

1 Timothy 3B

- Last time we had just started examining the qualifications for overseers in the church in chapter 4, so we return to that list tonight
 - Remember, an overseer is a general term for anyone who exercises authority over the congregation
 - The word overseer implies the highest levels of authority,
 - So we're talking about elders or pastors or any title of leadership that guards over the flock and makes decisions for the body
 - But we can't go wrong applying these same standards to lesser leaders
 - They represent the minimum qualifications for those who aspire to be an overseer
 - As we mentioned last week, these qualifications seem straightforward enough, but applying them can be a messy affair
 - No one (save Christ Himself) can meet these qualifications perfectly
 - So then we must apply these standards with a measure of grace and common sense
 - In the end, we want to elevate leaders who exemplify the best within the body
 - So that by their example, the rest of the congregation are inspired to imitate their godliness
- In our study last week, we examined the opening verses of chapter 4, but we didn't get very far
 - We covered Paul's opening statement in v.1 and the first three requirements of the 16 listed in vs.2-7
 - So for context, I'll reread the entire passage again
 - But we'll begin our discussion reviewing the first three briefly
 - And then we'll dive into the rest

[1Tim. 3:1](#) It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.

[1Tim. 3:2](#) An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

[1Tim. 3:3](#) not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money.

[1Tim. 3:4](#) He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity

[1Tim. 3:5](#) (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?),

[1Tim. 3:6](#) and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.

[1Tim. 3:7](#) And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

- The first requirement Paul gives is implied more than stated: an overseer must be a man
 - And as we saw last week, the reasons for this requirement were already addressed in chapter 2
 - So headship within the family and church requires that the body be led by male authorities
 - This is true for elders or any other overseer who has authority over men in the body of Christ
 - Basically, if an overseer has authority over men in the church, then that overseer must be a man as well
 - Secondly, the overseer must be above reproach
 - We explained that being above reproach means giving no cause for accusations within the church concerning character or conduct
 - We want our leaders to be above charges that might distract the church or sully the name of Christ
 - I said last week that this requirement includes both present and past behavior, including behavior committed prior to faith
 - But in applying this standard we must judge all past behaviors with grace, knowing that no one possesses a perfect testimony especially before faith

- Thirdly, we studied Paul's command that an overseer be a man of one wife
 - I gave a variety of interpretations of Paul's words
 - But the best interpretation I believe, the one in keeping with the spirit of the entire list, is that an overseer must practice moral marriage
 - Moral marriage means modeling the one-flesh relationship given in scripture
 - This precludes polygamy, adultery, divorce, or fornication
- With that we're ready to move into the rest of Paul's list
 - The fourth requirement is that an overseer must temperate
 - Temperate means to be sober, measured, clear-headed, balanced
 - Just as we say a climate is temperate to mean it doesn't experience extremes in weather
 - So temperate means remaining in control and balanced in all things
 - The word in Greek for temperate is *nephalios*, and it carries the suggestion of sobriety
 - The root of the word is *nepho*, which means to abstain from alcohol
 - But the word *nephalios* doesn't mean to abstain, and unfortunately the word temperance has been misused this way
 - Paul will address the issue of drinking more specifically in a moment, so we'll wait to talk more about it then
 - For now, we should focus on the other aspects of this important quality of leaders
 - Temperate means slow to anger, not prone to outbursts or rash behavior...
 - Not easily thrown off track or manipulated...
 - Even keeled

- The last thing we want is for the body of Christ to be led by men who impulsive or emotionally charged
- Next Paul says we want our overseers to be prudent men
 - Prudence is the natural compliment to temperate
 - A temperate person remains calm and in control no matter what comes their way
 - While a prudent person responds in well-considered and measured ways in every situation
 - The Greek word for prudent also means self-controlled, so you can clearly see a trend in Paul's thinking
 - He wants the church to select men who aren't going to say or do impulsive things
 - Because where are leaders go, so goes the body of Christ
 - Our leaders are supposed to create a climate within the body where we can grow and mature
 - Unpredictable and rash leaders are conducive to such an environment
 - Furthermore, Paul adds the man must be respectable
 - In Greek the word means orderly or proper
 - It describes someone with a sense of seriousness about their duty
 - They conduct themselves in a somewhat formal, dignified manner
 - Not stiff or humorless, but neither should they be silly
 - Take these three together (temperate, prudent and respectable), and you begin to imagine a man of distinction
 - A man who is reserved and always in control
 - A man with gravitas who commands respect
 - Men don't come out of the womb this way
 - We all start as children and must grow up

