

BEDFORD STREET CHURCH OF CHRIST

Family Emphasis Month



“Church Leaders Are To
Parent The Church”

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“A parent is an individual who has offspring, typically a biological or adoptive mother or father. They are responsible for the **care, protection, and nurturing** of their child or children, providing them with **love, guidance, support, and basic needs** such as food, shelter, and education. Additionally, being a parent involves taking on the **responsibility** of providing **physical, emotional, and psychological support**, as well as being a **role model** and **instilling values and morals** in their children.”

“The church of Christ is in a state of perfection but sometimes those who represent the church do it in an imperfect (immature) manner.”

Note: 2 Timothy 2:19





Church Organization

Elders

(Presbuteros Episkopos Poimen)

Presbyter Overseer Shepherd

Older man Bishop Pastor

Deacons

Ministers(evangelists)?

- Do you desire to be an elder, deacon, evangelist or a Christian leader?
- If so, we need to be *good (agathos)*.
- We need to preach Jesus and live according to his Word. For our charge is a serious one: we must guide people through life into the kingdom of God.
- Can we see ourselves as a spiritual parent who lovingly and firmly guides others along the Way of Christ?

Paul the Parental Pastor

- Surveying Paul's pastoral emphases, aspects of God's nature, and the elder qualifications of 1 Timothy 3.
- Paul called Timothy his child numerous times in the New Testament (1 Tim 1:2; 1:18; 2 Tim 1:2; 2:1; 1 Cor 4:17). Their relationship was one of mentor and disciple, of father and son.
- Note: Deuteronomy 6

Paul the Parental Pastor

- Timothy seems to have held Paul as a father too, as the apostle himself indicates: “But you know Timothy’s proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel” (Phil 2:22).
- Yet Paul not only pastors his disciples as a father figure. He also pastors as a mother. Of the Thessalonians, Paul says, “But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children” (1 Thess 2:7).

Leaders Qualifications Show Us How to Spiritually Parent

- The elder qualifications of 1 Timothy 3 as well as other leaders qualifications do not compromise some mysterious attributes of superhumans.
- They simply verify whether or not a Christian lives his life according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the nature of God.
- And yes: whether or not a person can effectively teach and preach as well as manage God's church.

Qualifications for Elders

- The qualifications for elders are primarily found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Key qualifications include:
- **1. Blameless:** An elder must be above reproach, meaning they should not have any serious accusations against them that could bring disrepute to the church.
- **2. Husband of one wife:** This indicates that an elder should be a faithful husband, emphasizing marital fidelity.

Qualifications for Elders

- 3. **Temperate and self-controlled:** Elders should exhibit moderation and control over their actions and emotions.
- 4. **Respectable:** They should be well-regarded by others, demonstrating good character and integrity.
- 5. **Able to teach:** Elders must be knowledgeable in Scripture and capable of teaching others.
- 6. **Not given to drunkenness:** They should avoid excessive drinking and maintain sobriety.

Qualifications for Elders

- 7. **Not violent but gentle:** Elders should be peaceful and not prone to anger or violence.
- 8. **Manage their own family well:** They should demonstrate leadership and care within their own households, as this reflects their ability to lead the church.

Qualifications for Deacons

- The qualifications for deacons are outlined in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. Important qualifications include:
- 1. **Reverent:** Deacons must have a serious demeanor and respect for God and His Word.
- 2. **Not double-tongued:** They should be honest and consistent in their speech, avoiding gossip and deceit.
- 3. **Not given to much wine:** Similar to elders, deacons should not indulge in excessive drinking.
- 4. **Not greedy for money:** Deacons should not be motivated by financial gain or materialism.

Qualifications for Deacons

- **5. Hold the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience:** They should be knowledgeable about the faith and live according to its principles.
- **6. Tested and found blameless:** Deacons should be mature Christians who have demonstrated their faithfulness and integrity before being appointed.
- **7. Husband of one wife:** Like elders, deacons should be faithful in their marriages.

Responsibilities

- **Elders** are primarily responsible for the spiritual oversight of the church, including teaching, guiding, and protecting the congregation.
- **Deacons** serve in various capacities to assist the elders, often handling practical matters and serving the needs of the church community.
These qualifications ensure that both elders and deacons are equipped to lead and serve effectively within the Church of Christ, maintaining the integrity and mission of the church.

Ten essential questions for church leaders

- Do I consistently follow through on what I say I'll do, even in the small things? Reliability in small matters lays the groundwork for credibility in larger ones.
- Do others see me as competent and prepared for my ministry responsibilities? Spiritual passion must be matched with skillful stewardship.
- Am I steady and dependable, even under pressure or in conflict? Consistency builds confidence; volatility erodes it.

Ten essential questions for church leaders

- Do I genuinely care for the people I lead, not just the ministry tasks they perform? People trust shepherds who love them as individuals, not just as volunteers.
- When trust is broken, am I quick to own my part and make it right? Humility and repentance are powerful trust-rebuilders.
- Do I communicate openly and clearly, or do I leave people guessing? Clear communication prevents confusion, suspicion, and division.

Ten essential questions for church leaders

- Am I someone who listens actively and values the perspectives of others? Listening signals respect and makes people feel heard.
- When conflict arises, do I handle it directly and respectfully, or do I avoid it? Avoidance leaves wounds festering; honest resolution fosters healing.
- Do I give credit where it's due and celebrate others' contributions? Gratitude strengthens loyalty and morale.
- Do I create a safe environment where people can speak openly and take risks? Emotional safety encourages creativity, honest feedback, and vulnerability.

Matthew 23:9-11KJV

”And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”

- **And do not call anyone on earth your father:** This phrase emphasizes the spiritual authority and reverence that should be reserved for God alone.
- In the cultural context of Jesus' time, religious leaders often sought titles that elevated their status, such as "father" or "rabbi."
- The term "**father**" here is not a prohibition against using the term in familial or respectful contexts, but rather a caution against attributing spiritual authority and reverence that belongs to God.

Matthew 23:9-11KJV

”And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”

- It reflects the intimate relationship between God and His people, a theme prevalent throughout Scripture.
 - In the Old Testament, God is often referred to as the Father of Israel ([Deuteronomy 32:6](#), [Isaiah 63:16](#)), highlighting His role as creator, protector, and provider.
 - In the New Testament, this relationship is deepened through the teachings of Jesus, who frequently refers to God as "Father," emphasizing a personal and relational aspect ([Matthew 6:9](#), [John 20:17](#)).
- This phrase calls believers to recognize and honor God as the ultimate source of life and authority.

Matthew 23:9-11KJV

”And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.”

- **who is in heaven:** This phrase locates the Father in heaven, distinguishing Him from earthly figures and emphasizing His divine nature and authority.
- The Lord's Prayer, where Jesus teaches His disciples to address God as "Our Father in heaven" (Matthew 6:9), reinforcing the idea of God's supreme authority and the believer's relationship with Him.
- Note: 1 Cor. 11:1 “Follow me as I follow Christ.”