

1 TIMOTHY

LESSON THREE

Chapter 3: 1 to 13

BISHOPS and DEACONS

Look for the answers to these questions:

1. What are the five ministries named in Ephesians 4:11-12?
2. What is the only qualification for those five ministries?
3. True or False: An apostle who falls from grace will lose his gift and calling.
4. The Greek word *episkopos* tells us that a BISHOP is someone who watches over a church. Epi means _____ and skopos means _____.
5. True or False: Having the DESIRE to be a bishop or deacon is all that God requires.
6. In 1 Timothy 3:2-7, how many qualifications are listed for a Bishop?
7. In 1 Timothy 3:6-7, the bishop must be someone who will not fall into the _____ of the devil and the _____ of the devil.
8. In 1 Timothy and Philippians, the Greek work *diakonos* is translated DEACON. Everywhere else it is translated _____ or _____.
9. In 1 Timothy 3:9-13, how many qualifications are listed for a Deacon?
10. In 1 Timothy 3:11, how many qualifications are listed for a Deacon's wife?

Gift Ministries and Church Offices

There are many ways to serve God,
many ministries in the Body of Christ.

Some ministries are appointments
made by God. Paul wrote about five
ministries given by Jesus to the
church. They are often called the five
“gift ministries.”

Ephesians 4:11-12

- ¹¹ And he gave some, **apostles**;
and some, **prophets**;
and some, **evangelists**;
and some, **pastors** and **teachers**;
- ¹² For the perfecting of the saints,
for the work of the ministry,
for the edifying of the body of
Christ:



Gift Ministries and Church Offices

A gift ministry is a gift of grace. The only qualification for the job is being chosen by God to do it. You cannot train to become an apostle like you train to become a medical doctor.

This appointment is made by God, and God never takes it back.

Romans 11:29

²⁹ For the gifts and calling of God
are without repentance.



Gift Ministries and Church Offices

A gift ministry is a gift of grace. The only qualification for the job is being chosen by God to do it. You cannot train to become an apostle like you train to become a medical doctor.

This appointment is made by God, and God never takes it back.

Romans 11:29

²⁹ For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

NIV: they “are irrevocable.”



Gift Ministries and Church Offices

A man who is ordained by God to an apostleship will be an apostle for the rest of his life, whether or not he is faithful in his service to God.

When that man stands before the judgment seat of Christ, he will answer for either honoring or dishonoring his gift. As Jesus said, “Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required” (Lk. 12:48).

Romans 11:29

²⁹ For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.

NIV: they “are irrevocable.”



Gift Ministries and Church Offices

There are also position of leadership, or “offices” in the church. These are the “**helps and governments**” of 1 Corinthians 12.

1 Corinthians 12:28

²⁸ And God hath set some in the church,
first apostles,
secondarily prophets,
thirdly teachers,
after that miracles,
then gifts of healings,
helps, governments,
diversities of tongues.



Gift Ministries and Church Offices

This is NOT an gift of grace. This ministry is given to someone who is right for the job.

In the New Testament, there are only two offices in the church:
the BISHOPS and the DEACONS.

1 Corinthians 12:28

²⁸ And God hath set some in the church,
first apostles,
secondarily prophets,
thirdly teachers,
after that miracles,
then gifts of healings,
helps, governments,
diversities of tongues.



1 Timothy

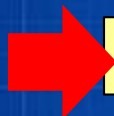
[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

