

WHY CAN'T WOMEN BE PASTORS AND ELDERS?

*Part II: A New Look At "If A Man Desire The Office Of A Bishop"
And 1 Tim. 3:1-13*

by Kenneth E. Roberson, Sr.

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Part II: A New Look At "If A Man Desire The Office Of A Bishop" And 1 Tim. 3:1-13

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I. Background.

Do 1 Timothy 3:1-13 prove that women cannot be pastors or elders in the church? Those verses read¹:

“(1) This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. (2) A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; (3) Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; (4) One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (5) (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) (6) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. (7) Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (8) Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; (9) Holding the mystery of the faith in a conscience pure. (10) And let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. (11) Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. (12) Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. (13) For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

These verses are commonly interpreted as prohibiting a woman from being a pastor or elder. The position is that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 prove that women cannot be bishops and, therefore, cannot be pastors or elders. But do these verse prove that women cannot be bishops?

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¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all Scriptural references are to the KJV.

This essay will present evidence below from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women *can* be bishops. Specifically, this essay will present evidence from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that those verses are teaching that men (married or not) can be overseers if those men have certain qualifications, men (married or not) can be deacons if those men have certain qualifications, and *women (married or not) can be overseers or deacons if those women have certain qualifications.*

II. *The Central Issue And The Burden Of Proof.*

Before this essay further addresses the question of whether 1 Tim. 3:1-13 prove that women cannot be pastors or elders, a number of observations are appropriate. First, as we evaluate the evidence to determine whether 1 Tim. 3:1-13 prove that women cannot be bishops, we must keep in mind what the central issue is. The central issue is *not* whether women *can* be bishops. The central issue is whether 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* be bishops.

And the central issue impacts the burden of proof. The common maxim is, “he who asserts must prove.” Thus, churches maintaining that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* be bishops have the *burden of proof* on that issue. The burden of proof does *not* lie on someone else to show that women can be bishops.

Of course, if 1 Tim. 3:1-13 prove that women can be bishops, then it is not true that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 prove that women cannot be bishops. Thus, the more the evidence from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 tends to show that women can be bishops, the less the evidence from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 tends to show that women cannot be bishops. But if a person has the burden of proof to prove from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women cannot be bishops, it is *not* necessary, in order to *prevent* that person from meeting that burden, to *prove* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women *can* be bishops. All that is necessary is to present such credible evidence from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women *can* be bishops that, after consideration of *that* evidence, one cannot say that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* be bishops.

Moreover, for the person bearing the burden of proof to *prove* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women cannot be bishops, it is not enough simply to show that it *plausibly* can be argued from those verses that women *cannot* be bishops, if it also *plausibly* can be argued from those verses that women *can* be bishops. In that event, there are merely *two* plausible views, but no *proof* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that the view that women cannot be bishops is the *correct* view.

III. *1 Tim. 3:1, By Itself, Provides Evidence That Women Can Occupy The Office Of A Bishop (Overseer), And Does Not, By Itself, Prove That Women Cannot Occupy That Office.*

The first evidence that women can be bishops comes from 1 Tim. 3:1. At that verse, Paul writes, “. . . If a *man* desire the office of a bishop, *he* desireth a good work.” (Italics added.) This verse is commonly interpreted as teaching that a woman cannot be a “bishop” or, therefore, a pastor or elder, because this verse uses the terms “a man” and “he.” But as we will see below, the Greek words being translated here can also be translated “. . . If *anyone* desire the office of a bishop, *one* desireth a good work.”

The phrase “the office of a bishop” is a translation of the Greek word “episkopes” (Gk.: “επισκοπης”).² “Episkopes” is a form of the Greek word “episkope” (Gk.: “επισκοπε”).³ “Episkope” refers to the *position or office* of a bishop (overseer).⁴ (As we will see later, another Greek word is used to refer to the *person* of an overseer.) “Episkope” can also be translated “overseership,” as we will discuss later. A form of the word “episkope” is also found at Acts 1:20, where Luke writes, “and his bishoprick let another take.” The word “bishoprick” is a translation of a form of the Greek word “episkope.”⁵

The phrase “a man” is a translation of the Greek word “tis” (Gk.: “τις”)⁶ The Greek word “tis” is a Greek indefinite pronoun which is “the equivalent of the English ‘someone,’ ‘anyone,’ ‘something,’ ‘anything,’ ‘a certain one,’ and the like.”⁷ BAGD describes “tis” as meaning “anyone, anything; someone, something; many a one or thing.”⁸ Another reference work observes that “tis” is “frequently rendered ‘a man,’ ‘any man,[’] -- the literal in such cases is simply ‘any’ or ‘any one.’”⁹ The interlinear we have cited translates “tis” at 1 Tim. 3:1 as “any.”¹⁰ Thus, at 1 Tim. 3:1, “tis” can be translated “anyone” or “any” instead of “a man.”

² George Ricker Berry, *Interlinear Greek-English New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978), p. 542.

³ George V. Wigram and Ralph D. Winter, *The Word Study Concordance* (Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1972), p. 286.

⁴ Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and adpdt. by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, 2nd ed. revised and augmtd. by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker [“BAGD”] (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1979), p. 299.

⁵ The Greek word at Acts 1:20 is “episkopen” (Gk.: “επισκοπεν”); Berry, p. 313.

⁶ Berry, p. 542.

⁷ David Alan Black, *Learn to Read New Testament Greek* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1992), § 142, p. 155.

⁸ BAGD, p. 819.

⁹ Wigram and Winter, p. 732.

¹⁰ Berry, p. 542.

The Greek word “tis” at 1 Tim. 3:1 is singular in form,¹¹ and is the subject of a sentence. Therefore, “tis” takes a verb which is singular in form. Accordingly, the verb “desire” in the phrase “a man desire” at 1 Tim. 3:1 is a translation of a Greek verb¹² which is third person *singular* in form.¹³

But 1 Tim. 3:1 later contains the phrase “he desireth[.]” Yet, *at 1 Tim. 3:1, in the original Greek, there is no separate Greek word which means simply “he.”*¹⁴ The word “desireth” is a translation of a Greek verb¹⁵ which is also third person *singular* in form.¹⁶ *The reason is that the subject of “desireth” is “tis.”* That is, “tis” is the subject of both “desire” and “desireth” at 1 Tim. 3:1. Thus, 1 Tim. 3:1 can be translated, “. . . If anyone desire the office of a bishop, *one* desireth a good work.”

Because the KJV earlier supplied “a man” instead of “anyone” as the subject of “desire” in 1 Tim. 3:1, the KJV supplies “he” instead of “one” as the subject of “desireth” in that verse.

Once “tis” is translated “a man” in the phrase “a man desire,” it makes sense to use later the word “he.” But if “tis” is translated “anyone,” resulting in the phrase “anyone desire,” it makes sense to use later the word “one.” Therefore, 1 Tim. 3:1 can be translated “. . . If *anyone* desire the office of a bishop, *one* desireth a good work.” That is, 1 Tim. 3:1 can be translated “. . . If *anyone* [i.e., man *or* woman] desire the office of a bishop, *one* [i.e., he *or* she] desireth a good work.”

Thus, 1 Tim. 3:1, by itself, provides evidence that women *can* occupy the office of overseer. In any event, a person maintaining that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* occupy the office of a bishop (overseer) has the burden of proof to show that 1 Tim. 3:1, by itself, does *not* provide evidence that women can occupy the office of an overseer. And one cannot prove from 1 Tim. 3:1 alone that women cannot occupy the office of an overseer or, therefore, that women cannot be pastors or elders.

¹¹ Black, §§ 141-142, pp. 154-155.

¹² The Greek verb is “oregetai” (Gk.: “ορεγεται”); Berry, p. 542.

¹³ Barbara Friberg and Timothy Friberg, eds. *Analytical Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), p. 637.

¹⁴ Berry, p. 542.

¹⁵ The Greek word is “epithumei” (Gk.: “επιθυμει”); Berry p. 542.

¹⁶ Friberg and Friberg, p. 637.

IV. *1 Tim. 3:1-13 Provide Evidence That Women Can Be Overseers And Deacons, And Do Not Prove That Women Cannot Be Overseers And Deacons.*

A. *1 Tim. 1:1-13 Viewed Through A Greek-English Interlinear New Testament.*

Do 1 Tim. 1:1-13 prove that women cannot be bishops (overseers)? In order to understand what Paul is teaching at these verses, it is useful to consider them in the Greek. This essay will examine 1 Tim. 3:1-13 below, using a Greek-English interlinear New Testament. A Greek-English interlinear New Testament provides a literal English translation of each word in the Greek text of the New Testament. This essay will quote 1 Tim. 3:1-13 below from the interlinear (INT), and certain words in those verses which are important to discuss will be underlined, italicized, or capitalized.

1 Tim. 3:1-13 (INT) reads:

“(1) Faithful [is] the word: if any stretches forward to OVERSEERSHIP of a good work he is desirous. (2) IT BEHOVES THEN THE OVERSEER TO BE irreproachable, husband of one wife, sober, discreet, decorous, hospitable, apt to teach; (3) not given to wine, not a striker, not greedy of base gain, but gentle, not contentious, not loving money; (4) his own house well ruling, [his] children having in subjection with all gravity; (5) (but if one his own house [how] to rule knows not, how [the] assembly of God shall he take care of?) (6) not a novice, lest being puffed up, into [the] crime of the devil he may fall. (7) But it behoves him also a good testimony to have from those without, lest into reproach he may fall and [the] snare of the devil. (8) THOSE WHO SERVE, IN LIKE MANNER, grave, not double-tongued, not to much wine given, not greedy of base gain, (9) holding the mystery of the faith in a conscience pure. (10) And these also let them be proved first, then let them serve, being unimpeachable. (11) WOMEN IN LIKE MANNER grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. (12) Let those who serve be husbands of one wife, ruling [their] children well and their own houses. (13) For those well having served, a good degree for themselves acquire, and much boldness in faith which [is] in Christ Jesus.”

