

8a	Διακόνους ὡσαύτως σεμνούς,	Cp. vv. 1–7
b	μὴ διλόγους,	Par 8a
c	μὴ οἴνω πολλῷ προσέχοντας,	Par 8a
d	μὴ αἰσχροκερδεῖς,	Par 8a
9	ἔχοντας τὸ μυστήριον τῆς πίστεως ἐν καθαρᾷ συνειδήσει.	Par 8a
10a	καὶ οὗτοι δὲ δοκιμαζέσθωσαν πρῶτον,	Comment 8–9
b	εἶτα διακονεῖτωσαν ἀνέγκλητοι ὄντες.	Seq 10a
11a	Γυναῖκας ὡσαύτως σεμνάς,	Cp. 8–10
b	μὴ διαβόλους,	Par 11a
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12a	διάκονοι ἔστωσαν μιᾶς γυναικὸς ἄνδρες,	Alttrntv 11
b	τέκνων καλῶς προϊστάμενοι καὶ τῶν ἰδίων οἴκων.	Par 12a
13	οἱ γὰρ καλῶς διακονήσαντες βαθμὸν ἑαυτοῖς καλὸν περιποιῶνται καὶ πολλὴν παρρησίαν ἐν πίστει τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.	Grounds 12

The 7-day prayer guide was written by Scott Maxwell and/or Matt Kellso, who emailed it to me for this BUILD lesson. The notes on the interpretation of “women” in 1 Tim 3:11, and those following each entry in the prayer guide (both in Garamond font) are my own.

The issue with 1 Tim 3:11 comes down to the interpretation of who is the referent of the word “women”:

1. Deacons’ wives
2. Deaconesses

There are several issues that make this issue not entirely straightforward. For instance, the reasons for holding the first view [*deacons’ wives*], good or bad, are:

- The word translated “women” means wives. (So, the argument goes, why wouldn’t Paul just use the feminine form of the word “servant” if he meant deaconesses?)
- Having qualifications for deacons’ wives is consistent with the qualification that they must oversee their own homes well (3:12) as this would reflect their faithful leadership and responsibility.
- View 1 gives a better explanation of vv. 8–13, since all these verses are understood as deacon qualifications. (So, the argument goes, View 2 needs to explain why Paul would turn to deaconess qualifications in 11, and return to deacons in vv. 12f.)
- *It avoids confusion about complementarian view of leadership, which is clearly biblical.
- *It avoids the awkward interjection of a discussion about deaconesses before returning back to the description of deacons in v. 12.
- If

The reasons for holding the second view [*deaconesses*] are:

- If Paul meant deacons’ wives, he could easily have added the plural possessive pronoun “their.” This would read, “Likewise, their wives must be . . .”
- The noun “deacon” is an interesting Greek noun. It’s form is identical whether the noun is masculine or feminine (grammar lesson—in most languages of PIE descent, nouns have gender; e.g., in 3:8, the noun “wine” is masculine). The noun “deacon” actually can be either masculine or feminine, and the spelling would not be any different. Interestingly, it does show up as a feminine noun when it is used of Phoebe (Rom 16:1–2, see below) and its form is identical to the masculine noun. So, if Paul were giving qualifications for the female deacons, using the feminine plural form of “deacon” would be indistinguishable in form or spelling from the word used of the office in 3:8 and of the men in particular in 3:12.
- The NT recognizes a deaconess in an official capacity in Phoebe, in Rom 16:1–2. It is difficult to view this term as simply someone who serves, when the chapter is full of greetings towards people who serve. Additionally, she is not only given the term “deaconess,” but the term sounds like an official title since it is modified by the phrase “of the church which is in Cenchrea.”
- The return back to deacons in 3:12 is not as abrupt as it may appear when you consider that the qualifications of 3:12 are *entirely* male headship qualifications—women cannot be one-woman men, nor can they be evaluated with regard to their oversight of their own homes. In other words
- The repetition of “likewise” (3:11) seems to carry the same function as the previous “likewise” (3:7). (Although, I have a friend who
- In light of the *servicing* function of a deacon (the term refers to table attendants, and we see this use on the NT, John 2:5), it seems strange, to say the least, for Paul to require the

character of the wife to qualify *deacons* but not *elders*. Since the office of elder is specifically giving oversight over the church, it would seem that the character of elders' wives would better reflect their leadership ability. Undoubtedly, both offices require character in this area (cp. 3:4–5 with v. 12), but the point here is that there does not seem to be a contextual explanation for taking the word “women” as deacons' wives here.

