

STUDIES IN 1 TIMOTHY

LAW NUMBER SEVEN: "There Is No Place in Leadership for Dishonest, Double-Tongued Drunks"

1 Timothy 3:8-13

Key Verse 3:8: "Deacons, in like manner, should be worthy of respect, not insincere (double-tongued), not addicted to much wine, not fond of dishonest gain."

TEXT:

v. 8 Deacons, in like manner, should be worthy of respect, not insincere (double-tongued), not addicted to much wine, not fond of dishonest gain,

v. 9 holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

v.10 And these, moreover, are to be first put to the test (put on probation); then being blameless let them be serving as deacons.

v.11 Women, likewise, [should be] worthy of respect, not given to slandering (gossipers in the Gk.), temperate, trustworthy in all things.

v.12 Let the deacons be one-wife sort of men (husbands of one wife), managing their children and their own homes commendably.

v.13 For those who have served in the office of a deacon commendably gain for themselves a good standing and much confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

INTRODUCTION:

(Laugh Again by Charles R. Swindoll)

Maybe this anonymous piece will help change your mind.

I'm Tired

Yes, I'm tired. For several years I've been blaming it on middle-age, iron poor blood, lack of vitamins, air pollution, water pollution, saccharin, obesity, dieting, underarm odor, yellow wax build-up, and a dozen other maladies that make you wonder if life is really worth living.

But now I find out, tain't that.
I'm tired because I'm overworked.

The population of this country is 200 million. Eighty-four million are retired. That leaves 116 million to do the work. There are 75 million in school, which leaves 41 million to do the work. Of this total, there are 22 million employed by the government.

That leaves 19 million to do the work. Four million are in the armed forces, which leaves 15 million to do the work. Take from that total the 14,800,000 people who work for the state and city governments and that leaves 200,000 to do the work. There are 188,000 in hospitals, so that leaves 12,000 to do the work. Now, there are 11,998 people in prisons. That leaves just 2 people to do the work. You and me. And you're standing there reading this. No wonder I'm tired.
p. 58

We are working our way through 1st Timothy and we are doing it with the outline "The Laws of Leadership." We have considered thus far:

LAW #1: A Statement of Goal Is Essential in Leadership

LAW #2: Never Get Over the Privilege of Your Position

LAW #3: To Be a Leader You've Got to Be Willing to Fight

LAW #4: A Commitment to Leadership Is a Commitment to Prayer

LAW #5: Leadership Is Primarily a Man's Role

LAW #6: Character Is a Vital Ingredient of Leadership

This now brings us to:

LAW #7: There Is No Place in Leadership for Dishonest,
Double-Tongued Drunks

Our KEY VERSE in this study is going to be the one we consider 1st, verse 8. We will find these 3 NEGATIVE HABIT PATTERNS given as means of disqualification from leadership.

(Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun by Wess Roberts)

ATTILA ON:
"LEADERSHIP QUALITIES"

1. LOYALTY
2. COURAGE
3. DESIRE
4. EMOTIONAL STAMINA
5. PHYSICAL STAMINA
6. EMPATHY
7. DECISIVENESS
8. ANTICIPATION
9. TIMING
10. COMPETITIVENESS
11. SELF-CONFIDENCE
12. ACCOUNTABILITY
13. RESPONSIBILITY
14. CREDIBILITY
15. TENACITY
16. DEPENDABILITY
17. STEWARDSHIP

pp. 16-21

(Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey)

Until you can say "I am my master," you cannot say "I am your servant." In other words, we might profess a service ethic, but under pressure or stress we might be controlled by a particular passion or appetite. We lose our temper. We become jealous, envious, lustful, or slothful. Then we feel guilty. We make promises and break them, make resolutions and break them. We gradually lose faith in our own capacity to keep any promises. Despite our ethic to be the "servant of the people," we become the servant or slave of whatever masters us.

This reminds me of the plea of Richard Rich to Thomas More in the play, A Man for All Seasons. Richard Rich admired More's honesty and integrity and wanted to be employed by him. He pleaded, "Employ me."

More answered, "No."

Again Rich pleaded, "Employ me!" and again the answer was no.

Then Rich made this pitiful yet endearing promise: "I would be steadfast!"

Sir Thomas, knowing what mastered Richard Rich, answered, "Richard, you couldn't answer for yourself even so far as tonight," meaning, "You might profess to be faithful now, but all it will take is a different circumstance, the right bribe or pressure, and you will be so controlled by your ambition and pride that you could not be faithful to me."

Sir Thomas More's prognosis came to pass that very night, for Richard Rich betrayed him!
p. 55

(Growing More Like Jesus by Richard L. Strauss)

In the early days of missions in Ethiopia a number of symptom-free lepers had come to know Christ. An appeal was made to them for volunteers to go to another needy area to preach the gospel, and two men volunteered. An older man rose to his feet and spoke with some emotion: "I cannot read or write, and therefore I cannot go and preach," he said. "But I can help. When you are ready to go, don't hire a donkey to carry your boxes. I will be your donkey!" He showed a servant's spirit--true greatness.
p. 125

The Navigators are well known for their emphasis on a servant's attitude. A businessman once asked Lorne Sanny, president of the Navigators, how he could know when he had a servant's spirit. Sanny replied, "By how you act when you are treated like one."
p. 146

In our previous study we were considering the 15 CHARACTER TRAITS OF AN ELDER. In these verses that we now consider Paul is moving from the ELDER to the DEACON.

Demarest points out:

The office of deacon is unique to the Christian church. Its genesis is recorded in Acts 6:1-7, and the essence of the office was service. Stephen, the first recorded Christian martyr, was the first-named of the original seven deacons. The word diakonos means "servant," and the deacon has always been a servant order in the church.
p. 187

Lenski says:

All that we know about deacons as they were found in Paul's day is contained in this passage and in Rom. 16:1; Phil. 1:11. The diakonia used in Rom. 12:7 and the diakonein used in 1 Pet. 4:1 point to the office of deacons although both passages refer to all who have the charisma of ministering to others. This is true also regarding the antilepheis or "helps" mentioned in I Cor. 12:28. We must, therefore, be content with the little information that we have. The fact that two offices are referred to by "overseers" and "deacons" is assured by our passage and by Phil. 1:1. The fact that deacons held the minor office and did not teach is also certain. What the deacons actually did is nowhere stated in detail.
p. 592

Guthrie says:

The earliest allusion to deacons is found in Acts vi, where the purpose of their appointment is mainly practical. Since they were particularly concerned with the distribution of the Church's charities it was as essential for them as for the presiding elders to be morally equipped for the task. There is no need to suppose that the office of deacon was a late development in view of Phil. i. I. There deacons are specially linked with bishops, probably because a gift is under consideration, for which no doubt they had been mainly responsible.
p. 83

Hendriksen points out:

. . . this does not mean that the work of the deacon was considered to be of inferior value. It was and is a glorious task. It is based upon Christ's loving concern for his people. So close to his heart is this tender solicitude that he regards what is done to the least of his brothers as if it had been done to himself (Matt. 25:31-46).

