

Elder Training Series

Session 03 - Qualifications Listed in 1 Timothy 3:3-5, with some parallels in Titus 1:7,6 and 1 Peter 5:2 (NIV based)

READ: 1 Timothy 3:3

(Continuing) 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.

(Repeating) NOTE: As we examine each of the requirements in these next verses, again 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..." "not [be] given to drunkenness," (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the person must not be "given to drunkenness", which in the Greek means not to be a drinker of any alcohol, which is regardless of whether or not he drinks in moderation or excess. (Strong's #3943)
- - The overseer is to be psychologically healthy, thereby having no need to drink alcohol and no desire to drink alcohol.
- - Also, a prudent overseer recognizes that drinking alcohol poses a major dangerous threat to ministry work, and therefore totally abstains from drinking alcohol not only as a precaution but also as a behavior choice to be emulated by those he oversees. (cf. v.3 in 1 Peter 5:1-3)
- - Properly, this requirement from God for total abstinence of alcohol by overseers also applies to other mind-affecting drugs such as marijuana, cocaine, and etcetera.
- - As is evident from the exposition of this verse phrase, God holds the overseer to a much higher standard than He does other believers, in this particular case so that the overseer is observably "being an example to the flock". (1 Peter 5:3)

"Now the overseer must..." "not [be] violent but gentle" (1 Timothy 3:3; c.f. Titus 1:7)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the person must not be "violent", meaning not "combative in nature, belligerent, quarrelsome, aggressive, litigious, or militant". (AHD - 'pugnacious', from Strong's #4131)
- - The overseer is not to be verbally or physically aggressive, or assaultive, or accusatory.
- - Instead, the overseer is to have a "gentle, appropriate, and mild disposition". (Strong's #1933)
- - He does not get angry nor verbally or physically attack people who oppose him but rather he uses gentle persuasion in conjunction with proper teaching from God's Word. (2 Timothy 2:25-26)

"Now the overseer must..." "not [be] quarrelsome" (1 Timothy 3:3)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the person must not be "quarrelsome", meaning he does not quarrel, argue, antagonize, or incite controversy. (AHD - 'quarrelsome')
- - By extension, he does not escalate disagreements into quarrels nor does he continue to participate in discussions any further when they start to become agitated or heated.

- - The overseer is always in control of his speaking and resorts to peacefulness rather than quarreling.
- - Therefore, winning an argument is not a priority for him.
- - However, he does confront the teaching of false doctrines as appropriate, but even then he actively avoids arguments and instead focuses on calmly presenting and promoting sound doctrine and God's work. (vv.1:3,4b; cf. Titus 1:9)

"Now the overseer must..." "not [be] a lover of money", "not greedy for money", "not pursuing dishonest gain" (1 Timothy 3:3; 1 Peter 5:2; Titus 1:7)

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the person must not be "a lover of money", meaning he does not strive to gain wealth nor to acquire materialistic possessions. (1 Timothy 3:3, *AHD* - 'avaricious', from Strong's #0866)
- - He is not "greedy for money", not being compelled or driven or "especially desirous to possess more than what he needs or deserves". (1 Peter 5:2, *AHD* - 'greedy')
- - Nor does he engage in get-rich-quick schemes, or shady business deals, or "pursuing dishonest gain". (Titus 1:7)
- - In other words, he is content with what he has, and his efforts are exerted on building God's Kingdom rather than building his own mansion and wealth. (cf. 1 Timothy 6:6-8)
- - This does not mean, however, that he is a wild or careless spender.
- - He manages his finances well and is frugal and careful to subsist on what God has supplied and he successfully continues with those provisions until God supplies more.
- - And he serves God from altruism and not from a desire or plan to attain financial affluence. (1 Peter 5:2)
- - He does not "serve two masters" - he serves God and willfully does not serve money. (Matthew 6:24)

READ: 1 Timothy 3:4

SECTION POINT: To be qualified as an overseer, a person must have demonstrated that he has managed his own family well.

"He must manage his own family well"

- - To be qualified as an overseer, the person must be demonstrating that he "manages his own family well".
- - In effect, he is overseeing his family, authoritatively watching over and establishing the direction his family is going in life. (from Strong's #4291 - 'manage')
- - He is decisive to set values, priorities, conduct boundaries, the atmosphere in the home, condition of relationships, spiritual pursuits, and etcetera, which he then is diligent to monitor and appropriately implement.