I have held to View 2 with some confidence for years. The elders here have held to View 1, with perhaps only one exception, for quite some time. Nevertheless, both I and they knew this when they offered me a pastoral position, and when I accepted it. I understand that both views have difficulties to grapple with. This exercise is hopeful helpful from a hermeneutical standpoint. Good and godly interpreters of the Bible sometimes do come to different conclusions. In this case the application of the passage does not make a huge difference in church practice. I can't imagine anyone who takes verse 11 as deacons' wives having a problem with sending a godly and qualified woman to a widows house to deliver a check from the benevolence fund for her rent and some groceries in her need. The only difference might be whether that caliber of women in the church were given the title “deaconess” or not. What is helpful in this exercise is consider that different criteria have different levels of significance in the minds of different interpreters. What is the interpretive hinge, or the more authoritative detail for coming to different conclusions? It must be *in the text*. I would not want to land on a view simply because of a hypothetical—*what could have been said but was not*. For this reason, I do not find the argument for View 2 about the lack of “their” as compelling as others, nor do I find the argument for View 1 that Paul could have used the plural form “deacon” with the feminine article very compelling—in fact, this argument, when it is used, fails to consider that the definite use of the noun would change the sense of the *qualitative* use of the noun in 3:8 and 12 to *definite* in 3:11.

I do find the argument that recognizes “likewise” as consistently being used. However, even to this observation, those who hold to View 1 would say that Paul should have used “likewise” for deacons in 3:8, and something else in 11 and 12 if he were going to specify female and male qualifications, respectively. However, this rebuttal does not hold much weight with me, because it goes back to speculating on what is *not* there to pay less attention to what *is* there.

MONDAY
Deacon Qualification Assessment:
‘A Man of Dignity’, 1 Tim 3:8

*“These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”
1 Timothy 3:10*

Lord, I desire Your work in my life in such a way that I will be proven faithful and above reproach as I help advance the gospel in my church.

So that my church might increasingly glorify You in its mission, grant me courage and humility to position my life and ministry so that my elders may better know me, my character, and my giftedness.

Help my elders to be full of Your grace, truth and wisdom as they measure Your work in my life so they might best determine the ministry You desire me to serve in this body.

Today, heavenly Father, work in my life to increasingly make me into **man of dignity**. As a **man of dignity**, this means that I possess a serious bearing in life because of a serious mind and character. . . Help this serious bearing to increase inwardly in my thought life so that it may greatly influence my outward character as well. . . Make me Spirit-filled in this dignity that You want me to possess so that it might be appealing and winsome to others, because then they might be drawn into greater service for You. God, remove from me any silliness or flippant attitudes that do not make You more visible in Me as the weighty God that You are. May no one ever be tempted to think lightly of You, my God, because I portray myself as shallow or because I make light of serious matters. Lord, please keep me from a kind of dignity that is empty of joy, laughter or that has a coldness of heart or mind. Today, shape my thoughts, conversations, attitudes and overall character toward a more honorable, dignified, serious bearing.

“For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

By Your grace and power, enable me to serve You and Your people well. If any high standing may come my way because You are making me into **‘a man of dignity’** in my service, may You be praised by all and above all. And please increase my confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ so that I may be emboldened in my gospel service.

σεμνός “pertains to evoking special respect”¹ and means “*revered, august, holy*.”² Similarly, the noun σεμνότης means “a manner or mode of behavior that indicates one is above what is ordinary and

¹ BDAG, 919.

² LSJ.

therefore worthy of special respect.”³ Both come from $\sigma\acute{\epsilon}\beta\omega$, which can mean “worship” or “show respect for.”⁴ In Greek literature, this word can be used in negative contexts, for *proud*, *haughty*, *solemn*, *pompous*.⁵ Clearly, however, this is not a negative context at all. Here, the solemnity is that which does not reflect arrogance, but a solemnity is befitting of the role/office.

