

# DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

*Our Mission: Reaching out to leaders who can change the world.*

July 2014

## LEADER DEVELOPMENT: OVERSEERS AND DEACONS

### INTRODUCTION

What job(s) have you had where you felt completely unqualified? How did you survive?

### OBSERVATION/INTERPRETATION

Read 1 Timothy 3:1-16

*Note: In the Greek culture, 'overseer' was used to describe a presiding official in a civic or religious organization. Here it refers to a man who oversees a local congregation. The equivalent word from the Jewish background or Christianity is 'elder'. The duties of an overseer were to teach and preach, to direct the affairs of the church, to shepherd the flock of God, and to guard the church from error. The Greek word 'deacon' means simply 'one who serves'. Generally, their service was meant to free the elders for full attention to prayer and the ministry of the word. The only two local church offices mentioned in the New Testament are those of overseer (also called elder) and deacon.*

1. Why would someone want to serve as an overseer in the church? vs. 1
2. Why are the list of qualifications for overseers in verses 2-7 important?

*Note: Polygamy and infidelity were common at that time. The details of a divorce may affect his reputation. Most scholars think the "husband of one wife" means he is faithful to his (existing) wife since conversion.*

3. How can these character traits be developed?
4. What are the similarities/differences in the qualifications for overseers and deacons? vv. 8-13
5. What role does the family serve in the life of an overseer/deacon? vv. 4-5, 12

*Note: Deacons have control over their children when they are young, but cannot be responsible for their adult children's choices. A wayward adult child is usually not a disqualification for leadership.*

6. Which character trait(s) for overseers/deacons would you give a higher priority? Why?
7. How are the character traits in this chapter applicable to any leader (spiritual or secular)?
8. What tests did Paul have in mind? Vs. 10 What shows that a person is ready for more leadership responsibility? Is a "360 degree" evaluation reasonable?
9. What are some benefits of 'serving well' as a spiritual leader? vs. 13
10. What is the cost of not serving well? How have you witnessed this first hand?
11. What challenges are associated with seeking potential spiritual leaders who possess the character traits described in this chapter? The rewards?

### APPLICATION

What character trait(s) from this chapter do you want to improve in your life? How would you implement such a plan?

*"At that moment, I knew I was relating to men who were not only new Christians, but who also knew little about the Bible. And I soon discovered these men were not new to the field of management. They made an observation I'll never forget. "You know", they said, "this is the first time we've heard this list of qualifications from the Bible. But we've learned from experience in hiring people for middle-management positions that these are the kind of men we're looking for. We want employees who have a good reputation. We don't want a man who is cheating on his wife or sleeping around. We certainly don't want a man who has all kinds of domestic problems. If he can't handle his own family, how in the world is he going to handle people in our steel mill?" These men outlined characteristic by characteristic what they had learned from experience regarding mature qualifications. Interesting, they realized that their basic list of mature qualifications closely paralleled Paul's list."*

*The Measure of a Man: Twenty Attributes of a Godly Man* by Gene A. Getz