- An overseer is that man who has outgrown the impulsive nature of his youth and has learned from his mistakes
- So that now he has obtained the maturity to lead
- Now Paul moves to traits that serve others beginning with hospitable
 - The word in Greek is *philoxenos*, which means literally to love strangers
 - It's the counterpart to *philadelphia*, which is love for a brother
 - When we hear hospitable, we usually think of hospitality in our homes
 - And certainly this is an important aspect of this requirement
 - We want our leaders to have an openness for serving others using everything they have at their disposal
 - And that's really the full sense of this term
 - It describes a man's desire to meet the needs of others, including those with whom he has no relationship yet
 - It's more than simply being polite
 - It's essential to the mission of the church that our leaders would have open hearts, open houses and open wallets for the needs of those they lead
 - Including for those they don't even know yet
 - Like Jesus demonstrated, our service to the Great Commission often turns on our willingness to extend kindness to the least of our society
- Next, Paul says the overseer must be able to teach, and of course Paul means implicitly to teach scripture
 - Therefore, a man seeking to be an overseer must demonstrate he is able to teach the Bible
 - And teaching involves two qualifications
 - First, the man must have an understanding of scripture sufficient to explain it and defend against error
 - In Titus, Paul provides a similar list for an overseer, and in that list he elaborates on this requirement

[Titus 1:9](#) holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

- Paul says the overseer must hold fast to the true teaching of the word according to the Apostle's teaching
 - In our day, the New Testament letters are the teaching of the Apostles
 - Therefore, an overseer must possess an abiding and orthodox understanding of scripture as revealed in the NT
 - And they will use that understanding to exhort the people and to refute the false claims that come against God's word
- Paul includes this requirement in the middle of the list, so we might think it of only average importance
 - But this isn't correct
 - Paul's instructions to Timothy later in the letter will make clear that the ability to teach is probably the highest trait of an overseer
 - Guarding the flock from false teaching is paramount, for the body of Christ is united and empowered by its understanding of God's word
- Today, the average Christian in the world is biblically illiterate, knowing almost nothing about what's in the Bible or what it means
 - This situation is a direct result of overseers who do not understand or value the word themselves
 - And so they do not guard it nor teach it methodically
 - Paul will address this very trend later in his second letter to Timothy
- Paul's next requirement is that an overseer not be addicted to wine, which we can generalize to any alcohol beverage or other mind-altering substance
 - The issue isn't the alcohol itself, of course, for even Jesus drank wine
 - And He promised His disciples He would share a cup of wine with them in the Kingdom

- Furthermore, Paul writing later in this letter under the leading of the Spirit prescribes medicinal wine for Timothy
- Paul's focus is on the word addicted
 - Addiction is a loss of self-control over the desires of our flesh
 - Addiction is proof to us that our flesh has gained a victory over our spirit in an area of our life
 - All believers are engaged in a life-long struggle against the flesh and the sin it produces as Paul describes in Romans

Rom. 7:19 For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want.

Rom. 7:20 But if I am doing the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin which dwells in me.

- Our fight against our flesh is a battle between our new perfect spirit and our fallen flesh
 - And this fight is tough enough as it is without giving our flesh an extra advantage
 - Alcohol or drug addictions are evidence that the flesh has gained a foothold, which means our spirit is less in control
- Obviously, we want our leaders to be under the Spirit's leading to the extent possible
 - So a serious addiction to alcohol or drugs is a disqualifying character trait
 - And it matters not if a drug is legalized
- Certainly, the willingness to use illegal drugs is disqualifying by itself since it demonstrates dishonest character
 - But even the use of legal drugs will disqualify a man if they gain control over him
 - And certainly some drugs are so powerful they should be avoided even when legal since the danger of addiction is high
 - The lesson here is to know your limits and weaknesses so you can avoid a misstep that may carry significant consequences