[ILL] Why do we not want a pilot who gets on the loudspeaker and hones his stand-up comedy routine? Why was I concerned when the anesthesiologist who showed up at 2am to give my wife an epidural looked like an unkempt bum whose appearance tempted me to imagine that he rolled off of his pile of padding deep in the dank back room of his hoarder-apartment. Positions of responsibility must be filled by those who are dignified. It’s not that a good pilot cannot have a tremendous skill with an airplane, not is it that the world’s best anesthesiologist cannot have bad hygiene. However, it is true that you cannot be characterized by dignity and be qualified as a deacon in the church. Similarly, there is nothing in this text which rules out the ability to have fun, engage people at their own level of maturity, age, or development. But the question really is this—*Is this man’s life dignified and respectable?*

Ask yourself, with regard to obedience and the mission of the church:

1. Do the words that come out of my mouth make it natural or difficult for my wife, children, and fellow Christians to respect me?
2. Does the way I spend my time make it natural or difficult for others to respect me?
3. Does the way I handle my money make it natural or difficult for others to respect me?
4. Am I more known for taking on responsibility or coasting through a biblically-comfortable existence avoiding responsibility as much as possible?
5. Do I take the meeting of needs in the body seriously?
6. Does the habit of my life reflect holiness and distinction from the world, or am I very conversant and familiar with the entertainment and drivel of the world?

Deacons *can* have a sense of humor, but they *cannot* be characterized as comedians.

Deacons *must* take the needs of others seriously, but they *cannot* take themselves seriously.

Deacons *must* take seriously the things that God takes seriously. Deacons *can* be flippant or indifferent about the things that do not affect the mission of the church or the true needs of those in the body.

³ Ibid.

⁴ BDAG, 917.

⁵ LSJ.

TUESDAY
Deacon Qualification Assessment:
‘Not Double-Tongued’, 1 Tim 3:8

*“These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”
1 Timothy 3:10*

Lord, I desire Your work in my life in such a way that I will be proven faithful and above reproach as I help advance the gospel in my church.

So that my church might increasingly glorify You in its mission, grant me courage and humility to position my life and ministry so that my elders may better know me, my character, and my giftedness.

Help my elders to be full of Your grace, truth and wisdom as they measure Your work in my life so they might best determine the ministry You desire me to serve in this body.

Today, heavenly Father, work in my life so that I might not be **‘double-tongued’**. **‘Not being double-tongued’** means that I do not have ‘two tongues’. To be this kind of man God, I need to be intimately aware of Your presence in every conversation. Please, enable me to remember You are my primary audience and hearer of every word I say to anyone else. For then and only then will my speech have integrity and will I become more trustworthy. Heavenly Father, if upon examination of my conversations today discrepancies arise because I made different representations to different people, I will confess those to You and seek Your and others’ forgiveness as is needed. Again, God help my representations of events to remain the same even though my human audience changes. Since I am in a position where I have leadership over me and servants under me, help me to not speak one thing in one way to one group and something different to the other.

“For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

By Your grace and power, enable me to serve You and Your people well. If any high standing may come my way because You are increasingly helping me to **‘not be double-tongued’** in my service, may You be praised by all and above all. And please increase my confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ so that I may be emboldened in my gospel service.

The Greeks had a word that would be the literal compound of “double” and “tongue,” which meant “bilingual.” That is not the word Paul uses here. For us, double-tongue means what this Greek term “double talk” means—it is insincere.⁶ Someone who is speaks twice is someone who will

⁶ Michael Holmes translated Polycarp’s use of this term as “insincere.” *Polycarp to the Philippians*, 5:2, “Similarly, deacons must be blameless in the presence of his righteousness, as servants of God and Christ and not of people. They must not be slanderers, not insincere, not lovers of money, but self-controlled in every respect, compassionate, diligent, acting in accordance with the truth of the Lord, who became a servant of all. If we please him in this present world, we

say what needs to be said for sinful motives depending on the situation. In other words, they are not in the habit of speaking truth by principle, but their speech will adapt to their governing desire.