B. *Preliminary Observations.*

Some preliminary matters should be noted. First, at 1 Tim. 3:1 (INT), Paul teaches that if any stretches forward to overseership, he desires a good work. The interlinear contains the word “he” in 1 Tim. 3:1. For reasons we have explained in III., above, however, 1 Tim. 3:1 properly can be translated “if any stretches forward to overseership, *one* desires a good work.” Indeed, the fact that the interlinear uses the word “any” provides strong evidence of this. *Accordingly, this essay will modify the interlinear*

and use the word “one” instead of “he” when the essay otherwise quotes 1 Tim. 3:1 below from the interlinear.

Second, Paul teaches at 1 Tim. 3:1 (INT) that *any* can desire the office of overseership. The office of overseership is not, e.g., like the office of the priesthood under the law of Moses, which could be sought only by members of the tribe of Levi. The office of overseership is not a property right to be inherited, e.g., just because your father was an overseer does not mean that you can be one, and just because your father was not an overseer does not mean you cannot be one. Nothing in 1 Tim. 3:1, in the Greek, precludes a person of any gender or race from desiring the office of overseership. Instead, if God is calling a person to the office of overseership, one evidence will be that that person *desires* (*stretches forward to*) the office. As Paul will later make clear, the restrictions on who can occupy that office are based, not on tribal or property right concepts, but on the possession of certain personal qualifications by the officeholder, e.g., the overseer must be “irreproachable,” etc.

Third, an office is distinguishable from an officeholder. Thus, the presidency is an office, but the president is the officeholder. In 1 Tim. 3:1-2, the office is the overseership and the officeholder is the overseer.

Fourth, the word “overseer” at 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT) is a translation of the Greek word “episkopon” (Gk.: “επισκοπον”).¹⁷ And there is evidence that elders are overseers. At Acts 20:17, Luke records that Paul sent for the “elders” of the Ephesian church to come to him. At Acts 20:28, Paul called them “overseers.” The Greek word translated “overseers” at Acts 20:28 is “episkopous” (Gk.: “επισκοπους”).¹⁸ Both “episkopon” at 1 Tim. 3:2 and “episkopous” at Acts 20:28 are forms of the same word: “episkopos” (Gk.: “επισκοπος”).¹⁹

¹⁷ Berry, p. 542.

¹⁸ Berry, p. 377.

¹⁹ Wigram and Winter, p. 286. There is also evidence that pastors are overseers. At 1 Pet. 5:1-2, Peter was addressing elders. After referring to “elders” at 1 Pet. 5:1, Peter told them, at 1 Pet. 5:2 (KJV), to “*Feed* the flock of God which is among you, *taking the oversight thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind[.]” The verb “feed” is a translation of the Greek word “poimante” (Gk.: “ποιμανατε”). (Berry, p. 601.) The word “poimante” is a translation of a form of “poimaino” (Gk.: “ποιμαινο”). (Wigram and Winter, p. 640.) In turn, “poimaino” comes from the Greek word “poimen” (Gk.: “ποιμην”). (Wigram and Winter, p. 640; Abbott-Smith, p. 370). “Poimen” means “shepherd.” (Abbott-Smith, p. 370.) The word “poimen” is translated “pastors” at Eph. 4:11. (Wigram and Winter, p. 640.) The phrase “taking the oversight thereof” at 1 Pet 5:2 (KJV) is a translation of the Greek word “episkopountes” (Gk.: “επισκοπουντες”). (Berry, p. 601.) “Episkopountes” is a form of “episkopeo” (Gk.: “επισκοπεο”). (Wigram and Winter, p. 286.) BAGD indicates that “episkopeo” at 1 Pet. 5:2 means “oversee, care for” (BAGD, p. 299) and “in a distinctively Christian sense of the activity of church officials . . . , esp. of the bishop . . . [.]” (BAGD, p. 299). Thus, the verb “feed” at 1 Pet. 5:2 (KJV) comes from a Greek word which can be translated “pastor”; those who “feed” are to take “oversight”; and the taking of oversight is connected with the office of bishop (overseer). This provides evidence that pastors are bishops (overseers).

Fifth, the phrase “those who serve” at 1 Tim. 3:8 (INT) is a translation of the Greek word “diakonous” (Gk.: “διακονους”).²⁰ The Greek word “diakonous” at 1 Tim. 3:8 (INT) is a form of the Greek word “diakonos” (Gk.: “διακονος”).²¹ “Diakonos” can, depending on context, mean “servant” or “deacon.”²² Thus, “diakonous” at 1 Tim. 3:8 (INT) can be translated not only “those who serve,” but “deacons.” *Instead of translating “diakonous” as “those who serve,” the essay will translate it, “deacons” (as does the KJV).*

Sixth, the word “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (INT) is a translation of the Greek word “gunaikas” (Gk.: “γυναικας”)²³ (pronounced “goo-ni-cas” with a hard i, and with emphasis on the middle syllable). The word “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 is a form of the Greek word “gune.”²⁴ Depending on the context in which “gune” is used, it properly can be translated “woman” or “married woman,” i.e., wife.²⁵ Therefore, one cannot determine merely from the word “gunaikas” whether Paul has in mind women in general, or only married women, i.e., wives. At 1 Tim. 3:11, the KJV translates “gunaikas” as “wives,” and the interlinear translates “gunaikas” as “women.” Which translation is correct depends, not on the word “gunaikas” alone, but on the *context* in which it is used. We must look for contextual clues to determine whether Paul is referring to women in general or wives.

C. *The Structure of 1 Tim. 3:1-11.*

In order to understand 1 Tim. 3:1-13, it is useful, as we will see below, to consider it in two parts, i.e., 1 Tim. 3:1-11, and 1 Tim. 3:12-13. And when determining the meaning of 1 Tim. 3:1-13, *it is important to discern a pattern inside the organizational structure of 1 Tim. 3:1-11 (INT), i.e., the pattern at 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11.* The emphasized words in the interlinear quote of 1 Tim. 3:1-13 above will assist this task. They reveal the following pattern inside 1 Tim. 3:1-11 (INT):

3:2 *IT BEHOVES THEN*

3:2	<u>THE OVERSEER</u>	TO BE	irreproachable, etc.
3:8	<u>DEACONS</u>	[TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER	grave, etc.
3:11	<u>WOMEN</u>	[TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER	grave, etc.

²⁰ Berry, p. 542.

²¹ Wigram and Winter, p. 145.

²² BAGD, pp. 184-185; Abbott-Smith, *A Manual Greek Lexicon Of The New Testament*, 3d. ed. (Edinburgh and New York: T & T Clark, 2001), p. 108.

²³ Berry, p. 542.

²⁴ Wigram and Winter, pp. 129-130.

²⁵ Wigram and Winter, pp. 129-130; BAGD, p. 168; Joseph Henry Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), p. 123.

The phrase “to be” is expressly stated in 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT). It is implied in 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11, and therefore placed in brackets above.

The pattern is revealed above. Three categories are stated: the overseer, deacons, and women. “To be” is stated at 1 Tim. 3:2, and implied at 1 Tim. 3:8, and 11. “In like manner” is used both at 1 Tim. 3:8 and 3:11. At 1 Tim. 3:2, certain virtuous characteristics are listed: “irreproachable,” etc. Likewise at 1 Tim. 3:8, certain virtuous characteristics are listed: “grave,” etc. And again at 1 Tim. 3:11, certain virtuous characteristics are listed: “grave,” etc.

Paul is teaching at 1 Tim. 3:1-11 (INT) that it *behoved the overseer* to be irreproachable, etc.; *it behoved deacons to be, in like manner, grave, etc.*; and *it behoved women to be, in like manner, grave, etc.*

Two final remarks are appropriate. First, this essay has omitted in this section a discussion of 1 Tim. 3:12-13. This essay will discuss 1 Tim. 3:12-13, as well as 1 Tim. 3:1-11, below. Second, although the interlinear translates “gunaikas” as “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11, this essay will not simply *assume* that that translation is correct. This essay will use the interlinear translation here but will also later explore whether “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 should be translated “women” or “wives.”

D. Greek Grammar And The Structure Of 1 Tim. 3:1-11.

1. The Idea Of Case.

In order to understand 1 Tim. 3:1-13, it is necessary to consider briefly some aspects of Greek grammar.

English grammar includes the idea of “case.” “*Case* refers to the form of a noun or pronoun that shows its function in a sentence.”²⁶ Let us use pronouns as an example. We do not say, “John baptized *I*.” We say, “John baptized *me*.” That is, when the pronoun represents the first person singular, and is the *object* of a verb (i.e., the pronoun receives the action of the verb), we use the pronoun “me.” Similarly, we do not say, “John baptized *we*.” We say, “John baptized *us*.” When the pronoun represents the first person plural, and is the *object* of a verb, we use the pronoun “us.” The words “I” and “we” are in the subjective case, because each word, properly used, is the subject of a

²⁶ H. Ramsey Fowler, *The Little, Brown Handbook* (Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), p. 142.

sentence.²⁷ The words “me” and “us” are in the *objective* case, because each word, properly used, is the object of a verb.²⁸

Likewise, Greek grammar also includes the idea of “case.” And what English calls the subjective case, Greek calls the *nominative* case. The Greek nominative case is used when a Greek noun is the subject of a sentence. What English calls the objective case, Greek calls the *accusative* case. The Greek accusative case is used when a Greek noun is the object of a verb. Thus, both Greek words “anthropos” (Gk.: “ἄνθρωπος”) and “anthropon” (Gk.: “ἄνθρωπον”) are singular in form and mean “a man.” The word “anthropos” is in the nominative case, and the word “anthropon” is in the accusative case. “Anthropos” is used when a man is the *subject* of a sentence, and “anthropon” is used when a man is the *object* of a verb. For example, if we were trying to say in Greek, “John baptized a man,” we would not say, “Ἰωάννης εβαπτισε ἄνθρωπος,” but “Ἰωάννης εβαπτισε ἄνθρωπον.”

