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C1126 – August 10, 2011 – 1 Titus 1:5-9
Qualifications Of Elders

One question last week, somewhat related to our class on church leadership, but not directly. Question: What about women teaching women? Answer: Basically three passages are involved. First, Titus 2:3-5, “Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.” So yes, one part of the answer to your question is yes. Older women are to teach younger women these practical duties that relate to their sphere of the home. They’re not teaching younger women Bible studies on the Book of Isaiah or something like that, they are instructing them in proper behavior in the home, practical things like how to love those little brats that destroyed your carpet this morning, how to stay home and take care of the home, how to submit to their own husbands who don’t do anything so far as they can see, how to be kind and not bite everybody’s head off - those are the kinds of things a younger woman needs to learn, because God has designated the home to be the place where most of her trials will occur and where most of her spiritual growth will occur. It’s all in the home. This is necessary Paul says “so that the word of God will not be dishonored.” So older women are giving a teaching forum and it is outside of the local church meeting, and it is exclusively to the younger women for the purpose of advising them in these practical matters of the home. The second passage is 1 Cor 14:34, “The women are to keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but are to subject themselves, just as the Law also says. 35 If they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church.” Clearly this says a woman cannot teach in the church. No women can teach in the congregational gathering, they can’t even speak. And Paul says two verses

later, “if anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized.” So in the church gathering women are to keep silent, no teaching. Finally 1 Tim 2:11, “A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. 12But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet.” Same instruction for women in the assembly, silence. If you want to know something go home and ask your husband. And then he gives the reasons, all of which relate to the Creation and the Fall in Genesis.

These things seem very clearly taught in the Bible and they used to be very clearly understood by the church but what’s happened? The culture outside the church has been brought into the church and now we have all kinds of unbiblical practices so far as women are concerned. It’s my observation over the years, and it’s just an observation, but if the women would fulfill their biblical requirements they wouldn’t even have time for these other things like women teaching other women Bible studies. They would be so busy obeying the Lord by teaching younger women these practical matters in the home that they would be totally fulfilled by ministry. And trust me, the ministry opportunities are there. The very fact that very few younger women even stay at home is evidence that they don’t want to be in the home because that’s too much frustration and struggle. They need the help of older women, they need their guidance, they need their ideas on how to, they need their encouragement to stick it out. So this need is tremendous today and if the Scriptures are going to be respected then some major changes are going to have to happen with both the older and the younger women in Christ’s church.

Alright, we’ve been spending our time in 1 Timothy 3 dealing with the qualifications of the elder first and then the deacon. Today we’re going to turn to Titus and return to the qualifications of elder again. These are critical passages in the NT that are given for the proper ordering of God’s household on earth until Christ returns for His household. And the fact is that the NT gives much greater proportion of revelation regarding the elder than the deacon. Both are important but the nature of the elderate is that it oversees all aspects of God’s household and the diaconate is in assistance to the elderate. So that explains why a much greater proportion of revelation is relegated to the elderate.

So this week we turn to Titus 1. Just as 1 Timothy was written from Paul to Timothy so Titus was written from Paul to Titus. Both of these men were converted through Paul's evangelistic ministry and were trained quickly by Paul's discipleship ministry. Paul always evangelized and followed up quickly with training to get new believers well-grounded in the Christian faith. And as he trained them he would look for those who were extremely zealous for the word of God and he would take them into his inner circle and give them intense training. This was after the model of the Lord Jesus Christ who had his circle of the 70 and inside that circle he had the 12 and inside the circle of the 12 he had the inner circle of the three, Peter, James and John. So Paul had a circle and he chose men to be in the innermost circle who had the greatest zeal and capacity for ministry.

Timothy was one of these men. Timothy had a Jewish mother but a Greek father and Paul wanted to take him into the inner circle and he had him circumcised. Titus was another one of these men Paul wanted to take along. Titus had a Greek mother and a Greek father so he was not circumcised. It's interesting that both these men were involved in the circumcision debacle. Timothy gets involved in Acts 17 because Paul did circumcise him and Titus gets involved in Gal 2 because Paul did not circumcise him. This confuses people so a common solution is to say that Paul was wrong to have Timothy circumcised. However, this misses the point. Paul didn't have Timothy circumcised as a requirement of salvation, Paul had Timothy circumcised for practical ministry purposes. Timothy was a unique case because his mother was Jewish and in that case the son would be born and they would not circumcise him. Instead they would allow the son to grow up and decide whether he wanted to identify with the Jewish people or not. If he did want to then he would be circumcised. Paul put this decision forward to Timothy and Timothy decided he wanted to. This was advantageous for ministry purposes because it would give Timothy access to Jews in the synagogue, so it would increase his ministry opportunities. As for Titus, he went up to Jerusalem with Paul and Barnabas to see Peter and James and John. The main purpose of this visitation was to make sure that the gospel Paul was preaching was the same gospel that Peter, James and John were preaching. Paul took Titus as a test case because Titus was a full Gentile. And in that meeting Titus was not compelled to be circumcised. So it is very clear that circumcision is not part of the gospel message, whether Jew or Greek,

