



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V24 N48 November 27, 2022

"Called to Lead"

1 Timothy 3:1-15

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Faithfulness

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

"Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart. Then you will win favor and a good name in the sight of God and man."

Proverbs 3:3-4



What are the qualifications for church leaders?

The Core Competencies were originally intended as a measure of Christian maturity. Believers with a growing comprehension of the Central Beliefs and a more consistent engagement in the Central Practices will find the Spirit using the two to develop the Central Virtues in them. Together the three form a profile of a developing follower of Jesus Christ to serve as measure of Christian maturity. Such a measure is helpful because the church needs leaders and leaders need to be growing disciples of Jesus Christ. Commenting on the requirements for leadership in the church found in 1 Timothy 3:1-15 and Titus 1:5-9, one author writes: "These qualities should be goals for every Christian man who is a Christ-follower. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Paul pulled together a number of characteristics he and other authors mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament for both men and women and outlined a marvelous profile for measuring Christ-like maturity in men particularly" (Gene A. Getz, *The Measure of a Man*, 22-23). Getz addresses his book to men, but as he says the characteristics discussed in it are "for both men and women."

Given the nature of the Core Competencies, there is no Christian Maturity Competency because the Central Beliefs, Central Practices, and Central Virtues together are the mark of maturity. However, if any one competency comes close to encapsulating them all, it's Faithfulness. In much the same way that holiness is both an attribute of God and at the same time the sum total of all the attributes, Faithfulness is both a Core Competency and at the same time the sum total of all the competencies. It speaks of establishing a "good name" described in terms of "long-term loyalty." Maturing disciples of Jesus Christ have established a "good name," de-

scribed in terms of their "long-term loyalty" to God and his word.

Without a doubt the church needs leaders, and its leaders need to be qualified to lead. On this subject, another author writes: "The inclusion of the 'trustworthy saying' in 1 Timothy 3:1 also underscores the importance of having qualified leaders. It is directed to those who are cautiously debating whether to be publicly available for the works. Not only should the church be looking for people who are qualified, but those with potential should be developing within themselves the qualities that will one day qualify them for the work. It is not enough for a church to hunt at the last moment for people to elect as elders at an annual meeting. It is a long-term, ongoing process. Early on in a Christian's life one should be growing spiritually and using the Spirit's gifts for the good of the church, with the possibility, humbly considered, of special ministry such as elderhood. Although this passage does not say so, elders and other mature Christians should be encouraging younger believers to seek God's leading in this direction" (Walter L. Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, 122).

While Liefeld speaks of those who serve the body of Christ as elders (1Ti 3:1-7), there are other leaders in the church as well – for example, those who serve as deacons (1Ti 3:8-13), that is, "humble servants" (A. Duane Liftin, "1 Timothy," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 737) – either deacons and *their wives* or deacons and women *other than their wives* who serve the congregation. Central Bible Church has elders by name, but it has no deacons by name. Instead it has a host of "humble servants" who minister to various groups in the church, e.g., Community Group Shepherds, Home Group Leaders, Children's and Student Ministers.



EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-15

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

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

11 In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

12 A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. 13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. 14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, 15 if 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.

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Underline "trustworthy saying" in v. 1.
- Circle "aspires" and "desires" in v. 1.
- Circle "noble" in v. 1.
- Circle "overseer" in v. 2.
- Number the qualifications for elders in vv. 2-7.
- Box "so that" indicating result in vv. 7, 14.
- Underline "devil's trap" in v. 7.
- Bracket "in the same way" in vv. 8, 11.
- Circle "deacons" in v. 8.
- Number the qualifications for deacons in vv. 8-9, 12.
- Circle "women" in v. 11.
- Circle "people" in v. 15.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing do you not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Paul lists the requirements for *three groups* of leaders in this passage. List them.
2. Explain the *relationship* of the first requirement for an overseer (“above reproach”) to all the others.
3. The NIV has interpreted the phrase “one-woman man” to mean “faithful to his wife.” What are some other possible interpretations (see note on verse 3)? And which one of them all reflects the position of Central Bible Church?
4. What does “temperate” mean?
5. Explain the *contrast* expressed in verse 3.
6. An *overseer* must manage his own family well. Why?
7. Explain verse 6.
8. Distinguish the role of the *overseer* and the *deacon*.
9. Who are “the women” mentioned in verse 11?
10. What can *deacons* expect to receive in return for their service?
11. **Discussion:** Talk about whether all three of the leader types mentioned in this passage are represented in Central Bible Church.

