

- ✓ for
- Elders
- Part 2
- **✓** 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 Part 1 rebellion.

For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not Part 2 pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,

but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, 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."

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

## **Character in the Home**

two required qualities (v. 6)

## **Character in the Church**

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

#### Review

- The criteria for choosing elders were not mere desire and availability but observable character and skill.
- Ultimately, each candidate had to possess a reputation against which allegations of misconduct were not being made.
- To define such a reputation, Paul focuses first on home life (v. 6):
  - (1) loyalty to the marriage covenant; and
  - (2) success in raising children.

#### **Overview**

 Paul now transitions to criteria related to the candidate's reputation as observable in general life (vv. 7–9).

He begins in v. 7 with a series of five prohibited characteristics.

• These are "the five disqualifying sins" for church leadership.

But these are not just disqualifying for eldership candidates;
 they discredit the reputations of all Christians (see 2:1–3:11).

# II. Evaluate elder-candidates then in general life.

"For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward" (1:7a)

- Paul now employs a different term to describe the person he previously referred to as an "elder" in v. 5.
- The term "overseer" (ἐπίσκοπος, episkopos) is used 5x in the NT: Acts 20:28; Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:7; and 1 Pet 2:25.
- While "elder" emphasizes maturity, "overseer" emphasizes the function of guardianship.

# "For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward" (1:7a)

- Paul once again stresses that moral qualification is not a preference; it is a necessity.
- He uses his strongest language yet:
   "For it is necessary—with respect to
   the overseer—above reproach to be."
- Why? Because he is "God's
  steward"—i.e., the administrator of
  God's household.



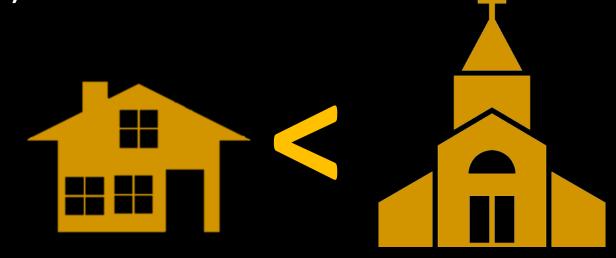


"Brethren, it is easier to declaim against a thousand sins of others, than to mortify one sin in ourselves; to be more industrious in our pulpits, than in our closets. Believe it sirs, all our reading, studying, and preaching, is but trifling hypocrisy till the things read, studied, and preached, be felt in some degree upon our own heart."

—John Flavel, "The Character of a Complete Evangelical Pastor"

Equation: "elder" (v. 5) = "overseer" (v. 7) = steward" (v. 7).

 Progression: smaller to the greater—from the man's reputation in the home (v. 6) to the man's reputation in the church (v. 7).



 1 Timothy 3:5 – "if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?" "not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain" (1:7b)

#### 1. Pride

• "self-willed" – one who is "headstrong," "self-centered," "stubborn," or "arrogant"—who strongly asserts his own opinion with little effort to listen to others.



• "At the root is a fundamental selfishness that compels one to ride roughshod over others in the effort to satisfy oneself" (Towner, Letters to Timothy and Titus, 687).

- Being "self-willed" is not the same as being "courageous."
- Paul does insist that an elder must be able "to hold fast the faithful word . . . so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict" (v. 9).
- "But such forthrightness cannot cross over the line to self-importance and a sense of superiority or entitlement over others" (Yarbrough, Letters to Timothy and Titus, 484).
- *Maxim:* Living to please self (self-pleaser) is just as dishonorable as living to please others (others-pleaser).

"The death of the spiritual life starts here, and in the end there is nothing left but empty spiritual chatter and clerical condescension which chokes on pious words. Those who cannot listen long and patiently will always be talking past others, and finally no longer will even notice it."

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Life Together, 98



- This character trait—self-will—was particularly palpable among the Cretans, posing special dangers for the church.
- Titus 1:12–13 "One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, 'Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons.' This testimony is true. For this reason reprove them severely so that they may be sound in the faith."
- Titus 3:9–11 "But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned."

"not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain" (1:7b)

#### 2. Wrath

- "quick-tempered" one who is "irritable" or "irascible,"
  who does not have his anger under control.
- The term is based off the noun orgē ("wrath"),
  which when exercised by God is always righteous,
  but when exercised by man is always sinful.
- It is the antithesis of "peaceable" (1 Tim 3:3).

"Then Moses lifted up his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came forth abundantly, and the congregation and their beasts drank. But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, 'Because you have not believed Me, to treat Me as holy in the sight of the sons of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

-Numbers 20:11-12

"Moses Strikes the Rock" by Edward Poynter (we could also call it "Moses Disqualifies Himself")



- A short fuse is fatal to relationships, let alone to the leadership of God's people.
- Proverbs 10:12 "Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions."
- Proverbs 15:18 "A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger calms a dispute."
- Proverbs 20:3 "Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, but any fool will quarrel."
- Proverbs 26:21 "Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife."

"For how shall he instruct others to rule that passion [of anger], who has not taught himself? For power leads on to many temptations, it makes a man more harsh and difficult to please, even him that was very mild, surrounding him with so many occasions of anger. If he have not previously practiced himself in this virtue, he will grow harsh, and will injure and destroy much that is under his rule."

