

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

(1 Tim. 3:8 – 13)

Open your group with a time of sharing and prayer. Ask God to give insight into today's important topic of leadership within the church.

- I. Today we pick up with the second set of leaders Paul instruct Timothy to raise up in the church at Ephesus. Last week we looked at Overseers (Pastors), now we will study Deacons. What exactly is a Deacon? How do they differ from Overseers? How are they similar?
- II. Read 1 Timothy 3:8 – 13. Note the phrase "in the same way". What does this signify? What does verse 8 have in common with Overseer qualifications in verses 2 – 3? Which standard is higher? Explain how personal character qualifies or disqualifies someone for service in a church congregation. According to verse 13, what is a benefit to having faithfully served God in the church?
- III. Read verse 9 again. What "deep truths of the faith" might Paul be referring to? Can you as a group list the basic non-negotiable doctrines of Christianity? How important are these doctrines for someone aspiring to church leadership? Should someone serve in the church if they don't hold to these Christian Doctrines? Explain.
- IV. Note verse 10 requires that deacons "be tested". What kind of test could this be? Any examples? What if someone fails the test, are they through, or is there another opportunity to become a deacon?

*verse 11 singles out women. Which women? Can women serve as deacons in the church? Any examples? Note (Rom. 16:1 – 3, 6, 12) What qualities must they possess to be considered for service?

- V. Finally, read 1 Timothy 3:12. What further qualifies someone to serve in the church? How is this like verses 4 – 5? What should the church do if a deacon is failing in his marriage or family life? What can the church do to better protect the marriages and families of its leaders and people?

*Close your time by asking God to raise up Deacons (servant leaders) at Bethel Gilead.

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