From Acts 6 we learn that deacons were chosen because the elders did not have the time and energy to take upon themselves the care of the poor and needy in addition to performing all their other work: governing the church, preaching the Word, administering the sacraments, leading the congregation in prayer, etc. The deacons, accordingly, were chosen in order to "serve tables." Their special task is to gather the offerings which God's people in gratitude make to their Lord, to distribute these gifts in the proper spirit to all who are in need, to prevent poverty wherever it is possible to do this, and by means of their prayers and words of Scripture-based comfort, to encourage the distressed.

p. 130

Barclay adds these comments:

In the early Church the function of the deacons lay much more in the sphere of practical service. The Christian church inherited a magnificent organization of charitable help from the Jews. No nation has ever had such a sense of responsibility for the poorer brother and sister as the Jews had and still have. The Synagogue had a regular organization for dealing with and helping such people. The Jews rather discouraged the giving of individual help to individual people. They preferred that help should be given through the community and especially through the Synagogue.

p. 97

Wiersbe says:

The English word deacon is a transliteration of the Greek word diakonos, which simply means "servant." It is likely that the origin of the deacons is recorded in Acts 6. The first deacons were appointed to be assistants to the apostles. In a local church today deacons relieve the pastors/elders of other tasks so that they may concentrate on the ministry of the Word, prayer, and spiritual oversight.

Even though deacons are not given the authority of elders, they still must meet certain qualifications. Many faithful deacons have been made elders after they proved themselves.

p. 42

Guy King says:

This was appointed, as we learn from Acts vi. 2-3, to deal with the material side, the "business" affairs, of the church life. Even so, very high spiritual quality was demanded of its members--indeed, that they be men "full of the Holy Ghost", as well as of "wisdom", which, in this context, I suppose means business acumen. Let it be remembered that this body of the church's business men included such flaming evangelists as Stephen and Philip. The church has ever since been often indebted to its laymen for great spiritual aid and adventure. Still, the more material aspects are, naturally, their particular department; though, be it added, the spiritual leaders are not always so lacking in financial and business, ability as they are commonly supposed to be!

p. 63

J. Vernon McGee says:

The word that is translated "deacon" here is the same word that is sometimes translated as "minister." Paul and Apollos are called deacons. The Lord Jesus is called a minister in Matthew 20:28. In Romans 13:4 government officials are called ministers, and in 2 Corinthians 11:15 ministers of Satan have the word applied to them. Deacon or minister, therefore, is a general term for a servant or a worker.

p. 443

Acts 6:1-7

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. And the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the word." And the statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them. And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

There are 3 THINGS that we will note about the office of DEACON before we look at the verses:

1. There is no reference to the teaching duties of the deacons.
2. There is no reference to the governing of the house of God by the deacons.
3. There is no reference to deacons serving the whole church in a representative kind of way.

The deacons were helpers of the elders. As far as we can tell, they do not have spiritual work involved in what they do.

Let us turn now to the text of scripture before us and pursue the qualifications for deacons.

v. 8 Deacons, in like manner, should be worthy of respect,
not insincere (double-tongued), not addicted to much
wine, not fond of dishonest gain,

This is our KEY VERSE for LAW #7:

"There Is No Place in Leadership for Dishonest,
Double-Tongued Drunks."

The apostle, in speaking of the deacons here, gives one
POSITIVE CHARACTERISTIC and 3 NEGATIVE in the verse.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary makes this observation:

Like overseers, deacons (cf. Phil. 1:1) must also be men of quality, even though their function in the congregation is significantly different. The word translated "deacon" means literally "a humble servant." The role of the deacons is to carry out under the elder's oversight some of the more menial tasks of the church so that the elders can give their attention to more important things. The qualifications for the office of deacon are almost as stringent as for the elder because of their public profile in the church and because the servant nature of their work requires strong qualities of maturity and piety.

Strauch says:

In some churches, the deacons are mere figureheads, but in a great many churches, they function as a quasi body of elders. Within these churches, the deacons are viewed as the board of directors, business administrators, or the official church board. The New Testament, however, clearly shows that the elders are the overseers, directors, and church leaders--not the deacons! Indeed, the deacons' very designation means servants, not overseers.
p. 367

He says further:

To relieve the elders' burden, some early churches chose a body of qualified men to serve on behalf of the whole assembly. In time, based on their work of serving the saints as a recognized, appointed body, these men acquired the humble designation, diakonoi meaning the servants or the helpers. Hence, a special sense of the word developed that was applied only to the body of men who served the saints in this unique manner. Unfortunately, this special use of diakonoi is transliterated into English as deacons rather than servants.

But what a wonderful name the group we know as deacons have--servants! Jesus said, ". . . 'but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant'" (Mark 10:43).

It is a great privilege to be a deacon. A deacon who serves well gains good standing in the church and greater boldness in faith. This enables him to better serve God and His people, as Paul says in 1 Timothy 3:13: "For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus."

p. 370

The special use of diakonoi to describe a select group of men appears in only two portions of Scripture: Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3:8-12. These passages reveal the following facts about the deacons:

In both places, deacons are closely related to overseers. As the terms and the order in which they are placed indicate, deacons are subordinate to overseers. Overseers perform certain functions that deacons as a corporate body do not, but the overseers can perform all the deacons' functions. Unlike deacons, however, elders are responsible for the overall leadership, supervision, and teaching of the congregation.

pp. 370-71

From the example of the seven in Acts 6, we learn that deacons provide a complementary service to the elders who bear the overall burdens of administration and teaching. Deacons bear some of the elders' load, freeing them to concentrate on the essential aspects of their ministry---prayer, teaching, and protecting. So, the deacons' work ought to be done in harmony with the elders and complement the elders' work.

The word, deacons is always plural. Like the elders, the deacons are a corporate body or team of servants.

p. 371

Let us come now to a consideration of our KEY VERSE here in LAW #7:

"DEACONS, IN LIKE MANNER, SHOULD BE":

QUALIFICATION #1:

"WORTHY OF RESPECT."

This same wording will occur when speaking of WOMEN down in verse 11.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

"Worthy of respect" refers to serious men of dignity, not clowns.

Lenski says:

"Dignified" (our versions, "grave") is the adjective corresponding to the noun semnotes which was used in v.4; . . . because being of serious mind and character. Because they had to deal with all classes, all ages, all types of people in their work sensible, steady men were needed
p. 594

Hendriksen says:

This refers not only to their necessary decorum or propriety of manner and conduct but also to the fact that in their inner thoughts and attitudes they must be men of Spirit-wrought gravity and respectability.
p. 130

Wiersbe says:

A deacon should be worthy or respect; a man of Christian character worth imitating. A deacon should take his responsibilities seriously and use the office, not just fill it.
p. 42-43

Guy King says:

I suppose that means seriously minded, an absence of flippancy. There is real danger in the rather jocose use of spiritual things, such as Bible stories, and Christian matters, and sometimes the layman is particularly guilty. Make no mistake about it, the Christian life is meant to be a very happy thing, and we are not intended to dwell in a miserable hiatus of dull negativism; but, for all that, it is a sacred and solemn thing, and is not to be conceived of with unbecoming levity.

p. 64

J. Vernon McGee points out:

A deacon, although he deals with the material matters of the church, should be a spiritual man. We have a problem today when we appoint a man as a deacon on the basis of physical rather than spiritual qualifications. We think that because a man is a successful businessman he will make a good deacon. There are too many men who are appointed to office on that basis.

p. 443

"DEACONS, IN LIKE MANNER, SHOULD BE WORTHY OF RESPECT, NOT INSINCERE (DOUBLE-TONGUED), NOT ADDICTED TO MUCH WINE, NOT FOND OF DISHONEST GAIN."

After this ONE POSITIVE STATEMENT by the apostle as a qualification for being a deacon, he now turns and makes 3 NEGATIVE STATEMENTS.

It is these 3 negative statements that have formulated my 7TH LAW OF LEADERSHIP, that being:

"There Is No Place in Leadership for Dishonest, Double-Tongued Drunks."