Commentary On The Text

On the instructions Paul gave Timothy recorded in 1 Timothy 3:1-15, one commentator explains: “Paul had experienced problems with some strong-minded leaders of the Ephesian church (1 Tim 1:19-20; 2 Tim 3:5-7). His instructions here were not merely a manual for church organization, but they were an effort to guarantee that new leaders in the church would have commitment to Christ and would encourage godliness and unity. In this section Paul discussed the qualifications of three groups of church leaders. In 3:1-7 he discussed overseers or bishop. In 3:8-10, 12-13 he discussed the requirements for deacons or church helpers. In 3:11 he presented requirements for women helpers” (Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, NAC, 105).

First, overseers or bishops (*episkopos*) – according to one commentator, Paul lists *fifteen* mostly outward and observable qualifications for overseers in two sets of seven plus an additional one (see William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Pastoral Epistles*, in *New Testament Commentary*, 120). In the first set all worded *positively*, “above reproach” heads the list. The word means literally “not to be taken hold of,” hence “irreproachable” or “unassailable.” An elder’s “conduct should be of such a nature that no handle is given to anyone by which to injure his reputation” (Homer A. Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 125).

The implications of this banner trait unfold in the following list of qualifications. The next four pertain to Christian morality in general: “faithful to his wife,” “temperate,” meaning sober, circumspect, clear-headed, and well-balanced, “self-controlled,” meaning sensible, not rash or unstable, and “respectable,” referring to someone “of inner moral excellency and of outward orderly behavior” (Hendriksen, 123). The next two describe the overseer’s ministry to others in the church: “hospitable,” which is clearly important in a day when traveling heralds of the gospel are dependent on the kindness of local Christians as they pass through, spreading the good news, and “able to teach,” which demands competence and skill in communicating Christian truth.

The second set of seven, most worded *negatively*, pertains to the overseer’s interpersonal relationships: “not given to drunkenness” and “not violent,” meaning not quick-tempered, not ready with a blow, not a bully, but instead “gentle,” complement one another. “The ‘gentle’ man uses elasticity in supervision and is flexible rather than rigid. Synonyms for ‘gentle’

include kind, forbearing, and considerate” (Lea and Griffin, 111). The list goes on “not quarrelsome,” meaning not verbally contentious nor pugnacious, and “not a lover of money,” an allusion to greed, a distinguishing feature of false teachers in Ephesus (6:5-10). The last two requirements come with explanations. “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him,” doing so in such a way that he doesn’t lose their respect in the process. After all, if he cannot preside over his own family, it’s unlikely that he will be able to preside over God’s family. And finally, “he must not be a recent convert,” lest he become conceited and contrary to the NIV fall under the judgment *the devil causes* (see note on v. 7). The additional requirement, number fifteen, rounds out the list. “He must have a good reputation with outsiders,” given the fact that “Satan likes nothing better than to disgrace God’s work and God’s people by trapping church leaders in sin before a watching world” (A. Duane Litfin, “1 Timothy,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, 737).

“*In the same way*, indicating a second class of servant leaders, namely, deacons (*diakonoí*) must meet the following list of requirements. *Positively* speaking, they are to be “worthy of respect,” a reference to them being “serious men of dignity, not clowns” (Litfin, 738), “sincere,” literally “not double-tongued,” meaning “not indulging in double talk (NEB), and *negatively* speaking, “not indulging in much wine,” referring to their moderation in all things, and “not pursuing dishonest gain,” a reference to using their position for material benefit. *Positively* speaking again, their lives are to be lived consistent with a mature understanding of the Christian faith. Then once approved, they are to be continually tested on the job to prove their worth. Like an overseer, a deacon must be faithful to his wife and manage his family well. Those who serve well are promised “an excellent standing” and “great assurance” of their growing maturity in Christ.

“*In the same way*, indicating a third class of servant leaders, namely, women who help in the church are to “be worthy of respect” like deacons (v. 8), “not malicious talkers,” “temperate” (cf. verse 2), and “trustworthy in everything,” meaning faithful in their church and family responsibilities.

