

Teacher Class Plan

I Timothy: Lesson #56 – Qualifications of Elders and Deacons For Sunday, Nov. 30th

Read I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9 (a simplified explanation of the text is supplied at the end of these notes).

Memory Verse: I Tim. 3:1 “This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.”

The Work of an Elder is a Good Work

- This lesson is about elders. We have elders of the church in our congregation. *[Teachers ask if they can tell you who the elders are in this church. Bring your directory to class and show them if they don't know.]*
- God gave us elders to lead the church. They don't make laws, they help us follow God's laws. They encourage us to live our lives the way God wants us to.
- In the New Testament elders are also called Overseers (or as some Bibles put it Bishops) because they watch over the church to make sure it follows what Jesus taught. They are also called Shepherds because the church is compared to a flock of sheep and the shepherds lead and care for the flock.
- Paul said that when a man wants to be an Elder, an Overseer, that this is a very good work to want to do. That's what our **memory verse** says, “This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.” (I Tim. 3:1) *Work on saying the memory verse together with the class.*
- One day some of the boys in this class could be elders of the church. That would be a great thing for them to do. Or they could also help the church a lot by being deacons. Some of the girls could be wives of elders or deacons.

What Kind of Man Can Be an Elder?

- Paul shows us what a man must be like to do be an elder of the church and to do an elder's work.
 - He should live his life so that no one could say that he is guilty of sinful things. Of course we know that everybody sins and that no one is perfect, but if a person has a reputation for doing sinful things, he cannot be an elder.
 - He must be married. He should not have a reputation for being involved with any other woman than his wife.
 - He is the kind of person who watches to make sure his life is what it should be and watches to see if others are doing right.
 - He must use good sense.
 - He must have his life in order.
 - He must show hospitality, be friendly to others, invite them into his home, do kind things for others, even if they aren't his close friends.
 - He must know God's Word and stay with it so that he does not stray from it. If people teach things different from God's Word, he must know how to correct them.

- He should not drink alcohol.
- He should never be the kind of person that gets angry and fights with other people.
- He should be gentle in the way that he talks and acts.
- He cannot love money. He should be interested in God's work and not just making money.
- He should be someone who loves his family and takes good care of them. His children should obey him and be Christians. They shouldn't be doing things that could cause him shame.
- He cannot be a man who just recently became a Christian. He has to have had time to learn and grow and prove that he follows Christ.
- He has to have a good reputation from people he is around. They have to believe that he is a righteous man.
- He must love things that are truly good and live righteously and holy.
- He should have control over his own life.
- He cannot be satisfied with just pleasing himself.

What Kind of Man Can Be a Deacon?

- Deacons are another important way for a man to serve the church. The word "deacon" really just means a servant, because they serve the church helping out where needed.
- Paul also tells us several things that must be true about men wanting to be deacons.
 - To become a deacon and do the work of a deacon, a man has to live an upright and good life.
 - He should always tell the truth and say the same thing to everyone.
 - He doesn't need to be influenced by alcohol.
 - He must not love money.
 - He, too, has to be married, and not have a reputation for being involved with any other woman. His wife should be an honorable, faithful Christian woman who doesn't slander people. He and his wife should be raising their children in an excellent way.
- The deacon who does his work well will improve his reputation with other Christians in the church.

Teachers it would be good to emphasize that while these things help a man become qualified to serve as an elder or deacon, they are also goals for all of us to try to become like. Almost of these things are mentioned as good qualities for every Christian.

Bible Quiz: Please run over the quiz questions with the class.

Simplified Explanation of the Text

The Work of an Overseer is a Good Work

I Tim. 3:1 This is a saying that can be believed: If any man is trying to reach the office of Overseer, it is a good and commendable work to want.

What Kind of Man Can Be Appointed as an Overseer

2 Therefore the Overseer must be someone who could not be accused of sinful conduct.

He is the husband of one wife.

He must be a person who is watchful and aware.

He should be a man known for good, sound judgment.

He must be someone whose life is well-arranged and orderly.

He must be given to hospitality.

He should have the capability to teach.

3 He should not be in the habit of drinking wine.

He cannot be the kind of person that would strike another.

But he should be gentle and mild in his dealings with other and not a person who is contentious and filled with strife.

He must not be a person who loves money.

4-5 He should be someone who has proven that he be over and care for his own household in a good way, having his children under control in a dignified and respectable way. If someone doesn't know how to be over his own house, how could he take care of God's church?

6 He cannot be a person who only recently became a Christian, or else he might be lifted up with pride and fall into the judgment of the devil.

7 And what other people, even outsiders to Christ, would say about him must be good or else he could fall victim to criticism and insults, and the devil would have him trapped.

Titus 1:5 I left you behind in Crete so that you set in order the things that were lacking, and appoint elders in every city. Just as I commanded you a man can be appointed...

6-7 ...If they have no charges of sin against them,

if he the husband of only one wife,

and if he has faithful children who are not involved in a lifestyle wasted on immoral pleasures and are not guilty of being out of control (because no one should be able to accuse him).

As a manager over God's household he cannot be striving to do what pleases himself.

He cannot get angry easily.

He cannot be around wine.

He cannot be a fighting, contentious person.

He cannot be greedy for money or willing to gain it in an unclean way.

8 On the positive side, he must love to show hospitality.

He must love goodness.

He must have good, sound judgment.

He must be righteous.

He must live a holy life.

He must have the strength to control himself.

9 He must hold tightly to the faithful Word according to what has been taught, so that he would have the ability to admonish and reprove in sound teaching those who oppose the truth.

What Kind of Man Can Be Appointed as a Deacon

I Tim. 3:8 Now in a similar way, a deacon must be honorable.

He should not be guilty of saying one thing to one person, then changing his story around someone else.

He cannot be a man who is attached to much wine.

He should not be someone who is eager for money in disgraceful ways.

9 He should hold the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

10 But let him first be examined and approved and then serve, if he is found blameless.

11 In the same way, a deacon's wife must be honorable, not guilty of slander, watchful and aware, faithful in everything.

12 A deacon should be the husband of one wife and be over his children and homes in an excellent way.

13 For serving as a deacon is an excellent way to get a step up in his reputation for boldness in the faith.