

Qualifications for Leadership: Holding Fast to the Word (Titus 1:9)

“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.” Titus 1:9 (NASB)

Hold Fast: The Greek word means to “proportionally lay hold of something in a way that matches the object grasped.” It means to seize or to “correspondingly have.”

1. The character and commitment of holding fast to the Word

Character: Teaching is the only skill/gift that is mentioned from v.5-9. While it is a skill, it is also a moral requirement. The gifted teacher:

- will match what he professes with what he possesses
- will match his life with his lips

Commitment: The shepherd must be loyal to the Word of God. He has a fidelity and deep devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ. As a result of his commitment, he knows what God has revealed about himself and about his creation; that knowledge changes his life.

2. The competency of holding fast to the Word

Competency: Not only is he committed (loyal) but he also understands the Word of God. He must be a first-class student and teacher; he not only has Scripture memorized (because of his commitment) but is also able to plumb the mind of the Spirit which is revealed in the Word of God.

3. The consequence of holding fast to the Word

The outcome and result of a character, commitment, and competency towards the Word of God will be rich comfort and loving rebuke.

A. The comfort of the Word

The Word of God when rooted in sound doctrine will provide healthy comfort and encouragement.

B. The correction of the Word

The Word of God when rooted in sound doctrine will correct false beliefs and “bring to light” anything that is not in accordance with the will of God. The goal of rebuke is not to embarrass or humiliate, but to restore the sinner to right thinking, and as a result, to right living.

Points of Application:

- I. A healthy church will have men who are committed, and competent in the Word of God. The leadership is hungry for and faithful to the Word of God.
- II. A healthy church will have a congregation that desires the Word of God; not man’s opinions, but healthy and sound doctrine which is accessible to all through God’s Word.
- III. The effectiveness of a teacher is in large measure how well his life matches what he claims to believe.
- IV. The Word of God is able to comfort and exhort
- V. The Word of God is able to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. False beliefs will lead to false living.
- VI. The goal of a rebuke is not to bring a sinner to humiliation, but restoration.