- Moving on, let's take the next three items together: not pugnacious but gentle and peaceable
 - We could lump these together as one requirement, since one is the opposite of the others
 - But let's examine each independently, starting with not being pugnacious
 - The Greek word for pugnacious is *pletes*, which means a striker
 - The word appears only here and in Paul's similar list in Titus
 - We could just as easily translate the word to mean violent or prone to physical outbursts
 - So I assume it's self-evident you can see why we wouldn't want leaders who are pugnacious or violent
 - Men prone to violence are the literally the opposite of what we want
 - Which is why Paul says we want men who exhibit gentleness
 - The word in Greek translated gentleness is also interesting
 - It can be used to describe someone who quietly suffers an offense
 - I'm reminded of the way a larger, older dog will sit patiently while a young puppy grabs at his ears or bites his tale
 - That's the sense of what Paul says we want in our overseers
 - And speaking as a pastor, I can completely identify with this requirement
 - An overseer in the church (or a leader in any organization) walks around with a target on his back
 - Most of the time, the slings and arrows that come our way are thrown by the very flock we're supposed to feed and guard and care for
 - So if an overseer doesn't have a thick skin and a willingness to suffer slights and insults from time to time, he won't survive very long

- He needs to be gentle in how he responds to the body he leads
 - When someone comes against him harshly, he needs to have a nature that assumes positive intent and doesn't take offense easily
 - He must be prepared to respond with a kind word when lessors men might have issued a sharp rebuke
 - He can't worry about defending his pride or ego because he knows there are more important objectives
- Finally, the man should be peaceable
 - The word in Greek is a bit humorous, especially for those of us who live in a Hispanic culture
 - The Greek word is *amachos*, pronounced am'-akh-os
 - But it looks like a-machos, as in *not macho*, which is actually a good definition of the word
 - It means to abstain from fighting or contentiousness
 - It's an attitude opposite to that of a bully
 - Here again it makes perfect sense that our leaders shouldn't be men who are prone to bullying people to get their way
 - Now should their style of influence be based on intimidation or threats
 - Taken together with gentleness and not being pugnacious we can see clearly the kind of leader Paul is describing
 - Perhaps he's like a grandfather, the strong but silent type
 - Our leaders should epitomize the man Rudyard Kipling describes in his immortal poem "If"
 - As part of the poem goes...

**If you can keep your head when all about you
 Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
 If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
 But make allowance for their doubting too;
 If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,**

Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
 Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
 And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
 Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
 If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
 If all men count with you, but none too much;
 If you can fill the unforgiving minute
 With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
 Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
 And—which is more—you'll be AN OVERSEER, my son!

- The next requirement is one many men struggle to meet, especially in our world today
 - An overseer must be free from the love of money
 - The Greek word translated love is actually the word for covet
 - So Paul's concern is for a man who covets material wealth
 - He desires money and the things money can buy
 - Paul's concern is for the man's attitude toward wealth, not necessarily with wealth itself
 - An overseer may be rich or poor
 - Yes, a rich man can have an unhealthy love of riches, but then again so can a poor man
 - On the other hand, a godly rich man may be generous with his riches just as a poor man can find contentment in his poverty
 - The question is whether a potential overseer is preoccupied with obtaining and retaining wealth such that it interferes with his ability to steward the church of God
 - For example, does he manipulate others or use his office to enrich himself?
 - The overseers of Israel in Jesus' day did exactly this thing

