

I Timothy Lesson 03

I Timothy Chapter 3

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Memory verses for this week: *Psa 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

Introduction: In chapter 2, we studied how that we should be constantly in prayer to the Lord for all men. Both kings, friends, and even those who do not know the Lord. God's desire is that we live such lives as would cause the lost to be drawn to Christ. We saw in verse 4 of chapter 2 that God's Will is for ALL men to come to him and be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

I. The Qualifications of Pastors (elders)

1 Tim 3:1 This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.

1 Tim 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

One of the great wonders of the bible is that it is all true. Every Word was God inspired and given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. We seen in this chapter the qualifications of a pastor. It is true that if a man seeks to be a pastor he does seek a good work. But we need to understand that God CALLS men into the ministry. Without a specific call from God, we should not be in the pulpit preaching. Unfortunately, God's Word is not used to determine qualifications for a pastor in many churches today. Those who ignore God's rules will answer for their failures one day. Those who follow the call of the Lord will never be among the highest paid in this life nor will they dwell in palaces and be worshipped as a king or lord. (If done God's way.) But this is a very desirable vocation and God does the choosing as to who is called and is placed in each church. In Acts Chapter 20, the bible says that the Holy Spirit makes the pastor/bishop the overseer of the flock.

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.

Verses 2 through 7 lay out the qualifications needed to become a pastor. The first requirement is that he be found blameless. That is not to say the man lives above sin, but he has a good Christian testimony and lives in an attempt to be pleasing to God by honoring the commandments and walking circumspectly in this world. The second qualification is the husband of one wife. This does not mean

one wife at a time. It means that he is married to his first wife until death. He can remarry at that time, but divorced men are not qualified for the ministry. Perhaps you know someone who is a pastor who has been divorced. I did not say all denominations enforce God's rules, but this is what the bible says. Does this mean single men can not be pastors? No, Paul himself was a man that we believe was not married. But if married, there is to be one wife. I think the teaching is clear that the husband of one wife also excludes women from the ministry. At my aunt's funeral a few weeks ago, the pastor performing the ceremony in a Methodist church was a woman. It seemed awkward and out of place to me, and made me feel uncomfortable trying to be gracious to her. Knowing the scriptures, I could not believe that God would want me to commend her for the service. Of course for the families sake I did not complain or make a scene, but I knew that this was not right in God's sight. Am I saying no one could be saved by this woman's preaching. No.. I believe she could preach the gospel and tell others about Christ, just as much as you and I have that right and command to do today as lay persons of the church. But I am saying that this verse had to be ignored for the woman to be ordained to begin with. If I know my heart, I want to please God rather than men. Verse 2 says the man should be vigilant and sober. Vigilant speaks of being awake and watchful as to what is going on around him. Sober goes beyond abstaining from alcohol, but means to have a steady inward mind that is clear and able to see what ought to be done. Verse 2 goes on to say the man should be of good behavior, given to hospitality, and apt to teach. A Christian pastor should have excellent outward behavior patterns. His look, his tone, even his dress should speak of his calling. The given to hospitality speaks of not only being nice and social to Christians, but to none-Christians also. Handling himself professionally around both those who have and those who have not. And the man of God should be apt to teach, meaning to teach the Word of God.

1 Tim 3:3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

Here is another command warning against alcohol use... not given to wine. We have churches teaching that fermented wine should be used in the Lord's supper. Overseas, in the Arab countries, you find wine meaning both freshly squeezed grape juice and fermented wine. The Lord would not command us to partake of something He has forbidden in other scriptures. The bible ALWAYS backs itself up from front to back. Times changed, and we moved from the period of Law to the dispensation of Grace. But sin is still sin as it was in the Old Testament. Praise God that we live in this period today. What a blessing that God has given us this time period to live here on earth. Verse 3 is clear about using alcohol, and here are a couple of others that forbid use of wine once it is fermented.

Prov 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

Prov 23:31 Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright.

Prov 23:32 At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder.

The man desiring the office of bishop should not have an intense desire of money. None of us should covet money, but the man of God is expressly forbidden to be that way and hold the office of a pastor. It goes on to say he should not be a brawler or one who would be quick to get into a fight with the fists. Rather he is to be one that is calm and patient with all men and women.

J. Vernon McGee said this about these verses.

“Not greedy of filthy lucre.” He shouldn’t have a love of money. The love of money is a root of all evil we are told in Scripture (1 Tim. 6:10). The way a church officer handles his money can lead him into a great deal of trouble—either his own money or the church’s money.

“Patient” means reasonable. He should be a reasonable man, someone you can talk to or reason with.

“Not a brawler.” He should not be a contentious person. Men who are constantly stirring up trouble in a church should never be selected as church officers.

“Not covetous” again refers to the love of money, but it also suggests idolatry, actually the worship of money. He should not be a man who puts the pursuit of wealth above everything else.

1 Tim 3:4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

1 Tim 3:5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

Verses 4 and 5 speak of the importance of raising your children correctly and managing your own affairs properly. If a man can not manage his own house well, how can he possibly manage the house of the Lord? This is a far greater responsibility. I have to highly commend our pastor in spending and controlling spending in the church. By doing things conservatively, we have been able to pay off the new church building in just a few years and can now concentrate our resources on helping missionaries and starting new churches. Many churches in our day are in debt to the point that they can not balance their budget monthly. My dad’s church is that way today. Always running in the negative to the budgeted amounts. God provides all the money we need and we should live within those boundaries that we might honor God with what He has given to us.