The deacon cannot be a man who uses double-talk. Such a phenomenon is typical of liars and deceivers, hypocrites and flatters. Double-talk speaks differently at times because the stakes change, the cost of speaking the unadorned or unadulterated truth might increase, and the target of pleasing the audience might warrant a different version.

Of course, none of us could ever be close to being accused of being double-talkers, could we? Well, what if I asked your wife whether you resorted to exaggeration when the recounting of the previous argument painted yourself in greater perspective than your words and motives really earned? What about flattering self, or words that intend to prove that your wife was incorrect, or that her reaction was unwarranted?

When someone does the same thing as someone else, but he describes his own performance in different terms than that of the other person, this is a form of double-speech. When someone gives conflicting messages, contradictory interpretations, or deliberately vague answers, they are double-tongued. They are double-talkers and are disqualified from being deacons. Worse yet, if they have phenomenal clarity about the sins of others, but they are unclear about their own, they may not be believers!

Ask yourself:

1. Does my wife affirm that I am a man of integrity?
2. Does my speech ever waffle or do I resort to vagaries?
3. Do I swear even to my own hurt and refuse to change when I have spoken? (Ps 15:4)

will receive the world to come as well, inasmuch as he promised that he will raise us from the dead and that if we prove to be citizens worthy of him, we will also reign with him—if, that is, we continue to believe.”

WEDNESDAY
Deacon Qualification Assessment:
‘Not Addicted to Wine’, 1 Tim 3:8

*“These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”
1 Timothy 3:10*

Lord, I desire Your work in my life in such a way that I will be proven faithful and above reproach as I help advance the gospel in my church.

So that my church might increasingly glorify You in its mission, grant me courage and humility to position my life and ministry so that my elders may better know me, my character, and my giftedness.

Help my elders to be full of Your grace, truth and wisdom as they measure Your work in my life so they might best determine the ministry You desire me to serve in this body.

Today, heavenly Father, work in my life so that I might **‘not be addicted to wine’**. **‘Not being addicted to wine’**, means that my thoughts and habits must not repeatedly turn to alcohol or anything in a sinful way that adversely affects my thought life and judgment. Lord, enable me to see if I in any way have become preoccupied with any drink, food or medicine in such a way that diminishes Your greatness and glory in my life. My desire is for my thought life and my behavior to always reveal to all that You are my greatest pleasure and treasure. Grant me the wisdom and strength to use all drink, medicine, and food in such a way so that they reveal You to be the all-satisfying treasure that You are!

“For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

By Your grace and power, enable me to serve You and Your people well. If any high standing may come my way because You are increasingly helping me to **‘not be addicted to wine’** in my service, may You be praised by all and above all. And please increase my confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ so that I may be emboldened in my gospel service.

Addiction is pandemic in our culture. We have addictions galore. “The DSM-5 specifically lists nine types of substance addictions within this category (alcohol; caffeine; cannabis; hallucinogens; inhalants; opioids; sedatives, hypnotics, and anxiolytics; stimulants; and tobacco).”⁷ The interesting common denominator here is that these all affect your cognitive sensitivity. They influence the mind. The verb translated “addicted” here means “to be in a state of alert, *be concerned about, care for, take care*” or “to continue in close attention to someth[ing], *occupy oneself with, devote or apply oneself to.*”⁸

⁷ From <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5328289/>, accessed March 12, 2021.

⁸ BDAG, 879; semantic domains 1 and 3.

We may expand the use of addiction to include such things that occupy our lives, such as pornography, football, fine dining, cars, golf, investing, etc. But this devotion has to do with a devotion to something that generates a reliance. It is interesting to talk with someone who is addicted to alcohol. Some blame it on their genetics. They vainly imagine that because a parent and/or grandparent was an alcoholic, that this disease was passed onto them by birth. They do not understand that behind the regular use of alcohol, or being devoted to its use, is the idol of escapism and sensuality. People want to feel a certain way. They may enjoy the way that they feel when they get a slight buzz, all the while feeling smug and self-righteous for not getting drunk. They may enjoy the freedom from what they are burdened by in their sober moments: guilt, bitterness, hatred about a relationship that they can't stand, memories that are painful, or simple discontentment with reality. When humans are not content with God's reality, they will gladly do what they can to create their own reality. Alcohol and other substances help them to forget that their imagination isn't real. Thus the strength of alcoholism is not a genetic propensity towards something, but a sinful animosity toward the God who determines reality for His own glory.