Let us come now to a consideration of these 3 NEGATIVE STATEMENTS here in verse 8:

QUALIFICATION #2:

"NOT INSINCERE (DOUBLE-TONGUED)."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

"Double-tongued" means not dishonest and hypocritical.

It is not speaking one thing to one person and something different to another.

Lenski says:

Three disqualifications follow although these extend beyond what "dignified" implies in a positive way. "Not double-tongued," saying one thing to one person and a conflicting thing to another so that, on comparing notes, the discrepancy becomes apparent. This is bad in any person; it would be especially bad in an officer of the church, who had constant rounds of visitation to make and would talk with many members.
p. 595

Hendriksen says:

He does not say one thing to one person and something different to another. He does not, "talk out of both sides of his mouth." He does not say one thing and know another, like:

Gehazi (II Kings 5:19-27) or Sanballet and Geshem (Neh. 6:2) or Ananias and Sapphira.
p. 131

Wiersbe says:

He does not tell tales from house to house; he is not a gossip. He does not say one thing to one member and something entirely opposite to another member. You can depend on what he says.
p. 43

Guy King says:

. . . "making different representations to different people about the same thing", says Dr. Vincent; saying one thing, meaning another; accommodating our opinion to our company. That kind of thing, which is reprehensible in any of us, is particularly detrimental in the work of a deacon, whose duties call for straight dealing, and decided speech. Let us all be careful that people shall come to know that if we say a thing we mean it, if we promise a thing we keep it, if we undertake a thing we carry it through--that, as it used to be said, " An Englishman's word is his bond," so now it may be understood that a Christian's word is his bond. So then, beware the snare of saying what we believe will be agreeable and popular even though it be slightly away from the truth.

p. 64

Lange says of this word:

In the manifold relations of the deacons with different persons and families, they might readily fall into this vice, so wholly unworthy of a man of character.

p. 41

Barnes says:

The word here used--dilogos--does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. It means, properly, uttering the same thing twice, and then deceitful, or speaking one thing and meaning another. They should be men who can be relied on for the exact truth of what they say, and for the exact fulfilment of their promises.

p. 148

Guthrie points out:

The word doubletongued (dilogos) could sustain the meaning 'tale-bearer' suggesting the idea of gossipers, a tendency which would be all too easy yet damaging for the holder of the deacon's office.

p. 83

Barclay has the following comments on this word:

One new qualification is to be added; they were to be straight. The Greek is that they must not be dilogos; dilogos means speaking with two voices, saying one thing to one and another to another. In The Pilgrim's Progress John Bunyan puts into By-ends mouth a description of people who live in the town of Fair-speech. There is my Lord Turn-about, my Lord Time-Server, my Lord Fair-speech, after whose ancestors the town was named, Mr. Smooth-man, Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Any-thing; and the parson of the parish, Mr. Two-tongues. A deacon, in his going from house to house, and in his dealing with those who needed and who requested charity, had to be a straight man. Again and again he would be tempted to evade issues by a little timely hypocrisy and smooth speaking. But the man who would do the work of the Christian Church must be straight.
pp. 98-99

J Vernon McGee says:

A deacon should not be two-faced. A man's word should amount to something. It can be dangerous when a man tries to please everybody or doesn't have the courage to stand on his own two feet. There is a fine balance between being a Mr. Milquetoast and being a dictator. An officer in the church needs to be somewhere between those two.
p. 443

JUST ONE FLAW

A salesman was stating his qualifications for a new job. "I have been very successful in every sales job I have ever had. I don't mind long hours, I can sell anything to anybody, and I really enjoy my work," he stated to the sales manager.

"Do you smoke?" asked the sales manager.

"No, Sir."

"Do you drink?"

"Never touch the stuff."

"Do you chase other women?"

"Oh, no, Sir. I'm a very happily married man with four children."

Highly impressed by the man, the sales manager finally asked, "Don't you have any bad habits?"

Confessed the salesman, "Well, yes. Just one. I'm the world's biggest liar."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

SHOW AND TELL

"I gave up fishing to take up golf. And I like golf much better."

"How come?"

"Because when you lie about golf, you don't have to show anybody anything."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

BEWARE

Believe only half of what you hear, and be sure it's the right half.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

HE WASN'T ALL WET

A small country church was having a "baptizing" in a river on a cold January day. A revival meeting had just concluded. The preacher asked one baptismal candidate, "Is the water cold?"

"Naw!" he replied.

One of the deacons shouted: "Dip him ag'in preacher, he's still lyin'!"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

THE TRUTH ABOUT LIES

According to experts, shading the truth is a common practice. As reported in USA Today, Jerald Jellison said, "Each of us fibs at least 50 times a day." He explained that we lie about our age, our income, or our accomplishments. And we use lies to escape embarrassment. A common reason for "little white lies," we're told, is to protect someone else's feelings. Yet in so doing, we are really protecting ourselves. According to Jellison, here are some of our most commonly used fibs: "I wasn't feeling well." "I didn't want to hurt your feelings." "The check is in the mail." "I was just kidding." "I was only trying to help."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

SPEAKING THE TRUTH

A fictitious story is told about a racing event staged by the United States and the Soviet Union. Both governments commissioned their best engineers to produce the fastest automobile possible. After much experimenting and preparation, the important day arrived for the high-speed contest. It finished with the American car winning by inches. This was rather hard for the Russians to swallow, and Pravda, their leading newspaper, carried the following report: "Russia and the U.S. competed in a long-awaited race yesterday afternoon. Both cars broke all former speed records. The Soviets came in second, and the Americans finished next to last!"

(InfoSearch 3.0)

(Customers for Life: How to Turn That One-Time Buyer into a Lifetime Customer by Carl Sewell & Paul B. Brown)

The most important thing to a customer is: Did you do what you promised? Keeping your word is worth more than all the empathy, smiles, and chocolates on your pillow in the world.
p. 34

(What Makes a Man? by Bill McCartney)

Nothing binds us one to the other like a promise kept and nothing divides us like a promise broken.

The insurance ad with the above copy reflects a change in the theme music of our culture. In the eighties we heard people say, "I'm out of here. There's nothing in it for me." I believe that theme music is slowly changing. Now we're beginning to hear, "I'm in for the long haul. Count on me." At least, I pray it is changing.
p. 17

One of our family's favorite movies is Mary Poppins. In one scene the two children, Jane and Michael Banks, jumped into bed after their first day with the amazing Mary Poppins. Jane asked, "Mary Poppins, you won't ever leave us, will you?" Michael, full of excitement, looked at his new nanny and added, "Will you stay if we promise to be good?" Mary looked at the two and as she tucked them in she replied, "Look, that's a pie-crust promise. Easily made, easily broken."
p. 28

One of my good friends gave me a new bumper sticker to display. It says:

"At least Bush broke only one promise!"

(Growing More Like Jesus by Richard L. Strauss)

An enthusiastic salesman was waiting to see the purchasing agent of an engineering firm to submit a bid for a job. The salesman noticed that a competitor's bid was on the purchasing agent's desk, but unfortunately, the total figure was covered by a can of juice. With the purchasing agent out of the office, the temptation to see the amount quoted on the rival bid became too much, so the salesman lifted the can. His heart sank as he watched thousands of BBs pour from the bottomless can and scatter across the floor. Needless to say, he didn't get the order.
p. 221

"DEACONS, IN LIKE MANNER, SHOULD BE WORTHY OF RESPECT, NOT INSINCERE (DOUBLE-TONGUED), NOT ADDICTED TO MUCH WINE."

We come now to the 3RD QUALIFICATION in this verse and the 2ND NEGATIVE STATEMENT:

QUALIFICATION #3:

"NOT ADDICTED TO MUCH WINE."