whether slave or free, whether male or female, it makes no difference, we are all justified by faith in Jesus Christ.

And therefore, the implication is that Paul didn't care whether you were Jew or Gentile. If he came in and evangelized and you believed and he trained and you showed a great zeal as a disciple and a capacity for ministry then Paul would want to take you into his inner circle so he could train you in the details of ministry. It's normal for a gifted teacher to want to take a few faithful men into an inner circle and give them high level training. He did this with Timothy and he did this with Titus. And his strategy was, of course, one of efficiency. Paul didn't waste his time on believers that messed around. Paul poured his time into men who would go out and teach other faithful men so they could teach other faithful men and so forth. Paul was always pouring his time into the faithful men because Paul followed the principle of efficiency; you are limited in what you can do so you don't waste time on believers that don't show much interest. You give time to men who do, a very important principle if you're going to duplicate yourself and build a strong ministry.

Now the men that Paul took into his inner circle would undergo a period of intense training and then gradually Paul would cut them loose, give them some opportunities to minister. For example, when Timothy started out with Paul and Silas on the 2nd Missionary Journey he was not much more than a go-fer boy until they got kicked out of Thessalonica. So city after city Timothy was sort of in the background doing odd jobs, things that Paul and Silas needed, fetching this and fetching that, so they could dedicate themselves to evangelism and training. But when Paul and Silas were kicked out of Thessalonica the only one with access was Timothy, so it was obvious that this was the time to inject Timothy into the ministry. And so they sent him back to strengthen and encourage the Thessalonians in the faith. It's like Timothy was a newly hatched bird in a nest and Paul is the daddy and he's kicking him out of the nest and said, go fly, it's time. Every young disciple has to learn how to fly. And Paul had trained him sufficiently by this point that he could fly so he pushed him out of the nest.

By the time of 1 and 2 Timothy, Timothy has become an experienced man in the ministry but Paul is still instructing him in practical matters of ministry, and in particular, how each member in the household of God should conduct

him or her-self; whether a part of the congregation or a part of the leadership. Inside the leadership you have two offices, elders and deacons, and each has certain qualifications. They overlap to a great degree, showing that their functions often overlap and they therefore need to stay in close communication, but they also have distinctives. Namely, the elder is given a teaching qualification, and that shows a major difference between deacon and elder. The deacon does not aspire to teaching, the elder does. And that is the main difference between an elder and a deacon so far as practical function is concerned in the church body.

Now we turn to Titus. And Paul did similar things with Titus as he did with Timothy. Titus was one of his personal converts and he was trained by Paul, he showed great promise so Paul took him into the inner circle and trained him intensely in ministry. He became one of Paul's most precious assets. He was beloved of Paul, he brought Paul great joy and he comforted and encouraged Paul on a number of occasions. Titus got injected into the ministry by Paul at Corinth when some contributions needed to be collected, Titus was the man who was sent, and eventually he was all over the ancient world ministering in various places such as Dalmatia on the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea and in Crete where Paul left him to set things in order.

Crete is where we find him in the Book of Titus. Crete was an island in the Mediterranean that receives no little attention in the NT. When Paul was arrested and faced his trials in Caesarea he finally appealed to Caesar and was sent by ship to Rome. On the way the ship came to port at Fair Havens on the isle of Crete (Acts 27). This port was not well protected from the upcoming winter storms so the pilot and captain argued that they needed to set sail over to the port at Phoenix. Paul disagreed with them but they decided against Paul and they set sail trying to reach Phoenix. But they never made it because a northeaster rose up and drove them along a course that eventually ended up in a shipwreck on the island of Malta. Now from this account we can't tell if Paul was on Crete long enough to start a church, he was a prisoner at the time but he did have some liberties, however, it's possible that he was there long enough to plant some churches.

