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| 1  1 Timothy 3:8-16 Sermon Outline  02/04/24  “Who Is Qualified To Lead The Church?” Part II  INTRO:  If you remember last week…  overseer = 2nd captain leads crew safely through storm and to destination  But another important crew member: First mate/Captain’s mate  -Second in command  Responsibilities:  -Fill in when Cap. not on deck  -In charge ship’s cargo and deck crew  -Safety and security of the ship  -Holds very vital role for ship  Similarly: office of deacon like that | 2  Now keep in mind that analogies are not perfect and they breakdown somewhere down the line, so this is just an analogy, it’s not a perfect one for one  But similar = first mate under authority of captain  deacons under authority of elders  Yet, deacons hold critical role in life of church  Like how captain can’t be on deck 24/7 with no sleep,  overseers can’t do everything for the church  They need help of deacons  When overseer = “under the deck” with sermon/teaching prep, deacons are “on the deck” so to speak filling in when the captain needs him  Without the captain, the crew will be lost  Without the first mate, the captain would be not able to lead fully to his potential |
| 3  Sermon: “Who Is Qualified To Lead The Church?”  “Who Is Qualified To Lead The Church?”  REVIEW:  Overseers = above reproach  Focus on character over ability  Ability = to be able to teach  Only difference between overseers/deacons = able to teach  BODY:  Beginning V. 8  *“Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain.”*  Deacons = “*diakonoi*” = servant | 4  Deacon = second official office of church  First mention of “deacons” = Acts 6  Issue in early church where Hellenistic widows being overlooked for (presumably) Hebrew widows in food  Hellenistic = Greek culture and way of life  Tension between them and native Hebrews  Problem = 12 disciples focusing too much time and energy on food distribution and not enough on preaching and teaching the Word  Solution: Acts 6:2-6  *So the* *twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said,* *“It is not pleasing to God for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brothers, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this need. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the word.”* |
| 5  *And this word pleased 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 stood before the apostles, and after praying, they laid their hands on them.”*  Now Acts 6 = not official formal deacons  but…  Pattern and example of what deacons do  Being a deacon does not mean = you can’t preach or teach God’s Word nor  That you can’t shepherd people. There will be ministry opportunities when you are at church or visiting someone’s home  Primary responsibility = meeting and serving needs whatever they are  So let’s get into qualifications | 6  1. “Men of Dignity” = serious  KJV = grave, dead serious about spiritual matters  Root word = venerate/to worship  = worshipful seriousness  Not that they don’t have humor but are serious about things of the faith  Eternity we are talking about where  Word of God = eternal impact on souls  Where people will spend for rest of eternity  Not to be clowns but create awe and respect for their character  Men of gravitas  2. “Not double-tongued” |
| 7  Could refer to gossip  but…  Idea = integrity in speech/consistent  Does not say one thing to one person, and different thing to another  Includes not saying something to person from divided motive  Show no partiality/consistent in speech  Deacon = not addicted to wine  Especially leaders = abstain from wine completely  Lev. 10:9  *“Do not drink wine or strong drink, neither you nor your sons with you, when you come into the tent of meeting, so that you will not die-it is a perpetual statute throughout your generation.”* | 8  Wine as mentioned last week was a lot less potent in alcohol than how today’s is made  God gifted people with fermentation to kill any harmful substances and bacteria in the water and to enhance the flavor  Gift = consume liquids safely  Water to wine = 8 to 1  If you are drinking thousands years ago maybe:  Psalm 104:15  *“wine makes a man’s heart’s glad.”*  But even then wine was enjoyable drink/quench thirst without having to ingest dangerous elements in water back then  Alcohol today = far more harmful |
| 9  World Health Organization published study in Lancet Public Health Journal January 2023 = no amount of alcohol is safe to drink  even if it’s just a drip  Linked consumption of alcohol = numerous cancers and disease  No evidence so far of supposed alcohol threshold in which carcinogenic effects alcohol start manifesting in body  Thus  Historical, cultural context + general direction away from wine in Scripture, especially as we see in Proverbs, = wise for deacon to stay away from it completely  Next deacon “not to be fond of sordid gain”  Because deacon handling money/goods directly more than elder = more temptation | 10  More temptation to mishandle/launder the money  So must be men of integrity in this area  If he is not wise with his own finances, that might be a red flag that he shouldn’t be a deacon  He will literally see who is getting what or not  ILLUS:  Let’s balance that out. Sally is getting way too much help from the church. What about me?! I should get a percentage of the cut for working so hard  Instead deacons = “hold to mystery of the faith with a clear conscience”  You must love JC with whole being  Paul not being mystical here = gospel  mystery = previously hidden, now revealed |
