

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. Please turn in your Bibles to 1 Timothy chapter 3.
2. As I have been thinking and asking God what He wanted me to share, I was brought to the 3rd chapter of 1 Timothy.
3. It is here where the Apostle Paul instructs young Timothy on *the call to lead the church*.
4. In this chapter, Paul tells us what kind of man should pastor or lead a church.

5. Before we look into this text, let's me first read the first 7 verses.
6. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7
7. Paul's letter to his son in the faith, Timothy, is one of the 3 pastoral epistles that appears in the NT. The other being 2 Timothy and Titus.
8. These 3 books are referred to as pastoral epistles because they address church matters.
9. In the letter under consideration tonight, Paul tells Timothy why he wrote this first letter to him in 1 Timothy 3:14-16 (NASB Strong's) I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; <sup>15</sup> but in case I am delayed, **I write so that you**

**will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.**

10. The matters that he has addressed up to this point are:
11. The false doctrine at Ephesus (1:3-11), The importance of Prayer (2:1-8), The role of women in the church (2:9-15), and now the calling and qualifications of leaders in the church (3:1-13)
12. Before we look at verse one let me explain the terms.
13. In verse 1 we are introduced to the term “overseer” or “bishop”

14. This is the Greek word episkopes and it means “overseer”
15. This is just one of the terms used for a pastor
16. In Ephesians 4:11 the word poimen is used and it means “shepherd”
17. In Acts 20:28 (NASB Strong's) all three terms are used: Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**, to **shepherd** the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. The third terms is used in verse 17: “elders”
18. Chapter 3, verse 1 begins with the calling of pastors....

# LESSON

## **I. The Calling of Pastors (3:1)**

Richard Mayhue issues an important warning at this point. He says, “Many a man has falsely claimed a call to the ministry. Frequently, a counterfeit desire has come from human pride, the aspirations of others, misunderstanding God’s will, or substituting formal education only for God’s complete ordination process. That is why the objective or external part of the ordination process is indispensable in confirming God’s will for a man’s life” (Ordination to Pastoral Ministry, Rediscovering Pastoral Ministry, p.139).

Charles Spurgeon said, “Whatever ‘call’ a man may pretend to have, if he has not

been called to holiness, he certainly has not been called to the ministry.”

A. It is Limited (v.1a)

“It is a trustworthy statement: if any man”

1. Church leadership is not for everyone
2. An essential requirement for a church leader is that he be a man
  - a) Tit.1:6 - “If a man...”
  - b) 1 Tim.3:2, “a one-woman man”  
(cf. Tit.1:6)

B. It is Compelling (v.1b)

“Those who seek the office of overseer must have a Spirit-given, compelling desire for it” (MacArthur).

1. He reaches out after it

“Aspires” Gr.oregomai, “to reach out after” – this described external action not internal motive.”

2. It is a strong inward desire

“Desires” Gr.epithumeo, “a strong passion”

I believe this is where Acts 20:28 comes in. The Holy Spirit places that desire on your heart for pastoral ministry. He makes you an “overseer.”

When did He do this? Before your were born.

God told Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1:5, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations.”

Now it’s one thing to have an internal desire and another to be qualified for the office.

In other words, desire alone does not qualify anyone for ministry.

Your calling to pastoral ministry is confirmed by the church through moral and spiritual qualifications.

## II. The Qualifications of Pastors (vv.2-7)

### A. They Must Be “Above Reproach” (v.2; Tit.1:6-7)

Gr.anepileptos, literally means, “Not able to be held” (MacArthur) or “not able to be taken hold of, irreproachable, beyond reproach” (Rienecker)

“This is a general character qualification stating that he must give no just cause for blame” (D. Edmond Hiebert, 1 Timothy, p.64).

John Calvin said, “He does not mean someone who is free from every fault, for no such man could ever be found, but one marred by no disgrace that

could diminish his authority – he should be a man of unblemished reputation.”

Richard Baxter said, “We are exhorted to take heed to ourselves, lest we live with those actual sins which we may preach against in others. Let us see that we are not guilty of that which we may daily condemn” (The Reformed Pastor, 28)

“Beware, lest you undo with your lives, what you say with your tongues. Beware, lest you become the greatest hindrance to the success of your own labors” (The Reformed Pastor, 32).

Ps.101:6 - “...He who walks in a perfect (blameless) way, He shall serve Me.”

So “an elder, or overseer, should be subject neither to being called to account nor taken into custody, as it were, on any moral or spiritual charge” (John MacArthur, Titus, 23).

B. They Must Be “The Husband of One Wife” (v.2; Tit.1:6)

“Husband” Gr.aner, “man”

“Wife” Gr.gunaikos, “woman”

“The Greek construction places emphasis on the word, ‘one,’ thereby communicating the idea of a ‘one-woman man’” (John MacArthur, Church Leadership, p.45).

