

Elder Training Series

Session 02 - Qualifications Listed in 1 Timothy 3:2 (NIV based)

READ: 1 Timothy 3:2 - "**Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,**"

SECTION POINT: God requires that persons must meet the following criteria listed in the pertaining verses in order to qualify to be an elder, overseer, or pastor.

IMPORTANT NOTE: This list and descriptions of requirements is quite extensive - and it will get even larger as we proceed through the next sessions in this series on the topic of God's requirements to qualify to be an elder, overseer, or pastor of a church or ministry. As we examine each of the requirements, perhaps it would be prudent and wise for you to mark with a colored highlight marker or pen the items that you need to work on or improve in order to meet God's qualification requirements.

"Now the overseer must be" "above reproach", "blameless" (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6,7)

- - "Above reproach" means being blameless, giving no grounds or cause warranting a valid accusation, and undeserving of any finding of fault or offense against him. (1 Timothy 3:2 AMP; AHD - 'reproach')
- - Being "above reproach" and "blameless" means that no one can justifiably "disapprove of, criticize, or bring a charge against the person for wrongdoing" because the person has been "innocent, faultless, and blameless in every respect". (1 Timothy 3:2 Strong's #0423 with AHD - '(without) reproach'; Titus 1:6 Strong's #0410 with AHD - 'irreproachable')
- - Being "above reproach" and "blameless" manifests as the person consistently conducts himself appropriately all the time and everywhere.
- - Thereby, an overseer who is "above reproach" and "blameless" would be someone who readily gains and holds the respect of others around him and who is noticeably worthy of being readily emulated.

"Now the overseer must be..." "the husband of but one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6)

- - God unequivocally says in this verse that a qualified overseer must have never been divorced and have never remarried.
- - The qualified overseer has been and continues to be faithful to his first and only wife.
- - And by implication, he is a good husband, getting along well with his wife and being a model for how he treats her and their children.

- - Notice in this phrase that God designates the overseer to be a man and not a woman, which corresponds to previous verses 1 Timothy 2:11-12 where God states that women are not to exert any authority over men in the church.
- - A proper conclusion then is that God does not approve of nor authorize women to be pastors, elders, leaders, or overseers in any ministry over which they would exert authority over men or teach men.
- - Logically, another proper conclusion though is that women who meet God's qualifications as listed in these Bible passages can be leaders of ministries over

children, youth, and other women, as long as there are no men being the subordinate workers under the woman leader. (Titus 2:3-5)

"Now the overseer must be..." "temperate" (1 Timothy 3:2)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the candidate must be "temperate", always "exercising moderation and self-restraint". (AHD - 'temperate')
- - He also is "sober minded", being generally quiet, calm, and subdued. (from Strong's #3524; AHD - 'sober')
- - Furthermore, he is "circumspect", being "heedful of circumstances and potential consequences; demonstrating pragmatism and common sense; practical". (from Strong's #3524; AHD - 'circumspect')

"Now the overseer must be..." "self-controlled" (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the candidate must be "self-controlled", always maintaining "control of his emotions, desires, and actions, which includes always keeping his composure, coolness, steadiness, and self-discipline". (AHD)
- - Furthermore, the candidate must be "sensible", "having a sound mind" characterized by "having, acting with, and exhibiting reasonableness, good sense, and sound judgment", which are accompanied and influenced by prudence and wisdom. (from Strong's #4998; AHD - 'sensible', 'discreet')

"Now the overseer must be..." "respectable" (1 Timothy 3:2)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the candidate must be "respectable", being "modest, orderly", "socially correct, polite, gentlemanly, nice, proper, well-behaved, and well-mannered". (Strong's #2887; AHD - 'decorous')
- - He earns and deserves respect, approval, and admiration because he always has proper behavior and conduct. (AHD - 'respectable')

"Now the overseer must be..." "hospitable" (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the candidate must be "hospitable", being welcoming of, "cordial toward, and fond of guests, with warmth, generosity, and receptiveness". (from Strong's #5382; AHD - 'hospitable')
- - He delights to have visitors, new people, and strange people come in, no matter what they look like, or smell like, or how quirky they behave, or how weird they look.
- - He is not inconvenienced nor regards as burdensome when new people come in, but rather he values their presence and enjoys serving them to make them comfortable and welcomed. (see James 2:2-4)

"Now the overseer must be..." "able to teach" (1 Timothy 3:2)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the candidate must be "able to teach", which given the context certainly primarily involves the ability to properly teach God's Word, the Holy Bible.
- - Therefore, he must know God's Word (v.1:7), hold sound doctrines (vv.1:3,10), be engaging and interesting while properly presenting God's Word (vv.1:6,8), and be proficient in effectively applying God's Word to the lives of his listeners (v.2:2b), connecting it at their level.

- - Additionally, he must be able to teach and train people how to do ministry. (Ephesians 4:11-12)

- - So patience, gentle instruction, and willingness to repeatedly describe and explain things should predominantly characterize his teaching approach.

- - On a relating note, the ability to teach God's Word, the Holy Bible, is cited as a spiritual gift - an ability given to some true believers and especially empowered by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:7,11,28-29; c.f. Romans 12:7, Ephesians 4:11)

- - Therefore, in order to perform this ability of teaching the Word Of God with extraordinary excellence and great effectiveness, the person must be distinctly empowered by the Holy Spirit during the time a teaching lesson is written and then also during the time that teaching lesson is presented to the audience.

- - If the teacher (or teaching elder) enters either of these times in a current state or condition of "grieving" or "distressing" the Holy Spirit, hindering or quenching His working in the spiritual heart and mind of the teaching person, then the outcome of the teaching will be significantly diminished because the teaching is not fully-empowered by the Holy Spirit. (v.30 in Ephesians 4:20-32)

- - Elders, overseers, and pastors would be wise to always keep this reality in mind when they perform this teaching (or preaching) duty of their position as an elder, overseer, or pastor. And notice that the elder duties of 'serving', 'leadership', 'pastor-ing', and 'administration' are also cited as being among the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit (in Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11-12; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 and 12:28-30; and 1 Peter 4:10-11).

- - For the temporary daily remedy to this 'grieving' / 'distressing' / hindering / quenching of the Holy Spirit, see Romans 6:12-13,16; 1 John 1:9; and Romans 12:1-2.

BIG IDEA: From His lists of requirements, God has set a high standard for personal character qualities of anyone wanting to be an elder, overseer, or pastor of a church or ministry.

APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATION:

- - Are there any of these requirements for which you are feeling convicted by the Holy Spirit that you are deficient in meeting one or more of these requirements?

- - If so, are you in agreement with that prompting of the Holy Spirit? Or are you going to deny, or reject, or hide that you are deficient in one or more of these requirements?

- - If you choose to face the deficiency(s) that you may have from this partial list in this training session, how are you going to remedy or fix the deficiency(s)?

- - Do you have a plan or approach to remedy or fix the deficiency(s)?

- - Do you have some kind of basis to surmise that your plan or approach will be successful?

- - If your plan or approach has failed in the past, then what makes you think your plan or approach will be successful now?

- - To advise you of a resource to assist you in this regard, an extensively-tested highly-effective approach to remedy or fix spiritual deficiencies is available for free download

on the 'Counseling' web-page of this website www.believerassist.com , and it is in the Seminar Series "Biblical Counseling Training for Lay Counselors", and is entitled "Session 03 - Identifying, Exposing, And Treating Ungodly Or Sinful Habits, Behavior Patterns, Thinking, Speaking, Etc."

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