

IN NEXT LEVEL

Healthy Elders & Deacons
Jim Dalrymple



YOUR MISSION IS OUT THERE.
Training starts here.

**Biblical Foundation
Christian Community
Global Service
Affordable Cost
Residential & Online**

OZARK
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE
OCC.EDU

EARN YOUR
MINISTRY
DEGREE
ONLINE



OCC.EDU/ONLINE

Healthy Elders & Deacons

Session 1: Defining Terms

Jim Dalrymple | Ozark Christian College



Read: 1 Timothy 3:1-15; 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-7; 1 Peter 5:1-5; Philippians 1:1; Acts 20:17-28

1. Leadership in the Church is Jesus-Shaped and Jesus-Centered.
2. The master metaphor for the church in 1 Timothy is the household.
3. Responsibilities not titles or offices
 - Elders
Overseers
Shepherds
 - Deacons
Ministers
Servants

Notice: We often transliterate the word deacon (from *diakonos*) in places such as and 1 Timothy 3 rather than translating it to a meaning such as servant or minister. Can this translation decision lead to inherent confusion with how the average person understands the role?



Discussion Questions:

What terminology do you use in your church? What are the implications?

What model does your current church leadership structure reflect?

- American Political Model
- Corporate Boardroom Model
- Social Club Model
- Household Model

What are some current concerns you have about how elders and deacons function in your church? What aspects are healthy?

Healthy Elders & Deacons

Session 2: Character Qualities of Elders

Jim Dalrymple | Ozark Christian College

1. Christian leaders lead first in their character.

2. The Bible focuses more upon their character than it does their specific tasks.

- 1 Timothy 3:1–7
- Titus 1:5–9
- 1 Peter 5:1–4

3. Checklist or Portrait? Functionality of “Above Reproach”

4. Christ-Like Traits of a Mature Elder/Overseer

- Maturity as a disciple (not a recent convert)
- Teaching and protecting the gospel
- Evidence of Christ’s control in their lives
 - a) Evidence of Christ-likeness and discipleship in the home
 - b) Christ-like interactions with others
 - c) Self-control (Spirit-controlled)
 - d) Motivations for leadership
- Reputation with outsiders



Discussion Questions:

Do you think it is best to view 1 Timothy and Titus 1 as a checklist or a portrait of one who is above reproach?

How can you better emphasize the importance of Christ-like character in your elders?

Are you willing to practice church discipline when an elder is no longer above reproach?

Healthy Elders & Deacons

Session 3: Character Qualities of Deacons

Jim Dalrymple • Ozark Christian College

1. Christian leaders lead first in their character.
2. The Bible focuses more upon their character than it does their specific tasks.
 - Acts 6:1-7
 - 1 Timothy 3:8–13
3. **Christ-Like Traits of a Deacon (Servant/Minister/Ministry Team Leader)**
 - Authentic disciple of Jesus
 - Evidence of Christ's control in their lives
 - a) Evidence of Christ-likeness and discipleship in the home
 - b) Christ-like interaction with others
 - c) Self-control (Spirit-Control)
 - d) Their motivations for leadership (all three warn against greed)
4. **1 Timothy 3:11**
 - Wives of deacons
 - Deaconesses
5. **Ephesians 4:11–16**



Discussion Questions:

Why do deacons need to have these character qualities if all they are doing is serving in a non-teaching capacity?

How do we currently search and select deacons? Should we consider changing the process?

Healthy Elders & Deacons

Session 4: Responsibilities of Elders

Jim Dalrymple | Ozark Christian College

1. Elders

2. Overseers

3. Shepherds

4. Discipleship (Matthew 28:18-20)

5. Teachers (healthy doctrine)

- 1 Timothy 3:2
- 1 Timothy 5:17-18
- Titus 1:9

6. Guard the church from unhealthy teaching (false teaching)

- Titus 1:9
- Acts 20:27-31

7. Prayer for the sick

- James 5:14



Discussion Questions:

What are the primary responsibilities of our elders? Where do they spend the majority of their time and energy?

Do these primary responsibilities match up with those found in the Bible?

