

ATTRIBUTES OF CHURCH LEADERS (1 TIMOTHY 3)

1 Timothy 3:1-7. About Elders. Now here's something you can trust, something to remember: if anyone aspires to be an overseer (elder, bishop, pastor), he aspires to noble work. Now the overseer must:

1. Be above reproach.
 2. The husband of one wife.
 3. Temperate.
 4. Self-controlled.
 5. Respectable.
 6. Hospitable.
 7. Able to teach.
 8. Not given to drunkenness.
 9. Gentle, not violent.
 10. Not quarrelsome.
 11. Not a lover of money.
 12. Manage his own family well.
 13. Sees that his children obey him with proper respect (After all, if he can manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)
 14. Not a recent convert (i.e., not a novice); otherwise he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.
 15. Possess a good reputation with outsiders, so he won't fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.
- Q Do you view these attributes as ideal or finitely required? For example (see verse 4), must a bishop (overseer, elder, pastor) have children (as in more than one) in order to "qualify" as a candidate for elder?
- Q Which attribute do you see most important? Least important?
- Q Which attribute do you believe would be the most difficult to assess?
- Q Which attribute do pastors have the most difficulty possessing and maintaining?
- Q When does a person stop being a pastor/elder/overseer/bishop?

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-7

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, [ἐπισκοπῆς, traditionally bishop] he desires a noble task. ²Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. ⁵(If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. ⁷He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

1 Timothy 3:8-13. *About Deacons*. Similarly, deacons (aka waiter, servant, minister) are to be men who are:

1. Worthy of respect.
2. Sincere.
3. Not indulging in much wine.
4. Not pursuing dishonest gain.
5. Keeping hold of the deep truths of the faith, with a clear conscience.
6. Tested, and if nothing against them arises, let them serve as deacons.
7. Have wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers, but temperate, trustworthy in everything.
8. Husband of one wife, and also must manage his children and household well.

Note: those who have served well achieve an excellent standing and assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

- Q Which attribute must an elder have that is not necessarily an attribute a deacon must have?
- Q Should an elder/pastor/bishop/overseer be required to serve as a deacon first?
- Q Why did Southern Baptists eliminate deaconesses in the early 20th century? Why did we have deaconesses in the early church?
- Q Do the wives of deacons have a higher level of expectation than their husbands or elders?
- Q Why does deacon service improve a deacon's standing and assurance in their faith in the Christ?
- Q When does a person stop being a deacon?

1 Timothy 3:14-16. *A Personal Note*. I'm hoping to come to you soon, so I'm writing these instructions so that if I'm delayed, you'll know how people should conduct themselves in God's household—the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the Truth. Beyond all question, the secret of godliness is mega!

God appeared in the flesh.

God was vindicated by Holy Spirit.

God was seen by angels.

God was preached among the pagans.

God was believed on in the world.

God was taken up in glory.

- Q So what is the purpose of listing these attributes of church leaders and servants?
- Q How is the church the pillar and foundation of Truth? What aspects of truth does the church overlook the most?

1 TIMOTHY 3:8-13

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. ⁹They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

¹¹In the same way, their wives [some mss. read *way*, *deaconesses*] are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

¹²A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

¹³Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

1 TIMOTHY 3:14-16

Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, ¹⁵if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. ¹⁶Beyond all question, the mystery of godliness is great:

He [some mss read *God*] appeared in a body [some mss read *in the flesh*], was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory.

SERVANT LEADERS' INSTRUCTIONS (1 TIMOTHY 4)

1 Timothy 4:1-8. *Stick to the Faith.* Holy Spirit says very clearly that in the latter days, some will abandon the faith. They'll pay attention to lying spirits and stuff taught by demons.

This stuff is promulgated by liars, hypocritical liars. They've been able to do this because their consciences have been seared, sealed like with a hot iron [κεκαυστηριασμένων]. For example, they forbid people from marrying, and eating certain foods.

Now the Lord God has created these foods to be received with thanks by those who believe and know the Truth. Everything the Lord God has created is good—nothing is to be rejected, if received with thanksgiving. Why? Such food is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

If you show these things to people, you will be a good minister [διάκονος] of Christ Jesus. You will show you've been brought up in the words [truth] of the faith of the faith, and the good teaching you've been following.

Listen, have nothing to do with godless myths, or old wives' tales. No, train yourself to be godly. Sure physical training has some value, but godliness has much broader application and value—holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

1 TIMOTHY 4:1-8

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

²Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. ³They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. ⁴For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

⁶If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed. ⁷Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.