When Pearl and I are away in the Cayman's for our R & R time in November, I usually get up before daylight to get a brisk walk through the quiet resort town. One morning while I was out doing my walk, it started to rain. I saw an empty beer can floating in a puddle of water and I began reflecting-- wondering what kind of a story the person who drained the can of its contents could tell about his life.

To the many who become addicted, it never stops raining. "And the floods beat upon that house and it falls and great is the fall of it." Those things which are most precious are swept away in its flood.

THE SERPENT IN THE GOBLET

An unusual goblet was used to serve liquor. At first glance there seemed to be nothing unusual about it, but a closer examination revealed a figure in the bottom of the glass. It depicted a snake in a coiled position, its mouth wide open and its fangs exposed. It was poised to strike out at its victim.

When the goblet was filled with an alcoholic beverage, the snake was indiscernible. But when the contents were drained to a certain level, the unsuspecting drinker would be startled by the shocking sight of that serpent's head with its glaring eyes, its gaping mouth, and its deadly fangs.

The craftsman who designed that goblet certainly knew what he was doing. Those who use strong drink are exposing themselves to a "deadly serpent" that is ready to strike out at its unwary victims and destroy them.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

"DEACONS, IN LIKE MANNER, SHOULD BE WORTHY OF RESPECT, NOT INSINCERE (DOUBLE-TONGUED), NOT ADDICTED TO MUCH WINE, NOT FOND OF DISHONEST GAIN."

Our focus in the passage now turns to this 3RD NEGATIVE STATEMENT and the 4TH WORD OF QUALIFICATION:

QUALIFICATION #4:

"NOT FOND OF DISHONEST GAIN."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

"Not greedy chasers after dishonest gain."

Hiebert points out:

Next he names three negative qualifications, which, if present, would disqualify the individual for the office. "Not double-tongued" points out that he must not be guilty of saying one thing to this man and a conflicting thing to the next. "Not given to much wine" requires that they be not addicted to wine. The words "not given to" mean not only not paying attention to but not giving assent to. "The use of strong drink is entirely incompatible with a fully developed Christian character" (Lipscomb). Nor must they be "greedy of filthy lucre," that is, "eager for base gain," turning the opportunities of their office into a means of personal profit. p. 68-69

Guthrie says:

The two further comments forbidding wine addicts and men with insatiable appetites for base gain are both expressed in stronger terms than in the case of the overseers, no doubt because their house-to-house visitation would expose them more pointedly to these evils.
p. 84

Barnes says:

The special reason why this qualification was important in the deacon was, that he would be intrusted with the funds of the church, and might be tempted to appropriate them to his own use instead of the charitable purposes for which they were designed; see this illustrated in the case of Judas, John xii. 6.
p. 148

John 12:6

Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.

Lange says:

Any who was capable of this, would soon appropriate dishonestly the gifts entrusted to him for the poor.
p. 41

Wiersbe says:

Deacons handle offerings and distribute money to needy people in the church. It may be tempting to steal or to use funds in selfish ways. Finance committees in churches need to have a spiritual attitude toward money.
p. 43

Hendriksen says:

A man who is fond of money is not necessarily an embezzler. But it is the embezzler or pilferer and the man who joins a good cause for the sake of material advantage whom Paul has in mind here in verse 8. It is the man with the mercenary spirit who goes all out in his search for riches, anxious to add to his possessions regardless of the method, whether fair or foul.
p. 131

Lenski says:

"Not out for shameful pain" (Tit. 1:7; adverb, I Pet. 5:2) = like pilfering Judas. The point is the disgracefulness of such an act whether it be by embezzlement of the alms entrusted for distribution or by otherwise currying favors for mercenary ends.
p. 595

J. Vernon McGee says:

This means that a deacon should not have an insatiable love of money. He should be a man of integrity and should handle the money of the church in an honest way. There is nothing that can hurt a church more than the accusation that the deacons are juggling the finances. Money given to a church for a specific cause needs to be carefully allotted to the intended cause.
p. 443

AN UNSOLD CALF

A humorous tale was told by Dr. Leon Tucker. He said that a man once promised the Lord he would sell one of his calves and give the money to missions. But he disregarded his pledge and never followed through. Every time he went to church an "inner voice" reminded him, "That calf must be sold!" Still he did nothing about it. One Sunday he decided to go to an outdoor meeting in the rural community where he lived. As he approached the gathering, the people were singing an old familiar hymn, "The Half Has Never Yet Been Told." Since the man's conscience was still bothering him, he misunderstood the words and thought he heard, "The Calf Has Never Yet Been Sold." Running toward the group, he shouted, "Stop, Please stop singing! I know the calf has not yet been sold, but it will be tomorrow!"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

ONE WAY OR THE OTHER

A minister received a call from the Internal Revenue Service asking about a member of his church.

"He stated on his income tax return," said the official, "that he gave three thousand dollars last year to your church. Is that correct?"

"I don't have the records here, and I would have to check on it. But I'll say this--if he didn't, he will."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

(Growing More Like Jesus by Richard L. Strauss)

If there is one sin that ought to arouse our righteous ire it is the greed we see in ourselves and others. Lust for money and material possessions is one of the most powerful motivating forces known to man, and grasping after more has become the order of the day. When we see people gambling away their incomes and reducing their families to poverty in desperate attempts to strike it rich, we have a right to be angry. When we see people suing others for millions of dollars over trivial matters in an obvious attempt to get rich, we have a right to be angry. When we see business people taking unfair advantage of others to make a fast dollar, we have a right to be angry.

When that greed is exhibited by people whose primary responsibility is ministering to the spiritual needs of others, as it was with the Sadducees, it is even more reprehensible. We have a right to be angry about so-called servants of the Lord whose first concern seems to be increasing their net worth. We have a right to be angry about professing Christian speakers and musicians demanding exorbitant fees for their services. We wonder whether they are serving God or money.

While there is not a great deal we can do about greed in other people, we can surely deal with it in our own lives. By being content with what we have (cf. 1 Timothy 6:6-8; Hebrews 13:5), we can show the world that Jesus Christ provides deeper satisfaction and happiness than any material thing can give. Then by graciously telling others about the life He offers, we can help them find release from the strangling grip of greed.

p. 53

We have a right to follow Christ's example and get angry when we see con artists preying on the elderly who live on fixed incomes, or company executives voting themselves a salary increase after making their low-paid employees take a cut because of declining sales. We have an obligation to get angry when religious charlatans milk sacrificial contributions from their low-income adherents with every manipulative technique they can devise, while they themselves live in luxurious homes, drive extravagant cars, and fly around the country in their own private jets. Such exploitation infuriated Jesus.

p. 54

John 2:14-17

And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers seated. And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the moneychangers, and overturned their tables; and to those who were selling the doves He said, "Take these things away; stop making My Father's house a house of merchandise." His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Thy house will consume me."

(You Can Make a Difference by Gary R. Collins)

Every evening a radio personality in the Chicago area closes his program with the same six powerful words: "Take it easy, but take it!"

I can't think of a more accurate summary of the philosophy of this age: Take what you can get. Accumulate possessions. Reach for the top. Push for more money. Expect that God will make you rich. Grab all the gusto you can get. The best way to die is to die shopping! The happiest man is the man with the most toys.

p. 145

LAW #7 says:

"There Is No Place in Leadership for Dishonest, Double-Tongued Drunks."

Paul, in speaking of the deacons, is saying that they:

"SHOULD BE WORTHY OF RESPECT."

Then he makes 3 NEGATIVE STATEMENTS:

1. "NOT INSINCERE (DOUBLE-TONGUED),"
2. "NOT ADDICTED TO MUCH WINE,"
3. "NOT FOND OF DISHONEST GAIN."