Healthy Elders & Deacons

Session 5: Responsibilities of Deacons

Jim Dalrymple | Ozark Christian College

1. Different (not less) responsibilities: Elders & Deacons

2. Deacons (Servants)

3. Acts 6 Paradigm



Discussion Questions:

Do you use the term deacon in your context? If not, what are the equivalent roles?

Do your deacons spend more time in meetings than in meeting needs?

What responsibilities do deacons currently have in your church? What changes should you consider?

What would it look like for your deacons to be selected and assigned responsibility for meeting specific needs within your church family? Assigned in groups?

Healthy Elders & Deacons

Session 6: Selection of Elders & Deacons

Jim Dalrymple | Ozark Christian College

1. Establish discipleship habits amongst your current leaders.
2. Define the response & responsibility.
3. Determine the person or group God has provided.
4. Test potential leaders in their character and gifting (1 Timothy 3:10).
5. Pray that God will gift & empower them for the responsibility.
6. Practice Church Discipline when the witness of the church is threatened (1 Timothy 5:19–22)



Discussion Questions:

How do you currently select and develop elders & deacons in your church?

How do our by-laws ensure or prevent us from following the biblical pattern of selecting leaders in our church?

Do we focus on the same attributes (Christ-like character) that the Bible focuses on or do we actually look to other attributes first (business savvy, connections, financial contribution, power, etc.).

How can we improve our discipleship and selection process?

Healthy Elders & Deacons

Session 7: Submission

Jim Dalrymple | Ozark Christian College

1. **Submission and humility are a Christian posture (1 Peter 5:4-7)**
2. **The church is a laboratory where we get to practice Christ-Likeness**
3. **The church is Christ's (Ezekiel 34; Jeremiah 23)**
 - **Hebrews 13:17** — *Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.*
4. **Be humble—you may not know the burden of leadership they carry.**
5. **When a leader's character is in question we are to respond without partiality or prejudgment.**
 - **1 Timothy 5:17–21** — *Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching. 18 For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer deserves his wages." 19 Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. 20 As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear. 21 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality.*
6. **We are to discipline the leader who has made a wreck of their faith or the doctrine. But all church discipline is restorative in its motivation.**



YOUR MISSION IS OUT THERE.
Training starts here.





Your investment at work!

John and Jane Doe
First Christian Church
Somewhere, USA



4.65% APY
5 Year Certificate

3.56% APY
3 Year Certificate

2.99% APY
1 Year Certificate

4.65% APY is based on a minimum investment of \$10,000 for a term of 5 years. 3.565% APY is based on a minimum investment of \$10,000 for a term of 3 years. 2.99% APY is based on a minimum investment of \$500 for a term of 1 year. The content and material contained herein are not an offer to sell or a solicitation of an offer to buy Investment Certificates of The Solomon Foundation. The offer is made solely by and through our Offering Circular, which you should read carefully before making an investment decision. The Investment Certificates are subject to certain risk factors as described in the Offering Circular. Investment Certificates are offered and sold only in states where authorized. Investment Certificates of The Solomon Foundation are not insured by the FDIC, SIPC or any other governmental agency. TSF has the right to call Certificates for redemption at any time upon sixty (60) days written notice. In such event, interest will be paid to the date of redemption.

A person is silhouetted against a bright orange sunset over a body of water. The person is standing on a small wooden pier or dock, holding a fishing rod. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a strong reflection on the water. Trees and foliage are visible in the foreground and background, framing the scene.

A SUCCESSFUL RETIREMENT - ALLOWS YOU TO - PURSUE YOUR PASSIONS NOT YOUR RECLINER



ccpension.org



For those who have devoted their lives vocationally in service to Christ, the Christian Churches Pension Plan is a reliable part of a **diversified and secure financial retirement strategy**.

CCPP's defined benefit plan was specifically developed for missionaries, church employees, ministry staff, and those serving nonprofit organizations associated with Christian Churches and Churches of Christ. Designed to supplement social security and other retirement vehicles, CCPP has been trusted by thousands of people for nearly 50 years. It is **stable, portable** (so you can take it with you even if you change jobs), **vests in just one year**, and offers the **industry's highest committed rate of return**.