

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?