On the other hand, there could have already been churches in various cities on the island of Crete because in Acts 2 there were Jews from Crete that were present on the day of Pentecost. And some of them could have been among

the 3,000 that believed that day and when they returned to the island they could have set up churches. In any case there were churches on the island of Crete. And Paul had been there during his voyage to Rome. And it's my guess that after his first imprisonment at Rome he met up with Titus who visited him regularly in Rome and they went to Crete. Now in Titus 1 Paul has left Titus in Crete to set things in order at the various churches on the island.

Now this was no small task for several reasons. For one, Crete is a large island about 150 miles long and about 35 miles wide; it had a number of cities on it, so geographically it was a tremendous task; Titus would have to cover a lot of ground. Second, Cretans were a very licentious people. Notice verse 12, "One of themselves, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." This testimony is true." Paul affirms it. It was uttered by a poet named Epimenides in the 6th century BC and Paul says this poet summed up the culture in a single line of poetry. Paul had seen it for himself; generally speaking Cretans lied, acted like animals, and were lazy gluttons. So the culture on Crete was very licentious. Every city or country has its sinful practices and it's always a temptation for Christians to capitulate or accommodate to those sinful practices. And what's the number one thing licentious people resist? Law and order. They don't like authority. They just want to do what they want to do and when they want to do it. So Titus is going to have to go in there and establish law and order. That's a tough task. And if you look further on down in Tit 2:15 you'll see that Paul knows Titus has a tough task. "These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you." he warns him, don't let them disregard you Titus, I know they're going to try. The Cretans are a bunch of lazy, evil people and the people in the Church are no different. So this is a rather lively letter and quite frankly it makes for some very interesting study.

Now if you notice in verse 5, and I'm going to use my translation because it's a lot more honest to the original, I don't know why the translators turn into softies when they translate the Bible but they do. This is tough talk. **For this reason I left you in Crete, in order that you yourself might correct the deficiency and you might appoint elders in each city, just as I ordered you.** Notice first of all there's a **deficiency**. Paul doesn't sugar coat it, *leiponta* means there is something lacking at the churches on the island of Crete. So the first thing is we have a problem here. And the problem is they

have no leadership, no elders. Imagine a church with no leadership! Better yet, imagine a group of sheep with no shepherds. What in the world is going to happen to the sheep? Well number one the wolves are going to have a feast. Sheep are basically defenseless animals, they can't do anything against a wolf and so when a wolf attacks it will take the lamb by the throat, break the neck and blood will spew out of the jugular and then rip it to pieces, it's a bloody mess. And its exactly the mess described in vv 10 and 11, there are wolves that are ripping this body of believers apart, upsetting whole families, teaching heresy, scamming money. So the first understatement of the year is that there's a deficiency at Crete, no leadership.

The second understatement of the year in verse 5 is that it would be no small task to correct it. Notice the end of the verse, **just as I ordered you**. Paul and Titus had already discussed this problem. Titus knew it had to be corrected. Now Paul is giving him the order again. Now why would you do that unless you knew that Titus would be tempted to not follow through? Why would you repeat an order unless you were pretty sure that Titus must just take the hands off approach? Paul knew it was a big job Titus had to do and that Titus would have to stand up to these lazy believers and so he writes and repeats the order,

The third thing is that Titus was the man for the job. I don't know exactly why Paul chose Titus to do this. But I suspect the reason is this: Titus had spent considerable time at another licentious city that was just glowing with a Christian testimony, Corinth. So Titus had experience with these kinds of licentious believers and he knew how to handle them. So it's my guess, and it's an educated one at least, Paul chose Titus to stay at Crete and take this on because he knew from personal ministry experience what it was like to handle licentious believers.

A fourth thing we might point out from verse 5 is that the **reason** Paul left him **in Crete** was to correct this problem. That shows the gravity of the problem. Paul would have probably liked to take Titus with him. Later in the letter he's going to say, come to me as soon as you can at Nicopolis. So he probably wouldn't have even left him if this wasn't a big problem that needed a big correction.

And fifth, the correction itself is to **appoint elders in each city**, they need leadership badly; the wolves were having a field day with the sheep there, just ripping them to shreds. And the solution for that was to get some shepherds that will watch over the sheep and protect them from the wolves. That makes a lot of sense and that's the main reason Paul writes the letter.