Demarest says:

To me, the deacons are the unsung heroes of our congregation. How blessed we are to have fifty-four deacons actively seeking out the needs of our people and serving, serving, serving. What a joy it is to make a hospital call and hear that a deacon has already been there.
p. 188

(Rediscovering Holiness by J. I. Packer)

When my wife used to say to me, "I don't want your ministry, I want you," she was telling me that she feared this temptation was engulfing me. When that role-player extraordinary, the late great film actor Peter Sellers, declined an invitation to have records made of him reading the Bible, the reason he gave was that you can only read the Bible aloud convincingly if you know who you are--and he did not know who he was. All Christians need God's help to know who they are, and to live with him and with their own human intimates in honesty, integrity, and vulnerability. But Christian professionals need this help most of all.
p. 185

v. 9 holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

Having considered 4 QUALIFICATIONS in verse 8, we now come to ITEM #5 in verse 9:

QUALIFICATION #5:

"HOLDING THE MYSTERY OF THE FAITH IN A PURE CONSCIENCE."

This takes us back to:

chapter 1:5

Now the goal of our instruction is (divine) love out of a pure heart and a good conscience and a genuine faith (without hypocrisy).

It also reminds us of:

chapter 1:19

holding faith and a good conscience, which some, having rejected (repudiated), have suffered shipwreck in their faith.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

This phrase is referring to men of spiritual depth. They understand and hold fast to the deep truths of the faith.

Acts 6:3

But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.

J. Vernon McGee says:

"The mystery of the faith" means the revelation of the gospel of Christ. When Paul says "the faith" he is not speaking of the abstract quality of faith, but of the doctrines of the faith. He speaks of it as a "mystery" because these doctrines were not revealed in the Old Testament but are now revealed in the New Testament. We are told in Acts that the early church "continued in the apostles' doctrine." The apostles' doctrine was "the faith" of the early church. It should be the faith of the church today, and the church needs to represent that faith before the world.

p. 444

Lenski says:

"Possessing the mystery of the faith in a clean conscience" is the direct opposite of the preceding three. But instead of merely saying that in all their work the deacons must preserve "a clean conscience" Paul adds to this what is greater than conscience, what is to enlighten and thus to govern and to hold the conscience true, and thus to keep it clean.
p. 595

He says further:

Here "the mystery of the faith" = "the mystery of Christianity"; deacons must possess this, must hold it "in a clean conscience."
p. 596

He says further:

Any man who is not careful of the truth, or who is enamored of wine, or who allows money to stick to his fingers, cannot hold to Christianity, to this blessed mystery of the faith, "in connection with a clean conscience," and is certainly not the man to be made a deacon in the congregation.
p. 597

Hendriksen says:

A good deacon, accordingly, is attentive to duty for Christ's sake. He is conscientious. Were he undignified, double-tongued, addicted to much wine, and greedy of shameful gain, he would not be the kind of man who with a conscience purified by the Holy Spirit "keeps clinging to the mystery of our faith."
p. 131

Wiersbe says:

Deacons must understand Christian doctrine and obey it with a good conscience. It is not enough to sit in meetings and decide how to "run the church." They must base their decisions on the Word of God, and they must back up their decisions with godly lives.

p. 43

A deacon who does not know the Word of God cannot manage the affairs of the church of God. A deacon who does not live the Word of God, but has a "defiled conscience," cannot manage the church of God. Simply because a church member is popular, successful in business, or generous in his giving does not mean he is qualified to serve as a deacon.

p. 44

Lock says:

[Paul is] laying stress on doctrinal correctness, but more probably, as there is no duty of teaching implied, holding their own faith, the secret of their allegiance to Christ, secure under the protection of a good conscience, "a true inward religion and a true inward morality." The stress is on . . . the casket in which the jewel is to be kept.

p. 40

Hiebert points out:

Paul is not content with outward blamelessness in the conduct of the deacons; they must also possess a vital spiritual life. They must be known as "holding the mystery of the faith." The expression, "the mystery of the faith," occurs only here. A "mystery" in Scripture is not something mysterious and incomprehensible but a truth before unknown but now divinely revealed to the believer (cf. I Cor. 2:7-10). The definitive genitive "of the faith" may be differently interpreted. It may be regarded as denoting the substance of the mystery, that is the content of the Christian Gospel, "the faith." Or it may have a subjective sense as pointing to the revealed truth which is apprehended and appropriated by faith. Either view is possible and amounts to about the same thing. This mystery is a precious treasure which is best preserved in the casket of "a pure conscience." He who would commend the truths of the Gospel to others must conscientiously exemplify it in his own conduct.

p. 69

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

A pure conscience meant that there must be nothing in the conduct of these men that was glaringly inconsistent with their professed beliefs. In other words, they must not profess but practice another.

JOSEPH is a great example of this:

Genesis 39:9

No one is greater in this house than I am. My master has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How then could I do such a wicked thing and sin against God?

Barnes says:

A mere orthodox faith was not all that was necessary, for it was possible that a man might be professedly firm in the belief of the truths of revelation, and yet be corrupt at heart.
p. 148

Lange says:

The pure conscience is the coffer in which the treasure is best deposited.
p. 41

Acts 24:16

In view of this, I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men.

(The Body by Charles Colson with Ellen Santilli Vaughn)

A survey of mainline denomination members found that only 32 percent believed their faith had anything to do with their life outside of church.
p. 195

Today, without a moral compass to gauge direction, "Does it work?" has replaced "Is it right?" as the question to ask in business and lifestyle choices. If it works for you, then go right ahead. Thus, the only question about abortion is whether the pregnancy is "wanted" (read: convenient). If not, then flush it away. Is your marriage working? If not, then get out of it. Will an inside deal profit your business? If so, go right ahead. Good ethics is good business, as Harvard teaches. The 1960s adage, "If it feels good, do it," has been updated for the 1990s: "If it works, do it."
p. 180

(Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey)

Positive personality traits, while often essential for success, constitute secondary greatness. To focus on personality before character is to try to grow the leaves without the roots.

If we consistently use personality techniques and skills to enhance our social interactions, we may truncate the vital character base. We simply can't have the fruits without the roots. Private victory precedes public victory.

Self-mastery and self-discipline are the roots of good relationships with others.

If we use human influence strategies and tactics to get other people to do what we want, we may succeed in the short-term; but over time our duplicity and insincerity will breed distrust.

p. 57

Many people with secondary greatness--that is, social status, position, fame, wealth, or talent--lack primary greatness or goodness of character. And this void is evident in every long-term relationship they have, whether it is with a business associate, a spouse, a friend, or a teenage child. It is character that communicates most eloquently. As Emerson once put it, "What you are shouts so loud in my ears I cannot hear what you say."

p. 58

EXHAUSTION

You know you're getting old when you become exhausted simply by wrestling with your conscience.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

v.10 And these, moreover, are to be first put to the test (put on probation); then being blameless let them be serving as deacons.

Acts 6:3

But select from among you, brethren, seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

They should demonstrate maturity before being placed in a position of responsibility.

1 Timothy 3:6

Not a new convert, lest having his mind blinded by pride, he fall under similar judgment as the devil.

They must prove their quality over time in the ordinary activities of life and ministry. After they have shown themselves irreproachable, then let them serve as deacons.