[1] 2:1-8 The Christian's Duty to Society

[2] 2:9-15 The Duty of Women



[3] 3:1-13 The Duty of Church Elders

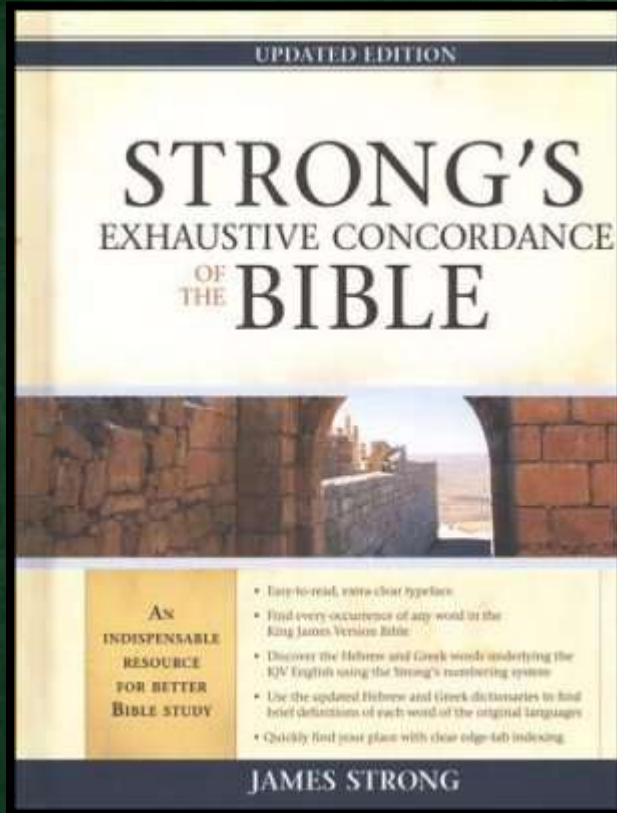
In this lesson, we will learn the qualifications of Bishops and Deacons.

When Christians hear the word “bishop”, they often think of an ornately dressed religious official who rules over many churches.



In the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church of England, a “bishop” is an upper-level position in church management.

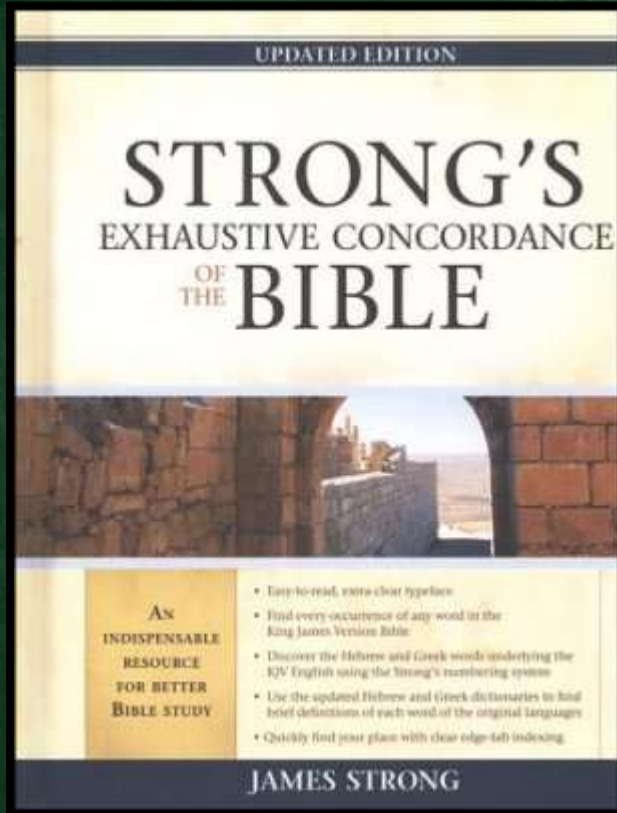




The biblical definition of a “bishop” is very different.

A “bishop” is the leader of a church congregation. He is an overseer – someone who watches over the work. He makes sure that things are done “decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:26).”

The Greek word is ἐπισκοπῆς (*episkopos*);
epi = above; *skopos* = looking,



The title of a “bishop” is not intended for leaders of mega-churches who claim authority over several smaller churches as well. In God’s design, every Christian fellowship is to have its own overseer, its own bishop.

Remember that when Paul wrote this letter, church meetings were being held in private homes. To have a large congregation that met in one place was both impractical and dangerous.