Paul leaves these instructions regarding the qualifications of leaders in the church so that Timothy “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.”

Word Studies/Notes

v. 1 *trustworthy saying* “‘Here is a trustworthy saying’ (v. 1) may refer to an important saying that circulated among the early churches or may mean simply ‘You can depend on this’ (see comments on 1:15; see also 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8). Either way, this phrase introduces an important assertion. Those who desire to serve in this way are to be encouraged, perhaps as those who build the church with valuable materials as in 1 Corinthians 3:12-14, a task that is indeed ‘noble’” (Walter L. Liefeld, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*, 122).

v. 1 *aspires, desires* “Two strong verbs depict the yearning for this office which is commended by Paul. *oregō* means to reach out after, and the middle voice employed here indicates that this subject is reaching after this object for himself. Such a yearning is described by a second verb *epithumeō*, to desire, to fix the ardor or passion upon a thing. Here it is used in the good sense of strong desire” (Homer A. Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 123).

v. 1 *noble* Cf. “an excellent work” (GNT); “a good work” (NET); “something worthwhile” (CEV).

v. 2 *overseer* “The *episkopos* (overseer) is the same official as the *presbuteros* (elder). It is generally admitted that the two are to be identified during the first century. Only in succeeding years as the church expanded was the overseer (often translated ‘bishop’) set over many elders and made an administrative officer over an area. In the New Testament several passages indicate the identity of the two names [cf. Ac 20:17-28; Tit 1:5-7] . . . The term *presbuteros* (elder) is the earlier designation, and was probably derived from the synagogue, in which the chief officials bore this title. The word itself emphasizes the maturity and dignity of the office. The New Testament lays no stress on the age of the officer, but the term came from Jews who did. The designation *episkopos* (overseer) emphasizes the duty or function of the office” (Homer A. Kent, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 121).

v. 2 *above reproach* The description ‘above reproach’ (irreproachable, Gr. *anepilempton*, v. 2; cf. 5:7; 6:14; Titus 1:6) means that he should possess no observable flaw in his character or conduct. That is, there should be no cause for justifiable criticism now or in his past (cf. v. 10) that anyone could use to discredit him and bring reproach on the name of Christ and the church. The Greek word means ‘not to be laid hold of.’ *This is the main quality that the following ones make clearer or unpack*” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on 1 Timothy,” 2022 ed., 65, plano-biblechapple.org/tcon/notes/pdf/1timothy.pdf).

v. 3 *faithful to his wife* Lit. “one-woman man;” cf. “the husband of one wife” (ESV; NET); “have only one wife” (GNT); “married only once” (NRSVA). “Or ‘a man married only once,’ ‘devoted solely to his wife’ (see 1 Tim 3:12; 5:9; Titus 1:6). The meaning of this phrase is disputed. It is frequently understood to refer to the marital status of the church leader, excluding from leadership those who are (1) unmarried, (2) polygamous, (3) divorced, or (4) remarried after being widowed. A

different interpretation is reflected in the NEB’s translation ‘faithful to his one wife’” (*The NET Bible*, 4tn on 1Ti 3:2). “The meaning of our present passage (1 Tim. 3:2) is simply this, that an overseer or elder must be a man of unquestioned morality, one who is entirely true and faithful to his one and only wife; one who being married, does not in pagan fashion enter into an immoral relationship with another woman” (William Hendriksen, *Exposition of Pastoral Epistles*, in *New Testament Commentary*, 121). “Our conclusion is that the qualification ‘husband of one wife’ is not to be read quantitatively but qualitatively. Does the candidate demonstrate the disposition of faithfulness to his present wife and has he enjoyed a blameless reputation for such fidelity. It’s not a matter of whether he has been divorced – for the Bible gives permission for legitimate divorce in rare circumstances. The question is whether the candidate is honorable in his marriage relationship, seeking to uphold his vows, and faithful to his wife” (“Can a Divorced Man Serve as an Elder,” CBC Divorced Elder White Paper, 2021-2022, 5).