- Which is why the scriptures report that the Pharisees were lovers of money but not of God
- As Jesus Himself said, you can't serve God and money at the same time
 - The desire for one will inevitably lead a person away from the other
 - The present waste land of prosperity teachers and the millions they've deceived are testimony to the truth of Christ's words
- Since both poor and rich men can be lovers of money, how can we judge this quality in a prospective overseer?
 - Amassing wealth or possessing nice things doesn't automatically mean a man is covetous
 - Ironically, a healthy savings account or a nice car could be evidence that the man is careful with his money
 - That's an admirable quality in a leader and it may be a skill the church needs
 - So we can't be too quick to judge on this issue
 - Like all character traits, a man's attitude toward wealth is something we come to understand by getting to know him
 - Everyone has a desire for money at least to some degree
 - But desire doesn't constitute a "love" of money
 - So here are some warnings signs to watch for in a prospect overseer
 - Is he generous to others?
 - Does he live a relatively modest lifestyle, one that's within their means?
 - Does he manage his own money well enough not to be a burden on others or is he always struggling to make ends meet?
 - It's worth the time required to understand a man's heart on this issue
 - So many church bodies have suffered grave damage from men who cared only about this world and what it offered
- In vs.4-5 Paul gives one of the more controversial qualifications for an overseer

- He says an overseer must manage his own home well
 - Managing the home is a broad concept that includes many things
 - But it begins with the basic idea of leading in the home
- The Bible teaches that men are the spiritual leaders in their families and in the church
 - Therefore, before a man may be judged ready to lead the church, he should already be leading in the home
 - Proper management in the home should look very much the same as in the church
 - A potential overseer ought to demonstrate all these same qualities before his family
- As Paul says in v.5, an overseer's approach to leading in his home is a good indication of what he will do in managing the church family
 - This principle holds true because the situations an overseer faces in the church are often very similar to those faced by a husband and father
 - Churches need order and structure, just like families
 - Churches need budgets and priorities, like families
 - Church experience disputes that must be resolved without sacrificing relationships, just like families
 - Churches must make time to celebrate one another, to practice discipline in love, and to mourn without losing hope
 - In these ways and many more, the leader of a church must apply the same skills and sensibilities as a good father or husband
- Finally, Paul adds that this man must keep his children in control with all dignity
 - There are two parts to this requirement, one we usually see easily but another we often overlook
 - We could translate Paul's phrase as "maintaining obedient children without losing his dignity"

- We want overseers who demonstrate they have the ability to maintain control over their children
- This is an excellent test of their fitness for the job
 - Children are inherently undisciplined
 - They exit the womb lacking self-control
 - Therefore, self control must be learned, but unfortunately not every child receives training in maintaining self-control
- So we want leaders who have an appreciation for self-control and submission to authority and train their children to share that attitude
 - Judging this qualification is subjective, since everyone has a slightly different standards in the home
 - And every child makes bad choices and experiences rebellious moments
 - But generally his children should demonstrate love for their parents, a heart of obedience and respect for authority
 - They should respond appropriately when corrected and show a sincere desire to do the right thing
- Given the lax parenting standards in our culture today, it's getting increasingly difficult to find men who meet this standard
 - But it gets even harder when we apply the second part of Paul's requirement
 - The man must maintain control over his children without losing his dignity
 - If he gains his control through physical or verbal abuse...
 - Or if he must plead and bargain and negotiate to get his children to obey his word...then he has lost his dignity
 - Of course, we can see why such things would disqualify a leader over the church
 - Resorting to abuse or negotiation is proof that a person lacks an appreciation for authority

- If a father must rely on inappropriate physical force or on unnecessary negotiation, then he won't have the respect of his children
- A father's word should be sufficient to drive a child's behavior
 - Of course, discipline is a necessary part of training a child to respect a father's word
 - But applied correctly, it generally isn't necessary for long
 - That's the kind of leadership we want in the church
- The final two requirements are found in vs.6-7, where Paul says the man may not be a new convert to the faith and possess a good reputation outside the church
 - To ignore these requirements brings the possibility of two similar pitfalls
 - Elevating a man into leadership too early could lead the man to follow in Satan's footsteps
 - Paul's referring to Satan's own fall, which Ezekiel says was the result of pride resulting from the the special position Satan held
 - Paul doesn't give a specific length of time in service because this qualification isn't merely a mathematical calculation
 - It's a matter of the heart
 - We don't want to elevate a man into a position of honor and authority in the church until he is wise and mature enough to handle the responsibility
 - We want a man who has pursued sanctification in his walk with Christ long enough to have gained the benefits of it
 - Specifically, he's gained the spiritual strength to resist any temptation to self-importance or conceit
 - The issue is partly one of physical age but more so of spiritual maturity
 - In situations where the pickings are slim like a new church in a remote location, an outside authority may select leaders closest to the goal

