



# Pleasant Ridge Baptist Church

## Galatians

### Biblical Qualifications for Deacons

1 Timothy 3:8-13

03/24/2019

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## Main Point

Deacons are held to high standards, for they are servants of the bride of Christ—the church.

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## Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**When have you seen someone serve in the church in a way that really set them apart?**

**What qualities did you appreciate about them?**

The qualifications demanded of deacons are similar to those required of elders. The term “deacon” refers literally to someone who serves. The Bible portrays the deacon as helping the elders in the ministries or work of the church. Interestingly, though, Paul begins this section on deacons without any definition or description of their duties.

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## Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

**ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 3:8-10.**

Paul listed several requirements for the position of deacon in these initial verses. The first serves as a cover term for his description of deacon qualifications. The next three requirements are negative in that they prohibit certain attitudes in the deacon.

**Which description in verse 8 sticks out to you the most? Why?**

**Notice that Paul doesn't outright prohibit drinking wine or possessing money. What, then, is he specifically warning against in verse 8? What is it about the pursuit of excess that changes a person?**

**What are some ways a person becomes worthy of respect?**

**What is the potential harm for the church in ignoring the prohibitions given for deacons in verse 8?**

**What did Paul mean in verse 9 when he said that deacons have the responsibility of "holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience"? What is the mystery of the faith?**

**What does verse 9 entail about the level of importance of a deacon's service?**

**Look at verse 10. How does our church go about testing people before giving them the responsibility of serving as deacons?**

According to these verses, the love for Jesus that deacons have is evidenced by the way they cling to Him. After passing the test of blamelessness, they are well positioned to model faithfulness for other members of the church.

**ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ 1 TIMOTHY 3:11-13.**

**How does your church view women and wives, as mentioned in verse 11?**

**What does verse 11 reveal about the equal value God places on both men and women?**

**Look at verse 12. How does possessing these character traits assist deacons in their service to the church? Generally speaking, what does being a husband of one wife reveal about the character of the husband?**

**Why do you think the connection between family life and the church is given such prominence?**

**What is the nature between boldness and faith, as seen in verse 13?**

**How can godly service in the church lead to bold witness outside of it?**

Paul's appeal for deacons called for visible, mature, righteous living that commended Christianity to its observers. He also wanted deacons to show a maturity that has been proven by obedience and endurance under trials and testing.

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## **Application**

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**From what you've learned from this passage, what is the relationship between gratitude, respect, and accountability between church members and deacons?**

**How do these biblical standards for deacons challenge you in your own walk with the Lord?**

**What role can you play in helping your church affirm deacons and show your appreciation of them?**

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## **Pray**

Spend some time thanking God for the wonderful gift of deacons to the church. Pray that God will continue to raise up godly deacons at this church. Ask God to bless our deacons, protect them from spiritual harm, and grant them the strength to serve our church in the mission God has given.

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## **Commentary**

### **1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13**

3:8 Deacons are the other office of the NT church, in addition to the pastor or elder. Likewise suggests a link between the lists of qualifications. There are striking similarities between the qualifications for pastor/overseer and for deacons. One key distinction is that deacons are not required to be able to teach.

3:9 The word mystery (Gk musterion) is a common Pauline word. It refers to the gospel (1Co 2:7; 4:1; 15:51; Col 1:25-26; 2:2; 4:3; Eph 3:4-13).

3:10 The testing described here would presumably be done by the church under the leadership of the overseers.

3:11 The Greek word behind wives here can mean “women” or “wives.” Context (e.g., v. 2) suggests “wives” is the proper translation choice.

3:13 This verse highlights the value and importance of the office of deacon by stating two results of good service in this role. Good standing refers to respect and appreciation from the church toward those who serve the church in this way. Great boldness probably refers to the increase in confidence in the faith that comes from serving and seeing the truths of the gospel proven in ministry.