Ask yourself:

1. Am I discontent with reality?
2. Am I drawn toward alcohol? If so, why?
3. Would my family members have any reason to question whether I have complete self-control over my use of food and drink?
4. Do I habitually flee from every influence which would hinder the influence of the Holy Spirit? (Eph 5:18)
5. Have I considered biblical wisdom when it comes to drinking?

Proverbs 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler,
And whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.

Proverbs 21:17 He who loves pleasure *will become* a poor man;
He who loves wine and oil will not become rich.

Proverbs 23:20 Do not be with heavy drinkers of wine,
Or with gluttonous eaters of meat;

Proverbs 23:30 Those who linger long over wine,
Those who go to taste mixed wine.

³¹ Do not look on the wine when it is red,
When it sparkles in the cup,
When it goes down smoothly;

Proverbs 31:4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel,
It is not for kings to drink wine,
Or for rulers to desire strong drink,

Proverbs 31:6 Give strong drink to him who is perishing,
And wine to him whose life is bitter.

THURSDAY
Deacon Qualification Assessment:
‘Not Fond of Sordid Gain’, 1 Tim 3:8

*“These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”
1 Timothy 3:10*

Lord, I desire Your work in my life in such a way that I will be proven faithful and above reproach as I help advance the gospel in my church.

So that my church might increasingly glorify You in its mission, grant me courage and humility to position my life and ministry so that my elders may better know me, my character, and my giftedness.

Help my elders to be full of Your grace, truth and wisdom as they measure Your work in my life so they might best determine the ministry You desire me to serve in this body.

Today, heavenly Father, work in my life so that I might **‘not be fond of sordid gain’**. **‘Not being fond of sordid gain’**, means that I do not love gaining wealth in such a way that causes my character to be questioned. Lord, help me to never approach my service in Your church in such a way that might tempt me to use my position as an opportunity to personally profit financially. Help me to take a serious look at my overall use of money. Open my eyes to see what You see about my financial habits in the ‘little things’. Help me to be faithful in the little things so that I can increasingly become more trustworthy as a steward of all that You have given me. Help me to look at all Your resources in ministry (people, things, money) in such a way that will help me be a good steward of them in the ministry for Your sake and honor.

“For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

By Your grace and power, enable me to serve You and Your people well. If any high standing may come my way because You are increasingly helping me to **‘not be fond of sordid gain’** in my service, may You be praised by all and above all. And please increase my confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ so that I may be emboldened in my gospel service.

“Sordid” comes from a word that means “shameful.” Shameful gain is something that would bring shame on the last day, standing in judgment before the Lord. This could be gambling, risking financial resources that were entrusted to you by the Lord on the possibility of gaining more money by means of games of skill or chance, that require others to lose money for you to gain. It could be from dishonest business: lying about your services or product, covering up what is really happening on the balance sheets, stealing from others, unpaying your employees, etc. There are *many* ways to increase wealth that are legal, but would still be shameful on the last day.

Just because it is not illegal to highlight your competitors strength, are you honestly more interested in what is best for your potential customer?

Ask yourself:

1.

FRIDAY
Deacon Qualification Assessment:
**‘Holding to the Mystery of the Faith with a Clear Conscience’,
1 Tim 3:9**

*“These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”
1 Timothy 3:10*

Lord, I desire Your work in my life in such a way that I will be proven faithful and above reproach as I help advance the gospel in my church.

So that my church might increasingly glorify You in its mission, grant me courage and humility to position my life and ministry so that my elders may better know me, my character, and my giftedness.

Help my elders to be full of Your grace, truth and wisdom as they measure Your work in my life so they might best determine the ministry You desire me to serve in this body.

Today, heavenly Father, work in my life so that I might **‘hold to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience’**.

