1 Timothy 3:1-13 (ESV)

¹ The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ² Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴ He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵ for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? ⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷ Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil. ⁸ Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. ⁹ They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰ And let them also be tested first; then let them serve as deacons if they prove themselves blameless. ¹¹ Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things. ¹² Let deacons each be the husband of one wife, managing their children and their own households well. ¹³ For those who serve well as deacons gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.

Study Questions

1. The word translated "overseer" (*episkopos*) carries the idea of visitation or watching over something. Compare the other usages in the NT: Luke 19:44, Acts 1:20, 1 Pet 2:12 and record anything notable.

2. The more common word translated "elder" (*presbuteros*) occurs 67 times in the NT. Compare some of its usages: Luke 20:1, Acts 4:5, Acts 15:23, 1 Tim 5:1, Titus 1:5, 1 Pet 5:1, Rev 4:4 and record anything notable.

3. Do you think "overseer" and "elder" refer to the same office in the church?

Women's Connection

Study Questions for March 2nd

4.	The word translated "deacon" (<i>diakonos</i>) seems to be used in general to refer to servants (as in Matt 20:26, Rom 13:14) as well as to a specific office (1 Tim 3, Rom 16:1). To what degree does this role seem to be an official office in all churches?
5.	What observations do you have about the qualifications for overseers and deacons? Are there similar themes? Do any of the qualifications seem unusual or inappropriate?
6.	Why do you think Paul includes a reference to deacons' wives (or deaconesses) but not for overseers?
7.	How would you envision a community evaluating candidates based on these qualifications? Who does the evaluating? What about disputes?
8.	What practical questions do you have about being an elder or a deacon at PBC? (Paul Taylor, one of our pastors and elders, will be teaching and will save time at the end to answer questions from the audience.)