

Six Characteristics of a Healthy Church: 03 Order

We are in the midst of a study of the book of 1 Timothy. The Apostle Paul is writing to his son in the faith, Timothy, about how the church should conduct itself. Paul said that he is hoping to come to Ephesus before long, but in case he is delayed, there are some things that he wanted to share with Timothy. These things could not wait. These six things that Paul wants to share are urgent. These six things were important to the welfare of the church in Ephesus. These six things needed to be acted upon by Timothy right now.

(1 Timothy 3:14-15) "I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you before long; {15} but in case I am delayed, I write so that you may 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."

What are these six things that could not wait? The first thing was sound doctrine. There were men who were teaching strange doctrines in the church. Paul charged Timothy with instructing these men not to teach these strange doctrines. These strange doctrines included myths, genealogies, dietary restrictions, circumcision, keeping the Law, etc. Strange doctrines in the church today include these things and many others. There are strange doctrines taught in the church today just like in Paul's day. We have a need in the church today for Sound Doctrine just like in the first century. Sound Doctrine is the first of the Six Characteristics of a Healthy Church.

Six Characteristics of a Healthy Church

September 9, 2012 Healthy Church # 1: Sound Doctrine

September 16, 2012 Healthy Church # 2: Prayer (1 Tim 2)

September 23, 2012 Healthy Church # 3: Order Part 1 (Elders, 1 Tim 3:1-7)

September 30, 2012 Healthy Church # 3: Order Part 2 Service (Deacons, 1 Tim 3:8-12)

October 14, 2012 Healthy Church # 4: Godliness

October 21, 2012 Healthy Church # 5: Honor (1 Tim 5-6)

October 28, 2012 Health Church # 6: Focus on God

The second characteristic was prayer. Paul exhorted the church to pray. He exhorted them to pray with entreaties, prayers, petitions or intercessions, and thanksgivings. We saw last week that entreaties were prayers for our own needs. Prayers were more general in nature. Petitions or intercessions were prayers for the needs of other people. The last area of prayer was thanksgiving. We should enter into His presence with thanksgiving. We should honor God with sacrifices of thanksgivings. It is God will for us to give thanks in everything.

Let me tell you just a few things that I am thankful for.

- I am thankful for the wife that God has blessed me with. Scripture says that house and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord. God has given me a wise and prudent wife. She is a precious gift from the Lord.
- I am thankful for the ten natural children that God has blessed us with. Psalms tell us that children are a gift of the Lord and blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them.
- I am thankful for the parents that the Lord blessed me with. My parents have been a blessing to me, to my children, and to this church.
- I am thankful for God's promises to us. I have clung to His promises throughout my life. God has proven time and again that He is a faithful God. I am thankful for His faithfulness in my life.
- I am thankful for his mercy and compassion. I was a selfish and self-driven young man, and the Lord reached down and changed my life. I am still a focused and driven man. Only now, I have

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a zeal and a passion for the kingdom of God. It is not about Bill; it is about Jesus and His kingdom. I am thankful for the plans He has for my life. I am thankful for the good works He planned in advance for me to walk in.

- I am thankful for the Holy Spirit and the presence of the Lord. The Spirit of God touched me during worship last week, and I was crying in His presence. At the last leadership meeting, I was literally shaking because of the presence of the Lord in that meeting. I am thankful for His presence. And, I am thankful for His ministry in my life and in this church.

God wants us to be a thankful people. It is His will that we give thanks in everything.

The third characteristic of a healthy church is order. God is a God of order. We will look at proper order this week and next week. The fourth characteristic of a healthy church is godliness. Tony Vaughn will be preaching on disciplining ourselves for the purpose of godliness. The fifth characteristic is honoring one another. The last characteristic is having proper focus in our lives. We must fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.

Before we get into our text today, I would like to look at order. Why call this week and next week, "Order in the Church." There are several reasons that I entitled it, "Order." Let's take a look at some of those reasons.

In Paul's letter to Titus, he tells him to set in order what remains in Crete and appoint elders in every city as he had directed him. There were five cities on the island of Crete. There had been a storm come through. Paul is wanting Titus to restore order in the churches in Crete. One of the things that Titus had to do to set the church in order was appoint elders in the churches.