The Office of A Bishop

The five gift ministries are ordained by God. Only God can rightfully make that appointment.

But becoming a bishop begins with having the *desire* to be a bishop. If a man believes he is qualified to serve in that office, and the elders of the church agree, he can be appointed to that position.

1 Timothy 3:1

- ¹ This is a true saying,
If a man desire **the office of a bishop**,
he desireth a good work.



The Office of A Bishop

The office of a bishop is an honorable work, and it is good to want to serve God and his people this way.

But if a man *truly* desires this work, he must first show that he is willing to do everything that is required of him.

1 Timothy 3:1

- ¹ This is a true saying,
If a man desire the office of a bishop,
he desireth a good work.



The office of a bishop is an honorable work, and it is good to want to serve God this way.

But if a man *truly* desires this job, he must first show he has the discipline to do the job.

In verses 2 to 7, Paul lists **16 qualifications** of a bishop:



I want to play professional football!

Come back when you are ready.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1 Timothy 3:2-7

- 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.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. Given to hospitality.
7. Apt to teach.
8. Not given to wine.
9. No striker.
10. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
11. Patient.
12. Not a brawler.
13. Not covetous.
14. One that ruleth well his own house...
15. Not a novice...
16. A good report of them that are without...

As we go through these 16 qualifications, keep in mind that these are not qualities to be DEVELOPED in an overseer. These virtues should already be in practice BEFORE he is given that responsibility.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. **Blameless.**

A bishop must be blameless. He does not leave himself open to criticism.

Philippians 2:15

That ye may be **blameless** and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. **The husband of one wife.**

His marriage should be a picture of the covenant between Christ and his church.

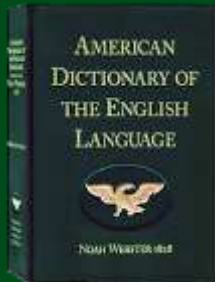
Ephesians 5:25-26

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

²⁶ That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. **Vigilant.**



He should be vigilant – “Watchful; attentive to discover and avoid danger, or to provide for safety.”

1 Peter 5:8

Be sober, **be vigilant**; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. **Sober.**

To be SOBER is to be “of sound mind, self-possessed, without excesses of any kind, moderate and discreet.” [International Standard Bible Encyclopedia]

1 Peter 4:7

But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore **sober**, and watch unto prayer.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. **Of good behavior.**

He is “to excel others in the example of a godly life.” [Geneva Bible Notes]

1 Thessalonians 2:10

Ye *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how holily and justly and unblameably **we behaved ourselves** among you that believe:

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. **Given to hospitality.**

HOSPITALITY is generosity to guests.

1 Peter 4:9

Use **hospitality** one to another without grudging.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. Given to hospitality.
7. **Apt to teach.**

He must be ready and able to give instruction in righteousness.

Ezra 7:10

For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do *it*, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. Given to hospitality.
7. Apt to teach.
8. **Not given to wine.**

He is not “a common drinker and one that will often partake of it.”
[Geneva Bible Notes]

Proverbs 20:1

Wine is a mocker, strong drink *is* raging:
and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. Given to hospitality.
7. Apt to teach.
8. Not given to wine.
9. **No striker.**

He does not lose his temper and lash out at people.

Proverbs 16:32

*He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;
and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city.*

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. Given to hospitality.
7. Apt to teach.
8. Not given to wine.
9. No striker.
- 10. Not greedy of filthy lucre.**

He is not motivated by gain. He is not a lover of money.

Proverbs 28:20

A faithful man shall abound with blessings:
but he that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. Given to hospitality.
7. Apt to teach.
8. Not given to wine.
9. No striker.
10. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
- 11. Patient.**

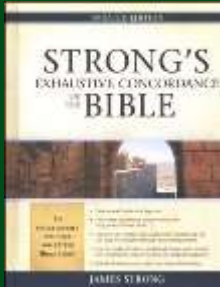
He is able to endure the troubles of this life without losing hope or faith.

