

## "We are the Church" Sermon Series / 1 Timothy 3:1-13 / Pt. 9

"A Healthy Church Commits to Church Leadership" | November 16th, 2025

### **Review:**

The sermon this week explored the biblical foundation for church leadership, examining how God has designed local churches to function through qualified leaders. We looked at snapshots of church membership throughout the New Testament and discovered that healthy churches commit to biblical leadership structures with pastor/elders and deacons serving together.

When we think about the church, we often focus on worship services, community gatherings, and fellowship. But have you ever stopped to consider the framework that holds it all together? The New Testament provides us with a detailed blueprint for how local churches should be structured and led—and it's far more intentional than many of us realize.

As we continue to grow together as a church family, let's embrace God's design with humble hearts. When we submit to His imperium—His supreme authority—we position ourselves to experience the order, joy, and spiritual health He intends for His people.

### **Sermon Outline:**

#### **Section 1: Biblical Pictures of Membership**

Snapshots of Membership: Acts 2:41-47; Acts 6:1-4; Romans 16; 1 Timothy 5:9-11; Hebrews 13:17

#### **Section 2: Qualifications for Leadership**

1 Timothy 3:1-7 (Pastor/Elder Qualifications)

1 Timothy 3:8-13 (Deacon Qualifications)

### **Key Takeaways:**

**1. Church membership is a biblical reality** - While no single verse commands it explicitly, the New Testament is filled with pictures of defined church membership.

**2. God prescribes qualifications for church leaders** - Pastor/elders and deacons must meet specific character requirements, with teaching ability being the key distinction for elders.

**3. Leadership structure matters** - Biblical leadership protects the church, ensures accountability, and allows God's Word to remain central.

**4. Character over competency** - God emphasizes who leaders are (their character) more than what they can do (their skills).

**5. Servanthood is foundational** - Pastors are servant-leaders; deacons lead servants.

### **Practical Applications: What This Means For You** (Choose At Least Two)

- 1. Pray specifically** - for your church's leaders (by name) every day this week. Pray for their character, their families, their teaching, and their protection from spiritual attack.
- 2. Express gratitude** - Write a note or send a message to a church leader thanking them for their faithful service and specific ways they've impacted your life.
- 3. Evaluate your commitment** - If you're not formally a member of a local church, prayerfully consider taking that step. If you are a member, evaluate whether you're living out the responsibilities of membership.
- 4. Serve intentionally** - Look for a practical way to serve your church this week, taking some burden off the leadership (the "dust kicker" mentality).
- 5. Study the qualifications** - Read through 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 daily this week. If you're in leadership, use these as a self-examination. If you're not, use them to pray more specifically for your leaders.
- 6. Support biblical structure** - If your church is working toward or maintaining biblical leadership structures, actively support those efforts rather than resisting change.

### **Questions for Reflection:**

- 1.** How does understanding church membership as a biblical concept rather than just an organizational practice change your view of commitment to a local body of believers?
- 2.** Why do you think God designed the church to have multiple elders working together rather than a single leader, and what safeguards does this plurality provide?
- 3.** How does viewing deacons as 'dust kickers' who serve with urgency and readiness challenge your own approach to serving in the church?
- 4.** In what ways might churches today have confused or merged the distinct roles of elders and deacons, and what problems does this create for church health?
- 5.** How does the practice of church discipline in Matthew 18:15-20 reflect God's love for His people, and why do you think modern churches struggle to implement this biblical command?

### **Prayer Focus:**

- Thank God for the gift of His Word and clear instructions for His church
- Pray for current and future leaders in your church
- Ask God to raise up qualified men to serve as elders and deacons
- Pray for unity and health in your local church
- Ask for grace to submit to godly leadership with joy