(Titus 1:5) "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,"

This was not a weather storm, but a doctrinal storm. Some false teachers had taught things that upset the faith of people. Paul tells Titus to silence these false teachers. In a similar thing that he tells Timothy about the problem with the false teachers in Ephesus, they had wrong motives. Also, some of the teachings were similar. There were those who were teaching that you could only be saved if you practiced the law, like circumcision. Titus had the responsibility of silencing these men, and then setting in place elders or pastors. It is the responsibility of the elders or shepherds of the church to provide sound doctrine. Because these churches did not have pastors in place, there was not a proper government.

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

In the Old Testament we find two identical verses that address this issue. Both of these are found in the book of Judges. Both state that in those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes. The principal is clear, where there is not a proper government in place, there is disorder. People do whatever they want. People can teach whatever they want. In the churches in Crete, they lacked proper government and there was disorder. Titus was going to set in order those churches by appointing elders in the churches in every city.

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(Judges 17:6) "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes."

(Judges 21:25) "In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

That is the first reason I have entitled these two messages, "Order." The second reason is found in 1 Corinthians 14:40. Paul writes the Corinthians and tells them that all things should be done properly and in an orderly manner. It is the responsibility of elders to make sure things are done properly and in an orderly manner.

(1 Corinthians 14:40) "But let all things be done properly and in an orderly (taxis) manner."

In this passage, Paul encourages the body to focus on the use of gifts that edify the whole body, rather than the individual. He encourages prophecy rather than the use of tongues. Tongues edify a person, but prophecy edifies the church. Therefore, he encourages the use of the greater gifts, like prophecy in a corporate setting.

(1 Corinthians 14:3-5) "But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. {4} One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church. {5} Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying."

Then, Paul talks about how they should prophesy one by one, instead of all at the same time. They were to keep quiet while someone was prophesying, so that all can learn and be exhorted. He concludes that God is not a God of confusion, but of peace.

(1 Corinthians 14:29-33) "And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment. {30} But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, let the first keep silent. {31} For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; {32} and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets; {33} for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."

In our services, there is to order and peace. It is the responsibility of the pastors to maintain order in the services. The role of pastors is not to control or prevent the use of gifts. We are to encourage the use of gifts. We are to encourage the proper use of gifts in our services. God wants everything to be done in a proper and orderly manner. The word for order in 1 Corinthians 14:40 is taxis, which means a regular arrangement of rank or character, official dignity, and order. Arranging the services and the events in the service is putting order into our meetings. It is the pastor's job to prayerfully arrange the services. Let me give you an example. Last week, Bill De Leeuw approached me about praying for Gerald Martinez. I told him that we would need to do it during the announcement time. I was going to have Lee pray over our government. I was going to have Larry pray over the President. Ray Arambula was going to pray over the election. Having Bill pray over Gerald at this point in my message would not have fit so well. It would not have flowed. It would not have been the proper arrangement. A pastor has to give some consideration to the order and flow of the service.

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G5010. taxis, tax'-is; from G5021; regular arrangement, i.e. (in time) fixed succession (of rank or character), official dignity:--order.

The third reason that I have called this message about order also relates to the government. It is the responsibility of elders to manage the affairs of the church and keep it in good order. In 1 Timothy 5:17, Paul says, "let the elders who rule (proistemi) well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching." A pastor wears many hats. Elders have to manage or rule. Those who do an effective job at leading the church are to be paid well. Paul adds, "especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching." I do not want to focus on the preaching and teaching; we covered that in the first message on the responsibilities of a pastor to diligently study and handle accurately the word of truth. I want to bring out the management side of ruling.

(1 Timothy 5:17) "Let the elders who rule (proistemi) well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching."

G4291. proistemi, pro-is'-tay-mee; from G4253 and G2476; to stand before, i.e. (in rank) to preside, or (by impl.) to practise:--maintain, be over, rule.

A pastor needs to be a good communicator. He needs to communicate with the leadership team. He needs to communicate with the flock. Communication and teamwork are part of pastoring. A pastor also needs to handle the finances of the church. The giving and distribution of funds need to be accounted for. There should be a church budget so that the church does not spend more than the offerings that are given. This is part of ruling or managing the affairs of the church. When a pastor does not do a good job managing the affairs of the church, there is chaos and disorder. God expects His house to be in good order.