Barnes says:

It should be ascertained that they were grave, serious, temperate, trustworthy men--men who were sound in the faith, and who would not dishonour the office. It is not said here that there should be a formal trial, as if they were candidates for this office; but the meaning is, that they should have had an opportunity of making their character known, and should have gained such respect for their piety, and their other qualifications, that there would be reason to believe that they would perform the functions of the office well.

p. 148

Hiebert observes:

The reference is rather to the general judgment formed by the Christian community of the character and conduct of those men who may be available for appointment to the office. Having been known as "blameless" or unaccused in their Christian life, they can be appointed to serve.
p. 70

Lock says:

Probably not by any definite examination or by a time of probation, but only in the same way as the episkopos, by the opinion of the Church judging his fitness by the standard just laid down.
p. 40

Wiersbe says:

This is the principle in Matthew 25:21: "Thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things."

It is worth noting that quite a few leaders mentioned in the Bible were first tested as servants. Joseph was a servant in Egypt for thirteen years before he became a second ruler in the land. Moses cared for sheep for forty years before God called him. Joshua was Moses' servant before he became Moses' successor. David was tending his father's sheep when Samuel invited him to be anointed king of Israel. Even our Lord Jesus came as a servant and labored as a carpenter; and the Apostle Paul was a tentmaker. First a servant, then a ruler.
p. 44

Hendriksen agrees by saying:

This does not mean that a prospective deacon must first serve a trial-period, but rather that by means of a consecrated life he must furnish a testimonial of character.

He must be able to sustain the test of having the eyes of the whole church (plus the outsiders!) focused upon him.
p. 132

Guthrie says:

Only when adequate testing has been made and the man is found to be blameless, (irreproachable), may he exercise his office.

p. 85

The 10th verse ends by saying:

"THEN BEING BLAMELESS LET THEM BE SERVING AS DEACONS."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

This word "blameless" means "being free from accusation." It is only in Paul's writings. It means unaccused, free from any charge at all. It is a Christlike conduct that is required of deacons.

THE VALUE OF TESTINGS

A traveler in Italy watched with curiosity as a lumberman occasionally jabbed his sharp hook into a log, separating it from the others that were floating down a mountain stream. When asked why he did it, the worker replied, "These may all look alike to you, but a few of them are quite different. The ones I let pass are from trees that grew in a valley where they were always protected from the storms. Their grain is coarse. The ones I've hooked and kept apart from the rest came from high up on the mountains. From the time they were small, they were beaten by strong winds. This toughens the trees and gives them a fine and beautiful grain. We save them for choice work. They're too good to make into plain lumber."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

(The Making of a Leader by J. Robert Clinton)

God develops a leader over a lifetime. That development is a function of the use of events and people to impress leadership lessons upon a leader (processing), time, and leader response. Processing is central to the theory. All leaders can point to critical incidents in their lives where God taught them something very important.
p. 25

Leaders must develop a ministry philosophy that simultaneously honors biblical leadership values, embraces the challenges of the times in which they live, and fits their unique gifts and personal development if they expect to be productive over a whole lifetime.
p. 180

(Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey)

o The head coach of a professional football team told me that some of his players don't pay the price in the off season. "They come to camp out of shape," he said. "Somehow they think they can fool me and Mother Nature, make the team, and play great in the games."
p. 15

v.11 Women, likewise, [should be] worthy of respect, not given to slandering (gossipers in the Gk.), temperate, trustworthy in all things.

Paul now turns to some women here in verse 11 and lists 4 CHARACTERISTICS true of them.

There are those who feel that these are deaconesses, and there are others who feel that these are the deacons' wives.

The Bible Knowledge Commentary raises the question:

Who are these? Not women of the congregation. They are either the wives of the deacons, or a group of female deacons. A case can be made for either with a slim advantage falling to the first, but being dogmatic about either view is unwarranted by the exegetical data.

Romans 16:1

I commend to you our sister Phoebe, who is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea;

The word "SERVANT" could be translated "deaconess."

Wiersbe says:

We thank God for the ministry of godly women in the local church, whether they hold offices or not! It is not necessary to hold an office to have a ministry or exercise a gift.

p. 45

Hendriksen says:

The simplest explanation of the manner in which Paul, not yet finished with the requirements for the office of deacon, interjects a few remarks about women, is that he regards these women as the deacons' assistants in helping the poor and needy, etc. These are women who render auxiliary service, performing ministries for which women are better adapted.

p. 133

[THESE] "WOMEN, LIKEWISE, [SHOULD BE]":

QUALIFICATION #1:

"WORTHY OF RESPECT"

This takes us back to verse 8, our KEY VERSE in the study, where we read:

"Deacons, in like manner, should be worthy of respect."

QUALIFICATION #2:

"NOT GIVEN TO SLANDERING (GOSSIPERS IN THE GK.)"

This is the Greek word "diabolous," which is the word that we translate "devil," for he is the chief slanderer.

J. Vernon McGee says:

"Not slanderers" means they are not to be gossips. A gossipy deacon's wife can cause much trouble in the church.
p. 444

Barnes says:

Mingling as they would with the church, and having an opportunity to claim acquaintance with many, it would be in their power, if they chose, to do great injury to the character of others.
p. 149

Hendriksen agrees by saying:

It is also easily understood why Paul would emphasize that women who do the rounds of the church in performing loving ministries must not be gossipers. "No scandal-mongers please!" he says as it were. Those who slander imitate the evil one, whose very name is diabolos, that is, slanderer.
p. 133

Barclay says:

It was very necessary that such women workers should be warned against slanderous gossip and should be bidden to be absolutely reliable. When a young doctor graduates and before he begins to practise, to this day he takes the Hippocratic oath, and part of that oath is a pledge and promise never to repeat anything that he has heard in the house of a patient, or anything that he has heard about a patient, even if he has heard it on the street. In the work of helping the poor, things might easily be heard, and things might easily be repeated and infinite damage might be done. It is not any insult to women that the Pastorals specially forbid gossip to them. In the nature of life a woman runs more risk of gossip than a man. A man's work takes him out into the world; he has his business and his activities and all his wider interests; a woman of necessity lives in a narrower sphere, and for that very reason has fewer things to talk about; and she is always in danger of talking about these personal relationships from which slanderous gossip arises. Whether man or woman, a tale-bearing, confidence-repeating Christian is a monstrous and a dangerous thing.
pp. 99-100

SERMON 'N' SONG

Sermon--"Gossip"
 Invitation Hymn--"I Love to Tell the Story"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

GAME-TIME GOSSIP

"When I was in high school I suffered from a tremendous inferiority complex. I felt so insecure that at football games, when the team went into a huddle, I was sure they were talking about me."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

GOSSIP

Gossip is information given by someone who can't use it to someone who won't.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

THE ARRIVAL

Time had some for the funeral of a woman who always kept her church and community in an uproar with her gossip. It was a dark, stormy day, and the lights were on in the chapel. The preacher was quietly conducting the service.

Suddenly a bolt of lightning shook the building and the lights went out. The preacher stopped talking and, in the sudden stillness, a voice was heard from the audience.

"She got there!"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

WHERE IN THE WORLD

He: "Did anyone ever tell you how wonderful you are?"
 She: "I don't believe they ever did."
 He: "Then where'd you ever get the idea?"

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

"WOMEN, LIKEWISE, [SHOULD BE] WORTHY OF RESPECT, NOT GIVEN TO SLANDERING (GOSSIPERS IN THE GK.), TEMPERATE."

Here we have the 3rd word in our verse that Paul uses to qualify the women for service:

QUALIFICATION #3:

"TEMPERATE"

"TEMPERATE" means "well-balanced."

This word also occurred:

back in chapter 3:2,

and it occurs in Titus 2:2.

QUALIFICATION #4:

"TRUSTWORTHY IN ALL THINGS"

This could be translated "faithful in everything."

v.12 Let the deacons be one-wife sort of men (husbands of one wife), managing their children and their own homes commendably.

