

## 1 Timothy 4

1. What is an elder?

-An elder is a leader of the church who knows, teaches, and obeys the Word of God.

2. How do elders care for the Christians in the church?

-By teaching them the Word of God.

-By praying with them and for them.

-By protecting them.

-By visiting them in their homes.

-By helping them if they have any spiritual or physical needs.

3. Why does the Word of God call the work of an elder a noble task or excellent work?

-Because the work of an elder is to take care of the people of the church for whom the Lord Jesus died.

4. Here on earth, what is important to God?

-The church, that is, God's people.

5. Why is the church most important to God?

-Because He paid for the church with His own blood, His own life.

6. When the Word of God says that an elder must be above reproach, does this mean that he must be without sin?

-No.

-No one is without sin except for Jesus.

7. What does it mean to be above reproach?

-It means that no one is able to find any wrong in you.

-This is because when you sin, you repent before God and man.

8. Why must an elder manage his own family well?

-If a man cannot lead his family at home, he will not be able to lead the church.

9. Why should an elder not be a new Christian?

-Because he may become proud.

10. When should a church choose elders?

-Not at the beginning, but only after the church has been meeting for a while.

11. In the early church, how were elders chosen?

-The man who began teaching the Word of God in a village.

12. How should a church choose elders?

-Elders should be chosen by God the Holy Spirit through the people of the church.

13. Must a man be perfect before he becomes an elder?

-No.

-Only Jesus is perfect.

-Yet an elder must live very close to the Word of God.

13. Can an elder live according to the Word of God and be holy in his own strength?

-No.  
-It is only by allowing the Holy Spirit to control his thoughts, his words, and his actions is he able to live according to the Word of God and be holy.

-In our last lesson, we learned how elders should be.

-Now, in this lesson, we will learn how deacons should be.

-What does the word “deacon” mean?  
-It means “servant.”

-While deacons are servants of the church, who else should serve the church?  
-All Christians.

-Who is the greatest example of a servant?  
-The Lord Jesus Christ.

-Even though the Lord Jesus is God, He came to earth to serve the people He created.

-Even though the Lord Jesus is God, He came to earth to die for the people to whom He gave life.

-While Christ was on earth, He had no home, no fields, and no cattle of his own.

-In Matthew 8:20, Jesus said this:

-“Foxes have dens and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head.”

-In Matthew 20:26-28, Jesus said to His disciples:

-“Whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

-The world, the flesh, and the devil want to be served.

-The Lord Jesus, however, has shown us by His example that it is more blessed to serve than to be served.

-The way of God is not to be served, but to serve.

-What is the difference between elders and deacons?  
-The only difference is their work.

-Elders mostly teach, and even though deacons can teach, it is not their primary work.

-Just like the only difference in the church between men and women is their work, the only difference in the church between elders and deacons is their work.

-Are elders more important than deacons?  
-No.  
-Both elders and deacons are equally important.

-Just like both men and women are equally important in the church, both elders and deacons are also equally important.

-Should elders have a greater faith than deacons?

-No.

-Both elders and deacons should have a strong faith in Christ.

-Just like God desires that the faith of both men and women be strong, God also desires that the faith of both elders and deacons be strong.

-Are there examples of deacons in the Bible?

-Some people believe that the seven men chosen by the church in Jerusalem were the first deacons (Ac 6:1-6).

-While these seven men surely did the work of a deacon, they are not called deacons in the Bible.

-How did the church in Jerusalem know which men to choose?

-They chose men who were full of the Spirit and wisdom.

-Why were these seven men chosen?

-These men would give food to the widows which would allow the apostles to teach and pray.

-Here, we see the difference in the work of elders and deacons.

-The apostles were doing the work of elders which was teaching and praying.

-The seven men were doing the work of deacons which was serving the needs of the church.

-Yet, some of these seven men were also teaching the Word of God.

-Stephen taught the Word of God, and Philip, who was an evangelist, also taught the Word of God.

-Some thirty years after the church in Jerusalem chose these seven men, God through Paul wrote about deacons in this book of 1 Timothy.

-This helps us to understand that deacons had become a part of the church.

-What is the work of a deacon?

-Nowhere in the Bible do we find a teaching of the work that a deacon must do.

-The Bible only teaches what a deacon should be, and not what a deacon must do.

-Why does the Word of God not teach us what the work of a deacon must be?

- Because every church is different.
- Because the needs of every church are different.
  
- While the Word of God does not teach us the work that a deacon must do, we do know that deacons serve God and serve the church.
  
- What should be the work of a deacon?
  
- The work of a deacon should be the work that the elders decide for them to do to meet the needs of the church.
  
- Elders and deacons must work together for a strong church.
  
- As we will see in the following verses, the only difference between elders and deacons is that elders should be able to teach (1 Ti 3:2).
  
- As we will also see in the following verses, God expects that both the faith of the elders and the faith of the deacons to be strong.

Let's read 1 Timothy 3:8

8-In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain.

-In the verse above, we read "In the same way."

- This teaches us that deacons should be in the same way like elders and have a strong faith in God.
  
- The Word of God teaches us that deacons are to be worthy of respect.
  
- Deacons are to live their lives properly both in the church as well as outside the church.
  
- They should be respected by everyone, and people should be able to trust and depend on the deacons.
  
- The Word of God teaches us that deacons are to be sincere.
  