James 5:10

¹⁰ Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of **patience**.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. Given to hospitality.
7. Apt to teach.
8. Not given to wine.
9. No striker.
10. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
11. Patient.
- 12. Not a brawler.**



NOT A BRAWLER: ἄμαχος (amachos)

Peaceable, not quarrelsome, not arguing about every little thing.

Proverbs 13:10

Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised *is* wisdom.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

1. Blameless.
2. The husband of one wife.
3. Vigilant.
4. Sober.
5. Of good behavior.
6. Given to hospitality.
7. Apt to teach.
8. Not given to wine.
9. No striker.
10. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
11. Patient.
12. Not a brawler.
- 13. Not covetous.**

He is not envious of the things of others, and unhappy until he gets them for himself.

Luke 12:15

And he said unto them, Take heed, and **beware of covetousness:**
for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

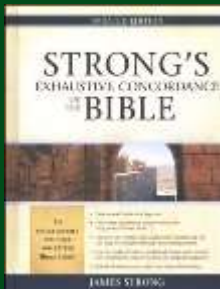
The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

- 14. One that ruleth well his own house,**
having his children in subjection with all gravity;
(For if a man know not how to rule his own house,
how shall he take care of the church of God?)

The most challenging and important fellowship any man will ever lead is his own household.

15. Not a novice,

lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.



NOVICE: νεόφυτος (neophutos) “newly planted”; a recent convert.

An immature Christian thinks his success is due to his own skill.

A mature Christian knows his success is due to God.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

15. Not a novice,
lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.
16. **Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without;**
lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

If they are being truthful, even the unbelievers can say nothing bad about his character.

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

15. Not a novice,
lest being lifted up with pride he fall into **the condemnation of the devil.**
16. Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without;
lest he fall into reproach and **the snare of the devil.**

The CONDEMNATION of the devil is to fall because of pride.

The SNARE of the devil is “the trap which Satan lays for those whose lives are not consistent with their profession. Once he has caught men in this trap, he holds them up to ridicule, scorn, and contempt.” [Believers Bible Commentary]

The 16 Qualifications of a Bishop

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2. The husband of one wife.
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5. Of good behavior.
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11. Patient.
12. Not a brawler.
13. Not covetous.
14. One that ruleth well his own house...
15. Not a novice...
16. A good report of them that are without...

Yes, this is a long list! But only a fool would trust his health to an untrained physician. How much more we should expect from those who say they are representatives of the Most High God?

1 Timothy

[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

[1] 2:1-8 The Christian's Duty to Society

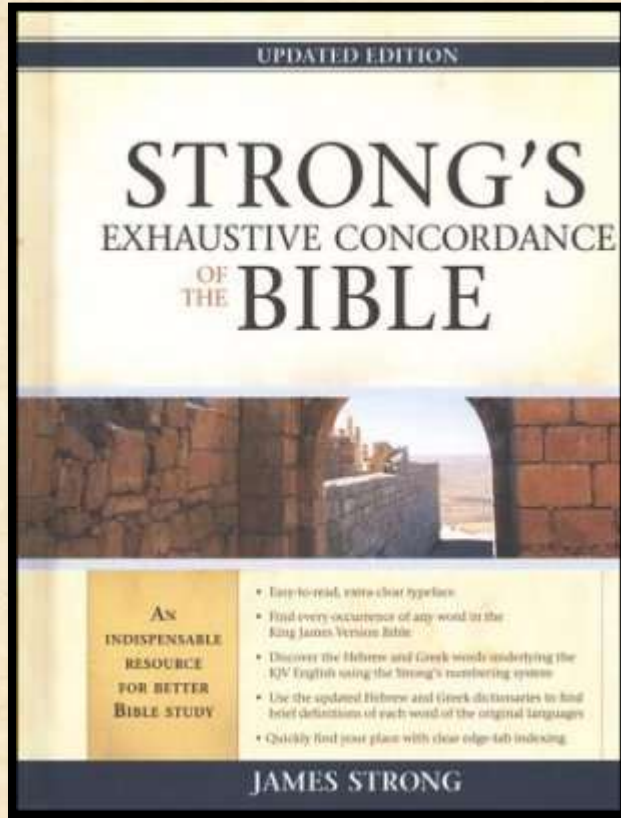
[2] 2:9-15 The Duty of Women

[3] 3:1-13 The Duty of Church Elders

[a] 3:1-8 Bishops

[b] 3:9-13 Deacons

Paul now instructs Timothy in the qualifications of a deacon.