Similarly, both Greek words “anthropoi” (Gk.: “ἄνθρωποι”) and “anthropous” (Gk.: “ἄνθρωπους”) are plural in form and mean “men.” The word “anthropoi” is in the nominative case, and the word “anthropous” is in the accusative case. “Anthropoi” is used when men are the subject of a sentence, and “anthropous” is used when men are the object of a verb. Thus, if we were trying to say in Greek, “John baptized men,” we would not say, “Ἰωάννης εβαπτισε ἄνθρωποι,” but “Ἰωάννης εβαπτισε ἄνθρωπους.” The “case” of a noun refers to the form of a noun that shows its function in a sentence. This essay has discussed above the Greek nominative case of a noun, which refers to the form the noun takes to show that it is the subject of a sentence. This essay has also discussed the Greek accusative case of a noun, which refers to the form the noun takes to show that it is the object of a verb.

2. The Greek Word “Dei,” The Accusative Case, And The Infinitive.

A final set of concepts from Greek grammar are important to grasp before we further consider 1 Tim. 3:1-11.

The Greek word “dei” (Gk.: “δει”) is an impersonal verb which means “it is necessary” or “one must.”²⁹ Infinitives are such verbal forms as “to be,” “to do,” “to have,” etc.

Sometimes the Greek word “dei” is used with a Greek infinitive to convey the idea that “it is necessary,” e.g., “to be” something or “to do” something. Moreover,

²⁷ Fowler, p. 142.

²⁸ Fowler, p. 142.

²⁹ Abbott-Smith, p. 99; BAGD, p. 172; Black, § 138, p. 150; § 139, p. 152.

sometimes when “dei” and a Greek infinitive are used this way, a *noun or pronoun* is introduced as the “subject” of the infinitive to identify *who* or what must engage in the activity called for by the infinitive. For example, in the phrase, “it is necessary for (or “it behoves”) an *overseer to be* irreproachable,” the noun “overseer” is the subject of the infinitive “to be.” (The phrase “it is necessary for” is, as we will see, a translation of “dei.”)

In the New Testament, when (1) “dei” is used with a Greek infinitive in a sentence that states that “it is necessary” for a *person* “to be” something or “to do” something, and (2) the sentence expressly refers to that person by using a Greek *noun or pronoun*, then (3) that Greek *noun or pronoun* is always expressed in the Greek *accusative* case. This is true even though the noun or pronoun is the “subject” of the infinitive. Three points evidence this.

First, one Greek grammar observes, that “dei” is an impersonal verb which “takes the acc[usative] and inf[initive].”³⁰

Second, a well-known New Testament Greek grammar (that of Blass and Debrunner) confirms this. In the example, “it is necessary for an *overseer to be* irreproachable,” there are two *different* “subjects”: “it” and “overseer.” “It” is the subject of the main verb “is.” “Overseer” is the “subject” of the simple infinitive “to be.” In this situation, the simple infinitive “to be” has a different subject than the verb “is.”

Blass and Debrunner discuss the topic of infinitives,³¹ and that discussion contains a subheading. That subheading reads, “The simple infinitive with a different subject.”³² Under that subheading is a discussion of situations in which the simple infinitive has a different subject than the verb. That discussion notes that the grammatical “construction of *acc[usative]* and infinitive” is used when the simple infinitive has a different subject than the verb does.³³ That is, the discussion notes that when the subject of the infinitive is different than the subject of the verb, and the subject of the infinitive is expressed, *the subject of the infinitive is expressed in the accusative*.

In particular, that discussion teaches that, in the New Testament, when the infinitive and verb have different subjects, the tendency is to use the *fuller* construction of

³⁰ Black, § 139, p. 152.

³¹ F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar Of The New Testament And Other Early Christian Literature*, trans. and revised. by Robert Funk (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1961), § 388, p. 196.)

³² Blass and Debrunner, § 407, p. 210.

³³ *Ibid.*, italics added.

*actually inserting the noun or pronoun which is the subject of the infinitive, and to insert that noun or pronoun in the accusative case.*³⁴

However, even when the fuller construction is not used, i.e., even when the noun or pronoun is not inserted (and thus not inserted in the accusative case), a noun or pronoun in the accusative case is implied. Blass and Debrunner give a phrase in Mt. 23:23 as an example of an occasion in which the accusative is not inserted but implied. The phrase “edei poisai” (Gk.: “εδει ποισαι”) is found in Mt. 23:23. The word “edei” is a Greek imperfect tense form of “dei.”³⁵ The Greek imperfect tense is a verbal form that indicates action in past time.³⁶ Thus, “edei” refers to “necessity or obligation in past time regarding a past event[.]”³⁷ “Edei” can be translated “it behoved.” “Poisai” means “to do.” Thus, “edei poisai” means “it behoved to do.”³⁸ “Blass and Debrunner give “edei poisai” in Mt. 23:23 as an example of an occasion in which the accusative is not inserted but implied.³⁹

Specifically, Blass and Debrunner note that the Greek word “umas” (Gk.: “υμας”) should be supplied (i.e., implied) in the phrase “edei poisai.” The word “umas” means “you.”⁴⁰ That is, according to Blass and Debrunner, the phrase should be read “edei [umas] poisai” (Gk.: “εδει [υμας] ποισαι”), meaning “it behoved [you] to do.” In fact, Berry translates it this way.⁴¹ *And, importantly, the word “umas,” meaning “you,” is in the Greek accusative case.*⁴² Blass and Debrunner thus give an example of the fact that when a form of “dei” (here, “edei”) is used with an infinitive, and the noun or pronoun which is the subject of the infinitive is not expressly stated or inserted, it is implied, and it is *implied* in the accusative case. This supports the discussion of Blass and Debrunner that when “dei” is used with the *fuller* construction, i.e., when the noun or pronoun which is the subject of the infinitive *is* inserted, *that noun or pronoun is inserted in the accusative case.*

³⁴ The pertinent portion of Blass and Debrunner reads: “*The simple infinitive with a different subject.* In spite of the unmistakable tendency to use the fuller construction of acc[usative] and infinitive, the acc[usative] need not be inserted at every point at which it could be according to classical practice . . . [citing a New Testament example at Acts 12:15]. So also with . . . δει: Mt 23:23 εδει ποιησαι (scil. υμας: however the generalizing subject ‘one’ would also fit), . . .” Blass and Debrunner, § 407, p. 210. The abbreviation “scil.” stands for “scilicet” which means “supply.” Blass and Debrunner, p. xxxvii. Thus, Blass and Debrunner direct the reader to supply or insert “umas,” but note that the word “one” can also be supplied.

³⁵ BAGD, p. 172.

³⁶ Black, § 48, p. 45.

³⁷ Abbott-Smith, p. 99.

³⁸ Berry, p. 66.

³⁹ Blass and Debrunner,

Black, § 64, p. 61.

⁴⁰ Berry, p. 66.

⁴¹ Black, § 64, p. 61.

⁴² Black, § 64, p. 61.

Third, Blass and Debrunner, discussing the topic of infinitives, also contains a different subheading that reads, “The proper sphere of the accusative and infinitive.”⁴³ Blass and Debrunner teach therein that the proper sphere of the use of the accusative and infinitive *includes the use of the accusative and infinitive with impersonal expressions such as “dei.”*⁴⁴ This confirms that when “dei” is used, *the subject of the infinitive is expressed in the accusative.* See also G. Abbott-Smith’s lexicon, in which he cites “dei” and gives examples of its use with an accusative and an infinitive.⁴⁵

The point is this. When, in the New Testament (1) “dei” is used with a Greek infinitive in a sentence that states that “it is necessary” for (or “it behoves”) a *person* “to be” something or “to do” something, and (2) the sentence expressly refers to that person, i.e., the subject of the infinitive, by using a Greek *noun or pronoun*, then, (3) that Greek *noun or pronoun* is always expressed in the Greek *accusative* case.

3. “*Dei*,” *The Accusative Case, The Infinitive, And The Structure Of 1 Tim. 3:1-11.*

Why is our above discussion important? 1 Tim. 3:1-2 (INT) states:

“(1) Faithful [is] the word: if any stretches forward to OVERSEERSHIP of a good work [one] is desirous. (2) *IT BEHOVES THEN THE OVERSEER TO BE* irreproachable,”

The phrase “It behoves” in 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT) is a translation of the Greek word “dei.”⁴⁶ The word “then” in 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT) is a translation of the Greek word “oun” (Gk.: “ουν”),⁴⁷ and the Greek word “oun” conveys the ideas of “wherefore, therefore, then.”⁴⁸ The phrase “to be” is an infinitive, a translation of the Greek word “einai” (Gk.: “ειναι”),⁴⁹ and “einai” is a Greek infinitive.⁵⁰

⁴³ Blass and Debrunner, § 408, p. 210.

⁴⁴ Blass and Debrunner, at § 408, at p. 210, discuss infinitives and have a subheading entitled, “The proper sphere of the accusative and infinitive.” Under that subheading, Blass and Debrunner indicate that “[t]he sphere of the acc[usative] and infinitive: [includes their use] with . . . impersonal expressions such as *δει, . . .*”

⁴⁵ Abbott-Smith, p. 99. Abbott-Smith cites as examples Mt. 16:21, Mk. 8:31, Jn. 3:7, and Acts 25:10.

