

Shepherding the Flock (Pt.3)

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1 Peter / 1 Peter 5:1; 1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:6–9

INTRODUCTION

1. We are looking again today at [1 Peter 5:1](#) where Peter tells the elders of the church to “shepherd the flock of God” (v.2)
2. We have defined what elders are
3. We said they are pastors, overseer
4. All three terms are used interchangeably to refer to the same individual or group of men who lead the church
5. We said that Peter was an “apostle” (1:1) and “a fellow elder” (5:1)

· As he writes to them, he is writing...

LESSON

I. From One Elder to a Plurality of Elders (v.1)

› Peter gives them...

a. The Exhortation (“I exhort”)

› Who is he exhorting?

b. The Identification

i. as “elders” (presbyteros, adj)

1. What are elders?

2. What do elders do?

› We said...

a. They equip the saints for ministry

b. They preach the Word of God

c. They baptize new believers

d. They confront false teaching

- e. They labor in the Word of God
- f. They ordain elders to ministry
- g. They ordain deacons to ministry
- h. They rule in the church
- i. They pray over the sick
- j. They oversee the finances
- k. They model righteousness (spiritual & moral qualifications)

3. How are they qualified? ([1 Timothy 3:1-7](#); [Titus 1:6-9](#))

Richard Mayhew 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. They are qualified by the Holy Spirit - [Acts 20:28](#), “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.”
- b. They must have a desire for the office - [1 Timothy 3:1](#).
 - i. “aspires” “desires” (AV) (orego, pres.mid.ind.), “to reach our after.” This describes external action not internal motive.
 - ii. “desires” (epithumeo, pres.act.ind.), “an internal strong passion”
- c. They must be men
 - i. [Ephesians 4:8](#), “Therefore it says, “When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men.”
 - ii. [1 Timothy 3:2](#), “the husband of one wife,” lit. “one woman man”
 - iii. [Titus 1:6](#), “namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.”
- d. They must meet certain qualifications (25) - [1 Timothy 3:1-7](#); [Titus 1:6-9](#) (26 qualifications)
 - i. “above reproach” (v.2; [Tit.1:6](#)), (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). “the husband of one wife” (v.2; [Tit.1:6-7](#)) “one woman man”

[Psalm 101:6](#), “...He who walks in a blameless way is the one who will minister to 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).

ii. “the husband of one wife” (v.2; [Tit.1:6](#))

1. “Husband” (aner), “man”
2. “Wife” (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).

- iii. “temperate” (v.2; [Tit.1:8](#)), (nephaios), 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.514515).

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 clearheaded.

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 strong drink, neither you nor your sons with you, when you come into the tent of meeting, so that you will not die—it is a perpetual statute throughout your generations—”
 2. [Numbers 6:3](#) says that those taking the Nazirite 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: “4 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.”
- iv. “prudent” (v.2; [Tit.1:8](#)), (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.”

- v. “respectable” or “of good behavior” (NKJV) (v.2), (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).

- vi. “hospitable” (v.2; [Tit.1:8](#)), (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](#), “12 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](#)) “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.”
 - c. [1 Peter 4:9](#), “Be hospitable to one another without complaint.”

| [Alexander Strauch](#) 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).

vii. “able to teach” (v.2)

Alexander Strauch 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](#), “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).

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](#), “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](#), “And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.”

viii. “not addicted to wine” (v.3; [Tit.1:7](#)), (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) or literally “to be continually alongside, or in the presence of, wine” (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).

- ix. not “pugnacious” (v.3; [Tit.1:7](#)) - lit. “a giver of blows” or “a striker”

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).

- x. “not greedy for money” (v.3; [Tit.1:7](#)), (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.”

- xi. “gentle” (v.3), (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., 199200).

- xii. “peaceable” or “not quarrelsome” (NKJV) (v.3), (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](#), “The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged.”

“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.4:58). 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).

CONCLUSION

1. We just looked at 12 of the 26 qualifications for men who serve as elder, pastor or overseer
2. The standard is high because God set it
3. [Matthew 5:48](#), “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”
4. We need to stop comparing ourselves to others and give heed to what Jesus just said in [Matthew 5:48](#).
5. The gospel.
6. Let’s pray

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