Now the apostle returns to the home front--talking about the deacon's marriage and his family.

1 Timothy 3:4, 5

presiding over his own house in a beautiful manner, keeping his children under control with true dignity. For if a man does not know how to preside over his own house, how shall he take care of God's assembly?

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Like the elders must be one-woman men, capable managers of their own families, so also the deacons.

Guthrie says:

Domestic orderliness and parental control are as necessary in a deacon as in an overseer and the requirements stated are in this respect identical with the previous list p. 85

Strauch says:

Not all the qualifications for deacons are the same as for elders, however. Deacons do not have to be able to teach. They are not responsible for the protection of the church from false teaching or feeding God's Word to the flock, although an individual deacon may well be a gifted teacher (Acts 6:8-7:60).
p. 371

WINDOW WATCHING

He looked out of the window and called to his wife. "There goes that woman Bill Jones is in love with."

She dropped the cup she was drying in the kitchen, hurtled through the door, knocked over a lamp, and craned her neck to look. "Where?" she panted.

"There," he pointed, "that woman at the corner in the tweed coat."

"Oh, you," she said, "that's his wife!"

"Well, of course, it is," he replied.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

DO IT YOURSELF

A missionary heard about a native who had five wives.

"You are violating a law of God," said the good missionary. "So you must go and tell four of those women they can no longer live here or consider you their husband."

The native thought a few moments, then said, "Me wait here. You tell 'em."

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

THEIR GERONTOLOGIST OFFICIATED AT THE WEDDING

One couple got married so late in life that Medicare paid for their honeymoon.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

(What Makes a Man? by Bill McCartney)

Real men accept responsibility for their behavior. They own what is rightfully theirs to own. Granted, there may be some legitimacy to their complaints. Like a poster in a colleague's office noted, "Just because you're paranoid doesn't mean people aren't out to get you." There may be truth to your accusations. But as I frequently remind my adolescent son, "There's no right reason for doing the wrong thing."

Reconciliation begins with, "I'm wrong." It is then followed by several other essential elements (remorse, changed behavior, forgiveness, etc.). But reconciliation always begins with ownership. What part of the failure can you own? It is with a willingness to accept responsibility for your behavior that true masculinity is displayed in a marriage.

p. 75

v.13 For those who have served in the office of a deacon commendably gain for themselves a good standing and much confidence in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Now Paul states the reason for why these qualifications are given in the previous verses:

"FOR THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED IN THE OFFICE OF A DEACON
COMMENDABLY GAIN FOR THEMSELVES" 2 THINGS:

1. "A GOOD STANDING,"
2. "MUCH CONFIDENCE IN THE FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary says:

Though the position of deacon seems by worldly standards to be menial and unattractive, to close followers of Jesus Christ it looks quite different. There are 2 THINGS that are pointed out in this 13th verse:

1. an excellent standing before fellow Christians who understand and appreciate the beauty of humble, selfless, Christlike service.
2. great assurance, that is, confidence, boldness, humble service which lacks all the rewards the world deems important becomes a true test of one's motives.

Here one discovers for himself whether or not his efforts are truly prompted by a Christlike spirit of selfless service. When a deacon has indeed served well, his ministry builds confidence in the sincerity of his own faith in Christ and his unhyprocritical approach to God.

Wiersbe says:

He is to use the office, not just fill it. The Greek word translated "degree" means "rank (as in the army), a base, a step, or rung on a ladder." What an encouragement to a faithful deacon! God will "promote" him spiritually and give him more and more respect among the saints, which means greater opportunity for ministry. A faithful deacon has a good standing before God and men, and can be used of God to build the church. He has a spiritual boldness that makes for effective ministry.

p. 45

1 Peter 5:6

Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time,

Hiebert says:

As an incentive to faithful service, it holds up the reward for such service, whether by bishop or deacons. The reward comes to those who "have served well" or "ministered excellently." The reference is not necessarily to the whole earthly life but to some definite period during which such service was rendered. They thereby "gain" or "are acquiring" for themselves "a good standing." The word "standing" means "a step" and so denotes an advanced position. Paul is not speaking of the ecclesiastical advancement of the deacon to the overseership, nor is he speaking of the future reward in glory. The reference is to the excellent community standing and recognition which they require through their having rendered good service.
p. 71

The consciousness of personal integrity and community acceptance enables them to speak and act with boldness and assurance.
p. 71-72

Lange says:

The true servants of God do not mourn over their sweat and toil; if they stay here without further promotion, they will have a degree so much the higher in heaven.
p. 43

Lenski says:

As their very names indicate, all these offices are to serve others; hence the qualifications are such as will insure true service in advance. It is thus that those who do well in these offices thereby acquire a noble place for their own selves.
p. 601

To have served excellently for some time places one beyond any timidity or hesitation and makes him act with boldness and assurance. The acquisition of such boldness in faith, the blessed faith that rests in Christ Jesus, is the most satisfying reward and the incentive to proceed on this tried course.
p. 604

King says:

Yes, I think we may be certain that this faithful deacon will have a good step up, will have earned promotion in the service of his Lord. Alas, it has sometimes happened that, because of unfaithfulness, servants of God have had to step down from the high prominence that once they held in Christian work. Let us grasp the solemn fact that, however high we may reach in holiness and service, we shall never get beyond the need for earnest watchfulness.
p. 65

Demarest says:

For the deacons who serve well, two things are promised: "a good standing" for themselves and "great boldness in the faith." Genuine servanthood has its rewards. I take "a good standing" to mean respect within the Christian community. Such respect is a natural response to the one who serves with integrity and sincerity. And with growing respect comes increasing confidence in the faith. While study and reflection is one of the paths to growing boldness in one's faith, active service to others is also essential.
pp. 188-89

Guthrie says:

The word rendered degree (bathmos) literally means 'a step', and is taken to mean a step in promotion to a higher office; 'standing', or 'vantage ground', relating to the influence gained in the esteem of the Christian community; 'standing in the sight of God'. The first seems quite out of harmony with the context and, as Scott rightly points out, it would make the previous instructions ridiculous if this were the main aim of the deacon's office, to provide a stepping stone to the elder's office. The second makes good sense and fully accords with the context, for as Simpson remarks 'Influence is a by-product of character'. But the third possibility cannot be ruled out in view of the concluding phrase, great boldness in the faith, which is co-ordinate with bathmos as object of the same verb 'to gain for oneself'; both parts may therefore legitimately be understood in a spiritual sense. Yet the transition of thought from moral qualifications to spiritual status is more difficult than that required for solution. Boldness seems primarily towards man, though it could include the notion of boldness in approach to God.
pp. 85-86

Hendriksen says:

Let it be remembered that those deacons who have served well acquire for themselves a noble standing. The church will think highly of them because they have performed their tasks in a worthy manner. (Incidentally, the word rendered standing has the primary meaning a step, say of a staircase.
p. 135

Moreover, the very consciousness of the fact that with the help of God he has done his best, so that he is not vexed by pangs of conscience, will give the deacon great confidence. He will not hold back, but will tell all. This confidence has reference to the faith (subjective sense here) which centers in Christ Jesus. It is concerning him that the deacon will freely and gladly testify.
p. 135

Barnes says:

The word here used occurs nowhere else in the New Testament. It means, properly, a step, as of a stair; and the fair meaning is that of going up higher, or taking an additional step of dignity, honour, or standing. So far as the word is concerned, it may mean either an advance in office, in dignity, in respectability, or in influence.
p. 150