⁴⁶ Berry, p. 542.

⁴⁷ Berry, p. 542.

⁴⁸ Abbott-Smith, p. 328.

⁴⁹ Berry, p. 542.

⁵⁰ Friberg and Friberg, p. 637.

The words “the overseer” at 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT) are a translation of the Greek words “ton episkopon” (Gk.: “τον επισκοπον”).⁵¹ “Ton” is an article meaning “the.”⁵² “Episkopon” (overseer) is a noun.⁵³ *The words “ton episkopon” are words in the accusative case.*⁵⁴ “Episkopon” is thus a noun in the accusative case. 1 Tim. 3:2, then, is an example of the principle that when “dei” is used with a Greek infinitive in a sentence that states that “it is necessary” for (“it behoves” (INT)) a person “to be” something, and the sentence expressly refers to that person, i.e., the subject of the infinitive, by using a Greek noun, that Greek noun is always expressed in the Greek accusative case. In 1 Tim. 3:2, “dei” is used with a Greek infinitive: “to be”; the sentence states that it is necessary for (“it behoves”) a person “to be” something; and the sentence expressly refers to that person, i.e., the subject of the infinitive, by using a Greek noun: “episkopon.” Therefore, “episkopon,” the *accusative* form of the Greek word “episkopos,”⁵⁵ is used at 1 Tim. 3:2.

But that is not all. The word “deacons” at 1 Tim. 3:8 (“those who serve” (INT)) is a translation of the Greek word “diakonous.”⁵⁶ “Diakonous” is a word in the accusative case.⁵⁷ *What this means then is that, grammatically, 1 Tim. 3:8 relates back to 1 Tim. 3:2.* That is, not only does the phrase “the overseer” in 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT) relate back to “dei” of 1 Tim. 3:2, *but the word “deacons” at 1 Tim. 3:8 relates back to “dei” of 1 Tim. 3:2.*

1 Tim. 3:2 and 1 Tim. 3:8, then, *read together*, are another example of the principle that when “dei” is used with a Greek infinitive in a sentence that states that it is necessary for (“it behoves” (INT)) a person “to be” something, and the sentence expressly refers to that person, i.e., the subject of the infinitive, by using a Greek noun, that Greek noun is always expressed in the Greek accusative case. 1 Tim. 3:8 relates back to 1 Tim. 3:2. Thus, Paul, using “dei” and “oun” at 1 Tim. 3:2; the accusative “diakonous” at 1 Tim. 3:8; the implied infinitive “to be” at 1 Tim. 3:8; and the phrase “in like manner” at 1 Tim. 3:8, teaches that *it behoves then deacons to be* in like manner certain things, i.e., grave, etc. Just like 1 Tim. 3:2 teaches that *it behoves then the overseer to be* certain things, i.e., irreproachable, etc., so too, 1 Tim. 3:2, read with 1 Tim. 3:8, teaches that *it behoves deacons to be* in like manner certain things, i.e., grave, etc.

⁵¹ Berry, p. 542.

⁵² Berry, p. 542.

⁵³ Friberg and Friberg, p. 637.

⁵⁴ Friberg and Friberg, p. 637.

⁵⁵ Wigram and Winter, p. 286.

⁵⁶ Berry, p. 542.

⁵⁷ Friberg and Friberg, p. 637.

Finally, the word “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (INT) is a translation of the Greek word “gunaikas.”⁵⁸ “*Gunaikas*” is a word in the accusative case.⁵⁹ What this means then is that, grammatically, 1 Tim. 3:11 relates back to 1 Tim. 3:2. That is, not only does the phrase “the overseer” in 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT) relate back to “dei” of 1 Tim. 3:2, and not only does the word “deacons” at 1 Tim. 3:8 relate back to “dei” of 1 Tim. 3:2, but the word “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (INT) relates back to “dei” of 1 Tim. 3:2.

1 Tim. 3:2 and 1 Tim. 3:11, then, read together, are still another example of the principle that when “dei” is used with a Greek infinitive in a sentence that states that it is necessary for (“it behoves” (INT)) a person “to be” something, and the sentence expressly refers to that person, i.e., the subject of the infinitive, by using a Greek noun, that Greek noun is always expressed in the Greek accusative case. 1 Tim. 3:11 relates back to 1 Tim. 3:2. Thus, Paul, using “dei” and “oun” at 1 Tim. 3:2; the accusative “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11; the implied infinitive “to be” at 1 Tim. 3:11; and the phrase “in like manner” at 1 Tim. 3:11, teaches that *it behoves then women to be* in like manner certain things, i.e., grave, etc. (Again, we have yet to determine whether “women,” as opposed to “wives,” is correct here.) Just like 1 Tim. 3:2 teaches that *it behoves then the overseer to be* certain things, i.e., irreproachable, etc., so too, 1 Tim. 3:2, read with 1 Tim. 3:11, teaches that *it behoves women to be* in like manner certain things, i.e., grave, etc.

Thus, the principles of Greek grammar discussed above explain why we find inside 1 Tim. 3:1-11, i.e., at 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11, the pattern to which this essay earlier referred. Again, that pattern is:

3:2 IT BEHOVES THEN

3:2	<u>THE OVERSEER</u>	TO BE	irreproachable, etc.
3:8	<u>DEACONS</u>	[TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER	grave, etc.
3:11	<u>WOMEN</u>	[TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER	grave, etc.

Thus, Paul is saying (with brackets below for what is implied):

3:2 IT BEHOVES THEN

3:2	<u>THE OVERSEER</u>	TO BE	irreproachable, etc.
	[IT BEHOVES THEN]		
3:8	<u>DEACONS</u>	[TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER	grave, etc.
	[IT BEHOVES THEN]		
3:11	<u>WOMEN</u>	[TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER	grave, etc.

⁵⁸ Berry, p. 542.

⁵⁹ Friberg and Friberg, p. 637.

4. *The Implied Office Of The Deaconate.*

We have seen that certain terms are implied in 1 Tim. 3:1-11. Thus, the phrase “to be” is implied at 1 Tim. 3:8, 11. Accordingly, the KJV and NASB use the term “be” at 1 Tim. 3:8, 11, putting it in italics to signal that it is being added by the translators. The NIV uses the phrase “to be” at those verses. But, as we will see below, the phrase “to be” is not the only term implied in 1 Tim. 3:1-11.

Principles of Greek grammar explain why we find inside 1 Tim. 3:1-11, i.e., at 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11, the pattern to which this essay earlier referred. As we have seen, the Greek words translated “overseer” at 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT), “deacons” at 1 Tim. 3:8, and “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (INT), are each in the accusative case, and *each relates back to the Greek word “dei”* in 1 Tim. 3:2. We have also seen that “dei” means “it is necessary for” (“it behoves” (INT)) at 1 Tim. 3:2. Thus, in that pattern, Paul is teaching that *it behoved* then the overseer to be irreproachable, etc.; *it behoved then* deacons to be in like manner grave, etc.; and *it behoved then* women to be in like manner, grave, etc.

But the pattern of 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11 must be viewed in the context of 1 Tim. 3:1. 1 Tim. 3:1 (INT) says, “Faithful [is] the word: if any stretches forward to OVERSEERSHIP of a good work [one] is desirous. If we view 1 Tim. 3:1 in light of our above discussions of 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11, the following implied structure is revealed:

3:1 Faithful [is] the word: if any stretches forward to OVERSEERSHIP
of a good work [one] is desirous.
3:2 *IT BEHOVES THEN*
3:2 THE OVERSEER TO BE irreproachable, etc.
[*IT BEHOVES THEN*]
3:8 DEACONS [TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER grave, etc.
[*IT BEHOVES THEN*]
3:11 WOMEN [TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER grave, etc.

Let us consider 1 Tim. 3:1-2 alone. At 1 Tim. 3:1, Paul teaches that if anyone desires the overseership, one desires a good work. Paul then teaches at 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT) that “then” or “therefore,” “it behoves” (“dei”). And Paul teaches *who* “it behoves” (“dei”). As we have seen, the phrase “the overseer” at 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT) is, in the Greek, in the accusative case, and *relates back to the phrase “it behoves” (“dei”) in 1 Tim. 3:2*. That is, Paul teaches that “it behoves” “the overseer” to be irreproachable, etc. Thus, *Paul is saying that if one desires the overseership, one desires a good work (1 Tim. 3:1), therefore, “it behoves” the overseer to be irreproachable, etc. (1 Tim. 3:2).*

1 Tim. 3:1-2 are part of a pattern which includes 1 Tim. 3:8. Does the pattern of 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, and 8, permit us to reach a conclusion as to those verses which is similar to the conclusion this essay reached as to 1 Tim. 3:1-2?

Let us apply to 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, and 8 (with verse 8 pertaining to “deacons”), the reasoning the essay used as to 1 Tim. 3:1-2 and “overseers.” At 1 Tim. 3:1, Paul teaches that if anyone desires the overseership, one desires a good work. Paul then teaches that “then” or “therefore,” “it behoves” (“dei”). And Paul teaches *who* “it behoves” (“dei”). As we have seen, the word “deacons” at 1 Tim. 3:8 is, in the Greek, in the accusative case. The word “deacons” *relates back to the phrase “it behoves” (“dei”) in 1 Tim. 3:2.* That is, Paul teaches that “it behoves” “deacons” to be grave, etc.