A fourth reason for entitling this "order" is because part of that order and arrangement is having ministry team leaders in place. In the second half of chapter three, Paul talks about the office of servant or deacon. There are many men and women that meet the character requirements of an elder, but do not have the calling to preach and teach. The primary difference between the qualifications of an elder and a the qualifications of a deacon is the ability to teach the word of God. We will talk more about that next week when we look at the qualifications of a deacon. But, part of the order of the church is having qualified leaders in place over the various areas of ministry.

When we look at the problem in the Jerusalem church with the Hellenistic widows who were being overlooked, the church chose seven men of good reputation to oversee this ministry. These were the first deacons in the church. This freed up the apostles and elders to devote themselves to the ministry of the word and to prayer. Having deacons in place in church frees up the pastors to spend time studying and preparing messages each week. That is part of bringing the church into proper order.

A fifth reason for calling this about order is that elders need to help people find their place of service in the body, or be properly arranged in the body. Scripture encourages us to be submitted or subject to the elders. The Greek word for subject or submit is hupotasso. Hupo mean under and tasso means proper order and arrangement. The leaders of the church are not to rule over the flock like the Gentiles do, lording over the flock. Instead, they are to be examples to them. So, when a church member is submitted to the leadership, it is not so that they can be controlled or lorded over. It is so

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that they can come into proper order and arrangement. Leadership needs to help people find their proper place of service in the body. They need to equip saints for the work of service, and then help them find their area to serve.

(1 Peter 5:5) "You younger men, likewise, be subject (hupotasso) to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

G5293. hupotasso, hoop-ot-as'-so; from G5259 and G5021; to subordinate; reflex. to obey:--be under obedience (obedient), put under, subdue unto, (be, make) subject (to, unto), be (put) in subjection (to, under), submit self unto. [G5021. tasso, tas'-so; a prol. form of a prim. verb (which latter appears only in certain tenses); to arrange in an orderly manner, i.e. assign or dispose (to a certain position or lot):--addict, appoint, determine, ordain, set.]

When the whole body is properly arranged and every part is properly working, the body will be in order and will grow. Listen to what Paul tells the Ephesians, "the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

(Ephesians 4:16) "from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

On the note of submission, we are to submit to God. We are also to submit to the authorities in our lives. And we are to submit to one another. In the Old Testament in the book of 1 Samuel, there is an account of Saul destroying the Amalekites. The Lord had instructed them not to take any spoils of the animals or goods. But, Saul and the people did not destroy everything. They took the best of the animals and everything that was good, and destroyed the rest. Then, the Lord tells Samuel to go to Saul and confront him. When he got there, Saul tells Samuel that he has done what the Lord had told him to do. In a humorous response, Samuel asked Saul, "What is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

(1 Samuel 15:13-14) "And Samuel came to Saul, and Saul said to him, "Blessed are you of the LORD! I have carried out the command of the LORD." {14} But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?"

A few verses later, Samuel says that rebellion is as the sin of divination, and insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. The word insubordination literally means "not under proper order and arrangement." It is exactly the opposite of the word submission in the Greek, which means under proper order and arrangement. In this case, Saul had not submitted to God, the highest authority in our lives.

(1 Samuel 15:23) ""For rebellion is as the sin of divination, And insubordination is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has also rejected you from being king.""

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One of the things that I have maintained for many years is that it is dangerous to be under a man who is not submitted to authority. King Saul needed to be under proper authority, and he was not. He was doing his own thing. He was insubordinate to what he had been asked to do. Pastors need to be submitted to authority. Elders need to be submitted to the Lead Elder or Pastor. The Lead Elder should also be submitted to the Board of Elders. I believe that the elders also need to be submitted to the apostle over the church. If a man struggles with authority, it is a warning flag for me. It should be a warning flag for you also.

Here is a note for you women or young ladies that are single. When a man is interested in you, take a few minutes to look at his submission. If he is young and at home, is he submitted to his parents? Does he honor his parents? If he is not submitted to them, stay clear. Do not get involved. Do not get emotionally attached. If it is an older man, is he submitted to the leadership in his church? Is he submitted to his employer? Does he have a problem with governmental authorities? Does he have a difficult time submitting to one another? If there are issues with submission, put the brakes on in that relationship. Those are warning flags.