This is stressing “character, not marital circumstances...the character of the

elder should reflect fidelity to one woman” (MacArthur).

John Piper in his challenging book to pastors called, “Brothers, We Are Not Professionals,” says, “Oh, how crucial it is that pastors love their wives. It delights and encourages the church. It models marriage for the other couples. It upholds the honor of the office of elder. It blesses the pastor’s children with a haven of love. It displays the mystery of Christ’s love for the church. It prevents our prayers from being hindered. It eases the burdens of the ministry. It protects the church from devastating scandal. And it satisfies the soul as we find our joy in God by pursuing it in the joy of the beloved. This is not marginal,

brothers. Loving our wives is essential for our ministry. It is ministry” (246).

### C. They Must Be “Temperate” (v.2; Tit.1:8)

Gr.nephalios, literally means, “wineless,” or “unmixed with wine” (MacArthur)

“It speaks of sobriety – the opposite of intoxication” (Colin Brown, The New International Dictionary of NT Words, pp.514-515).

The verb form (nepho) was used in a literal and figurative sense in both Hellenistic and NT Greek. If Paul had the literal sense of nepho in mind, he was requiring elders to abstain from any form of intoxication.

The primary sense may mean “alert, watchful, vigilant or clear-headed. A leader must be one who thinks clearly” (MacArthur).

1. Leviticus 10:9 forbade priests from drinking wine when performing their Priestly duties:

“Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations.”

2. Numbers 6:3 says that those taking the Nazarite vow also could not drink wine

“He shall abstain from wine and strong drink; he shall drink no vinegar, whether made from wine or strong drink, nor shall he drink any grape juice nor eat fresh or dried grapes.”

3. Proverbs 31:4-5 says that kings and rulers were to abstain from drinking because it could dull their senses and affect their judgment

“It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Or for rulers to desire strong drink, 5 For they will drink and forget what is decreed, And pervert the rights of all the afflicted.”

D. They Must Be “Prudent” or

“Sober-Minded” (NKJV, v.2; Tit.1:8)

Gr.sophron, “of sound mind” (Kittel). It refers to “discipline or self-control.” It “describes a person who is sober-minded and coolheaded” (MacArthur).

This is a man who is “well-balanced,” who has a “properly regulated mind.” He is “discreet and prudent” (Hiebert, p.65).

1. Titus 2:2 says “the older men” are to be “sober”
2. Titus 2:5 says “the older women” (v.3) are “to be discreet”

“The temperate man avoids excess, so he can see things clearly—that clarity of

thought leads to an orderly, disciplined life.”

E. They Must Be “Respectable” or “Of Good Behavior” (NKJV, v.2)

“Respectable” Gr.kosimios, “orderly” (Strong). It denotes “order as contrasted to disorder.” It “characterizes him as ordering well both his inner and out life” (Hiebert, p.65).

Homer Kent said, “The ministry is no place for the man whose life is a continual confusion of unaccomplished plans and unorganized activities” (The Pastoral Epistles, p.127).

“A spiritual leader must not have a chaotic, but an orderly lifestyle. If he

cannot order his own life, how can he bring order to the church?” (MacArthur).

#### F. They Must Be “Hospitable” (v.2; Tit.1:8)

Gr.philoxenos, composed of two words: xenos, “stranger,” and phileo, “to love or show affection.” It means “to love strangers.”

Kenneth Wuest says, “The hospitality spoken of here found its occasion in the fact that in the days of the great Roman persecutions, Christians were banished and persecuted, and rendered homeless. Or, in the case of traveling preachers and teachers, ministering from church to church, these servants of God were to be received and cared for

by the bishop” (Word Studies in the Greek NT, 55).

The pastor “must be characterized by a willingness to receive into his home and care for Christian strangers” (D. Edmond Hiebert, 1 Timothy, 65).

In an official capacity this is the “duty of keeping open house both for delegates traveling from church to church and for ordinary members of the congregation” (Fritz Rienecker, The Linguistic Key to the Greek NT, 622).

1. Biblical hospitality is showing kindness to strangers not friends

Luke 14:12-14 says, “And He also went on to say to the one who had

invited Him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, otherwise they may also invite you in return and that will be your repayment. 13 "But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, 14 and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous."

2. All Christians are to show hospitality not just the pastor
  - a) Romans 12:13 says we are to be "given to hospitality."

b) Hebrews 13:2 (cf. Gen.18:1-8) says, “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.”

c) 1 Peter 4:9 says, “Be hospitable to one another without complaint.”