But is Paul saying that if anyone desires the overseership, one desires a good work (1 Tim. 3:1), therefore, “it behoves” deacons to be grave, etc. (1 Tim. 3:8)? Is Paul teaching that if a person desires the overseership, then deacons have to have certain qualifications? Why would Paul, discussing someone wanting the overseership, be concerned about the qualifications of deacons?

The point is this. 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, and 8 *imply* an office, and that office is the *deaconate*, otherwise those verses, read together, make no sense. The office is the deaconate; the officeholder is the deacon. That is, at 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, and 8, Paul is saying, in a shorthand way, if one desires the *overseership*, one desires a good work, therefore, “it behoves” the *overseer* to be irreproachable, etc., and if one desires the *deaconate*, one desires a good work, therefore, “it behoves” *deacons* to be in like manner grave, etc. *Paul expressly refers to an office at 1 Tim. 3:1, and that office is the overseership.* And Paul later *implies* another office, *and that office is the deaconate.* Just as Paul implies certain terms, such as “to be” at 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11, so too Paul implies the office of the deaconate.

Thus, what Paul is saying is:

3:1 Faithful [is] the word: if any stretches forward to OVERSEERSHIP
of a good work [one] is desirous.

3:2 *IT BEHOVES THEN*

3:2 THE OVERSEER TO BE irreproachable, etc.

[if any stretches forward to THE DEACONATE
of a good work [one] is desirous.

IT BEHOVES THEN

3:8 DEACONS [TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER grave, etc.

5. An Implied Office(s) For “Gunaiikas.”

But the parallel does not stop there.

Similar to what the essay has said above, 1 Tim. 3:1-2, and 8 are part of a pattern which includes 1 Tim. 3:11. At 1 Tim. 3:1, Paul teaches that if anyone desires the overseership, one desires a good work. Paul then teaches that “then” or “therefore,” “it behoves” (“dei”). And Paul teaches *who* “it behoves” (“dei”). As we have seen, the word “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 is, in the Greek, in the accusative case. The word “women” *relates back to the phrase “it behoves” (“dei”) in 1 Tim. 3:2*. That is, Paul teaches that “it behoves” “women” to be grave, etc.

This provides evidence that Paul is saying that if anyone desires the overseership, one desires a good work (1 Tim. 3:1), therefore, “it behoves” women to be grave, etc. (1 Tim. 3:8). As the essay noted, it would be incongruous if Paul (1) said that anyone could desire the overseership, and (2) then launched into a discussion of the qualifications of deacons. But there is no similar incongruity if Paul (1) says that anyone can desire the office of the overseership, and (2) then discusses the qualifications of women.

The point is this. 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, 8 and 11 provide evidence that Paul is *implying* an office(s) that women are to hold, otherwise those verses, read together, make no sense. This essay will later identify the office and the officeholder. It is sufficient to note at the present that, at 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, 8, and 11, Paul appears to be saying, in a shorthand way: (1) if anyone desires the office of overseership (Paul expressly referring to an office and identifying it), one desires a good work, therefore, “it behoves” the overseer to be irreproachable, etc.; (2) if anyone desires the office of deaconate (Paul impliedly referring to an office and identifying it), one desires a good work, therefore, “it behoves” deacons to be in like manner grave, etc.; and (3) *if anyone desires an office* (Paul implying an office but not identifying it), *one desires a good work, therefore, “it behoves” women to be in like manner grave, etc.* That is, Paul expressly refers to an office at 1 Tim. 3:1, the overseership (for the overseer), later implies another office, the deaconate (for deacons), *and still later implies another office which he does not expressly identify* (for women).

Thus, the above provides evidence that what Paul is saying is:

3:1 Faithful [is] the word: if any stretches forward to OVERSEERSHIP
of a good work [one] is desirous.

3:2 *IT BEHOVES THEN*

3:2 THE OVERSEER TO BE irreproachable, etc.

[if any stretches forward to THE DEACONATE
of a good work [one] is desirous.

IT BEHOVES THEN

3:8 DEACONS [TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER grave, etc.

[if any stretches forward to [AN OFFICE(S)]
of a good work [one] is desirous.

IT BEHOVES THEN

3:11 WOMEN [TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER grave, etc.

We have seen that Paul teaches at 1 Tim. 3:1 that a person might stretch forward to an office (which he expressly identifies as the office of overseership), *therefore*, at 1 Tim. 3:2, Paul discusses the qualifications that a person must have to be the officeholder (the overseer). Phrased differently, the reason Paul is discussing the qualifications that a person, as an overseer, must possess is *that that person might stretch forward to an office* (which Paul expressly identifies as the office of overseership).

Similarly, we have seen that Paul teaches at 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, and 8, read together, that persons might stretch forward to an office (which Paul impliedly identifies as the office of the deaconate), *therefore*, at 1 Tim. 3:8, Paul discusses the qualifications that persons must have to be officeholders (deacons). And, again, the reason Paul is discussing the qualifications that persons, as deacons, must possess is that those persons might stretch forward to an office (which Paul impliedly identifies as the office of the deaconate).

By parity of reasoning, the above provides evidence that Paul is teaching at 1 Tim. 3:1, 2, 8, and 11, that a person might stretch forward to an office (which Paul does not expressly identify), *therefore*, at 1 Tim. 3:11, Paul discusses the qualifications that persons must have to be officeholders. If, on every other occasion when Paul discusses the qualifications that persons must have, he does so because the persons might seek an office, this provides evidence that when Paul discusses the qualifications of women, he does so because women might seek an office.

The point here is: 1 Tim. 3:1-2, 8, and 11, provide evidence that *women* might stretch forward to an office, and that Paul is discussing the qualifications that *women* must have to be officeholders. This essay will reserve until later our identification of the

office(s) to which women can stretch forward, and the office(s) of which women can be officeholders.

E. Whether “Gunaikas” Should Be Translated “Women” Or “Wives,” Paul Is Discussing “Gunaikas” And Issues Of Church Office.

One of the things this essay will discuss below is whether “gunaikas” should be translated “women” or “wives.” But before this essay does so, it should be noted that, whichever translation is correct, Paul, at 1 Tim. 3:11, appears to be discussing “gunaikas” who are somehow connected to issues of church office. That is, he does not appear to be discussing *all* Christian “gunaikas,” whether or not they are somehow connected to issues of church office. In 1 Tim. 3:1-13, Paul is discussing issues of church office, i.e., issues pertaining to the overseership, the deaconate, and the qualifications of the overseer and deacons.

It seems highly unlikely that Paul would interject, into 1 Tim. 3:1-13’s discussion of issues concerning church office, an unrelated discussion about *all* Christian “gunaikas” in general, whether or not they were somehow connected with issues of church office. Thus, we proceed below on the basis that the “gunaikas” of 1 Tim. 3:11, whether translated “women” or “wives,” are somehow related to issues of church office.

F. There Is Evidence That “Gunaikas” At 1 Tim. 3:11 Should Be Translated “Women,” That They Desire The Offices Of The Overseership and Deaconate, And That They Are Overseers And Deacons.

1. There Is Evidence That “Gunaikas” At 1 Tim. 3:11 Should Be Translated “Women.”

There are two possibilities as to how “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 should be translated: (1) “women” (married or not) or (2) “wives.”

And it is important here to remember who has the burden of proof. As we have discussed, a person maintaining that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 prove that women cannot be overseers has the burden of proof on that issue. And that burden, as it relates to 1 Tim. 3:11, means that a person who maintains that “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 means “wives” *has the burden of proof on that issue*. The burden of proof does *not* lie on someone else to show that “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 means “women.” With the above as background, we ask: does 1 Tim. 3:11 refer to “women” or “wives”?

First, this essay has provided evidence in IV.D.5., above that, at 1 Tim. 3:11, Paul is saying:

[if *any* stretches forward to [AN OFFICE(S)]
of a good work [one] is desirous.
IT BEHOVES THEN]

3:11 WOMEN [TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER grave, etc.

The phrase “if *any*” provides evidence that Paul is viewing “gunaikas” as referring to *all* women, not just wives.

Second, there is another evidence that “gunaikas” should be translated “women.” There are three personal categories at 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11: the overseer, deacons, and “gunaikas,” respectively. If the overseer of 1 Tim. 3:2 does not have to be married, and the deacons at 1 Tim. 3:8 do not have to be married, this provides evidence that the “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 do not have to be married. *And if the “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 do not have to be married, this provides evidence that “gunaikas” should be translated “women.”*

It is true that 1 Tim. 3:2 (KJV) teaches that an overseer must be the “husband of one wife,” and 1 Tim. 3:12 (KJV) teaches that deacons must be “husbands of one wife.” However, these verses reasonably can be understood to mean, not that overseers and deacons must be married but, *if* they are married, they must be husbands of one wife.

By comparison, 1 Tim. 3:4 teaches that an overseer must rule his “children” in subjection, and 1 Tim. 3:12 teaches that deacons must rule their “children” well. But no one argues that these verses mean that overseers or deacons *must* have children. And note, “children” is plural, and if overseers and deacons must have “children,” having merely one child would not do. These verses reasonably can be understood to mean that *if* an overseer has children, he must rule them with subjection, and *if* deacons have children, deacons must rule them well.

Similarly, 1 Tim. 3:2 and 3:12 reasonably can be understood to teach, not that overseers and deacons *must* be married, but that, *if* they are married, they must be husbands of one wife. (Otherwise, e.g., there can be no unmarried overseers, elders, or deacons, and if the spouse of a married overseer dies, the overseer may no longer be an overseer.) And if overseers and deacons do not have to be married, this provides evidence that “gunaikas” do not have to be married, i.e., that “gunaikas” should be translated “women.”