"and see that his children obey him with proper respect"

- - The person also must be demonstrating success in his presiding over the raising of his children.
- - He consistently holds his children accountable, ensuring that they are always properly respectful and subordinate to authority. (Strong's #3956 - 'all' (omitted in the *NIV*); #5292 - 'obey')

- - This includes the condition of their character, that his children genuinely possess "complete and confirmed integrity, uprightness, moral excellence, goodness, decency, and morality". (AHD - 'probity', from Strong's #4587 - 'proper respect')
- - And he ensures his children always exhibit "appreciation, considerateness, favorable regard, high opinion, and honor" of others, including those people in authority over them. (AHD - 'respect')

READ: Titus 1:6 - "**An elder must be... a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.**"

- - In Titus 1:6 is further added that each of the person's children must be a true believer
- having genuinely and personally placed their faith in Jesus Christ, that He died on the cross for their own sins, and that He rose from the dead on the third day.
- - Even though his children may have repeatedly heard this information about Jesus perhaps in various church or religious environments over the years, they must have applied this information about Jesus to themselves personally in the form of establishing their own true faith in Jesus. They need to have moved their head-knowledge about Jesus into a personal heart-knowledge of Jesus.
- - Furthermore, each of his children must be applying to their attitude and behaviors the basic principles that correspond to and spring forth from having genuine faith in Jesus.
- - Their conduct needs to be consistently appropriate, and does not generate "accusations or complaints" from people in various settings that his children "lack moral restraint" or are "wild", "unruly, un-subdued, insubordinate", or "disobedient". (Strong's #2724, #0810, #0506)
- - In effect, the children of a prospective elder demonstrate his competence or incompetence in modeling, teaching, and insisting on godly character.
- - The implication here is that the person's children and own family members see how genuine his faith is, and thereupon they each embrace it as their own, personally responding agreeably to how he lives out his faith and what he has been teaching them about the faith.

READ: 1 Timothy 3:5

SECTION POINT: A person who has not managed his own family well likely will not be a good manager of God's church.

- - With the inclusion of this question in verse 5, extra emphasis is being placed on the necessity that the person must have a proven history or track record of proficient managing of his own family well - demonstrated skills, demonstrated priority, demonstrated people management skills, demonstrated interpersonal skills, demonstrated organizational management skills, demonstrated financial management, demonstrated leadership, and demonstrated oversight.
- - To be appropriately successful at managing his own family thereupon requires that the person has a personality disposition which properly ensures that the conduct of the people under his oversight stays within certain limits or boundaries.
- - In other words, he has balanced intestinal fortitude, which is not wishy-washy or lax, nor is it extreme or harsh.

- - God requires that elders have the character quality of being ready and willing to appropriately take a stand for what is right, what is proper in the church.
 - - If the person has demonstrated that he knows how to manage his family well, therefore he possesses the basic skills to manage and "take care of [the people in] God's church" well.
 - - And the converse is likewise true, that if he has not demonstrated ability and success at managing his own family well, then he lacks the basic skills to successfully manage God's church, and therefore he is unqualified for becoming an elder or ministry overseer.
 - - The implied principle is that the person will "direct the affairs of the church" in the same way and will achieve essentially the same results that he does from directing the affairs of his family. (v.5:17)
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(Repeating) 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 need to remedy or fix deficiency?
 - - Being truthful and honest, do you consume any alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, or other mind-affecting drugs that disqualify you from becoming an elder, or overseer, or pastor?
 - - Being truthful and honest, are there occasions in which you are combative, or verbally assaultive, or aggressive, or quarrelsome?
 - - Being truthful and honest, do you essentially strive to gain wealth or to acquire materialistic possessions?
 - - Being truthful and honest, does how you manage your family and children disqualify you from becoming an elder, or overseer, or pastor?
 - - As a fair warning, you do realize, don't you, that if you hide or minimize or ignore your deficiencies in any of God's requirements for elders, sooner or later you likely will cause some or much hindering, or diminishing, or harm to come upon the church or ministry that you are an elder or overseer in?
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