- And then an overseer must possess a good reputation outside the church
 - Earlier Paul said this man must be above reproach, which meant no one in the church could bring a charge against the man
 - Now Paul extends that to the unbelieving world
 - In the first case Paul wanted the church to be sensitive to accusations against the man that might have substance behind them
 - In this case Paul is concerned for public accusations regardless of whether they are true
 - He says he doesn't want the overseer to fall into reproach or disgrace or the snare of the devil
 - Paul's speaking of a both fact and fiction
 - If an overseer has a bad reputation in the public eye, then either he has real character issues
 - Or there is substance and he may feel pressure to cover up the false accusations
 - In either case, the church can't afford to have leaders that cause a public sensation which may detract from the mission
 - So we should pass over men who are controversial or notorious whether justified or not
 - It may not be fair, especially in cases where they are falsely accused
 - But the mission of the church is more important than one man's opportunity to lead
 - By the way, this requirement argues against church leaders becoming prominent in politics or societal movements apart from the Gospel
 - We want leaders to remain quietly focused on leading the flock and reaching the world for Christ
 - Too much notoriety is unhelpful because the enemy will take advantage of any opportunity to bring church leaders to ruin
- So those sixteen requirements when properly applied will result in the strongest possible leaders for the church

- But remember, these requirements are standards of godliness for all Christians
 - We want our leaders to model the highest possible standard
 - But all believers are expected to imitate their leaders in adopting these same attributes
 - So don't assume that only overseers needs strive for these things
- Keep that in mind as we look at the second list in this chapter, that of the position of deacon

1Tim. 3:8 Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain,

1Tim. 3:9 but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

1Tim. 3:10 These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.

1Tim. 3:11 Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.

1Tim. 3:12 Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.

1Tim. 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.

- Last week I explained that the position of deacon is a title of service in the body of Christ, not a title of authority
 - A deacon is someone who leads by example in serving the body
 - And in that sense, they occupy a leadership position
 - But they do not exercise authority over the body overall
 - In many churches today, the position of deacon is either misapplied or is absent altogether
 - Deacons are sometimes assigned authority over the body, which is not in keeping with Paul's instructions
 - If they have authority over the body, they should be called overseers or perhaps elders
 - This would allow a true deacon position to emerge in the church
 - But in most churches, no one receives the title of deacon

- Instead, we use other titles like “director” or committee chairman, etc.
- These roles are service roles, where the person has responsibility to oversee the work of the church in some capacity
- So overseers oversee people, while deacons oversee work
- Paul gives requirements for deacons, both men and women
 - He gives 8 qualifications for the men and 4 for the women
 - The two groups address similar ideas
 - The differences relate to the different roles of men and women in the church and family
 - Paul begins with men of dignity
 - Dignified refers to carrying oneself in a holy, serious or reverent way within the church
 - Deacons are not silly men
 - They are men worthy of respect in the body
 - Secondly they are no double-tongued
 - The word in Greek can be translated insincere
 - We don’t want those leading the work of the church to be untrustworthy in what they report to the leaders
 - They will be entrusted with resources and they will direct people in accomplishing work
 - So they must be trustworthy
 - The next two requirements are similar to two requirements for overseers
 - A deacon cannot be in addiction nor seeking for wealth in appropriate ways
 - We don’t need to explain those further except to note that even those who aren’t in leadership over others need to guard against such things
- The next two requirements are test of maturity