Third, although “gunaikas” is translated “wives” at 1 Tim. 3:11 in the KJV, it is noteworthy that “gunaikas” is translated “women” at that verse in the NASB and Revised Standard Version (RSV). This essay will return later to the KJV translation of 1 Tim. 3:11.

In sum, if the phrase “if *any*” at 1 Tim. 3:1 applies by extension to “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11, this provides evidence that Paul is referring to *all* “gunaikas,” i.e., “women.” And if overseers and deacons do not have to be married, this provides evidence that

“gunaikas” do not have to be married, i.e., “gunaikas” should be translated “women.” Finally, it is noteworthy that the NASB and RSV translate “gunaikas” as “women.” *Thus, the first two facts provide evidence (apart from the NASB and RSV) that the word “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 should be translated “women,” not “wives.”* And, it must be remembered, the person maintaining that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 prove that women cannot be overseers has the burden of proof to show that “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 should not be translated “women.”

2. There Is Evidence That The “Women” At 1 Tim. 3:11 Desire An Office, And Are Officeholders.

If “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 is translated “women” and not merely “wives,” one possibility is that Paul is discussing “women” and issues of church office, and teaching that “women” can desire an office and be officeholders. The second possibility is that Paul is discussing “women” and issues of church office, but he is *not* teaching that “women” can desire an office and be officeholders. Let us begin by looking at the first possibility.

Four points provide evidence that “gunaikas” (women) can desire an office and be officeholders. First, in our discussion at III., above, we have seen that 1 Tim. 3:1 can be translated “. . . If *anyone* [i.e., man *or* woman] desire the office of a bishop, *one* [i.e., he *or* she] desireth a good work.” This, therefore, supports the idea that women can desire an office and be officeholders.

Our second point was previously mentioned at IV.D.5., above. That point relies on the fact that the Greek words translated “overseer,” “deacons,” and “women” are each in the accusative case because each of those Greek words relates back to the Greek word “dei” at 1 Tim. 3:2. The point is: 1 Tim. 3:1-2, 8, and 11, provide evidence that *women* (“gunaikas”) might stretch forward to an office, and that Paul is discussing the qualifications that *women* must have to be officeholders.

Third, there are three personal categories: the overseer (1 Tim. 3:2), deacons (3:8), and “gunaikas” (3:8). The phrase “to be” is expressly stated at 1 Tim. 3:2, and implied at 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11. And certain things, i.e., qualifications, are listed at 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11. At 1 Tim. 3:2, a person is “to be” certain things (“irreproachable,” etc.), and that person is an officeholder (the overseer). At 1 Tim. 3:8, persons are “to be” certain things (“grave,” etc.), and those persons are officeholders (deacons). *By parity of reasoning, at 1 Tim. 3:11, persons are “to be” certain things (“grave,” etc.), and those persons are officeholders (“gunaikas”).* That is, the pattern of 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11, including the personal categories, the repeated phrase “to be” (express or implied) and the repeated lists of qualifications, provides evidence *that women (“gunaikas”) are officeholders.*

Fourth, the phrase “in like manner” is found at 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11. At 1 Tim. 3:8, persons are to be “in like manner” certain things (“grave,” etc.), and those persons are officeholders (deacons). *By parity of reasoning, at 1 Tim. 3:11, persons are to be “in like manner” certain things (“grave,” etc.), and those persons are officeholders (“gunaikas”).* That is, the pattern of 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11 and the repeated phrase “in like manner” in each of those verses provides evidence *that the women (“gunaikas”) are officeholders.*

As mentioned, a second possibility is that “gunaikas” should be translated “women” (not “wives”); Paul is discussing “women” and issues of church office; but Paul is *not* teaching that “women” can desire an office and be officeholders. But if so, what *is* Paul teaching about “women” and issues of church office? In short, there is no persuasive evidence that Paul is discussing “women” and issues of church office, but *not* teaching that “women” can desire an office and be officeholders. Instead, there is persuasive evidence that Paul is discussing “women” and issues of church office, and teaching that “women” *can* desire an office and be officeholders.

3. There Is Evidence That The “Women” At 1 Tim. 3:11 Desire The Offices Of The Overseership And Deaconate, And Are Overseers And Deacons.

a. Evidence From 1 Tim. 3:1-13.

This essay previously has indicated that there is evidence that the “women” of 1 Tim. 3:11 stretch forward to an office, and are officeholders, but the essay has not identified the office(s) of which the women are officeholders.

In order to identify what that office(s) is, it is necessary to remember that one must imply certain terms to understand 1 Tim. 3:1-13. For example, as we have seen, the phrase “to be” at 1 Tim. 3:8 is implied. The phrase “to be” at 1 Tim. 3:11 is implied. The office of the “deaconate” is implied.

i. Paul Implies “Women” Can Stretch Forward To The Offices Of The Overseership And Deaconate.

Similarly, Paul appears to *imply the office(s)* to which “women” can stretch forward. We have seen from IV.F.2., that there is evidence that Paul teaches that “women” can stretch forward to an “office.” If “women” can stretch forward to an office, there are two possibilities. Either Paul is *implying* that “women” can stretch forward to the offices of the *overseership and deaconate*, or *Paul leaves us clueless as to the “office(s)” to which “women” can stretch forward.* To the extent one relies only on the Greek at 1 Tim. 3:1-13, any argument that “women” can stretch forward, e.g., to the office of the deaconate but not to the office of the overseership, cannot be persuasively

supported, and any criterion one employs to permit “women” to stretch forward to one office but not the other is necessarily arbitrary. Both offices are previously referred to, either expressly or impliedly, and 1 Tim. 3:1-13, in Greek, logically permit “women” either to stretch forward to both offices or to neither. The above provides evidence that Paul is implying that “women” can stretch forward to the offices of the overseership and deaconate.

ii. *Paul Implies That “Women” Can Be Officeholders As Overseers And Deacons.*

Moreover, Paul appears to *imply* that “women” can be *officeholders* as overseers and deacons. The “overseer” discussed at 1 Tim. 3:2 is a *man*; that verse says that the overseer must be the “husband of one wife.” Similarly, the “deacons” of 1 Tim. 3:8 are *men*; 1 Tim. 3:12 says that deacons are to be “husbands of one wife.”

But at 1 Tim. 3:11, *Paul turns to the topic of “women.”* And, as we have seen in IV.F.2., there is evidence that the “women” of 1 Tim. 3:11 are officeholders. Either Paul is *implying* that “women” can be officeholders as overseers or deacons, *or Paul leaves us clueless as to how “women” can be officeholders.* To the extent one relies only on the Greek at 1 Tim. 3:1-13, any argument that “women” can be deacons but not overseers cannot be persuasively supported, and any criterion one employs to permit “women” to be one officeholder but not the other is necessarily arbitrary. Both the overseer and deacons are previously referred to, and 1 Tim. 3:1-13, in the Greek, logically permit “women” either to be both officeholders or to be neither. The above provides evidence that at 1 Tim. 3:2 and 8, Paul is discussing officeholders who are men, *but that, at 1 Tim. 3:11, Paul is switching focus to officeholders who are “women,” and teaching that “women” can be overseers and deacons.*

iii. *The Qualifications For “Women” Include One Of The Qualifications For Overseers And One Of The Qualifications For Deacons.*

It is also noteworthy that when Paul discusses the qualifications of “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11, one of the qualifications of “women” is a qualification of an overseer, and one of the qualifications of “women” is a qualification of deacons.

One of the qualifications of “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 is that “women” must be “sober” (KJV). One of the qualifications of an overseer at 1 Tim. 3:2 is that an overseer must be “vigilant” (KJV). The word “sober” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (KJV) and the word “vigilant” at 1 Tim. 3:2 (KJV) are each a translation of a form of the same Greek word:

“nephalios” (Gk.: “νηφαιλιος”).⁶⁰ (And “nephalios” is not listed as a qualification of deacons, thus, Paul is referring to a qualification that previously was used as a qualification for an overseer but not deacons.) Thus, the “women” of 1 Tim. 3:11 have qualifications, *one of which is also a qualification of an overseer.*

Similarly, one of the qualifications of “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 is that “women” must be “grave” (KJV). One of the qualifications of deacons at 1 Tim. 3:8 is that deacons must be “grave” (KJV). The word “grave” (KJV) in each verse is a translation of a form of the same Greek word: “semnos” (Gk.: “σεμνος”).⁶¹ (And “semnos” is not listed as a qualification of an overseer.) Thus, the “women” of 1 Tim. 3:11 have qualifications, *one of which is also a qualification of deacons.*

If the qualifications of “women” include one of the qualifications pertaining to overseers, and one of the qualifications pertaining to deacons, this provides evidence that “women” can be overseers and deacons.

iv. Summary

In sum, viewed from the above perspective, there is evidence from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that what Paul is saying is:

3:1 Faithful [is] the word: if any stretches forward to OVERSEERSHIP of a good work [one] is desirous.

3:2 *IT BEHOVES THEN*

3:2 [MEN OVERSEERS]

TO BE

irreproachable, etc.

[if any stretches forward to THE DEACONATE of a good work [one] is desirous.

IT BEHOVES THEN

3:8 [MEN] DEACONS

[TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER grave, etc.

[if any stretches forward to [THE OVERSEERSHIP OR THE DEACONATE] of a good work [one] is desirous.

IT BEHOVES THEN

3:11 WOMEN [OVERSEERS OR DEACONS]

[TO BE] IN LIKE MANNER grave, etc.

⁶⁰ Wigram and Winter, p. 515; Kurt Aland, Matthew Black, Bruce M. Metzger, Allen Wikgren, eds., The Greek New Testament, 3rd Ed. (Germany: United Bible Societies, 1983, pp. 723-724.

