of an elder? Can these qualities be applied to those who are not serving as leaders?

**QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS (8-13):** What is the difference between elders and deacons? What are the 9 desired qualities of a deacon? Is it essential to have the offices of elders and deacons in churches? Who are the elders and deacons accountable to?

**HOUSE OF GOD (14-15):** How is the house of God described?

**MYSTERY (16):** What is the mystery of godliness? Is it still a mystery?

# Qualifications of Elders

(1-7)

This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

<sup>2</sup> A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; <sup>3</sup> Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

<sup>4</sup> One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; <sup>5</sup> (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

<sup>6</sup> Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. <sup>7</sup> Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

# Bishop/ overseers

This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

Bishop = pastors, overseers, elders

We see examples of more than 1 (so it is a shared leadership)

**Acts 14:23** And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed

**Acts 20:17** And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.

**James 5:14** Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church

It is a good office/work to aspire to. However, appointment must be by the Holy Spirit. It takes work ... it is not for lazy or noncommitted people.

**Acts 20: 28** Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

# Who can be Leaders in God's house?

- Do children of godly parents automatically qualify?
  - Do naturally talented people automatically qualify?
  - Do hardworking volunteers automatically qualify?
  - Do those coming for long time automatically qualify?
  - Do big donors automatically qualify?
  - Do seminary educated members automatically qualify?
  - Do those holding high positions in society automatically qualify?
  - Do elderly people automatically qualify?
- **Not necessarily**
  - It is a divine appointment by Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28)
    - **1 SAMUEL 16:7** But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For *the Lord does not see* as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.”

# Who is Qualified? 16 Desired Qualities of Elders/ Leaders

1. Blameless (does not mean sinless, has integrity, continually sanctified)
2. Husband of one wife (faithful to one)
3. Vigilant (cautious, alert)
4. Sober
5. Good behavior
6. Hospitable (to believers, strangers, sinners)
7. Teacher of sound doctrine
8. Not alcoholic
9. Not violent
10. Not greedy for riches
11. Patient
12. Not fighter/conflicts
13. Not covetous (for positions/wealth)
14. Leader/Shepherd at home (raising children) (Rule-house, take care-church)
15. Not recently converted
16. A good testimony in church & outside (devil has set up traps to bring down leaders)

**CHRIST**

**CHURCH**

**Elders**

**Deacons**

Plurality of  
leaders seen  
in NT

# Qualifications of Deacons (8-13)



# Who is qualified? Desired qualities of Deacons

<sup>8</sup> Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; <sup>9</sup> Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

<sup>10</sup> And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. <sup>11</sup> Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

<sup>12</sup> Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. <sup>13</sup> 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.

# Deacons

## Deacons

- Deacons are not inferior to elders
- They complement the role of elders and support the local church ministries
- We need both elders & deacons for effective functioning of church
- **Elders** – Spiritual ministries; **Deacons** – Practical/Operational ministries

**Acts 6** (Responsibilities divided among those who focused on prayer/God's word and those who took care of widows/serving tables)

And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations. <sup>2</sup> Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables. <sup>3</sup> Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. <sup>4</sup> But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

# Who is qualified? Desired Qualities of deacons (similar to elders)

1. Reverence: respect to God and man (?)
2. Not double tongued: be truthful, not hypocrites, gossipers
3. Not alcoholics
4. Not greedy for money
5. Be strong in their faith and believe/practice sound doctrine. Have good conscience.
  - a. Mystery of gospel no longer a mystery, 1 Corinthians 2:6-16
6. Be tested and proved: Not an immature believer. conduct will prove if he is fit for the role; Only proven believers should be put in leadership role
7. Have godly wives - well behaved and have good character (not slanderers or gossipers), Faithful in all things (like co-workers and supporters of the work, as for me and my house!)
8. Husband of one wife
9. Good leaders at home (ruling their children well)

# Women deacons?

## **KJV ... Romans 16:1-2**

I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea. <sup>2</sup> That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also.

## **NIV ... Romans 16:1-2**

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church in Cenchreae. <sup>2</sup> I ask you to receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of his people and to give her any help she may need from you, for she has been the benefactor of many people, including me.

**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.

- Those who are faithful will be recognized and promoted by the Lord.
- While the work of deacons may not always be visible, God is watching and rewarding.
- Stephen and Philip were among the deacons (Acts 6:5) appointed for taking care of widows.
- Stephen was given boldness to witness and was eventually martyred (Acts 7:60)  
Philip became a great evangelist (Acts 8)

His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord (Mathew 25:21)

# House of God (14-15)

14-15

<sup>14</sup> These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

<sup>15</sup> 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.

# House of God

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**Paul's motive in writing:** He may be away for a while and wants Timothy have the knowledge of how to conduct the church

## House of God

- Church of living God (not a temple of idols)
- Pillar (supports structure) and ground of truth (foundation)

**GENESIS 28:16** And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. <sup>17</sup> And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.



God's dwelling  
place ... God  
desires to have  
communion with  
us as seen from  
Genesis to  
Revelation

1. **Adam and Eve** ... direct communion with God
2. **Tabernacle** [Exodus 25:8](#) “And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. [Exodus 29:42](#) “... where I will meet you, to speak there unto thee”.
3. **Solomon's Temple** [I Kings 9:1-3](#) “ ... and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually”
4. **New Testament Church (Church as a body of believers)**  
[Ephesians 2: 22](#) “In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit”  
[Mathew 18:20](#) “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”
5. **Our Bodies as the Temple of God**  
[I Corinthians 3:16](#) Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?
6. **No Temple in Heaven**  
[Revelation 21:3](#) And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God.  
[Revelation 21:22](#) And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. 23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it

# Mystery of Godliness

(16)

## Mystery of Godliness

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.

**Manifest in flesh** (born in a manger)

**Justified in spirit** (Baptism, Mathew 3:16, Resurrection, Romans 8:11, Transfiguration, Mathew 17:5, Ascension, John 16:10)

**Seen of angels** (at birth, temptation, garden of gethsemane, resurrection, ascension)

**Preached unto gentiles** (by first church, Paul & Timothy and others)

**Believed on in the world** (many saved and added to church)

**Received up into glory** (Luke 24:51, seated at right hand of the father, John 20:24-29, Hebrews)

Gospel and  
Sound  
Doctrine ...  
**Not a mystery  
anymore**

## **I CORINTHIANS 2: 6-16**

<sup>6</sup> we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: <sup>9</sup> But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. <sup>10</sup> But **God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit**: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. <sup>14</sup> But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. but we have the mind of Christ.

We are now **stewards of the revealed mysteries/sound doctrine**

**I Corinthians 4:1** ...stewards of the mysteries of God

**I Samuel 3:19** ... let none of his words fall to the ground

*Is the mystery still a mystery to us?*

*Are we good stewards of the revealed Word?*

# REFLECTION

**Does the list imply perfect elders and deacons ?**

**What do you expect from leaders of churches?  
(beyond the qualities mentioned here)**

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