

'Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.

Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips but temperate faithful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; but in case I am delayed, I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth. By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory"

The purpose of Paul writing this letter.

v.14-16. To tell them how to **conduct themselves at church.** - Paul dedicates his 3 final letters to how we are supposed to conduct ourselves at church. Conduct; behavior, way of behaving, manners, deeds, activities.

What You need to have a Biblical church. 1. Sound doctrine, ch. 1 2. Men who are engaged in prayer. 3. Women who fulfill their proper role and do not usurp authority. 3. Elders that are called and qualified. 4. Deacons that are tested and serve. **WHY?** Because the church is the pillar of the truth. **What you do NOT need** – a coffee bar, a website, interesting and updated décor, engagement from important figures in the community.

Godliness. The pursuit of becoming like Christ, Christ-like, Christian. The pursuit of maturing in the Christian faith is an on-going process. It is the secret that produces piety, the secret is actually no secret at all, it is Jesus Christ, as taught in the Word through the Spirit. These faculties occur at a church that sets these things in order. 1 Tim. 1:5 'the goal of our preaching is love from a pure heart and a clear conscience.'

The Juvenilization of the Christian Church - the dumbing down of Biblical standards and qualifications. Started circa 1950's with the growth of suburbia and American Youth Culture.

Principle: No church is perfect BUT, every church should, **Always Be Reforming.** Always be working to make the church conform to the image of Christ. No exception. A sound interpretation always has a sound application and that application always gives God glory, gives us transformation into Christ-likeness. The procedures and policies of the church should adhere to the Bible and those are the very things that change a person's life into godliness.

You will not fall away from God if your '**life and doctrine**' in church is always being analyzed in light of the Bible. There are no perfect churches, no perfect people at church, BUT God has given us His perfect Word to conform our churches and our people to that WORD.

Deacons. Nontechnically, it means a person who serves. All Christians all called by Christ to serve. However there are some people who are specifically called to a high-level of service and God has ordered their life for them to commit to this higher level of service. Both, men and women serve in this capacity.

*This people need to be on public display to the church and recognized for their work both to inspire good deeds and to show a good example of Christian service. Also, just for the practical purpose of knowing how to get work accomplished.

v. 8-10 'Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.'

Being a deacon is not a lesser role to Elders. 'we no longer evaluate according to the flesh' Gal. 3/2 Cor. 5. The NT doesn't show that. However, their function is distinct and accomplished a very important distinct purpose.

Dignity. only occurs here and Tit. 2:7, stately, noble, regal, formal, honorable, with gravity, with integrity. Worthy of being treated with respect.

Double-tongued. διλογοθσ/dilogous, insincere, not keeping their word/hypocritical/back and forth, tossed about. A deacon needs to be a person comfortable in the truth and lives in it.

Addicted to too much wine. - **doesn't have an alcohol problem but not any one of those types of addictions, self-controlled.**

Must be tested. This doesn't really refer to a written test, but instead, long-term observation of meeting these qualifications. 'God tests the righteous' Ps. 11:5, 'blessed is the man who perseveres under trial' Ja. 1:12

'sordid gain' - deacons often handle money distribution or collection.

'clear conscience' - they understand sound doctrine and if they do not know something they understand how to pursue clarity of doctrine from the Elders who are teaching. The conscience is a very important aspect of our Christian service. We should serve with a clear conscience which means we maintain a life of integrity and humility. **People often hide from service because they do not have a clear conscience and do not want that to be exposed.**

11-13 'Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.'

malicious gossip. διαβολουσ/diabolous, devil - the women are not to be she-devils. slanderous. Any woman who does this needs to be corrected on the spot. 'Resist the devil and he will flee' Ja. 4:7, 'give no opportunity to the devil' Eph. 4:27

temperate, sober-minded, level-headed, down to earth, not flighty or given over to grandiose ideas, they aren't the good idea fairy

faithful in all things; πιστας/pistis, they are reliable, they are dependable, they will be there on Sunday, you don't have to wonder about their level of commitment.

husbands of one wife, good managers of their children and households.

those who serve well, high standing and great confidence in the faith.

They prove their Christian faith in their service at the church. They walk out their faith.