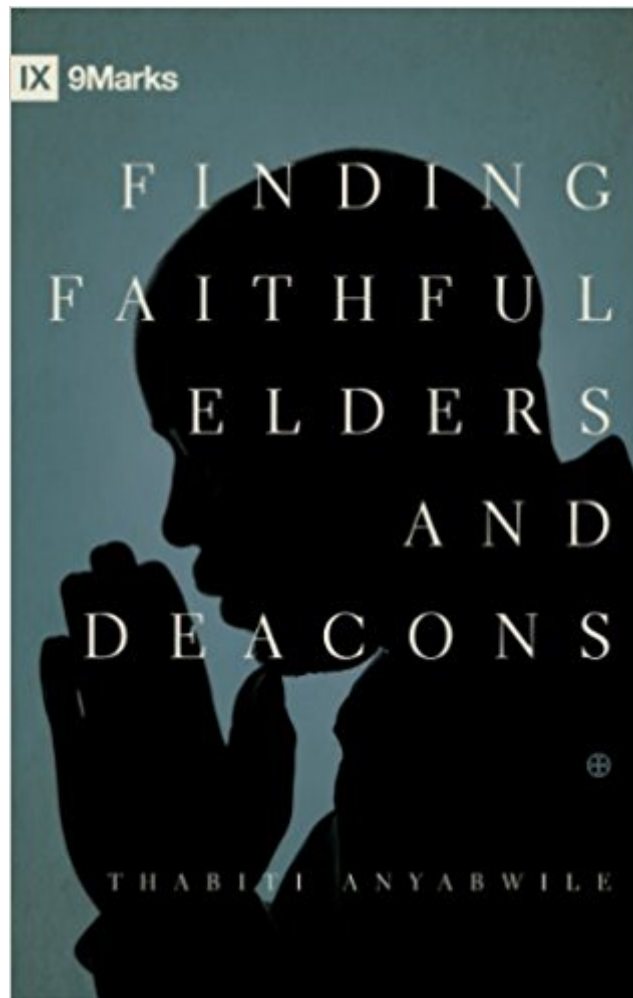




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Finding Faithful Elders And Deacons (9Marks)



Synopsis

Every church leader knows the qualifications for elders and deacons that are spelled out in the Bible, but actually finding other leaders who fulfill the biblical qualifications can be difficult. Thabiti Anyabwile writes from his expertise as a pastor and elder, showing how to identify and reproduce legitimate leaders and willing servants throughout the ranks of the local church. Balancing thoughtful analysis of pertinent passages with thorough application for practical use in a contemporary context, Anyabwile answers the questions, “Who should we look for to lead and serve in the church?” and “What should they do to fulfill their calling?”

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

“Choosing men who will lead your church is serious work. I commend this valuable resource to you from my friend and partner in the gospel, Thabiti Anyabwile. It is both thoughtful and practical. His insights in this book will help you recruit, enlist, and reproduce faithful leaders in your church.”
—James MacDonald, Pastor, Harvest Bible Chapel, Rolling Meadows, Illinois; author, Vertical Church
“Out of an obvious love for the local church, Pastor Thabiti takes biblical leadership very seriously. He takes it so seriously that he has written a book designed to be both biblical and accessible to the people of the church—clearly explaining the Bible’s teaching on the qualifications for leadership and so much more. After a careful exposition of every leadership qualification, he includes a list of helpful questions for the aspiring

leader to ask one's self and for those who will be interviewing such aspiring leaders. Thank you, Thabiti, for helping me to reflect more deeply on my calling as an elder and in my effort to raise up God-glorifying and people-loving leaders in Christ's church for the next generation!

•Tom Steller, Pastor for Leadership Development, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Dean, Bethlehem College and Seminary

“How do we identify, pick, and train the leaders we so desperately need? Pastor Thabiti has written a very practical and theologically faithful book that addresses this critical issue, leaving no stone left unturned. Thabiti's questions on each and every quality are some of the best I have seen. It is the kind of book you will want to keep on hand and refer to as you consider potential deacons and elders for the ministry. The book is down to earth, relevant, and very thought provoking.”

•Dave Kraft, A Life and Leadership Coach, Building Champions; author, *Leaders Who Last; Mistakes Leaders Make*

“This is a great book. On the surface, it's an extended meditation on the biblical qualities of elders and deacons that causes you to think carefully about what God intends for his leaders. What should churches look for? Are you that kind of person? But underneath, it's a radical reorientation of what leadership in the church is. Church leadership does not depend on academic or professional success, but on godliness. This book will help change the way church members and leaders think of leadership, what we value, what we cultivate. Leaders and members both will benefit.”

•Jonathan Leeman, Editorial Director, 9Marks; author, *The Church and the Surprising Offense of God's Love*

“Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons offers the sort of meditations from the Pastoral Epistles that would-be elders and deacons-in-training need. Yet, pastors and laymen alike will find these chapters to be insightful and poignant, for they are faithful to Scripture, culturally contextualized, and able to be implemented immediately. I am encouraged to think that there are thousands of well-meaning churches peddling along with mediocre religious practice that could be transformed into vibrant, Christ-pleasing, soul-winning, community-transforming churches if the officers of their congregations would humbly embrace the simple exhortations of this gracious work.”

•Eric C. Redmond, Assistant Professor of Bible, Moody Bible Institute; Pastor of Adult Ministries, Calvary Memorial Church, Oak Park, Illinois

“Thabiti Anyabwile's book has been a great reminder to me of the basics that can easily be forgotten in the race for ecclesiastical progress—namely, that we need faithful elders and deacons. Although this book is meant to help those looking for church officers to know what to look for, I found the questions to be a good tonic to my soul and a mirror exposing the areas in which I need to shape up as a church pastor.”