Alexander Strauss says, “Hospitality practically displays the Christian family’s generosity, closeness, and love” (Biblical Eldership, 197).

This goes “beyond opening your home to strangers – it includes opening your heart” (MacArthur).

The “lack of hospitality among the Lord’s people is a sure sign of selfish, lifeless, loveless Christianity” (Ibid., Strauss, 197).

#### G. They Must Be “Able to Teach” (v.2)

Alexander Strauss again says, “Like Israel, the Christian community is built on Holy Scripture, and those who oversee the community must be able to guide and protect its members by instruction from Scripture. Therefore all elders must be ‘able to teach’ (Ibid., 197).

“Able to teach” Gr.didaktikon, “skilled” or “skillful in teaching” (Rienecker). It occurs only 2 times in the NT (1 Tim.3:2; 2 Tim.2:24)

“This is the only qualification that relates to the function of an elder, and sets the elder apart from the deacon”  
(MacArthur).

John Calvin says, “Those who are charged with governing the people should be qualified to teach. And what is required here is not merely a voluble tongue, for we see many whose easy influence contains nothing that can edify. Paul is rather commending wisdom in knowing how to apply God’s Word to the profit of His people”  
(Calvin’s Commentaries: 1 Timothy, 225).

1. Elders must be skilled in teaching

Titus 1:9 says, “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.”

Kenneth Wuest says He is “not merely given to teaching, but able and skilled in it” (Ibid., 55).

R.C.H. Lenski said, “The more a faithful teacher teaches, the more will he feel the need of acquiring more and more knowledge of the blessed truth he is to teach.”

2. Elders must have the ability to communicate God’s Word and the integrity to make their teaching believable

This is the purpose of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

1 Timothy 4:16 says, “Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”

3. The role of teaching the church is limited to those who have been called and gifted for that task

1 Corinthians 12:28 says, “And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers...”

## H. They Must Not Be “Addicted to Wine” (v.3; Tit.1:7)

Gr.paroinos, “The noun is made up of para, ‘beside,’ and oionon, ‘wine’ (Wuest). The compound means “one who sits long at his wine” (Rienecker) or “one who drinks” (MacArthur).

John Calvin said, “By this word the Greeks described not just drunkenness but any kind of intemperate drinking of wine.”

1. It doesn't refer to a drunkard—that's an obvious disqualification
2. It refers to one's associations

“The issue here is the man’s reputation. He is not one who associates himself with the bars, taverns, and inns, nor is he at home in the noisy scenes associated with drinking” (Ibid., MacArthur).

- I. They Must Not Be “Pugnacious” or “Not Violent” (NKJV, v.3; Tit.1:7)

Gr.plektes, “a giver of blows” or “a striker” (Wuest)

He “must not be quick-tempered and ready with his fists” (Hiebert).

“Because a pugnacious man will strike the sheep rather than gently leading them, he cannot be one of Christ’s undershepherds” (Ibid., Stauch, 199).

J. They Must Not Be “Greedy for Money”  
(v.3; Tit.1:7, NKJV)

Gr.aphilapguros, “lover of money”

This is not in the better manuscripts (MacArthur, Wuest). That is why it does not appear in the NASB.

John Calvin said, “Those desirous of filthy lucre are all covetous persons.”

K. They Must Be “Gentle” (v.3)

Gr.epieikes, translated “patient” or “gentle.” It means “to be considerate, genial, forbearing, gracious or gentle” (Alexander Strauss, Biblical Eldership, p.199).

Aristotle said, “It speaks of a person who easily pardons human failure.”

An overseer “is mild and considerate of others” (Hiebert) and must “have the ability to remember good and forget evil” (MacArthur).

Alexander Strauch says, “A gentle man exhibits a willingness to yield and patiently makes allowances for the weakness and ignorance of the fallen human condition. He is gracious, reasonable, and considerate. One who is gentle refuses to retaliate in kind for wrong done by others, and does not insist upon the letter of the law or personal rights. He possesses God’s pure, peaceable, gentle, reasonable,

and merciful wisdom (Jas.3:17)” (Ibid., 199-200).

- L. They Must Be “Peaceable” or “Not Quarrelsome” (NKJV, v.3)

Gr.amachon, translated “not a brawler” (KJV). “Not to be withstood, invincible.”

“It is similar in meaning to ‘not violent.’ The difference is that the latter refers to not being physically violent, whereas the former refers to not being ‘quarrelsome’” (MacArthur).

This word “does not mean that he must not contend for the truth but it must not be done in a harsh, contentious spirit” (Ibid., Hiebert, 66).

“The word describes a person who does not go about with a chip on his shoulder” (Ibid., Wuest, 57).

2 Timothy 2:24-26 says, “The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, 25 with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 26 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.”