v. 7 *devil’s trap* Lit. “snare of the devil” (NASB). “It seems best to take the references in both v. 6 and v. 7 as condemnations or spiritual traps Satan causes” (Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, Jr., 1, 2 *Timothy, Titus*, NAC, 113) – contrary to the NIV which takes the first to refer to the “same judgment as the devil,” i.e., the judgment the devil receives.

v. 8 *deacons* “The term ‘deacon’ refers literally to someone who serves . . . Bible scholars view the overseer as providing administrative leadership for the church. They see the deacon as helping the overseer in the ministries of work of the church” (Lea and Griffin, 115).

v. 11 *women* “Who were these *gynaikas* [women or wives] Paul addressed? They were almost certainly not the women of the congregation generally. They were most likely either the wives of the deacons or a group of female deacons (cf. Phoebe, Rom. 16:1)” (A. Duane Litfin, “1 Timothy,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 738). “These are *women who render auxiliary service*, performing ministries for which women are better adapted” (Hendriksen, 133; see also Lea and Griffin, 119).

v. 15 *people* Lit. “you will know how one should act” (NASB); cf. “you will know how people ought to conduct themselves” (NIV, NET), or “you may know how you ought to conduct yourself” (NKJV). “The meaning will be much the same with either a ‘you’ (reference to Timothy himself) or a ‘one’ (a reference to the behavior of any Christian). Since Paul here viewed the church as God’s family, it is more likely that he applied these statements to the entire Ephesian church and not merely to Timothy” (Lea and Griffin, 122).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

The church's various servant leaders must demonstrate their suitability for ministry by meeting the requirements Paul gave Timothy, whether they be overseers, deacons, or women who serve.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The "Living Questions" are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

Growing up, I saw a lot of people take on leadership roles in my own life. My grandmother showed many of the qualities Paul talks about in 1 Timothy. My grandmother was faithful to God's Word, hospitable to everyone she met, taught well, and managed our family in many ways. She was truly a woman of God and everyone she met could see that. She showed me what it was like to be a woman of Christ and to walk faithfully in God's Word. She showed me how to love others and to always be kind no matter the circumstance. She also taught me how to lead my friends, family and others well. I would not be the woman I am today without her leadership and guidance as I was growing up. Kids start learning and developing who they are at a young age, which is why they need to grow up around strong leaders. We want to build their foundation as kids so that by the time they are adults they have enough knowledge and tools in their tool belts to carry them through their walk with Christ on their own. Leadership for me is one of the most important aspects of life, and that is why Paul emphasizes the importance of leadership in the church. Are you as a parent acting in your own house to lead your family well? Are there things you are missing as a leader? Let's take hold of Paul's instructions, so we can help lead our children and family well.

**This week's Family Scrolls is guest written by Delaney Elliott, Children's Ministry Associate.*

What Does The Bible Say?

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-15

1. What are three qualifications of an overseer?
2. What does Paul say about those who serve well?
3. Why did Paul write these instructions?

What Do You Think?

Why is it important for us to have people with these leadership qualities in the church?

What Do You Do?

Think of someone who shows good leadership in the church or at home. Write them a letter encouraging them and thanking them for being faithful to God. (Remember to bring your letter to church Sunday.)

CORE COMPETENCY: Faithfulness

I am loyal to God and others, so they know they can count on me.

MEMORY VERSE: 1Thessalonians 5:16-18

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRAL Kids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week's verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE

PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Tom Bulick (M.A. in Educational Leadership, Eastern Michigan University, Th.M. in Old Testament, and Ph.D. in Bible Exposition, Dallas Theological Seminary). For more than forty years, Tom has served as pastor, faculty member, and administrator. Tom was Vice President for Student Life and Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Trinity Western University (Vancouver, B.C.) from 1986 to 1998 and Spiritual Formation Pastor at Central Bible Church (Arlington, TX) from 1998 to 2022. He and his wife Ruth have one son, Zach.

Stephanie Thomas (B.B.A University of Texas at Arlington). Stephanie is married to James and they have four children: Elijah, Levi, Ella and Simon. Stephanie has attended Central Bible Church for more than 20 years, has been on staff since 2014, and now serves as Children's Minister.

The Scrolls Bible Study is a spiritual growth resource of Central Bible Church, Fort Worth, Texas.

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BIBLE CHURCH**

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