What is a DEACON?

From the Greek διάκονος diakonos

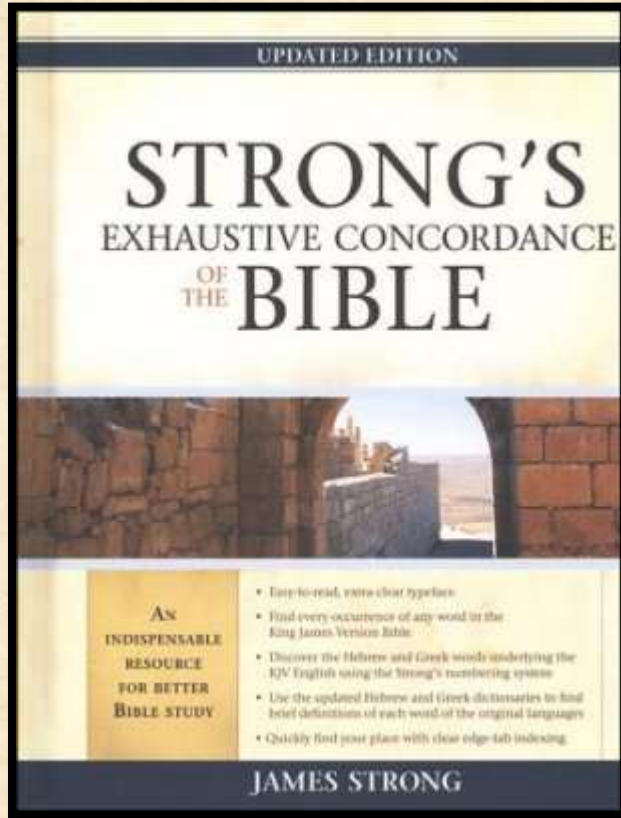
This word is translated “deacon” 1 Timothy and in Philippians. Everywhere else it is translated “minister” or “servant.”

Matthew 20:26b

²⁶ ... but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your **minister (diakonos)**;

John 12:26a

²⁶ If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my **servant (diakonos)** be...



What is a DEACON?

From the Greek διάκονος diakonos

1. one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master.
2. a servant, attendant, minister.

A “DEACON” is a servant or minister who is specially chosen to help the bishops.

The 9 Qualifications of a Deacon

There are fewer qualifications for a deacon than a bishop, but they are equally important.

Verses 8 to 10, plus verse 12 list NINE necessary virtues:

(Verse 11 is about the *wife* of a deacon so it will be considered separately.)

1 Timothy 3:8-10 and 12

- 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.
- ¹² Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

The Nine Qualifications of a Deacon

1. Grave.
2. Not doubletongued.
3. Not given to much wine.
4. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
5. Holding faith in a pure conscience.
6. Proven.
7. Blameless.
8. The husband of one wife.
9. Ruling children and house well.

These six virtues are also required of bishops,
so we have already looked at them.

The Nine Qualifications of a Deacon

1. Grave.
2. Not doubletongued.
3. Not given to much wine.
4. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
5. Holding faith in a pure conscience.
6. Proven.
7. Blameless.
8. The husband of one wife.
9. Ruling children and house well.

We will examine these three only.

