
THE MYSTERY OF GODLINESS (I Timothy 3:14-16)

At the end of this Chapter we find Paul telling Timothy he is hoping to come to him shortly: *But if he tarries long, that he may know how men ought to behave themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth* (I Timothy 3:14,15).

Verse 16 is intended to suggest what is contained in this **mystery of godliness**... “the mystery of our religion.” ¹

The Mystery of Godliness:
God was manifest in the flesh,
justified in the Spirit,
seen of angels,
preached unto the Gentiles,
believed on in the world,
received up into glory (I Timothy 3:16).

As individual believers our ultimate witness to this truth must be the lives that we live---lives transformed by the power of Christ. ¹

THIRD STUDY

QUALIFICATIONS OF CHURCH LEADERS

QUALIFICATIONS OF BISHOPS (I Timothy 3:1-7)

This is a true saying, If a man desires the office of a bishop (overseer), he desires a good (excellent) work (I Timothy 3:1). Luke also mentions the office of a bishop in Acts 20:28, where, after sending for the elders at Ephesus, *and when they were come to him* (Acts 20:18) he gives them these instructions, — *Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers* (bishops), *to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.*

1. In Paul’s instructions to Timothy in I Timothy 3:1-4,6-7, what qualifies a person for the office of a bishop? _____

1. Beacon Bible Commentary, Volume 9, p. 590,591.

2. What are the dangers of using a novice (a new convert) in a position of authority in the church?

QUALIFICATIONS OF DEACONS (I Timothy 3:8-13)

3:8 THE DEACONS. Deacon (Gk. *diaconos*) means “servant.” One of their functions in the N.T. church is suggested in Acts 6:1-6. They were to assist the pastors by administering the temporal and material affairs of the church so that the pastors might give themselves to prayer and the ministry of the Word (Acts 6:4). The spiritual qualifications for deacons are essentially the same as for pastors (compare vv. 1-7 with vv. 8-13, see Acts 6:3). ¹

3:8 NOT GIVEN TO MUCH WINE. Concerning this qualification, the following should be noted (1) It is morally unthinkable that the apostle was approving the moderate use of all kinds of wine available in his day. Many wines were drugged and dangerous (cf. Prov. 23:29-35). ¹

(2) Paul states that drunkenness is such a terrible sin that it excludes one from the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:10). It is absurd, therefore, that Paul would actually require, as one of his high standards for deacons (cf. v. 2), that they not be habitual

drunkards (someone who is unsaved). He must have a different meaning in mind than intoxicating wine. ¹

1. (a) What are the 6 qualities and conditions that have first to be proved, of anyone seeking to be a deacon in the church? (I Timothy 3:8-13)

(1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
(4) _____
(5) _____

(6) _____

(b) What about the wife of a deacon? Is their lifestyle important to the choosing of a deacon?

(c) What are the home-life qualifications of one seeking the office of a deacon? (I Timothy 3:12)

(d) What is the reward of those who served in the office of a deacon well? (I Timothy 3:13)

1. Full Life Study Bible, p. 1907.

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