⁶¹ Wigram and Winter, p. 684.

Based on the above, 1 Tim. 3:1-13 provide evidence that, in those verses, Paul first discussed men overseers (1 Tim. 3:2), then discussed men deacons (1 Tim. 3:8), and then discussed women (1 Tim. 3:11) who were either overseers or deacons. That is, there is evidence from those verses of the following. First, Paul discussed qualifications for men overseers and men deacons (whether those men were married or not). Second, Paul then, at 1 Tim. 3:11, turned to the issue of women. Third, he turned to the issue of women at that verse, *but expected his reader to understand that he was still talking about overseers and deacons. Fourth, for that reason, he did not use the words “overseer” or “deacons” at 1 Tim. 3:11 but, in a shorthand way that avoided unnecessary repetition of those words, discussed at that verse the qualifications for women overseers and women deacons (whether those women were married or not).*

b. *Phebe At Rom. 16:1 Provides Evidence That, At 1 Tim. 3:11, “Gunaikas” Should Be Translated “Women,” And That Those “Women” Can Be Deacons.*

At Rom. 16:1, Paul wrote, “I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a *servant* of the church which is at Cenchrea[.]” The Roman letter was written from Corinth, Greece. Cenchrea was a seaport near Corinth. The word “servant” at this verse is “diakonon” (Gk.: “διακονον”).⁶² The word “diakonon” at Rom. 16:1 is a form of the Greek word “diakonos” (Gk.: “διακονος”).⁶³ “*Diakonos,*” or a form thereof, can be translated “*deacon*” or “*deacons,*” and is so translated at, e.g., 1 Tim. 3:8 and 12.⁶⁴ It is noteworthy that, at Rom. 16:1, “*diakonon*” is translated “*deacon*” in the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV).⁶⁵ It is also noteworthy that, at that verse in the NIV, “*diakonon*” is translated “*servant,*” *but a footnote at that verse gives “deaconess” as an alternate translation.* Rom. 16:1, then, in the Greek, provides evidence that Phebe was a deacon, and provides additional evidence that “*gunaikas*” can desire the office of the deaconate and be deacons.

Indeed, if the word “*diakonon*” in Rom. 16:1 is translated “*deacon,*” this supports our earlier discussion at IV.F.1., that “*gunaikas*” at 1 Tim. 3:11 should be translated “*women.*” This is so because there is no evidence in Rom. 16 that Phebe was a wife, i.e., that she was married. If 1 Tim. 3:11 should be translated “*wives,*” and if 1 Tim. 3:11 is only teaching about “*wives*” and church office, *then nowhere in 1 Tim. 3:1-13, Paul’s most comprehensive discussion of the qualifications of church officers, does Paul acknowledge what Rom. 16:1 provides evidence of, namely, that an unmarried woman can be a deacon.*

⁶² Berry, p. 434.

⁶³ Wigram and Winter, p. 145.

⁶⁴ Wigram and Winter, p. 145.

⁶⁵ A footnote at that verse in the NRSV gives “*minister*” as an alternate translation.

4. Conclusion.

In sum, there is evidence that the “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (married or not) can be overseers and deacons if those women have certain qualifications, and our previous discussion concerning the burden of proof bears repeating. A person maintaining that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* be overseers has the *burden of proof* on that issue. And if a person has the burden of proof to show that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* be overseers, it is *not* necessary, in order to *prevent* that person from meeting that burden, to *prove* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women *can* be overseers. All that is necessary is to present such credible *evidence* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women *can* be overseers that, after consideration of *that* evidence, one cannot say that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* be overseers. Moreover, for the person bearing the burden of proof to *prove* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women cannot be overseers, it is not enough simply to show that it *plausibly* can be argued from those verses that women *cannot* be overseers, if it also *plausibly* can be argued from those verses that women *can* be overseers. In that event, there are merely *two* plausible views, but no *proof* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that the view that women cannot be overseers is the *correct* view. And, it is submitted, the above discussion shows that the view that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 teach that women *can* be overseers is *at least* as plausible as the view that those verses teach that women cannot be overseers.⁶⁶

G. *There Is No Persuasive Evidence That “Gunaikas” At 1 Tim. 3:11 Should Be Translated “Wives,” But Even If “Gunaikas” At 1 Tim 3:11 Were Translated “Wives,” There Would Be Persuasive Evidence That Those “Wives” Desired An Office, And Were Officeholders.*

1. *There Is No Persuasive Evidence That “Gunaikas” At 1 Tim. 3:11 Should Be Translated “Wives.”*

As mentioned, the word “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 should be translated either “women” or “wives.” And there is no persuasive evidence that “gunaikas” at that verse should be translated “wives.” First, as the essay has noted, the mere word “gunaikas” at 1

⁶⁶ As an aside, Eph. 5:22 teaches that wives are to submit to their husbands. But the verse is interpreted to teach that husbands are *not* to submit to their wives, something the verse does not expressly say. If that interpretation were correct, then, by parity of reasoning, husbands are to love their wives (Eph. 5:25), but wives are *not* to love their husbands. Eph. 5:22 cannot be divorced from its context. Eph. 5:18-21 describe four sets of activities by which one is filled with the Spirit: “speaking,” “singing and making melody,” “giving thanks” and “submitting yourselves *one to another* in the fear of God.” This fourth activity is the overarching responsibility that governs the relationship between a Christian and all other Christians, including the relationship between a Christian and a Christian’s spouse. If the first three activities apply to all Christians without restriction, so does the fourth activity. (Cp. 1 Pet. 3:1 “ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands” and 5:5 “all of you be subject one to another[.]”) Viewed from this perspective, Eph. 5:21-28 remind Christian wives to submit to their husbands, but remind Christian husbands to *love, and* submit to, their wives. The principle that the husband is the head of the wife (Eph. 5:23) does not conflict with the above; the husband can be the leader in love and submission.

Tim. 3:11 provides no persuasive evidence one way or the other as to whether it should be translated “women” or “wives.” Paul forces us to look elsewhere, to contextual clues, to determine which translation is correct.

Second, nothing in the Greek used in 1 Tim. 3:11 as a whole provides persuasive evidence that “gunaikas” should be translated “wives.” Thus, in 1 Tim. 3:11 (INT), Paul merely teaches that “gunaikas” are “[to be] in like manner, grave,” etc., and Paul does not state in that verse whether the “gunaikas” are “women” or “wives.”

Third, nothing in the Greek used in 1 Tim. 3:1-13 provides persuasive evidence that “gunaikas” should be translated “wives.”

In sum, neither the word “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11, that verse as a whole in the Greek, nor 1 Tim. 3:1-13 in the Greek provides persuasive evidence that “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 should be translated “wives.”

2. Even If “Gunaikas” At 1 Tim. 3:11 Were Translated “Wives,” There Would Be Persuasive Evidence That Those “Wives” Desired An Office, And Were Officeholders, And No Persuasive Evidence To The Contrary.

This essay previously has shown that there is plausible evidence that “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 should be translated “women.” But even if “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 were translated “wives” and not “women,” and assuming that Paul is discussing “wives” and issues of church office, there would be three possibilities. The first possibility would be that Paul was teaching that “wives” *themselves* could desire an office and be officeholders. The second possibility would be that Paul was *not* teaching that “wives” could be officeholders, but he was discussing “wives” who were merely *married* to officeholders, i.e., “wives” whose husbands were officeholders. The third possibility would be that Paul was discussing neither “wives” who were themselves officeholders, nor “wives” whose husbands were officeholders. As we will see, only the first possibility makes sense.

a. There Would Be Persuasive Evidence That The “Wives” Desired An Office, And Were Officeholders.

As to the first possibility, even if “gunaikas” were translated “wives,” there would still be evidence that these “wives” could desire an office and be officeholders. This is not to say that “gunaikas” should be translated “wives.” This is to say that if, for the sake of argument, “gunaikas” were translated “wives,” this would not mean that those “wives” could not be officeholders, for there would still be evidence that those “wives” could be officeholders.

The evidence is found in our discussion at IV.F.2., that the “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 desire an office, and are officeholders. Although that discussion pertains to “women,” *that discussion can apply equally to “wives” since the word “gunaikas,” viewed in isolation, can be translated “women” or “wives.”* Therefore, even if, “gunaikas” were translated “wives,” there would still be evidence that these “wives” could desire an office and be officeholders.

Moreover, additional evidence is found in our discussion at IV.F.3., that the “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 desire the offices of the overseership and deaconate, and are overseers and deacons. Again, that discussion pertains to “women,” *but that discussion can apply equally to “wives” since the word “gunaikas,” viewed in isolation, can be translated “women” or “wives.”* (The only exception is the second paragraph in IV.F.3.b., where the essay discussed the fact that since there is no evidence that Phebe of Rom. 16:1 was married, this provided evidence that “gunaikas” at 1 Tim 3:11 should be translated “women.”) Therefore, even if, “gunaikas” were translated “wives,” there would still be evidence that these “wives” could desire an office and be officeholders. And if so, this would still mean that at least *some* women could desire an office and be officeholders.

b. *There Would Be No Persuasive Evidence That The “Wives” Were Merely Married To Officeholders.*

As mentioned, even if “gunaikas” were translated “wives,” the second possibility would be that Paul was *not* teaching that “wives” could be officeholders, but he was discussing “wives” who were merely *married* to officeholders, i.e., “wives” whose husbands were officeholders. But, as discussed below, there is no persuasive evidence from 1 Tim. 1-13 in the Greek that Paul was discussing this possibility.