⁸For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

- Q What does it mean to “abandon the faith?” Soteriological consequences?
- Q What's the most deceptive spirit with which you are familiar, especially one that causes one to abandon the faith?
- Q What's the most demonic thing you see being taught in these last days?
- Q Why is it useful to forbid people to marry? To abstain from certain foods?
- Q What food should be rejected? BTW, when did the Lord God permit all food for ingestion? Why did the Lord God require certain foods at one time to be avoided?
- Q What's a good example of a godless myth told today? [e.g., my country is God's country?; some effects have no causes]
- Q Why do we drift away from “the faith?” What is the toughest part of the faith to stick to?

1 Timothy 4:9-16. *Keeping the Main Thing the Main Thing*. Now here's something else which bears remembering and fully accepting (and for which we labor and strive)—We put our hope in the living God, the living God who is our Savior of all people, especially the Savior of those who believe.

Command and teach these principles. Don't let anyone put you down because you're young. Set an example for the believers—how you speak, how you live, how you love, how you practice your faith, and how you live a pure life.

Until I come, make sure you devote yourself to reading the Scripture publically, to preaching [παροακλήσει; exhorting, by one's side; 3874] and to teaching [διδασκαλία; instruction; 1319]. And, don't neglect your charismatos which was given you through prophecy, when the presbyters laid their hands on you.

Stay diligent on all this—give it all up to them so everyone may see your progress. Watch your life, and your doctrine, closely. Stay persistent because if you do, you will save not only yourself, but those who hear you exhort and instruct (verse 13).

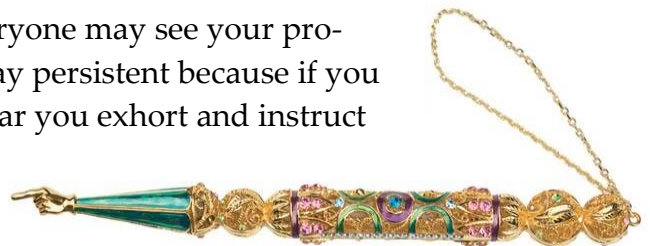
- Q Why do we “strive” to put our hope in a “living God,” a God who saves all people?
- Q If the Lord God is not only living, but the Savior of all people, how also is the Lord God “especially the Savior of those who believe?” [μάλιστα; most of all, particularly so; 3122]
 - ✓ Why is universalism not a particularly useful view in soteriology?
 - ✓ Why is universalism a particularly useful view in soteriology?
- Q Do we read the Scripture publically enough? Why don't we? And, why publically?
- Q What “Scripture” is to be read publically? So, why do we call it “Old?”
- Q Which is more important, to watch one's life or doctrine closely?
- Q What can we learn about the word Paul/Saul used to describe “preaching” here (verse 13)?

1 TIMOTHY 4:9-16

This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance ¹⁰(and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

¹¹Command and teach these things. ¹²Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. ¹³Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. ¹⁴Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

¹⁵Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. ¹⁶Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.



EVERYDAY MINISTRIES & CONCERNS (1 TIMOTHY 5)

1 Timothy 5:1-16. *Caring for Widows.* Overall, remember to exhort an elder [Πρεσβυτέρω; elder, member of the Sanhedrin or an elder of a Christian assembly; 4245]⁵ as if he were your father, and certainly do not rebuke them harshly. As for younger men, treat them as brothers; older women as if they were your mother, and younger women—as if they were your sisters, absolutely pure in motive, pure in deed, and pure in consequence.

As to widows—do not ignore them, but provide proper recognition for those really in need. Now, if a widow has children or grandchildren, they should care for their own family, put their religion in practice and thus please the Lord our God. The widow who is alone and truly in need puts her hope in God, and continues to pray and ask God for help. But, the widow who “lives for pleasure” [living wantonly, luxuriously] is “dead even while she lives.”

Make sure people follow these instructions for those who fail to provide for their relatives, and especially their immediate family, have denied the faith and are worse than unbelievers.

A widow’s list is comprised of women over sixty, women have been faithful to their husband, and are well known for their good deeds. Consider, for example, bringing up children, showing hospitality [ἐξενδοχῆσεν, “ she entertained

1 TIMOTHY 5:1-16

Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.

³Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. ⁴But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.

⁵The widow who is really in need and left all alone puts her hope in God and continues night and day to pray and to ask God for help. ⁶But the widow who lives for pleasure is dead even while she lives.

⁷Give the people these instructions, too, so that no one may be open to blame. ⁸If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

⁹No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, [or *has had but one husband*] ¹⁰and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.

¹¹As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. ¹²Thus they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. ¹³Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to. ¹⁴So I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander. ¹⁵Some have in fact already turned away to follow Satan.

¹⁶If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.