Sixth, notice the term **elders**, we've seen this word before, it's *presbuteros* which is the word for old, for maturity and the Presbyterian church named their church after their model of Church Government which is Presbyterian or Elder rule. Hold on to that word because we're going to see another word used of this same office in a minute.

And seventh, a grammatical point here, observe that **elders** is plural and **city** is singular, so a plurality of **elders** per **city**. You'll say, well, that doesn't prove a thing; there was a plurality of elders and a plurality of home churches. So they might have just had one elder per home church. I'll grant that they did meet in a plurality of homes, but I will not grant that these homes were separate churches in the modern sense. They were not all split up over doctrinal differences. They were united and they even met together on occasion. Today we have a different situation. Titus' instruction is to go to each city and establish a single group of elders to oversee the church in that city. So there really was only one church per city at the time, and that's the functional equivalent of a plurality of elders in a single church in our time. I cite Acts 14:23, the churches of Galatia as a parallel passage to the idea.

Now in verse 6 he starts to outline the corrective to this deficiency, the appointment of elders. And notice Paul has delegated this task to Titus. Normally it was the apostles who did this but Paul has delegated it to Titus. And Titus is what we call an apostolic legate or deputy just as Timothy was. Timothy was not the pastor of the church at Ephesus and Titus was not the bishop of the churches on Crete. Both of these were men who were apostolic legates or deputies. The apostle Paul could not do everything and could not be everywhere at once, so they would delegate tasks to those in the inner circle and they expected that they would follow their orders. So Timothy and Titus were apostolic deputies and Paul delegated the task of appointing elders in the cities of Crete to solve the deficiency. Now that the apostles have passed off the scene this is a responsibility of elders. The elders delegate certain things to deacons to help them.

Verse 6, **namely, if anyone is blameless, a one woman man, having faithful children, not accused of wild living or autonomous.** Now I've translated this to reflect Paul's intended meaning. The translation in the NASB and some other translations have led to confusion on some of these qualifications. And again these are character qualifications. Just as in 1 Tim 3 we are interested in what kind of man this is, what kind of character he has, what kind of man is this now that he has advanced to spiritual maturity. We're not interested in what kind of unbeliever this man was and we're not interested in what kind of new believer this man was, we are only interested in what kind of man this is now that he has grown to spiritual maturity.

So let's look at the 17 character qualifications given here, the first one I've translated **blameless**, they've translated above reproach; for all intents and purposes it's a synonym of the first one in 1 Tim 3:2, and that's an interesting observation. Paul put this foremost in both lists. And what the word means is that there are no obvious flaws in his character that could bring justified criticism. He is **blameless** or above reproach.

Second he is *mias gunaikos aner*, almost identical to the 1 Tim 3 passage, husband of one wife. I translate a **one woman man**, so no homosexuals can serve as elders, a one woman man, not a one man man. This book is not rocket science, it's very simple and I just point that out to show you how absurd the modern progressive church has become adopting gay clergy. These people are not reading this book. Now while it would exclude that, the exact meaning of this, *mias* is an adjective modifying woman, is a one woman kind of man, meaning he is devoted to his wife. Now you have to give it to that interpretation, it covers a lot of territory; it crosses out homosexuality, it crosses out polygamy, it crosses out flirtation. How could he be considered devoted to his one wife if he's homosexual, polygamous or flirtatious? So that interpretation, devoted to his one wife covers a lot of territory. This man has eyes for only one woman, his wife, if he has a wife, the requirement is not that he have a wife but that, assuming the general situation that a man of this caliber of spiritual maturity would have a wife, he is devoted to her.

Third, having children who believe, which you see I've translated **having faithful children** to reflect Paul's true intention. Some have taken this expression to mean that the elder's children must be believers. However, no

elder can guarantee that his children, or anyone else for that matter, will believe. That is a choice of God not a choice of man. So while it could be translated as, having children who believe, that way it is highly unlikely. Further, in the parallel of 1 Tim he says “having his children under control” so it’s obvious that Paul is saying a parallel thing. Paul is saying that the children must be faithful to their father, they must be in obedience to him and then he goes on to further define what an unfaithful child would look like. **not accused of wild living or autonomous.** So the child, and by a child we mean a son or daughter living at home, not adult children that live outside the home. An elder cannot control the actions of his adult children outside the home and their actions would not disqualify him from serving as an elder. But if a child living at home was **accused of wild living** he would be disqualified. And the simple reason is because if he can’t keep his children under control in the home then how can he ever hope to keep the sheep under control in the house of God? So wild living children is just what it sounds like, kids that get drunk, party, sleep around, do drugs, vandalize, steal, lie, cheat at school, etc., those are characteristics of a wild child and that reflects poorly on the management skills of the father. Therefore he’s not qualified to serve as an elder. Second, **or autonomous**, the word means independent. This is a child who’s refuses to submit to authority, they have been disciplined according to the word of God and therefore they are spoiled little brats. And again, you can’t have those kinds of children and qualify as an elder. And the reason is simply because it shows that you don’t trust the word of God when it comes to running your own house, and if that is so how are you going to trust the word of God when it comes to running the house of God?