The KJV illustrates this point, for it is an example of a translation that assumes that Paul was discussing “wives” who were merely married to officeholders. 1 Tim. 3:11 (KJV) says, “Even so *must their* wives be grave,” etc. This translation implies that the “wives” are merely married to officeholders, and the “wives” are not themselves officeholders. However, for the reasons discussed below, there is no persuasive evidence that the KJV translation of 1 Tim. 3:11 is the most accurate translation of that verse.

First, by using the phrase, “Even so” at 1 Tim. 3:11, the KJV fails to reflect that the Greek word translated “Even so” at 1 Tim. 3:11, and the Greek word translated “in like manner” at 1 Tim. 3:8, are the same word: “osautos” (Gk.: “ὡσαυτως”).⁶⁷ If the KJV had translated “osautos” as “Likewise” both at 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11, the pattern of 1 Tim 3:2, 8, and 11 verse would have been obvious.

⁶⁷ Berry, p. 542.

Second, in the KJV at 1 Tim. 3:11, the words “must” and “their” are in italics because they were *added by the King James translators*. The words “must” and “their” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (KJV) are not literal translations of any Greek words found at 1 Tim. 3:11.

This is important, because the word “their” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (KJV) can be read to refer to the “deacons” of 1 Tim. 3:8. That is, “their wives” (KJV) can be read to mean “deacons’ wives.” And, if so, the word “their” in 1 Tim. 3:11 in the KJV means that 1 Tim. 3:11 *relates back only to the men deacons at 1 Tim. 3:8*. But if we omit the word “their,” which is not a translation of any Greek word found in 1 Tim. 3:11, and which was added by the translators, a different perspective emerges. That perspective is that *the accusative case of the word “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 serves to relate 1 Tim. 3:11 back, not to 1 Tim. 3:8, but to 1 Tim. 3:2, and the word “dei” (“It behoves”)*.

Third, the KJV translation of 1 Tim. 3:11 translates “gunaikas” as “wives” and treats the word “wives” as if it were the *subject* of a *complete sentence* at 1 Tim. 3:11. But, as we have seen, “gunaikas” is in the *accusative* case. It is not in the nominative case, which would be the case representing a subject.⁶⁸ And, as we have seen, “gunaikas” is in the accusative case because “gunaikas” relates back to the phrase “it behoves (“dei”) then” (INT) at 1 Tim. 3:2. That is, in the Greek, *1 Tim. 3:11 is not a complete sentence*, since it must be read together with the phrase in 1 Tim. 3:2, “it behoves then[.] (INT)” (The fact that 1 Tim. 3:11 relates back to 1 Tim. 3:2 is part of the evidence the essay has discussed previously that, in accord with 1 Tim 3:1, the “gunaikas” are stretching forward to an office and are officeholders.)

Fourth, at 1 Tim. 3:11 (KJV), Paul does not expressly say to whom the word “their” refers. Of course, no Greek word is found at 1 Tim. 3:11 which can be translated “their”; it was added by KJV translators. But even if the word “their” was part of a proper translation of 1 Tim. 3:11, what is the antecedent of the word “their”? Does “their” refer to deacons, with the result that the phrase “their wives” means the wives of deacons? Why would Paul discuss only the qualifications of wives of deacons, and not the qualifications of wives of overseers? If preserving the dignity of the deaconate is important enough to require wives of deacons to have certain qualifications, is it not reasonably arguable that preserving the dignity of the overseership is at least as important as preserving the dignity of the deaconate, and wives of overseers should have certain qualifications? 1 Tim. 3:11 (KJV) presents the reader with the problem of trying to determine the antecedent of a word, “their,” which is not a translation of any Greek word found in that verse.

⁶⁸ Black, § 28, pp. 24-25.

Therefore, even if “gunaikas” at 1 Tim. 3:11 were translated “wives” and not “women,” there is no persuasive evidence from 1 Tim. 1-13 in the Greek that Paul was discussing “wives” who were merely married to officeholders.

c. *There Would Be No Persuasive Evidence That Paul Was Discussing “Wives” Who Were Not Officeholders, And Who Were Not Married To Officeholders.*

As mentioned, even if “gunaikas” were translated “wives,” the third possibility would be that Paul was discussing “wives” who were not officeholders, and “wives” who were not married to officeholders. But if that were the case, what *was* Paul teaching about “wives” and issues of church office? In short, there is no persuasive evidence supporting this possibility.

H. *Additional Verses.*

There are additional verses that warrant discussion, 1 Tim. 3:7, and 1 Tim. 3:12-13.

1. *1 Tim. 3:7.*

As the essay has discussed, 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11 reflect a pattern. That pattern is attributable to the fact that 1 Tim. 3:2 uses the phrase “it behoves” (INT) (Gk.: “dei”),⁶⁹ when “dei” is used, the expressed subject of the infinitive is expressed in the accusative; and the Greek words translated “overseer” (1 Tim. 3:2 (INT)), “deacons” (1 Tim. 3:8 (KJV)), and “women” (1 Tim. 3:11 (INT)), are each in the accusative. The pattern is also attributable to the fact that 1 Tim. 3:2 expressly uses the phrase “to be,” and the phrase “to be” is implied in 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11. As a result, “the overseer,” “deacons,” and “women” *relate back to the phrase “it behoves” in 1 Tim. 3:2.*

But 1 Tim. 3:7 (INT) also uses the phrase “it behoves.” 1 Tim 3:7 (INT) reads:

“But *it behoves* him also a good testimony to have from those without, lest into reproach he may fall and [the] snare of the devil.”

The phrase “it behoves” in 1 Tim. 3:7 (INT) is also a translation of the Greek word “dei.”⁷⁰

Does this mean that the terms “deacons” at 1 Tim. 3:8, and “women” at 1 Tim. 3:11 (INT) relate back only to the phrase “it behoves” in 1 Tim. 3:7 (INT), and not to the

⁶⁹ Berry, p. 542.

⁷⁰ Berry, p. 542.

phrase “it behoves” in 1 Tim. 3:2 (INT)? Two facts provide evidence that this is not the case.

First, 1 Tim. 3:2-6 (INT) teach that it behoves “to *be*” certain things, but 1 Tim. 3:7 (INT) teaches that it behoves “to *have*” a certain thing. The qualifications listed at 1 Tim. 3:8 for deacons are things that deacons are “to be.” The qualifications are not things which deacons are “to have.” For example, deacons are “to be” grave. They are not “to have” grave. Similarly, the qualifications listed at 1 Tim. 3:11 for women are things that women are “to be.” The qualifications are not things which women are “to have.” Women are “to be” grave; they are not “to have” grave. But if 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11 are listing things which deacons and women, respectively, are “to be,” this provides evidence that the infinitive to which those verses relate back is not “to have” at 1 Tim. 3:7, but “to be” in 1 Tim. 3:2. That is, this provides evidence that 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11 relate back to the infinitive “to be” in 1 Tim. 3:2, and not to the infinitive “to have” in 1 Tim. 3:7.

Second, 1 Tim. 3:8 (INT) states “in like manner” and then lists *multiple* qualifications for deacons. Similarly, 1 Tim. 3:11 (INT) states “in like manner” and then lists *multiple* qualifications for women. The phrase “in like manner” and the multiple qualifications in 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11 lead the reader to look for a preceding verse(s) that contains *multiple* qualifications. 1 Tim. 3:2-6 contain multiple qualifications, but 1 Tim. 3:7 does not. 1 Tim. 3:7 contains only one qualification (“a good testimony” (INT)). Paul is teaching that deacons and women must have *multiple* qualifications “in like manner” as the overseer. This focuses attention on the *multiple* qualifications of the overseer listed at 1 Tim. 3:2-7, and not just on the *single* qualification listed at 1 Tim. 3:7 by itself. Of course, like the overseer, deacons and women should have a good report, however, the point is that 1 Tim. 3:8 and 11 relate back to the phrase “it behoves” in 1 Tim. 3:2.

2. 1 Tim. 3:12-13.

We have seen that 1 Tim. 3:2, 8, and 11 reflect a pattern, in part because the terms “the overseer,” (INT) “deacons” (KJV) and “women” (INT) are each in the accusative case. The essay has not included 1 Tim. 3:12 in that pattern, because the Greek word translated “deacons” (KJV) at 1 Tim. 3:12 is not in the accusative case, but in the nominative case,⁷¹ i.e., the case represents a subject.⁷² Thus, the word “deacons” at 1 Tim. 3:12 does not relate back to the Greek word “dei” at 1 Tim. 3:2. Accordingly, at 1 Tim. 3:12-13, Paul *returns* to a discussion of men deacons, a topic he last discussed in 1 Tim. 3:8-10.

⁷¹ Friberg and Friberg, p. 637.

⁷² Black, § 28, pp. 24-25.

V. Conclusion.

As we noted at the beginning of this essay, the central issue here is *not* whether women *can* be bishops (overseers), but whether 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* be overseers. And the common maxim is, “he who asserts must prove.” Churches maintaining that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 *prove* that women *cannot* be overseers have the burden of proof on that issue. Moreover, for churches bearing the burden of proof to *prove* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that women cannot be overseers, it is not enough simply to show that it *plausibly* can be argued from those verses that women *cannot* be overseers, if it also *plausibly* can be argued from those verses that women *can* be overseers. In that event, there are merely *two* plausible views, but no *proof* from 1 Tim. 3:1-13 that the view that women cannot be overseers is the *correct* view.

A person reading this essay may well conclude that this essay proves that women can be overseers, and, therefore, pastors and elders. But that is not our burden. Instead, it is simply submitted that this essay shows that the view that 1 Tim. 3:1-13 teach that women *can* be overseers is *at least* as plausible as the view of some churches that those verses teach that women cannot be overseers. In sum, 1 Tim. 3:1-13 do not *prove* that women cannot be overseers or, therefore, pastors or elders.