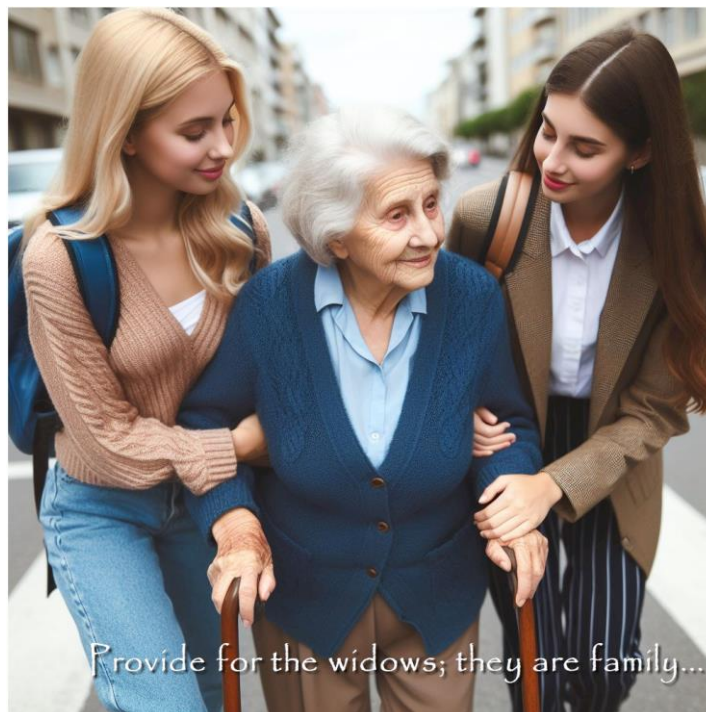
⁵According to the *Helps Word-studies* (see <https://biblehub.com/greek/4245.htm>) “The NT specifies elders are *men*. (The feminine singular, *presbyterā*, never occurs in the Bible.” Note, however, in the next sentence, Paul uses this same word root, *presbyter*..., *πρεσβυτέρας*, to refer to *women* in the church. Interestingly, *Helps Word-studies* claims 1 Timothy 5:2 refers to *aged* women, not women with an official church office or title. A little more than lexical analyses going on here?

strangers;" [3580](#)], washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble, and devotion to all kinds of good deeds.

Younger women should not be on your list. When their sensuality becomes more important than their devotion to the Christ, they want to marry. In doing so, they bring judgment on themselves—they've broken their "first pledge." [ἀθετέω; to do away with what has been laid down, set aside, "cast off their first faith;" [114](#)] Often they become habitually idle, and gossip saying things they should not.

So? I counsel younger widows to get married, have children, and manage their homes well so no opportunity for the enemy to slander will be afforded. In fact, some have already done that. If any believing woman has widows in her family, she should help them; don't let the church be burdened; the church then can help those widows truly in need.

- Q Why are taking care of widows such an important issue for the church then? Now?
- Q What's a clear sign that one has lost their faith? (verse 8) So?
- Q Should widows who have not been faithful to their husbands, or had more than one husband, not be helped? And those who despise washing other people's feet? What about those who are not totally devoted to all kinds of good deeds? Should they be helped? What's going on here?
- Q To what extent was Paul aware of women's fertility, or was it much later in the 1st century?
- Q To what extent do you conclude sexism, specifically misogyny, is occurring here?
- Q What guidelines for assisting those in need can you glean from Paul's advice on assisting widows?



1 Timothy 5:17-25. *Handling Elders*. Now when it comes to those who lead the church, elders, they are worthy of being paid [or “honor” with a “price” root; τιμῆς], especially [most of all] those who work/strain in the word [κοπιῶντες ἐν λόγῳ, [2872](#)] and teach [διδασκαλία]. Scripture says we are not to muzzle the ox who treads out the grain, and Scripture also says the worker deserves his wages.

Also don't receive or even acknowledge [παράδεχου, [3858](#)] an accusation against an elder unless presented by two or three witnesses [μαρτύρων], not just complainers. Those who are publically sinning should be rebuked publically so others may learn, and take warning.

Now, as for you Timothy, I challenge you right here in front of God, Christ Jesus and selected angels: keep these instructions, without favoritism – do nothing with partiality. Don't be hasty to lay on hands; don't share in the evil of others. Bottom line? Keep yourself pure.

Drink a little wine for your stomach's sake and frequent illnesses; stop drinking only water.

Remember, the sins of some people are right up front and judgment is right there; whereas, the sins of others have consequences which happen later. Similarly, good deeds are obvious, and even those can't be hidden.

- Q Why are elders who work in the word and teach to be paid? Why do we resist this notion?
- Q What is significant about Paul's comment that Scripture says “The worker deserves his wages?”
- Q What unique characteristics must people have if bringing an accusation against an elder/pastor? Does this apply also to “associate” or “assistant” pastors/elders?
- Q Why do we usually sweep under the rug sins of elders/pastors? Does Scripture support this?
- Q How often do you have stomach aches?
- Q How do we know good deeds are indeed good deeds?