Verse 7, **It is necessary for the blameless overseer**, first notice the word **overseer**, this is the other word for elder in the NT, sometimes translated bishop. But our point is that in verse 5 he was referred to as an elder, in verse 7 the same man is referred to as an overseer, so these are one and the same office, not two distinct offices, the bishop or elder is the same man, one is not higher than the other. And we have now seen this in two places in the NT, here and in Acts 20:17 and 38. Let’s see more, **It is necessary for the blameless overseer to be even as a manager of the household of God**, that’s quite different from the NASB, but it reflects accurately the original, **blameless** is an adjective that modifies the **overseer**. What kind of **overseer** is he? A **blameless one**. We already saw that in verse 6, “if any man is blameless.” Same exact word in verse 6 is the word here. Paul says **It**

is necessary for the blameless overseer to be even as a manager of the household of God. In other words, think of the house of God in the OT. What was the house of God in the OT? Where did He dwell? In the Temple. Who managed the temple? The priests. How did they manage the temple? Very carefully, there were strict instructions, very tedious laws that regulated how they managed the temple. Now transfer that idea to the elder in the church of God. And how is he supposed to oversee it? Very carefully, this is a tremendous responsibility. So how the OT priest managed the Temple is the analogy of how the NT elder is to oversee the Church.

And then he proceeds to give a series of negatives, **not arrogant, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not a bully, not fond of dishonest gain**, those are all the negatives, five of them and we've already seen several of these in prior weeks. **not arrogant**, it's clear what that is, someone who has no humility. And since humility is the cardinal virtue of the Lord Jesus Christ who condescended to us and took to Himself true humanity, emptying Himself of the independent use of His divine attributes, that becomes the model of humility for all time. So if an elder is too high in his own estimation to come down on people's level in the church and identify with them in their hour of need, then he doesn't qualify.

Then he says, **not quick-tempered**, not someone who loses it at the drop of a hat, he can't be that kind of man, he has to have a long fuse, the opposite of this is patient, a man who has patience in situations and can solve problems patiently. It doesn't mean a delayer, that could equally be a problem, but someone who can keep their cool and solve problems in a timely manner.

Then he says, **not addicted to wine** and we might add any substance of abuse, anything that is a mind altering drug or stimulant. Those things alter the mind, the Bible says be filled by the Holy Spirit, don't be filled with spirits, mind altering substances, they will destroy you. How can you solve the problems of others when you've got your own problems that need to be solved?

not a bully, this is a man who is going to get his way in the church, he pushes people around by physical size, mere size can intimidate other men. If he doesn't have physical size he may use power, power in the community can intimidate men, if he doesn't have power he may use money, money can

intimidate other men. But however he does it he's a bully and he bullies others around. He's disqualified. And here for example is why it's so important to put the right men in office the first time. Think how hard it is to remove a bully from the elderate. It's very difficult. So best not to put one on there in the first place.

And finally, **not fond of dishonest gain**, just like the deacon, he can't be a man who's looking for loopholes and trying to figure out how he can get a little dough off the top. These men are going to be handling money and so you don't want a man who will be tempted to take a little for himself. That's a bad idea.

Verse 8, **but hospitable**, strong contrast, adversative conjunction, **but hospitable, loving what is good, thoughtful, righteous, holy, self-controlled** and so forth. Let's look at these; these are all positive attributes, **hospitable** means friendly to strangers, willing to help when there's a genuine need. And I think we do this real well here, we keep our eyes and ears open for needs and we fill those needs discretely. All these needs are evaluated carefully because we don't want to enable, we want to help when there's a genuine need. So all these things are discussed and you should know that.