| 11  Instead of holding onto money  Hold onto the gospel which possesses far more riches than money could ever buy  Hold onto it with a clear conscience. No room for both greed. No more for discontentment.  Jesus says:  “You cannot serve both God and money. Either you will hate the one or love the other.”  V. 10  *“deacons must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”*  Time and truth go hand in hand  Tested = are they trustworthy with small tasks?  If they are not, they won’t be with major ones | 12  Gradually increase responsibility  Luke 16:10  *“He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much, and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much.”*  Once man tested = can serve as deacons if beyond reproach  Same qualification = above reproach = nothing sticks in accusations  Then V. 11  *“Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.”*  = a little tricky  Usually I am dogmatic when it comes to most things in Scripture if they are clear |
| 13  Very few things honestly can say “I can see this go either way”  Now, it doesn’t mean both are right. I think it’s one or the other  This is one of those issues  V. 11 = not entirely clear = deacon’s wives or women deacons?  Problem = “women” = gune = wives/women  Not going into minutiae of each argument  I think = women deacons = natural flow of passage + elder’s wives qualification missing if it is deacon’s  wives in view  Greek: Deacon is masculine no feminine form  So Rom. 16:1 Phoebe = a “servant” of the church = deacon, not deaconess  But because we speak English and not Greek = ok to refer to women deacons as deaconesses | 14  Not separate office from deacon = same  If you want to refer to women deaconesses as “deacons” = that’s fine, I won’t fight you on that  Also there are godly brothers and sisters in Christ = take “women” = wives of deacons which I can see why they would argue that way  Either way, whether you believe Scripture allows or does not allow for women deacons at the very least women who serve in a formal sense in the church should meet this qualification for women in verse 11  V. 11 women too = “dignified” = grave = serious  Not = malicious gossips  “diabolos” = lit. slanderer  Word used to describe Satan often  Matt. 4:1  *“Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil…”* |
| 15  There’s that word = diabolos  Ladies, the Scriptures if you are maliciously gossiping about someone, slandering their reputation, you resemble Satan’s character than God’s character.  -Pretty serious  As women go house to house helping/giving = more temptation to disclose something false  Proverbs 18:8 says,  *“The words of a whisperer (gossiper) are like dainty morsels, And they go down into the innermost parts of the stomach.”*  We’ve all been guilty of all that right?  -In our sinful flesh and pride we like to feel like we are better than others  “Slander” not really used today | 16  Slander = twisting truth about someone to destroy their reputation  All it does is cause division and evil suspicions right?  That’s what Satan loves!  He loves to divide the church!  Satan = accuser. He nature is of lies and not of the truth.  He is a master of deception  But resisting temptation to gossip women deacons = “temperate” = lit. “wineless”  Same word for V. 2 for “overseers”  Clear head and be “faithful in all things”  Must be absolutely trustworthy = strong resistance against any type unfaithfulness towards money = resources of church |
| 17  Paul goes back to V. 12  Must be “*husbands of one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households*.”  Deacons like overseers = “one-woman man”  Must be absolutely faithful to wives and guard heart  Like overseers must rule and lead children and households well  Deacon’s children are not out of control of their homes  Obedient children  Not perfectly obedient, not saved children necessarily, but obedient children  Respects and obeys father  When they do all of that V. 13 | 18  *“deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.”*  Why does Paul say that?  Nature of deacon’s work = behind the scenes  Deacons not going to be in pulpit as much as elder  Naturally how things go: preacher get most attention/accolades  Unfortunately they don’t get as recognized  But Paul has great word of encouragement V. 13  Deacons = 1 Pt. 5:6 “humble yourselves under the might hand of God, and He will lift you up in due time”  In God’s eyes, you have a high and honorable standing with Him  Advantage of deacons = less temptation to be corrupted by power |
| 19  ILLUST:  seminary professors  “Beware of drinking the elixir of power”  Now Paul comes to foundation of the book vv. 14-16  Centerpiece of book  V. 14  *“These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”*  Paul wanted to ensure Timothy had everything he needed from the Lord to know how to conduct himself in God’s household  Reminds Timothy that everything they talked about is based on the truth | 20  church = depository of truth  Unlike any other institutions or gathering = unique  Church not building made out of pillars and supports to hold the roof  Spiritual unseen gathering where each believer is pillar and supports that exalts truth over everything  Truth, not bricks and stone = material and currency of church  And here breaks out into praise and doxology V. 16  *“By common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He was revealed in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.”*  “Common confession” + staccato like statements = likely early hymn or creed |