- The word "sincere" means not having two tongues, but only one tongue.
  
- Deacons should never say one thing to one person, and another thing to another person.
  
- They should always speak the truth to everyone.
  
- What would happen if a deacon or any Christian would not be sincere, but would "talk with two tongues"?
  
- He would cause division in the church.
  
- The Word of God teaches us that deacons are not to indulge in much wine.

-When the Bible was written, people drank mostly wine, as the water was not clean to drink.

-The wine of the time of the Bible, however, was very weak, and not like the strong wine of today.

-As we learned in the last lesson, and learn now in this lesson, elders and deacons should not drink alcohol if it will hurt themselves or their fellow Christians.

-The Word of God teaches us that deacons are not to pursue dishonest gain.

-If deacons collect and give out the money of the church, they must not be dishonest.

-Dishonest gain may also mean to be greedy for money.

-Will someone who is greedy serve God and the church with his whole heart?

-No.

-A greedy person looks after himself more than others, and may use the resources of the church for himself.

-Does this mean that deacons cannot be rich?

-No.

-This only means that a deacon should not put his wealth above God and others.

-Rather, he should use his wealth for God's work and to help others in need.

Let's read 1 Timothy 3:9

9-They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience.

-The Word of God teaches us that deacons must keep hold of the deep truths of faith.

-To know the truths of God is not enough, as even Satan knows the truths of God.

-Deacons and all Christians must study the truths of God.

-What happens when deacons and all Christians study the truths of God?

-We learn to love God and His truths more and more which protects our conscience and our lives.

Let's read 1 Timothy 3:10

10-They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

-The Word of God teaches us that deacons must first be tested in order to serve.

-Should the church choose a new Christian to be a

deacon?

-No.

-What should the church do if all of the Christians are new?

-The church should wait and not choose deacons until they are tested.

-What does it mean to be tested?

-It means to wait until these people have shown everyone that their faith in God is strong.

Let's read 1 Timothy 3:11

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

-From this verse, we learn that women may also serve as deacons in the church.

-In Romans 16:1, we read of a woman named Phoebe who served as a deacon at Cenchrea, a town near Corinth.

-Like elders and deacons who are men, women deacons must be worthy of respect and not malicious talkers, temperate and trustworthy in everything.

-They must not allow Satan to use their tongues to speak evil of others.

-Is it right for the wife of a deacon or a woman deacon to gossip or to spread evil rumors?

-No.

Let's read 1 Timothy 3:12

12-A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well.

-Just like an elder, a deacon must be faithful to his wife.

-When the Word of God says that a deacon must be faithful to his wife, does this mean that a single man cannot be a deacon?

-No.

-If a deacon is single, however, he must not flirt with women.

-Why is it important for a deacon to manage his family?

-If he cannot manage his family, he will not be able to help manage the church.

-If his wife and children do not respect him, the church will not respect him either.

Let's read 1 Timothy 3:13

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

-What will deacons gain if they serve well?

-An excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

-If we serve others in all humility, we will be respected and honored by those whom we serve.

-If we serve others in all humility, God gives to us a great assurance of eternal life in Christ.

-If we serve others in all humility, God Himself will lift us up (James 4:10).

-With the verse above, 1 Timothy 3:13, we come to the end of the teaching of how deacons should be.

-How is it possible for a deacon and all Christians to live according to the Word of God?

-By allowing the Holy Spirit to control our thoughts, our words, and our actions.

-The degree or measure to which we allow the Holy Spirit to control our thoughts, our words, and our actions is the same degree or measure that He will do so.

-If we allow the Holy Spirit to control only a little of our

thoughts, our words, and our actions, He will only control a little

-However, if we allow the Holy Spirit to control all of our thoughts, our words, and our actions, He will control all.

-This is the example of our Lord Jesus Christ.

-Christ allowed the Holy Spirit to control all of His thoughts, all of His words, and all of His actions.

-In John 5:19, Jesus said this:

-“The Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does.”

-In John 14:24, Jesus said this:

-“These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.”

Let's read 1 Timothy 3:14-15

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.

-Where was Timothy when God and Paul wrote this letter?

-In Ephesus.

-In Ephesus, the Christians were beginning to forget the foundation of the truths of God.

-This can happen in any church.

-This is the reason why God through Paul wrote this letter to Timothy.

-This is the reason why God through Paul wrote this letter to all Christians.

-As people sometimes forget, we must all be reminded of the foundation of the truths of God.

-Without the foundation, our faith can fall down.

-As 1 Timothy 3:15 writes, the church is the foundation of the truth.

-Why is the church the foundation of the truth?

-Because the church holds and teaches the Word of God.

-The church is like a bank.

-As a bank holds and gives out money, the church holds and gives out the Word of God.

-As a bank without money is nothing, the church without the Word of God is nothing.

-To whom does the church belong?

-To the Lord Jesus Christ alone.

-Does the church belong to people?

-No.

-As the Lord Jesus said in Matthew 16:18: "I will build my church."

-Since the church belongs to God, what should elders and deacons do?

-They should ask God what He wants to do with His church.

-Here is an illustration:

-Would it be right for someone to tell you what you can and cannot do in your house?

-No.

-In the same way, Christians should not tell God what He can and cannot do in His house.

-Rather, we need to pray and be sure that we are doing what God wants us to do.