‘Holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience’, means that first and foremost have a strong allegiance and obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ personally. Today Lord, increase my grasp of and on the gospel. As my life more consistently becomes aligned with the gospel of Jesus Christ, Your gift to me – my conscience – will not condemn me, but rather will affirm that I indeed am living by Your word and will. Lord, may my desire for Your word become like Jesus’ desire (who said that He did not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds from Your mouth). Purify my motive and reason for coming to Your word. May Your word for me increasingly become for me the primary means to knowing and loving You, the most glorious and all-satisfying end of all.

“For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

By Your grace and power, enable me to serve You and Your people well. If any high standing may come my way because You are increasingly helping me to **‘hold to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience’** in my service, may You be praised by all and above all. And please increase my confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ so that I may be emboldened in my gospel service.

Mystery is a technical term in Paul’s letters for previously unrevealed truth. “The faith” is definite, and as such should be taken to refer to the body of sound doctrine which the Christian receives by faith. I take “the mystery of the faith” to be the previously unrevealed truths that compose sound doctrine, the whole counsel of God which He has revealed for the spiritual blessing of His children. The deacon must hold to apostolic teaching with a clean/clear/pure conscience. Catharsis is a Greek loan-word means cleansing, and this is the adj. of that word—καθαρός (e.g.,

καθαριζω, καθαρισ, καθαρος). What that means is that the deacon must be characterized by holding to the body of sound doctrine with a conscience that is free and clear of any indictment. There is nothing in the apostolic doctrine that he cannot swear by with a clean conscience. The man who wavers on his doctrinal commitments cannot be a deacon. The man who assents to hold a view for ulterior motives is disqualified as well (e.g., to sign a doctrinal statement, earn a paycheck as a professor, retain credibility with his “scientific” colleagues).

If a man had violated his conscience with doctrinal compromise, the cleanliness of the conscience does not come from never violating it, but rather having it *cleansed* by the blood of Christ. When someone has a cleansed conscience, this does not speak to the fact that the conscience has never been violated, but instead that the former violations have been *cleansed* and subsequently maintained. Paul was able to say “Brethren, I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day” (Acts 23:1).

Ask yourself:

- Am I *convinced* of what I read in Scripture? Do I question the truth of what I read? [*distinguish this from reading critically for the sake of meaning—“Is this what you meant by what you said?”*]
- Do my doctrinal commitments waver? [If you are so young in the faith that your doctrinal commitments don’t deserve the description of a “commitment,” then you probably are not qualified to be a deacon.]
- Does your conscience tell you that there is any area of your life that you are not maintaining with consistency to the faith you profess? For example, one application of this qualification would be the fruit of conviction about God’s sovereignty and goodness. If you believe Rom 8:28, then complaining is blasphemy. The man who is characterized by grumbling/complaining against God’s providence is not qualified. A leader in the church might well have fallen into complaining but he cannot be properly characterized by it. Otherwise, he would not be holding to the mystery of the faith with a cleanse conscience.

SATURDAY
Deacon Qualification Assessment:
‘A Husband of One Wife’, 1 Tim 3:12

*“These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”
1 Timothy 3:10*

Lord, I desire Your work in my life in such a way that I will be proven faithful and above reproach as I help advance the gospel in my church.

So that my church might increasingly glorify You in its mission, grant me courage and humility to position my life and ministry so that my elders may better know me, my character, and my giftedness.

Help my elders to be full of Your grace, truth and wisdom as they measure Your work in my life so they might best determine the ministry You desire me to serve in this body.

Today, heavenly Father, work in my life to increasingly make me into a **‘husband of one wife.’**

As a **‘husband of one wife’**, this means that I am completely satisfied to love only one woman in this life – my wife. Restrain my romantic, sexual, and emotional thoughts and desires to be exclusively for my wife. Grant me wisdom daily to shepherd my wife into a serious bearing in life. As we serve You and Your people it will be important for her to be able to control her words. Please keep malicious gossip far from her.

Position me so that I can protect her from such a sin. Make her into a woman who is increasingly becoming clear-headed (temperate). I will need such a helper with me in ministry like that. Help me to shepherd her into faithfulness in everything she undertakes in our home and in her ministry. May she be a trustworthy servant in Your eyes.