| 21  “Great is the mystery of godliness” = gospel of Jesus Christ  Person and work of Christ  This gospel carried a great and glorious weight and intensity to it  Six lines = chronological life of Christ  1. “*Revealed in the flesh*”  = incarnation  Second person Trinity = impossible = taking on human flesh  Uniting his human nature with his divine nature in the person of the Son  How can something imperishable, perfect, all powerful, all knowing, and all present perishable, imperfect, weak, insignificance, and finite?  “Great is the mystery of godliness” | 22  2. “Vindicated In The Spirit”  Jesus did all His atoning work by the power of the Holy Spirit  It was the Spirit that drove Him into the wilderness to be tempted  It was the Spirit that drove Him to the cross  And it was the Spirit that raised Him from the dead:  Rom. 1:4 (Christ’s resurrection)  Jesus *“was designated as the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord.”*  Nobody has ever died and has walked out of the grave like Jesus  He sealed His work on the cross by His resurrection and has opened up heaven for all who enter  “Great is the mystery of godliness” |
| 23  3. “Seen by angels”  Through resurrection = Christ appeared both to angels and fallen angels  Angels not given privilege of seeing the details of the gospel like humans  1 Pt. 1:12 = gospel is very thing that angels long to look  “look” = stoop down and look intently  They served Christ in his work of redemption, but they didn’t experience glorious truth of gospel because they are different from humans experiencing salvation  With resurrection Christ proclaimed victory over wicked hosts in heavenlies | 24  Col. 2:5  *“having disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them in Him.”*  1 Peter 3:19  *“went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison.”*  The bonds of darkness have been broken. Satan has lost. Satan and all his evil armies will one day be cast into the lake of fire  “Great is the mystery of godliness”  4. “Proclaimed Among The Nations”  After being seen by angels Matt. 28 Jesus commissioned disciples  *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to* |
| 25  *keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Now the phrase “proclaimed among the nations” can be translated “proclaimed among the Gentiles.”*  Word “ethnos” = generally refer to nation = often translated “Gentiles” in NT  Jews knew (or at least should have known) that Gentiles can be grafted in  But didn’t know about the church in which both Jews and Gentiles are saved in the same way  “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*.”  “Great Is The Mystery of Godliness”  5. “Believed On In The World”  Many believed in Him after resurrection | 26  Women saw empty tomb and proclaimed victory of Christ over sin and death to disciples  Then disciples told everyone else  Thomas and James, the Lord’s brother didn’t believe until resurrection  1 Corinthians 15:3-8  *“For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep. After that, He appeared to James, then to all the apostles, and last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared to me also.”*  6. “*Taken Up In Glory*” |
| 27  Ascended to Father’s right hand  Goes back to be united in same glory He shared with Father before his incarnation  This time, unique God-man, glorified human body  To be your representative, advocate, mediator, and high priest forever!  “Great is the mystery of godliness!”  CONCLUSION:  Qualification for both elder/deacon = same  Standard of Christ  Paul: “Imitate me as I imitate Christ”  Only way have standard of moral excellency is entrusting yourself to gospel  1 Cor. 9:23  *“I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partake of it.”* | 28  If Gospel is full of glory, why wouldn’t God expect utmost faithfulness from his undershepherds in response to its glory?  Deacons, without your help, elders would not be able to fully focus on God’s Word in preaching and teaching it  Church choosing only to have elders but no deacons is like cutting off right foot  You would be awkwardly off balanced, crippled in some way  1 Cor. 12  *“eye can’t say to the hand “I don’t need you!” Neither can the head say to the foot “I don’t need you!”*  I hope you don’t see this as only for them  Truly for you to strive towards  If you do fall short, God will enable you to be above reproach |
| 29  Ask God to transform you from inside out that Christ = preeminent over life  Phil. 1:27  conduct yourselves worthy of the gospel of Christ  But question arises…  “Are you even a part of the body of Christ?”  Or do you belong in the world?  Because if you belong in world, one day it will pass  1 John 2:15-17  *“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away, and also its lusts, but the one who does the will of God abides forever.”* | 30  The King is returning to be married to His engaged bride, the church  When Jesus was “taken up in glory”  He will also return in glory  Acts 1:11 Two angels:  *This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”*  King will come back to earth to judge all those loved the world and did not love Jesus and bride  Before King comes, calling all citizens on earth to attend His wedding banquet  = repent of your sins, love Him, and believe in Him for eternal life  If you don’t…horrific consequences |
| 31  Matt. 22:11-14  *“But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed in wedding clothes, and he \*said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?’ And the man was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”*  Don’t be found speechless by the king of truth  When He asks you how you got into heaven…  May your response be:  “It is only because He has clothed me with His righteousness”  Let’s pray | 32 |