A few years ago, my son David invited us to his graduation from Marine Boot Camp. We went out on the tarmac at the Marine Recruit Depot in San Diego and watched all the Marine boots march in formation. Each unit stayed in formation. Each unit was part of the larger platoon. Everybody there was in proper order and arrangement. Everything was synchronized and well coordinated. The word hupotasso is a military term. Similarly, everyone in the church is to be under proper order and arrangement. Everyone should not be doing whatever is right in his own eyes. There should be a proper government so that everyone is properly arranged in place and order, and working together.

I know that this was a lengthy introduction to this passage on elders, but I have already spent a number of weeks last year carefully going through the calling of an elder. I have taught on the five fingers that point to the calling of an elder. I have already spent a lot of time discussing the work of an overseer. I have even taught on the character requirements of an elder. Therefore, I felt that it would be good to spend some time talking about proper order, which is the reason that I believe Paul includes this in his letter to Timothy giving six characteristics of a healthy church.

1. Aspiration

The first area that Paul addresses in this passage is the aspiration that a person has to be an elder or pastor. First, the Greek word used for aspires is oregomai. It literally means to stretch oneself or to reach out after. It is as if Paul is telling Timothy to set the bar for an elder. If someone has a desire to do the work of an elder, and it is hard work, then here are the requirements. You will have to stretch yourself to reach this bar.

(1 Timothy 3:1) "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires (oregomai) to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do."

[G3713. oregomai, or-eg'-om-ahee; mid. of appar. a prol. form of an obsol. prim. [comp. G3735]; to stretch oneself, i.e. reach out after (long for):--covet after, desire.]

This list of requirements is almost identical to the list that Paul gives Titus. The primary difference is in the use of those requirements. Titus was asked to appoint elders in every church, and the list

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in Titus was for him to use in selecting elders. The list in Timothy has a very different purpose. Paul starts by saying, “if any man aspires to the office.” In this case, the list is for the person who has an inward desire to be a pastor.

When I was a young man, I knew that I wanted to play professional golf. At the age of seven I said that I aspired to be a professional golfer. I worked hard at my golf and became very skillful at it. When I was in high school, I practiced every spare moment I had. On weekends, when other kids were doing drugs, I was working hard on my golf game. In the winter time, even when it was below freezing, I would hit balls until my hands were too numb to feel anything. I exercised and worked out to become stronger, with the goal of playing professional golf. When I looked at colleges, I looked at it from a golf standpoint. When I was in college, Karen used to go out to a place called Worth Hills on the TCU campus and watch me hit balls. She used to go to golf courses on the weekends and watch me practice chipping and putting. It was not hard to see what I aspired to do. I did not need to tell someone that this was my aspiration. It was readily apparent by my actions. I was stretching myself towards the bar of the PGA Tour.

How does this work from a practical standpoint in the church, particularly in regard to leadership? Some people were upset about the formation of the leadership team that we had. A number of people approached me and told me they felt a call to leadership. Furthermore, several asked me to mentor them in word ministry. They clearly communicated to me their aspiration to be part of church leadership. I am not a mind reader, so unless someone tells me that they have a desire or an aspiration to pastor and shepherd the flock, I may not ever know that. Timothy would probably not have known if someone had an aspiration or not, unless they communicated that desire to him. So, if you have a desire to pastor and shepherd the flock, let me know. If you feel a call to study and preach the word, let me know. If you have a burning desire to do the work of an overseer, let me know.

On our membership interview form, there is a place to select the areas of ministry that you are interested in serving. If someone puts down leadership, I take note. I am looking to see what aspirations and passions people have. I want to help them find their place of service in the body. The interview form is simply a tool to help us come into proper order in the church.

