

LESSON 4

THE TRAINING GROUND FOR CHURCH LEADERS

1 TIMOTHY 3:1–16



1 Some people learn their working skills on the job; others learn their skills at school. Where did you receive the training you needed for your current job or role?

2 Describe one of the best learning experiences that you can remember. What made it so effective for you?



Read 1 Timothy 3:1–16 and the following notes:

☐ 3:1 ☐ 3:1–13 ☐ 3:2 ☐ 3:4, 5 ☐ 3:8–13

3 What is the difference between an elder and a deacon? How do these positions correspond to categories of responsibility in your church?

4 What does it mean to be able to manage your children and household well?

The family is a training class and proving ground for leaders in the church. We can determine much about an individual's fitness to lead in church by finding out how he or she behaves at home. How we behave at home tells others much about our character and conduct. Our spouse, children, and relatives can provide feedback and encouragement to improve our character and conduct. Home is a proving ground because we must demonstrate the skills for leading the church by effectively leading our own families. Because the church is God's family, those who set their hearts on leadership should start at home. Those who are heavily involved in the church should never neglect their family responsibilities.



5 What are the qualifications for becoming a leader in your church? How are new leaders selected? How are they trained?

6 What might be the consequences for a congregation that elects leaders who have not managed their own families well?

7 Why is wanting to become an elder considered an "honorable" desire (3:1)? When would it be wrong to set your heart on becoming a leader in your church?



8 Explain what each of the following qualifications means today:

Cannot be spoken against: _____

Faithful to his wife: _____

Exhibits self-control: _____

Lives wisely: _____

Has a good reputation: _____

Enjoys having guests in his home: _____

Able to teach: _____

Not a heavy drinker: _____

Not violent but gentle: _____

Peace loving: _____

Not one who loves money: _____

Manages his own family well: _____

His children respect and obey him: _____

Not a new Christian: _____

People outside the church must speak well of him: _____

9 Which of these qualifications might be a problem for you?

10 Though all believers should strive to meet these qualifications, why is it especially important that the leaders meet them?

11 What are some of the most important aspects of managing one's family well?

12 How has your home life shaped your character?

13 What can those who are single or who have no family do to prepare themselves for leadership in the church?

14 In what ways are you a leader at church right now? How would you like to lead in ten or twenty years?

15 What flaws in your character or conduct have been exposed in your home and need attention? How can your marriage and family life most help and strengthen you to lead in the church?

16 Review the way you act at home. How are you falling short of the standards presented in this chapter? What lessons do you need to learn that you have been putting off or resisting?



A How does the ability to manage one's household relate to being a leader at church? How does managing a home differ from managing at work?

B What does it mean that deacons should first be tested? How does your church test those who aspire to leadership?

C Why was it important to teach people how to conduct themselves in God's household? What are some of the mistakes in conduct that we could easily make today?

D What is the "great mystery of our faith" (3:16)?

E How does the hymn in 3:16 refute the heresy that was affecting the believers in Ephesus? Which of these statements about Christ does your church need to emphasize?

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