

- ✓ for
- **Elders**
- Part 1
- **✓** Titus 1:6b–9

"For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, selfcontrolled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict."

Review

- The Apostle Paul evangelized the island of Crete after his first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28:30–31), sometime between the years AD 62–65, on his fourth missionary journey.
- He did not stay long enough to establish the new congregations but delegated the task to Titus (Titus 1:5a).
- Crucial to the establishment of these new congregations was the appointment of "elders" for each congregation (1:5b).
- But what kind of men were fit for this appointment?

Overview

- Fundamentally, candidates were to be recognized by the fact that others did not have allegations of misconduct against them—i.e., candidates were to be "above reproach" (1:6a).
- But to provide greater clarity, Paul provides Titus with an additional list of fourteen specific characteristics (1:6b-9):
 - Two focused on the man's reputation in the home (1:6b).
 - Twelve focused on the man's reputation in the Christian fellowship and in society at large (1:7–9).

"above reproach" (Titus 1:6a, 7a)

Character in the Home

two required qualities (v. 6b)

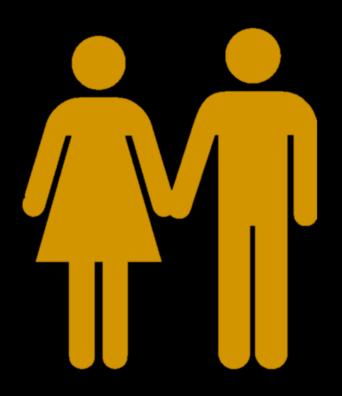
Character in the Church

- five qualities prohibited (v. 7b)
- seven qualities required (vv. 8–9)

- These fourteen characteristics in 1:6–9 provided the standard by which Titus was to assess and appoint candidates as elders.
- These characteristics remain the authoritative standard for evaluating candidates for eldership in the church today.
 - I. Evaluate elder-candidates first in the home (1:6b).
 - II. Evaluate elder-candidates then in the church (1:7-9).
- These characteristics also provide the standard by which all members of the church should orient their lives (Titus 2–3).

I. Evaluate elder-candidates first in the home.

"if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife . . . " (1:6)



- Paul begins by pointing first to the candidate's most definitive relationship: his relationship with his wife.
- He does the same in 1 Timothy 3:2 ("An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife").
- What does this quality mean? Five views:

- VIEW #1: The man must be married "the husband of a wife, not single."
- VIEW #2: The man must not be a polygamist "the husband of one wife, not many."
- VIEW #3: The man must be married only once in life "the husband of one wife, ever."
- VIEW #4: The man must not be divorced and remarried "the husband of one living wife."

- VIEW #5: The man must be maritally pure "the husband loyal to one wife."
 - Paul is not focused on status but on character.
 - His language is intentionally general, able to address all kinds of moral issues related to marriage.
 - Infidelity was as rampant in Paul's day; the candidate qualified for the office could not have any accusations against him in this area.
 - Such a quality was a greatly-needed example for the rest of the church struggling with temptation.
 - By it Paul emphasizes the priority of covenant faithfulness.

"The correct sense here is not quantitative but qualitative. The man is truly a one-woman man. There are no other women in his life. He is totally faithful. . . . He is 'a man who having contracted a monogamous marriage is faithful to his wedding vows."



—Kent Hughes, 1, 2 Timothy and Titus, 78

- Elders must manifest strict covenant loyalty in their marriages, because they serve as examples of what faithfulness looks like to the rest of the church.
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:3–8 "For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality, that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor."
 - Hebrews 13:4 "Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."

 Life-long, exclusive faithfulness to one's wife is the most powerful testimony to the strength of a man's loyalty.

 Marital faithfulness serves as the litmus test of a man's commitment to his promises.



"Because if a man is not faithful to his wife, how can he be trusted to be faithful to his obligations elsewhere? If a man cheats on his wife, where else will he cheat?"

—Pritchard, Man of Honor, 196

"if any man is above reproach, . . . having children who believe" (1:6)



- Paul next turns to the second most definitive relationship: his relationship with his children.
- He does the same in 1 Timothy 3:4 ("one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity).
- What does this quality mean? Two views:

• VIEW #1: The man must have children who believe in Christ—who have been raised to share the same faith as their father.

• VIEW #2: The man must have children who are obedient—who have been raised to follow his leadership.

VIEW #1: - Salvific Faith "believers"

VIEW #1: -Moral Faithfulness "faithful"

NASB, ESV, NIV

LSB, CSB, KJV, NKJV

- VIEW #1 (savific belief) is generally supported by Paul's use of the adjective πιστός (pistos) in the Pastoral Epistles.
- When applied to *persons*, the adjective more frequently refers to *salvific faith* than to moral faithfulness or reliability.
 - Timothy 4:10 "For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of <u>believers</u>."
 - 1 Timothy 6:2 "Those who have <u>believers</u> as their masters must not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but must serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are <u>believers</u> and beloved. . . ."

 VIEW #2 (obedience) is generally supported by the context and more closely harmonizes with 1 Timothy 3:4–5.

The Context of Titus 1:6

The Parallel of 1 Timothy 3:4

"having faithful children"

"not accused of dissipation [wild]

living] or rebellion"

"having his children *under* control"

- Elders must manifest the ability to raise children successfully, because they are to serve as the example after which others in the church can pattern their parenting.
- After all, all Christian fathers are expected to manage their households well:
 - Ephesians 6:4 "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."
 - Deuteronomy 6:4–9; Proverbs



"He talketh of prayer, of repentance, of faith, and of the new birth; but he knows only to talk of them. I have been in his family, and have observed him both at home and abroad; and I know what I say of him is the truth. His house is empty of religion as the white of an egg is of savor. There is there neither prayer nor

sign of repentance for sin Thus say the common people that know him: 'A saint abroad and a devil at home.' His poor family finds it so For my part, I am of the opinion that he has, by his wicked life, caused many to stumble and fall; and will be, if God, prevent not, the ruin of many more."

—"Talkative," in *Pilgrim's Progress*

IMPLICATIONS



 Pray for your elders; they are men at best, always in need of divine grace and enablement.

 Pray that God would raise up qualified elders; the great need across the world is for such men (Matt 9:36–38).

 Consider how your life imitates this "blueprint of maturity" that all Christians should reflect.