“For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

By Your grace and power, enable me to serve You and Your people well. If any high standing may come my way because You are making me into **‘a husband of one wife’** in my service, may You be praised by all and above all. And please increase my confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ so that I may be emboldened in my gospel service.

A one-woman man does not disqualify a single man. Interestingly, the converse qualification “one-man woman” describes those who are true *widows* (1 Tim 5:9). This means that you are devoted *only* to one, your wife. Whether you have one or not is not the issue, but the exclusivity is.

Ask yourself:

1. Do you have eyes for your wife only?
2. Do you flee from youthful lusts? (media such as books, websites, movies, songs, or items for purchase that fuel or incite lust; locations; topics of conversation)

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3. Do you confess sexual temptations to your wife? In counseling, if a marriage is struggling (communication, intimacy, conflict resolution, etc.) and confession is absent, then I'm going to press every time. If a man marries in the first place, he either has hormones to begin with or he was arranged in marriage by his parents!
4. Would selflessness characterize your marriage, both in preferences, acts of service and sacrifice, communication, intimacy, and leadership decisions?

SUNDAY
Deacon Qualification Assessment:
‘Good Manager of My Children and Household’, 1 Tim 3:12

*“These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.”
1 Timothy 3:10*

Lord, I desire Your work in my life in such a way that I will be proven faithful and above reproach as I help advance the gospel in my church.

So that my church might increasingly glorify You in its mission, grant me courage and humility to position my life and ministry so that my elders may better know me, my character, and my giftedness.

Help my elders to be full of Your grace, truth and wisdom as they measure Your work in my life so they might best determine the ministry You desire me to serve in this body.

Today, heavenly Father, work in my life to increasingly make me into a **‘good manager of my children and household’**.

As a **‘good manager of my children and household’**, this means that I am providing direct and ongoing oversight of my children and the events of my family. Shape me in such a way that I am eager to stand before and among my children graciously as the head of my household. Help me to see where I may be disconnected from the guidance our children need spiritually, emotionally, etc. Help me to see where my wife may be burdened by my absence. Give me courage to change my work schedule or free time so that my leadership over my family is all that it should be for Your sake and their sake.

“For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 3:13

By Your grace and power, enable me to serve You and Your people well. If any high standing may come my way because You are making me into **‘a good manager of my children and household’** in my service, may You be praised by all and above all. And please increase my confidence in the gospel of Jesus Christ so that I may be emboldened in my gospel service.

- Headship, created order, leadership, sacrifice, love, and spiritual responsibility are created aspects of masculinity
- The state of your home is a reflection of your leadership. Members in your home are culpable for their own sin, and bear their own guilt, but the husbands bear *responsibility* for the state of the home.
- The word “manager” is not an inaccurate translation, but the English word should not evoke the meaning of another word for “manager,” namely, οἰκονόμος. This word has the connotation of manager in the sense of a steward who manages someone else’s estate. Our

word is a compound that would have the etymology of something more like “standing at the front,” or “to stand before,” which is why the word is defined as “*rule, direct, be at the head (of).*”⁹

Ask yourself:

- Do you *rule, direct, or oversee* your home well?
- Do you find yourself imagining that communication, spiritual fellowship, or spiritual conversations are not what they are because of the people God has given you in your family? Do you blame your spouse? Your children? (Remember, some of you may have unbelieving wives, but God has only given any of us unbelieving children. Make sure that the word of righteousness never departs from your mouth.)
- Are you leading your wife, equipping your wife, to succeed as a wife, mom, homemaker? That is not the responsibility of the women who serve in Wellspring. Its yours!
- Do you know how to equip your wife? Are you succeeding in 1 Pet 3:7 so that your wife can trust your leadership?
 - [ILL] practical problem with homeschooling . . . I gave an answer an it was received like a cold fish sandwich—“Uhhh. I guess I could do something with that . . . if I didn’t care about how it would taste going down.” The next day: “I talked to so-and-so who has been homeschooling for over a decade, and they said _____” [which was exactly what I had just said]. *This proved that I had not, in that early season of our parenting, established enough of a habit of listening to my wife, and understanding her, that she trusted that I understood her situation well enough to give such quick, impromptu answers or directives.*

⁹ BDAG, 870.