•Conrad

Mbewe, pastor, Kabwata Baptist Church, Lusaka, Zambia; chancellor, African Christian University, Lusaka, Zambia

“As a member of a pastoral team that is always at some point in the process of identifying, developing, and affirming elders and deacons, I welcome this very helpful book by Thabiti Anyabwile. Right from the start, with the simple clarity and conviction of the opening sentences, this book is marked by sound biblical teaching. The consistent transition into the practical counsel at the end of each chapter, however, is where this book really proves its worth. Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons will be a most useful primer for all those who are committed to doing church leadership by the Bible.”

•Mike Bullmore, Senior Pastor, CrossWay Community Church, Bristol, Wisconsin

Thabiti M. Anyabwile (MS, North Carolina State University) serves as a pastor at Anacostia River Church in Washington, DC, and is the author of numerous books. He serves as a council member of the Gospel Coalition, is a lead writer for 9Marks Ministries, and regularly blogs at The Front Porch and Pure Church. He and his wife, Kristie, have three children.

A few years ago, I heard Thabiti Anyabwile preach at Together for the Gospel in Louisville. I remember being impressed with his pastoral heart, theologically precise mind, and his feet that were obviously set on obeying and glorifying God. His newest book confirms my first impressions at T4G. Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons reads like cliff notes for men who either aspire to serve, or are currently serve in either office. And "cliff notes" is not a criticism; rather it is written in the most positive vein. This does not suggest watered-down content or "weak tea." Rather, it affirms the qualifications and responsibilities that emerge in Scripture for faithful elders and deacons. It reminds me of Biblical Eldership by Alexander Strauch - but tends to be less technical. While Anyabwile's treatment is theologically and exegetically accurate, it veers away from some of the more technical language and arguments that appear in Strauch. The book is arranged in three parts. Part one and part two survey deacon and elder qualifications - in short how to find faithful leaders for the household of God. Part three summarizes the job description of pastors: Elders Refute Error Elders Avoid Myths and Train for Godliness Elders Hope in God Elders Command Elders Let No One Despise Their Youth Elders Set an Example Elders Teach Elders Grow Elders Watch Their Life Elders Watch Their Doctrine Finding Faithful Elders and Deacons is a welcome and needed reminder for churches who are set on living, leading, and shepherding to the glory of God. This is an important book and deserves to be read. Highly recommended!

I knew this book was sorely needed when one person in our church suggested making someone else a deacon so that they would start coming to church more regularly! This book fills a void in a much needed way. It is practical, and easily readable. Anyabwile walks through the texts that describe the requirements for elders and deacons, and gives help to those in churches who are looking for the next generation of rising leadership. Anyabwile ends each chapter with practical questions (with explanations) to help you locate those who are leadership material, and what sorts of things you should be looking for in their lives. Although the purpose of this book seems rather narrow, in reality it will be helpful in a much broader range of applications. The descriptions of a faithful elder and deacon are really just descriptions of a mature Christian, and therefore this could be a useful tool for discipleship. It is certainly also a useful and convicting book for those already serving in these capacities. Carefully walking through each of the qualifications is a useful bit of accountability, encouragement, and admonition. If I had to nitpick, I would wish that the book was more broadly and explicitly Christ centered. Anyabwile does give fair warning in the introduction that no elder or deacon is perfect, and that we must always undertake these offices in full reliance on the grace of God given to us in Christ. But still, given the nature of the book, as one that undertakes to describe the quality of person who is qualified to serve in the church, I believe that it could have been edifying to refer to our dependence on Jesus more regularly. No one in themselves is fit to serve as an under-shepherd in Christ's church. But in his grace, God calls men to serve him in his church, and to model Christ as they do so. Still, this is a useful book that I'm sure I will be referring back to regularly.

This book lives up to what I have come to expect from 9 Marks, which is solid, biblical wisdom and advice for church government. I bought the book after the latest ordination of new elders in my local church body because I had some reservations about some of the men and wanted to know if my reservations were merely my own opinions and convictions, or if they were based on Scripture. This book has answered my questions and more. I honestly wish I had found it and read it a year ago. I was also looking for guidance on how to conduct an elder nomination process. I'd like to know what how other churches conduct this process and how scripture influences it. This is where the book failed to give me answers I was looking for. There is nothing within its cover that addresses this process. It has plenty to offer about what to look for and the biblical requirements, but nothing about the actual process of choosing and electing elders and deacons. This is the only area I would humbly suggest for improvement upon this excellent resource.

This was an easy and fast read, and was profitable, although I don't think there was anything earthshaking or super insightful in the book. I think it is a good resource for perspective elders and deacons to see how they stack up against the qualifications of the office. My chief concern about the book is that there is a lot of talk about someone being "the deacon/elder of _____" which is really a dangerous way to go about ministry, and can lead to appointing someone to a spiritual office that they are unqualified for because it is unbiblically attached to a skill they are competent at. I also found some of the author's analogies a little flippant, and could lead an undiscerning reader to not treat the office of elder or deacon with the gravity it deserves.

This book was a great refresher on the qualifications and qualities required of deacons and elders. It would be a great resource for any baptistic pastor to have on hand! Each chapter's questions and observations made sure that the issue(s) addressed in the chapter did not stay in the land of theory, but made its appearance in the everyday nitty gritty of church ministry.

Good understanding about the church leader. I will pray and practice to become the better worker in the church. Thank the God.

Very easy to read. Practical and biblical. My third book on elders and a very refreshing one. Good questions and examples.

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