The Nine Qualifications of a Deacon

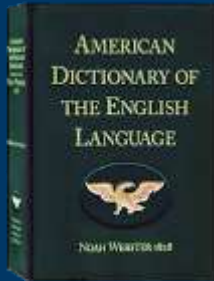
1. Grave.
2. Not doubletongued.
3. Not given to much wine.
4. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
5. Holding faith in a pure conscience.
6. Proven.
7. Blameless.
8. The husband of one wife.
9. Ruling children and house well.



GRAVE: having a serious and dignified quality or demeanor

The Nine Qualifications of a Deacon

1. Grave.
2. Not doubletongued.
3. Not given to much wine.
4. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
5. Holding faith in a pure conscience.
6. Proven.
7. Blameless.
8. The husband of one wife.
9. Ruling children and house well.



NOT DOUBLETONGUED:
Not deceitful, not making contrary declarations on the same subject at different times.

The Nine Qualifications of a Deacon

1. Grave.
2. Not doubletongued.
3. Not given to much wine.
4. Not greedy of filthy lucre.
5. Holding faith in a pure conscience.
6. Proven.
7. Blameless.
8. The husband of one wife.
9. Ruling children and house well.

“They must be committed to the revealed truths of the Christian faith and must live with a clear conscience.” [NLT]

The 4 Qualifications of a Deacon's Wife

There are four virtues that a deacon's wife must uphold:

1 Timothy 3:11

¹¹ Even so *must their wives be*
grave,
not slanderers,
sober,
faithful in all things.

The 4 Qualifications of a Deacon's Wife

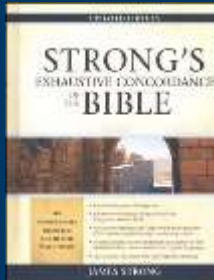
These two qualities were already discussed.

1 Timothy 3:11

¹¹ Even so must their wives be
grave,
not slanderers,
sober,
faithful in all things.

The 4 Qualifications of a Deacon's Wife

1. Grave.
2. Not slanderers.
3. Sober.
4. Faithful in all things.



διάβολος (diabolos). This is the root of the English word, “Devil.”
prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely.

The 4 Qualifications of a Deacon's Wife

1. Grave.
2. Not slanderers.
3. Sober.
4. Faithful in all things.

Luke 16:10

He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much:
and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.

There is great reward to those who serve this office well.

1 Timothy 3:13

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.



(The translation in the New Jerusalem Bible is a little easier to understand.)

1 Timothy 3:13

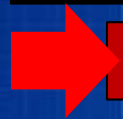
¹³ Those of them who carry out their duties well as deacons will earn a high standing for themselves and an authoritative voice in matters concerning faith in Christ Jesus.



1 Timothy

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[B] 1:3-20 Admonition



[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties

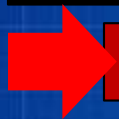
This section is now completed.

1 Timothy

[A] 1:1-2 Benediction

[B] 1:3-20 Admonition

[C] 2:1 to 3:13 Christian Duties



[D] 3:14-15 Intended Visit

Chapter 3 will continue with Paul's desire to visit Timothy in Ephesus.

Questions to test your understanding of this lesson:

1. What are the five ministries named in Ephesians 4:11-12?
2. What is the only qualification for those five ministries?
3. True or False: An apostle who falls from grace will lose his gift and calling.
4. The Greek word *episkopos* tells us that a BISHOP is someone who watches over a church. Epi means ____ and skopos means ____.
5. True or False: Having the DESIRE to be a bishop or deacon is all that God requires.
6. In 1 Timothy 3:2-7, how many qualifications are listed for a Bishop?
7. In 1 Timothy 3:6-7, the bishop must be someone who will not fall into the _____ of the devil and the _____ of the devil.
8. In 1 Timothy and Philippians, the Greek work *diakonos* is translated DEACON. Everywhere else it is translated _____ or _____.
9. In 1 Timothy 3:9-13, how many qualifications are listed for a Deacon?
10. In 1 Timothy 3:11, how many qualifications are listed for a Deacon's wife?

Each question is worth 10 points. Do NOT share your answers with other students.



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