J. Vernon McGee says:

"Good degree" could be read "good standing." In other words, a deacon who serves well will become known as a man who is to be trusted.
p. 444

Strauch says:

The New Testament intentionally lists no fixed duties for deacons. As their name indicates, deacons are good servants who serve in whatever capacity they are needed. They adjust to meet the needs at hand. There is great latitude in their work.
pp. 371-72

Even though they are not called to teach or lead the flock, deacons must still be of proper moral and spiritual character. There is great flexibility in their work, but all deacons must be servants-at-large--men who have a servant's heart.
p. 372

PARABLE OF A WILD DUCK

Some wild ducks were taking their annual northward journey when suddenly a flock of tame ones came into view in a barnyard far below. Leaving his winged friends in flight, one of the migrants landed and mingled for a short time with those on the ground. After eating some of the corn, he flew away. Soon he returned, however, this time remaining somewhat longer. The safety of the farm and the plentiful supply of food were so appealing that he lived among the domestic fowl all summer. When autumn came, he heard the cries of his former companions as they headed southward. He felt a strong desire to join them, but his added weight from eating so much kept him from flying very far. So he settled down and stayed all winter. In the spring he again heard the familiar call of the migrating flock. His eyes gleamed, and he began to flap his wings but made no real effort to fly. That fall the sound of the wild ducks only caused him to raise his head, and from then on he paid no attention at all.

(From InfoSearch 3.0)

(Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun by Wess Roberts)

. . . success is the result of hard work that overcomes all forms of disappointment and moments of discouragement. Success is not achieved through complex strategies. It is achieved only through conscientiously carrying out the duties of your office and exercising the responsibilities of leadership--nothing else will prevail.
p. 64

(Lincoln on Leadership: Executive Strategies for Tough Times
by Donald T. Phillips)

And when Gen. David Hunter grumbled and complained after being placed in charge of a mere 3,000 men, Lincoln wired back: "Act well your part, there all the honor lies. He who does something at the head of one Regiment, will eclipse him who does nothing at the head of a hundred."
pp. 110-11

(What Makes a Man? by Bill McCartney)

Vance Havner said, "When it comes to a deeper experience of Christ, too many only deplore the lack of it; some discuss theories about it, a few describe how to have it, but too few demonstrate it."
p. 179

(Lincoln on Leadership: Executive Strategies for Tough Times
by Donald T. Phillips)

Even newspaperman Horace Greeley, often at odds with the president and his administration, came to value Lincoln's excellence:

He was not a born king of men . . . but a child of the common people, who made himself a great persuader, therefore a leader, by dint of firm resolve, patient effort, and dogged perseverance. He slowly won his way to eminence and fame by doing the work that lay next to him--doing it with all his growing might--doing it as well as he could, and learning by his failure, when failure was encountered, how to do it better. . . . He was open to all impressions and influences, and gladly profited by the teachings of events and circumstances, no matter how adverse or unwelcome. There was probably no year of his life when he was not a wiser, cooler, and better man than he had been the year preceding.
pp. 170-71

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: Matthew 20:26, 27

It is not so among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave;

LESSON #2: "There Is No Place in Leadership for Dishonest, Double-Tongued Drunks."

LESSON #3: When you promise something, is your word as good as a signed contract?

LESSON #4: Are you in the habit of saying one thing to one person and something else to another, or are you consistent in your conversation?

LESSON #5: Wine and money have the potential to disqualify us from leadership.

LESSON #6: The mystery of the faith is the jewel that is placed in the setting of a pure conscience.

LESSON #7: The control of our words is a critical concern in leadership.

LESSON #8: Are you a person who is faithful in all things?

LESSON #9: Marriage and family are major concerns in leadership.

LESSON #10: There is great reward for those who are faithful in their servanthood leadership.

(Principle-Centered Leadership by Stephen R. Covey)

It also sets us on a life of service and I fear, unless enough of us capture the spirit of the following conviction of George Bernard Shaw, that the social problems of today will overwhelm the economic machine and discombobulate all of society.

"This is the true joy in life, being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one.

"Being a force of nature instead of a feverish, selfish little clod of ailments and grievances complaining that the world will not devote itself to making you happy.

"I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as I live it is my privilege--my privilege to do for it whatever I can.

"I want to be thoroughly used up when I die, for the harder I work the more I love. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me; it is a sort of splendid torch which I've got a hold of for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."

p. 324

(To the End of the Race by George McDaniel Cole)

"Screamer was the most faithful dog I ever had," said my father. "He never led the pack, but you surely did not have to worry about him quitting a race. I never got too rough for Screamer. He never gave out. He was faithful all the way to the end. He was dependable, could be relied upon, and was loyal to his master and to the race. He was just great in his faithfulness and loyalty."

Screamer's voice was not that of a leader. His voice was deep and low. His was a voice that gave harmony to the melody of the race. Sometimes you might not hear it too well, but it was not because it wasn't there. Whenever the going got rough, and other dogs quit the race, and still others were not giving voice, then you heard from Screamer in a very real way. He sent a message back, saying, "I'm still here and will be here all the way to the end of the race."

Then with words carefully chosen, my father turned to me and spoke as a prophet: "Son, if you live long enough, and remain in the ministry of our Lord, you will find that some of God's choicest servants are much like ole Screamer. . . ."

p. 61

(Welcome to the Family by Stephen W. Brown)

Once there was a man who was a world-renowned tight-rope walker. One of his publicity stunts was to walk across Niagara Falls on a cable stretched from one end of the falls to the other. On the day he was to perform this great stunt, a tremendous crowd assembled to watch. The famous artist shouted out to them, "How many of you believe I can walk across those falls?" Everyone knew his reputation and most of the people in the crowd shouted, "We know you can!"

He did it, and when he had finished he once again shouted out to the crowd, "How many of you believe I can take a wheelbarrow across those falls with a sack of potatoes in it?" The crowd shouted, "We believe you can do it!" He did it, and when he had finished he shouted, "How many of you believe I can take a man across in the wheelbarrow?" Everyone shouted back, "We know you can do it!" The artist pointed to a man standing in the front row and said, "I want you to volunteer." The man turned and all you could see were heels and elbows as he made his way in the opposite direction. You see, he believed with his mind, but he had never internalized that belief.

There are a lot of people like that man. They believe all of the doctrines but they have never made the step from head knowledge to heart knowledge. If one does not take that step, one does not become a Christian. It's that simple. Jesus promised that if we confess our sins and ask Him to come into our lives, He will do just that. When we do it, He comes to dwell within us and from that point on, no matter what, it is settled.

pp. 31-32

(Laugh Again by Charles R. Swindoll)

He was thoroughly and radically converted, like the man who wrote these words:

I had walked life's path with an easy tread,
Had followed where comfort and pleasure led;
And then by chance in a quiet place--
I met my Master face to face.

With station and rank and wealth for goal,
Much thought for body but none for soul,
I had entered to win this life's mad race--
When I met my Master face to face.

I had built my castles, reared them high,
Till their towers had pierced the blue of the sky;
I had sworn to rule with an iron mace--
When I met my Master face to face.

I met Him and knew Him, and blushed to see
That His eyes full of sorrow were fixed on me;
And I faltered, and fell at His feet that day
While my castles vanished and melted away.

Melted and vanished; and in their place
I saw naught else but my Master's face;
And I cried aloud: "Oh, make me meet
To follow the marks of Thy wounded feet."

My thought is now for the souls of men;
I have lost my life to find it again
Ever since alone in that holy place
My master and I stood face to face.

pp. 138-39

STUDY #7 - 1 Timothy 3:8-13

What are some of the lessons that we can learn from this particular study?

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