

1 TIMOTHY VERSE BY VERSE
SESSION 7 | 1 TIMOTHY 3:1-10

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7 | THE THIRD CHARGE (PART 1): OVERSEERS

Note: the outline assumes that the charge of 1:18 is carried out in 2:1-3:13

- Verse 1 –
 - A **true saying** is a *faithful* (as in 1 Tim. 1:15) *word* (λόγος [logos]). Not a “saying” as in “a proverb,” but Paul is emphasizing a truth.
 - The word **man** is from the indefinite masculine pronoun sometimes translated *anyone*, but to translate as *anyone* here (as in Young’s Literal) would be in error since verse 2 shows him to be a **husband**.
 - The **office of a bishop** is translated from ἐπισκοπή [episkope], a noun, from *epi* (upon) and *skope* (scope). The one in the *episkope* is in a place of *looking over*. The word could be *overseer* (as in NASB) or *the oversight* (YLT), but **office of a bishop** was the best translation in 1611.
 - The body of Christ could likely benefit from a good discussion of *what the preacher should be called*.
 - Preacher - used of Paul in 1 Tim. 2:7, 2 Tim. 1:11, and of Noah in 2 Peter 2:5.
 - Pastor - Used in Jeremiah 17:16, and a more *shepherding* word than is fully fitting of the Body of Christ.
 - Bishop - the English word actually came into the English language by morphing the original *episcopos*, dropping the first and last letters making *piscopos* and then eventually becoming *bishop*. Though this word is the closest English equivalent to the original, it is distasteful to many in the free-church tradition due to associations with Catholicism and Anglicanism.
 - Minister - used a number of times in the scriptures, but almost always from the root for *deacon*.
 - Reverend - from a latin term which means “to stand in awe/respect.” Also distasteful to most of the free-church tradition. In addition, it is almost the total opposite of “one who looks over” to “one who is looked upon.”
 - Paul clearly shows no animosity toward the *desiring* of this office. I do not see that the Scripture insists on a mystical calling (though many in the church do). The **office of a bishop** should be carried out in such a way that men would desire this **good work**.
- Verses 2-3 –
 - These two verses give the *quick list* which Paul feels needs no further explanation or commentary. I will therefore keep my commentary to a minimum.
 - **blameless** - literally “nothing can be put upon him.”
 - **husband of one wife** - literally “a one woman man.” Almost zero chance he was talking about polygamy (which was virtually unheard of in Paul’s day).
 - **vigilant** - watchful.
 - **sober** - self-controlled.
 - **of good behavior** - modest.
 - **given to hospitality** - having a love for those he does not know.
 - **apt to teach** - A teaching mind and spirit.
 - **not given to wine** - the word literally means *not beside wine*.
 - **no striker** - not violent or a bully.
 - **not greedy of filthy lucre** - one who desires to make his living honestly.

- **patient** - gentle, moderate in behavior.
 - **not a brawler** - not looking for a fight.
 - **not covetous** - literally “not a lover of silver.”
- Verses 4-7 –
 - In these verses, Paul gives requirements on which he feels the need to give brief explanation (unlike verses 2-3).
 - A good husband and father -
 - He **ruleth well** in his **own house** so that he may **take care of the church of God**. Note that Paul speaks of a different kind of leadership in the home than in the church, but if he cannot do the “home kind” he will not be able to do the “church kind.”
 - Hi **children** should be **in subjection with all gravity**. That is, the children should *know their place* and *accept it*.
 - My personal understanding is that *while a pastor’s children are in the home, he needs to be in full control of their behavior*. After they leave the home, the pastor is no more responsible for his children’s behavior than any other man.
 - One who is **not a novice** -
 - The Greek νεόφυτος [neophytos] comes from *neos* (young) and *phytos* (to grow up). The English word *neophyte* is used of many subjects, but the primary definition is *one who is new to the faith*.
 - A **novice** in the faith could succumb to **pride** and then into **the condemnation of the devil**. Note that **condemnation** is the word κρίμα [krima] rather than *krisis*, which is a judicial condemnation. To be in the devil’s *krima* is to come into his “field of condemnation” and to be thus attacked.
 - One who has a **good report** from outsiders.
 - The word **report** is from μαρτυρία [marturia], which is related to the word *witness*.
 - This *good witness from outsiders* is necessary due to a two-fold purpose:
 - It will keep him from **reproach**. While a reproach from those who are enemies of the church is expected (as it was experienced by Christ - Rom. 15:3), a Pastor does not want to be so reproached by the general population as to have no ability to make progress in the Gospel.
 - It will cause him to fall into **the snare of the devil**. It may be the devil’s plan, in fact, to isolate the preacher from the society.

1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13 | THE THIRD CHARGE (PART 2): DEACONS

- Verse 8 –
 - From this extended passage (1 Tim. 3:1-13) we learn that the church has *two* offices, that of the **bishop** and of the **deacons**. The local church should emulate this model as quickly as possible.
 - It is notable that Paul speaks of the **bishop** always in the singular, but the **deacons** always in the plural.
 - While it is not expressly ordered, the Biblical nature of a local church seems to be that of Bishop/Overseer/Pastor along with deacons, giving oversight and ministry to the congregation, in whom the full authority rests.

- The deacons should be **grave** (worthy of respect), **not doubletongued** (insincere in speech), **not given to much wine** (a lesser command than to the Bishop, not striving to have much wine), and **not greedy of filthy lucre** (exactly as the command to the Bishop).
- Verse 9 –
 - It seems to me that **the mystery of the faith** is the Pauline revelation. Thus, a man who does not understand *rightly dividing* (dividing the mystery from prophecy) does not meet the Biblical qualifications to be a deacon.
 - In “standard evangelicalism” this phrase almost always is simply taken as “spiritually mature.” For example, *GotQuestions* says: “In this context, Paul is simply saying that the man who serves the church should be a believer who is mature, who has a firm grasp on the basic elements of the gospel, and whose life matches his profession of faith.” (<https://www.gotquestions.org/mystery-of-faith.html>).
- Verse 10 –
 - After being **proved** (Paul does not give instructions for the time or method of doing so, leaving it up to the congregation), when they are **found blameless** (as for the bishop in verse 2) they may begin to serve.