Then **loving what is good**, obviously he can't love what is evil. The Cretans loved what is evil, so this is the opposite of the typical Cretan, a lover of what is good.

thoughtful, the NASB translates "sensible," and that's fine enough, but the sense is that he thinks through decisions, not just how to solve problems but when to solve problems, there's a timing issue that he's sensitive to, there are other questions when solving problems than simply how to do it. And this man is thoughtful enough to engage those kinds of questions and make sure it's done in the best manner.

The next adjective is **righteous** toward men, he gives righteous decisions between men when there's a judgment involved. Then **holy** what they translate **devout**, but the idea here is what we would call one who walks in fellowship, he's a man who abides in Christ, technically it means a man who has a consecrated walk, his life is separate from the world, he lives a holy

lifestyle, in fellowship, not all the time obviously because no one can do that, but his life is one that is constantly keeping sin in check by walking in fellowship.

And finally in verse 8, **self-controlled**, this word means he has his fleshly impulses under control, he has the lusts of his flesh under control. Obviously everyone still has fleshly lusts, fleshly impulses, you have yours and I have mine, but this kind of man is one who has those under control.

Verse 9, **having a peculiar interest in the faithful word according to the teaching, in order that he might be mighty, not only to exhort in the sound teaching but also to refute those who contradict.** That's a mouthful but it's very telling about the elder. First of all let's look at this first expression, **having a peculiar interest in the faithful word according to the teaching.** The expression having a peculiar interest comes from the Greek word *antechomenon* and it's in the middle voice, this man himself has a peculiar interest in what? In the things of the word of God. He's hungry to know the word of God, he's hungry to dig in and get into the details and figure out what it's saying. He asks questions of the text because asking questions of the text is how you find answers. So this man has a peculiar interest in this book and I think that's very telling so far as an elder is concerned; he has this very high level of interest in the things of the word of God that is far above the average Christian.

According to what? **According to the teaching** gives us the standard, he's interested in this book according to the standard of the teaching. What's the standard of teaching? The apostle's exposition of this book. There are other ways to organize the Scriptures, to group texts into a system. The Pharisees had one way of organizing the OT texts into the system of Judaism, Jesus had a different way of organizing the same OT texts and Jesus challenged the validity of the way they were organizing the texts, and the implication is that there is only one correct way to organize the texts and the elder is interested only in the correct way of organizing the text and that is according to the apostolic exposition of the text. So this is an interesting characteristic of the elder, he has an insatiable thirst for the word of God according to the apostolic exposition of it, not some interesting thing that he came up with in his closet some Saturday morning.

Verse 9, why must he have this peculiar interest in the apostolic exposition of the word of God? **in order that he might be mighty**, that he might be a powerful man, powerful in the proper sense of a man that is mighty in teaching this book, not only, and here's the two sides of his duty, there's a positive side and a negative side, both are necessary, **not only to exhort in the sound teaching but also to refute those who contradict**. So we have the positive, to **exhort in sound teaching** and that means to give a positive exposition of what the Scriptures teach. This is what the Bible says about the doctrine of God, this is what the Bible says about the doctrine of inspiration, this is what the Bible says about the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, that's all fine and well, but that's only one side of the elder's duty. The other side is to **refute those who contradict**, that is to go head to head with false doctrine and refute it biblically and logically. Sometimes I've had people harp on me to stop telling us the false doctrine and just tell us the true and if I do that then they'll be able to identify the false. Sorry, that's not true. Never was true, never will be true, the Bible says it is my job and every elder's job to teach you the true and the false and how to refute the false. That's part of my job description before God. And if you don't like it you can discuss my job description with Him. I intend to follow His job description not your imaginary idea of what I should be doing up here.

Alright, what can we say as far as principles are concerned? Number one I think we can say that the appointment of elders is to establish order in the church. The churches on Crete were chaos and the wolves were having a time ripping and tearing up the sheep. So the elders are necessary to proper order in the church. Second, there was a plurality of elders in each church. The whole operation is not resting on one man and that's God's wisdom because even one good man can fall and then what will happen to the whole operation? It will come crashing down. So you have a plurality to protect against that and a host of other things. Third, the elder has a peculiar interest in the apostolic exposition of the word of God. There's an insatiable thirst there and this is unique to the elder, the deacon doesn't necessarily have this. And fourth, the elder is mighty in the Scriptures. He is able to give a positive exposition of the truth, of what the Bible teaches, but not only that, he is also able to refute false doctrine, refute all the newfangled ideas that come down the pike. And he has to be able to do both to protect the flock from the wolves.

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