“Quarrel” Gr.machomai, (same word used in 1 Tim.3:3), “to quarrel, dispute, fight, or strive” (Strong)

Alexander Strauch says, “Since the day Cain killed Abel, his brother, men have been fighting and killing one another (Gen.4:5-8). This is one of the horrible consequences of man’s sinful nature. Christians, however, are commanded to be different, ‘to malign no one, to be uncontentious, gentle, showing every consideration for all men’ (Tit.3:2). God hates division and fighting among God’s people. Yet fighting paralyzes, weakens, and kills many local churches. It may be the single most distressing problem Christian leaders face. Therefore, a Christian elder is required to be ‘uncontentious’ (Ibid., 200).

M. They Must Be “Free from the Love of Money” or “Not Covetous” (v.3)

Gr. *aphilarguros*, comes from two words *phileo*, “to be fond of,” and *arguros*, “silver” means “not fond of silver” (Wuest) or “not loving money.” It speaks of someone who doesn’t love money.

1. Love of money can corrupt a man’s ministry

“Because it tempts him to view people as a means by which he can get more money” (MacArthur).

“The desire for money must not be a ruling motive in his life” (Hiebert).

“Money-loving, materialistic elders set the wrong example and will inevitably fall into unethical financial

dealings that disgrace the Lord's name" (Strauss).

## 2. All Christians must avoid the love of money

Hebrews 13:5 says, "Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you."

1 Timothy 6:10 says, "For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

3. An elder can avoid the love of money by not putting a price on his ministry

N. They Must Be “One who Manages his Own Household Well” (vv.4-5)

1. This speaks of one who maintains a godly family

“An elders home life is an essential consideration. Before he can lead in the church he must demonstrate his spiritual leadership within the context of his family” (MacArthur).

“One who manages” Gr.proistemi, “to preside over,” “have authority over, stand before, or manage” (MacArthur).

This means the elder is “the manager of his home. That affirms the consistent biblical teaching on male headship in the home.

Obviously there are shared responsibilities between husband and wife, and there are many tasks that the wife manages within the home; but the husband must be the leader” (MacArthur).

2. The elder must manage his own household “well”

“Well” Gr.kalos, “good—pertains to a positive moral quality with the implication of being favorably valued—good, fine, praise worthy” (Louw-Nida Greek NT Lexicon)

In other words, the elder manages his household “beautifully, lovely. It’s appealing to the eye” (MacArthur).

“The idea is that an elder’s leadership in the home is inherently good, and manifestly good to those who observe it” (MacArthur).

3. The elder must have “his children under control with all dignity”

“Children” Gr.teknon, refers to “one’s immediate offspring but without specific reference to sex or age – child” (Louw-Nida)

“Control” Gr.hupotage, “obedience, to submit to the order or directives of someone” (Louw-Nida)

“This is a military term that speaks of lining up in rank under those in authority.” The elder’s “children are to be lined up under his authority—respectful, controlled, and disciplined” (MacArthur).

R.C. H. Lenski said, “Ill-trained, bad children reflect on any pastor, not merely because they are hurtful examples to the children of the members of the church, but still more because they show that the father is incompetent for his office.”

“With all dignity” Gr.semnotes, refers to “behavior which is befitting, implying a measure of dignity leading to respect” (Louw-Nida).

The RSV translates this verse: “He must manage his own household well, keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way.”

“A biblical leader is best tested by how well he handles his children, not by how rich, successful, or well-known they may be” (Strauss).

O. They Must Not Be “a New Convert” or “Novice” (NKJV, v.6)

“New convert” Gr.neophutos, “Newly planted – a new convert”

Alexander Strauch says, “No matter how spiritual, zealous, knowledgeable, or talented a new convert may be, he is not

spiritually mature. Maturity requires time and experience for which there is no substitute.”

“An elder must be mature in the faith”  
(MacArthur).

“So that he will not be conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.”

To “be conceited” or as the KJV says, “puffed up with pride,” is used figuratively to mean “to be beclouded with pride” (MacArthur) or to “be swollen with pride” (USB Greek Dict) or “extremely proud” (Louw-Nida)

P. They Must “Have a Good Reputation with Those Outside the Church” (v.7)

This refers to one who “has a good internal and external reputation or testimony.”

John Calvin said, “It seems difficult to think that a godly man should have unbelievers who are most eager to tell lies about us as witnesses to his integrity. The apostle’s meaning is that, as far as external behavior is concerned, even unbelievers should be forced to acknowledge that he is a good man.”

## **CONCLUSION**

1. This is the kind of man that is to lead the church.

2. He has a genuine desire for the office and a godly life that qualifies him for it. Let's pray.