—Chrysostom, *Homily II*, on Titus 1:5-11

- Scripture instructs us to avoid the quick-tempered.
- Proverbs 22:24–25 "Do not associate with a man given to anger; or go with a hot-tempered man, or you will learn his ways and find a snare for yourself."
- Romans 16:17 "Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them."
- Titus 3:9-11 "But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned."

"not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain" (1:7b)

## 3. Gluttony

- "not addicted to wine" literally, "one who dwells alongside the wine"; figuratively, "one given to drinking too much."
- The candidate cannot be one who is marked by a "thirst" for alcohol.
- He cannot be known as one who lingers alongside of it, who crosses the line into excess and loses control.

"As I coach and mentor church planters and pastors, I am shocked at the number of them who are either addicted or headed toward addiction to alcohol. Increasingly, the same is true with prescription drugs. One pastor I know could not relax without several beers after work and could not sleep without the aid of a sleeping pill. "

—Darren Patrick, Church Planter, 51

- Scripture emphasizes that enslavement to alcohol is sin, and that such enslavement warrants strong discipline.
- 1 Corinthians 5:11 "But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one."
- Ephesians 5:18 "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit."
- Titus 2:2–3 "Older men are to be temperate," older women are not to be "enslaved to much wine."

- With increased enslavement to substances like alcohol comes:
  - Decreased rational capacity (Hosea 4:11).
  - Decreased moral restraint (Ephesians 5:18a).
  - Decreased spiritual discernment (Isaiah 5:11–12).
  - Increased physical enslavement (Proverbs 23:34–35).
  - Increased economic consequence (Proverbs 21:17).

"not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain" (1:7b)

## 4. Aggression

- "not pugnacious" literally, "a striker;" figuratively, one who is always ready for a battle.
- "Striker is therefore the term which he applies to those who deal much in threatenings, and are of a warlike temperament" (John Calvin).
- "A man who is ever ready with his fists, a bellicose person, a spitfire or fire-eater" (Hendriksen, *Pastoral Epistles*, 125).

58. *Resolved*: Not only to refrain from an air of dislike, fretfulness, and anger in conversation, but to exhibit an air of love, cheerfulness, and benignity.

59. Resolved: When I am most conscious of provocations to ill nature and anger, that I will strive most to feel and act good-naturedly; yea, at such times, to manifest good nature . . .

—Jonathan Edwards, "Resolutions"

- Titus 3:9–11 "But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and strife and disputes about the Law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned."
- 2 Timothy 2:24–25 "The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will."

"not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain' (1:7b)

#### 5. Greed

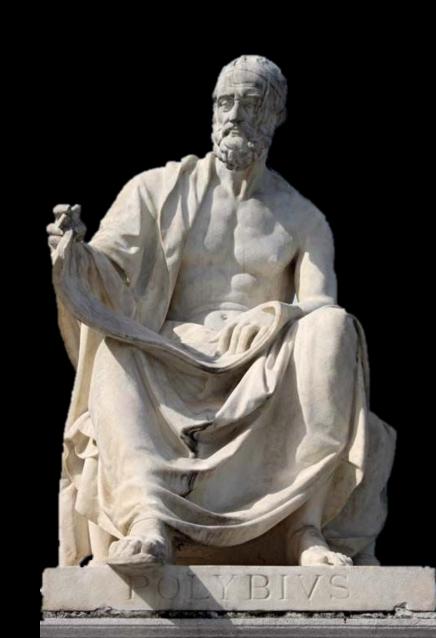
• "not fond of sordid gain" – shamelessly greedy for money.



 Titus 1:10-11 - "For there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach for the sake of sordid gain."

"Money is held in such high honor among them that its acquisition is not only regarded as necessary, but as most honorable. So much in fact do sordid love of gain and lust for wealth prevail among them, that the Cretans are the only people in the world in whose eyes no gain is disgraceful. . . . The Cretans . . . owing to their ingrained lust of wealth are involved in constant broils both public and private, and in murders and civil wars."

—Polybius, Histories, 6.46.2–5



- Paul does not teach against the financial support of elders (1 Cor 9:13 14; 1 Tim 5:17–18).
- He does, however, identify a ubiquitous problem: ministry motivated by money, not by God's glory and His people.
- Acts 20:33 "I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes."
- 1 Timothy 3:3 "free from the love of money."
- 1 Peter 5:2 "shepherd the flock of God . . . not for sordid gain, but with eagerness."

## **Summary**

"In this list of five vices Paul has singled out ways in which one may be gripped and controlled by the different sins of self: pride, anger, and desire for drink, dominance, or wealth. Being controlled by any of these disqualifies a man from the position of 'overseer,' one who leads others by serving as God's steward."

—Polybius, *Pastoral Epistles*, 292

## **IMPLICATIONS**



- Pray for your elders; they are men at best.
- Examine your own life for the discrediting sins of pride, wrath, gluttony, aggression, and greed.
- Relying upon God's enablement, put off these sins and replace them with their opposite virtues: humility, peace, self-control, patience, and generosity.