1 Tim 3:6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

1 Tim 3:7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

This not a condemnation of young pastors, but just a warning that we have need to learn quickly and preach the whole word of God with accuracy and wisdom. God is the one who gives us wisdom. I believe if we pray seriously and stedfastly for

wisdom, God will honor that prayer and give us wisdom far beyond our years. When Solomon took the throne, he was a relatively young man and realized that he had limited capabilities, and to fill the shoes of his father David would be no easy task. And when he asked God for wisdom to guide the people, God gave him GREAT wisdom and knowledge.

1 Ki 3:6 And Solomon said, Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great mercy, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day.

1 Ki 3:7 And now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child: I know not how to go out or come in.

1 Ki 3:8 And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude.

1 Ki 3:9 Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?

1 Ki 3:10 And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing.

1 Ki 3:11 And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

1 Ki 3:12 Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee.

1 Ki 3:13 And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days.

1 Ki 3:14 And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days.

How can we have a good report from them that are without? I think this speaks of walking humbly before all men and helping those that have need as God would so guide us. This may also speak of those outside of the church. In other words, not only should his own flock see him as a good man, but those outside of the immediate church also knows him as an honest and just man.

“Them which are without” means those who are outside the church. In other words, if a man has a bad reputation on the outside—if he doesn’t pay his bills, is

untrustworthy, or is a liar—he immediately is not a candidate to be an officer in the church. If he is such a man he is really a candidate of the Devil—he would better represent the Devil than he would represent the cause of Christ.

We all have to fight pride. We can get lifted up and see ourselves far beyond where we truly are in God's sight. When this happens, we can fall under condemnation of the devil. It was pride that caused Lucifer to be cast from his lofty position in Heaven.

Ezek 28:17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

Prov 11:2 When pride cometh, then cometh shame: but with the lowly is wisdom.

Prov 16:18 Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.

II. The Qualifications of Deacons

1 Tim 3:8 Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre;

We see many of the qualifications of a pastor in the deacon. A deacon is an appointed position by the pastor, and was never meant to an office that oversees and dictates church policy for the pastor to follow. Deacons were honestly in the early days the ones that waited on tables for the widows who had not been properly cared for. A deacon is to be a helper to the pastor, certainly not a controlling mechanism against God's perfect design of hierarchy in the church. Christ is the head of the church, and the pastor is the Shepherd overlooking the flock. The Holy Spirit is to guide the church under the direction of the pastor. Not many churches use the office of deacon in the proper way it was intended, causing much trouble and division within the church body.

To the qualifications... a deacon is to be a serious minded person who speaks the truth. What he tells one person should be the same to all people. He is to give the same report to all men. He, like the pastor, is not to be given to much wine. The Greek word 'oinos' used here means grape juice, not fermented wine. He also is to be free from the greed of money.

1 Tim 3:9 Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

1 Tim 3:10 And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless.

A deacon should hold a clear and conscientious view of Divine Truth. He should know that God's Word is accurate, inerrant, and divinely inspired. And knowing this, he should study the scriptures and be able to contend for the faith. Verse 10

says that a man should first be proven before given the office of a deacon. Only after he has been examined and found that he fills all of the qualifications would he use the office of the deacon.

1 Tim 3:11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

Note that the deacon's wife is to meet all of these qualifications. Not a person who is a gossip or one to cause problems, but a serious woman that is faithful in all things. A woman like this is a glory to her husband and glorifies God by living righteously before all.

1 Tim 3:12 Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

1 Tim 3:13 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.

As a pastor, a deacon should be the husband of one wife. We did not mention it earlier, but if a pastor (or a deacon) should outlive their wife, they are free to marry again and this would not disqualify them from their office. The deacon should rule his children and his home well. The office of a deacon is to be a commendable position and should be desired by those serving the Lord out of honesty and sincerity.

III. The Church – The Pillar and Ground of the Truth

1 Tim 3:14 These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly:

1 Tim 3:15 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.

Paul had a great desire to come and to be with young Timothy and his church. And his desire was to be able to return. We know this was not in God's Will, and Paul soon died after writing these letters to Paul.

Verse 15 goes over how we should conduct ourselves inside the church in the assemblies. In this verse, the church is called the house of God.

Psalm 122:1 I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.

Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalm 27:4 One thing have I desired of the LORD, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD, and to enquire in his temple.

We need to think about what God is saying here when he speaks of the pillar and ground of the truth. The ground of a thing is the foundation upon which the structure rests. The pillar is a column that upholds the superstructure. Our attitude in the church towards the truth is that it upholds all things. We stand on the truth of God's Word and teach the true doctrines according to the blessed scriptures. If the church was removed from the world (which is going to happen one day soon), there will be no truth left in the world.

IV. The Mystery of Godliness

1 Tim 3:16 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.

How true verse 16 is... the mystery of Godliness is great. The church, as a pillar and foundation, upholds the truth by proclaiming it through the ministry of the church. The ordinances are a picture of the gospel. And as we live Godly lives, we put forth Jesus Christ.

What are we as a church to uphold?

1. God was manifested in the flesh.

Gal 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

Gal 4:5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

2. He was justified in the Spirit

3. He was seen of Angels.

Luke 2:8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

4. Christ was Preached unto the Gentiles. (first by Peter, then Paul, and many others.)

5. Believed on in the world. (some did not and still do not believe today.)

6. Received up into glory. Only those who believed.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.