- Paul says deacons must hold to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience
 - This requirement is a lesser form of “able to teach”
 - It means to have a firm conviction that the doctrines of the church, as taught by the overseers, are true
- The deacons aren’t expected to have the same depth of understanding as an overseer
 - And therefore they aren’t called to teach, since they aren’t occupying an authority position
 - But they are expected to operate in harmony with their convictions on the doctrines of the faith
 - So we wouldn’t elevate someone to deacon if they don’t understand the core beliefs of Christianity or if they have doubts about the elder’s teaching
- Furthermore, they must be tested or approved to make sure they are beyond reproach
 - This requirement is a companion to the elder requirement
 - The difference is an overseer’s past is on the table
 - But for the deacon the issue is his present condition
 - So we test or approve a deacon to see if they are blameworthy or blameless in some way
- Next we move to qualifications for female deacons
 - Deacons can be men or women because the position is not a position of authority over the congregation
 - Not only does Paul describe qualifications for the position here
 - But he mentions a deaconess serving in the church in Cenchrea in Romans 16:1
 - Moving to the qualifications for women deacons, Paul expects them to meet the same basic character qualifications as men
 - First in v.11 they must also be dignified as the men
 - Then Paul adds they must not be malicious gossips

- The phrase in Greek means to share inappropriate details about others in the church with an intent to do them harm
 - I find it curious that Paul didn't list mere gossiping as disqualifying for a woman (perhaps that would have ruled out too many?)
 - The ones Paul is concerned about are those who have engaged in the behavior with a desire to hurt someone
 - Obviously a woman so spiritually immature that she purposely hurts other in the church is in no position to lead works of faith
 - She needs time to grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ first
- Lastly, a female deacon is to exhibit a temperate, faithful disposition
 - We talked already about temperance
 - And the word in Greek for faithful mean literally stable and reliable
 - Both words together suggest a woman who isn't flighty or shrill but calm, measured and quiet
 - Remember, Paul is working in this letter to strengthen Timothy's church against false teachers who had led women astray
 - So it makes sense that Paul wanted women elevated into leadership positions of service to the body
 - But he wanted the right kind of woman serving to counter the negative influence of the women deceived by false teaching
- Returning to the men, Paul asks that the deacons be husbands of one wife and good managers of their homes
 - Once again, these qualifications mirror those of the overseers and for all the same reasons
 - It's interesting to wonder why women deacons didn't have the same requirements
 - And the answer is that women had little responsibility in these areas in the family

- Women had no legal standing in marriage, so they couldn't initiate a marriage much less a divorce
 - So if a woman was to practice a godly marriage, it depended on the husband to ensure that outcome
 - Likewise, the father had authority over the household, so if the children were unruly, it was to the father's shame, not the mother
- Paul ends this section with a statement that forms a bookend with v.1
 - In v.1 he said that a man who aspired to be an overseer was seeking a good work
 - That good work was the work of pursuing godliness in his life
 - And by that pursuit he could qualify himself to hold a position of authority
 - Now in v.13 Paul says that those who have served well as deacons will gain a high standing and great confidence
 - High standing could also be translated high rank
 - Furthermore, great confidence could be phrased more boldness
 - So for an overseer, the position itself is recognition of having obtained a superior testimony of godliness
 - But for a deacon, it is his or her years of service that will result in great honor
 - And that honor comes in two parts
 - First, the deacon will have high rank in the faith that is in Christ Jesus
 - At the very least, high rank means accolades among those in the church
 - But Paul's choice of words seems to be a reference to the eternal rewards that come to those who serve Christ well
 - The "rank" could refer to the deacon's place in the kingdom
- Secondly, the deacon who serves well will gain greater boldness or confidence in the faith they enjoy in Christ Jesus

- While they may have begun with only a moderate confidence in their faith, that is in the doctrines and assurances of Christ
 - But now after years of faithful service, they will find their confidence and boldness increased
 - They will have greater certainty in the faithfulness of Christ and in the promise of good things to come
- How does this happen? This is a basic truth of scripture...that serving God is the surest way to strengthen your faith in Him and in His word
 - Because as you serve God, you will inevitably confront difficulties and challenges that you can't solve yourself
 - But the Lord will show up and show Himself strong time and time again
 - And as He does, you gain great confidence in Him and His word
- It's like a child who works closely with his or her father in chores around the house or in chores or a family business
 - Working side by side with a parent is the best way to get to know them and to trust them
 - Serving the Lord is an opportunity to know the Master
 - Serving can't replace knowing Him in His word, but it's a catalyst for sanctification
 - Those who serve as deacons will see a reward of sanctification leading to an eternal reward