1 TIMOTHY 5:17-25

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. ¹⁸For the Scripture says, “Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,” [Deuteronomy 25:4] and “The worker deserves his wages.” [Luke 10:7] ¹⁹Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. ²⁰Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning.

²¹I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.

²²Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.

²³Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.

²⁴The sins of some men are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them. ²⁵In the same way, good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not cannot be hidden.

WE'RE ALL SLAVES—BUT, WHO'S YOUR MASTER? (1 TIMOTHY 6)

1 Timothy 6:1-10. *Masters & Slaves, Funky Teachers, Money Lovers*. Even if you've been enslaved, accord your owner full respect; otherwise, God's reputation and our teaching will be viewed negatively, if not blasphemed. If your owner is a believer, do not use that as an excuse to be less respectful simply because they are brothers. In fact, serve them even better because they will benefit as believers; be dear to them. Teaching these things, urge this principle.

Now as for false teachers, remember they are diverging from the instruction of our Lord, Jesus the Christ, and not only that, they are conceited/puffed up (literally "blow smoke"); they understand nothing.

You'll also note false teachers have an unhealthy interest in controversies, quarrels about word which result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicion and useless debates [*διαπραρατιβαί*, wrangling, constant arguing, [3859](#)] between people of corrupted minds. They think godliness is a way to gain financially.

Here's the real story—godliness with contentment has great gain. We've brought nothing into this world and we'll take nothing out. If we've got food and clothing, be content. People wanting to get rich easily fall into temptation; many foolishly harmful ideas have plunged people into ruin, into destruction. Remember a source of all kinds of evils is the love of money [avarice, covetousness]. In fact, some eager for stuff have been seduced away from the faith, and pierced [*περιέπειραν*, "per-ee-pi'-ro;" been put on a spit, [4044](#)] themselves with much sorrow.

- Q Why are believing slaves to be particularly good slaves? How is this reconciled with 1 Tim 1:10?
- Q What are some indicators of false teaching—beyond obvious variance from the teachings of the Lord?
- Q Why are we not content with food and clothing?
- Q What sorrow have you experienced from being on the spit of eagerness for money? Why does this cause people to be seduced from the faith?

1 TIMOTHY 6:1-10

All who are under the yoke of slavery should consider their masters worthy of full respect, so that God's name and our teaching may not be slandered. ²Those who have believing masters are not to show less respect for them because they are brothers. Instead, they are to serve them even better, because those who benefit from their service are believers, and dear to them. These are the things you are to teach and urge on them.

³If anyone teaches false doctrines and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus [the] Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions ⁵and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain.

⁶But godliness with contentment is great gain. ⁷For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. ⁸But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. ⁹People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

1 Timothy 6:11-21. *Closing Thoughts*. But you are different—flee from all this nonsense. Pursue other things: righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness.

Fight the good fight of faith. Grab on to *eternal* life, the life to which you were called when you confessed your faith in the presence of many witnesses. You confessed in the presence of Father God, who gives life to everything, and in front of Christ Jesus who Himself confessed in front of Pontius Pilate.

I challenge you to keep pursuing without blemish until the Lord Jesus the Christ Himself appears. He will appear when Father God deems it to be the right time for He is the only King, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He alone is immortal; He alone lives in unapproachable light who no one has seen or can see. He gets the honor, and the praise for might, forever. So be it, truly, let it be.

Teach those who are rich in this world to tone down their arrogance, not to put their hope in wealth, a wealth which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in the Lord our God. God richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.

Teach the rich to do good—to be rich in good deeds; to be generous and willing to share. In doing so, they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so they may grab life that is truly life.

Finally, Timothy, protect what has been entrusted to you. Avoid profanely empty babblings, and what has been falsely called “knowledge.” Yes, some have professed and in doing so, have wandered away from the faith. May grace be extended to all of you.

1 TIMOTHY 6:11-21

But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

¹²Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. ¹³In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you ¹⁴to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵which God will bring about in his own time—God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, ¹⁶who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

¹⁷Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. ¹⁸Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. ¹⁹In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

²⁰Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge, ²¹which some have professed and in so doing have wandered from the faith.

Grace be with you [all].

- Q What makes wealth so uncertain? Why then do we put our hope in wealth? Tangible numbers.
- Q Has Paul introduced another criterion for salvation in verse 19? That is, verse 18, says be rich in good deeds, be generous and share willingly.
- Q What was the “good confession” Jesus the Christ made in front of/to Pontius Pilate? [Matthew 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3; John 18:33ff, 19:8-11]
- Q What is our confession that we manifest regarding Jesus the Christ? Are we in fact δούλοις? Or servants, or employees, or ...? How do you describe your relationship with the Lord God?