Most of the time, just as my example of aspiring to play professional golf, we will see the aspirations of an individual through his actions. A person with a shepherd’s heart will shepherd people, with or without a title. A leader will lead people with or without a title. A person who loves to study and teach God’s word will always be sharing insights with people. He or she will be constantly teaching, even though it may not be from the pulpit. A wise pastor will keep his eyes and ears open to the flock so that he can spot who is doing the work of an elder. The office of elder does not make you an elder. If God has called someone to be an elder, that is part of who they are. It is what they do. The things that they do will clearly show their aspirations. The pastor or pastors simply need to recognize the calling.

Individuals with a call to leadership will work through a process. Paul set the bar for those aspiring to the office of overseer or pastor. But, there must be an evaluation of the individual based on the requirements given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7. If someone feels called to leadership, but not as a pastor, the requirements in 1 Timothy 3:8-13 will apply. These character qualities need to be addressed, one by one, and if there are areas that need to be worked on, time will be given to work on them. That means that there is accountability, humility, and a willingness to talk about difficult issues.

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This list is not the only list that I look at. The list in Titus 1:5-8 is nearly identical, but it is not exactly the same. I look at both lists. I also look at other Scriptures that pertain to being faithful. For example, Luke tells us that a faithful person is faithful in small things. A faithful person is faithful in what belongs to others. And a faithful person is faithful with the use of money. He concludes that if a person is not faithful with earthly treasures, who will entrust them with real treasures. People are real treasures. Why should we entrust a person with the care of people when they are not faithful with money. Therefore, I look at how a person uses their money. Are they disciplined in their spending? Do they manage their money well? Do they faithfully support the church with their tithes? Does this person go beyond the tithe and give offerings? Is this person a generous giver?

(Luke 16:10-12) ""He who is faithful in a very little thing is faithful also in much; and he who is unrighteous in a very little thing is unrighteous also in much. {11} "If therefore you have not been faithful in the use of unrighteous mammon, who will entrust the true riches to you? {12} "And if you have not been faithful in the use of that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own?"

Part of the process includes the prophetic voice. Acts 20:26 says that it is the Holy Spirit that makes an overseer. The Holy Spirit often speaks through prophetic words. I like to have prophetic people, like John Dean, look at our leadership team to see if the Holy Spirit is pointing a finger towards anyone. If the desire of the individual, the recognition of the calling by the pastor, the recognition of the shepherd's calling by the sheep, the character requirements, and the prophetic fingers all point to the person, we will lay hands on the person. That is the process. It starts with the Aspiration or inward desire of the person to be a shepherd. It starts with the stretching or reaching for that bar that Paul gives Timothy in this passage.

2. Above Reproach

The second area that Paul says about elders is that they must be Above Reproach. There are three areas that a person should be above reproach. He should be Above Reproach in his family life. He should be Above Reproach in his character. Third, he should be Above Reproach with those outside the church. We will look at all three. First, let's read the passage together.

(1 Timothy 3:2-7) "An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, {3} not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. {4} He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity {5} (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?); {6} and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. {7} And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

There are two different Greek words used in this passage for reproach. In verse two, the Greek word is *anepileptos*, which means not arrested. It literally means someone that has not be seized, caught, or taken a hold of. The implication is a person who has been charged with a crime, and arrested, and held captive. A man who is an elder is one that is not charged with any known crimes, offenses, or things that could discredit him or the church. He is above reproach.

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G423. anepileptos, an-ep-eel'-ape-tos; from G1 (as a neg. particle) and a der. of G1949; not arrested, i.e. (by impl.) inculpable:--blameless, unrebukeable.

In verse seven, Paul uses a different Greek word, oneidismos. This word means that an elder cannot be defamed, taunted, chided, or reproached. There is nothing in his life that the enemy can revile him about. An overseer must not be someone who has hands on him because of a crime, and he must not have things in his life that someone could grab hold of.

G3680. oneidismos, on-i-dis-mos'; from G3679; contumely:--reproach. [G3679. oneidizo, on-i-did'-zo; from G3681; to defame, i.e. rail at, chide, taunt:--cast in teeth, (suffer) reproach, revile, upbraid.]

A. Above Reproach in his Family Life.

The first area above reproach pertains to his family life. Paul says that he must be the husband of one wife. He must manage his own household well, and he must keep his children under control with all dignity.

(1 Timothy 3:2-5) "An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife...{4} He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity {5} (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)."

He must be a faithful and committed husband. The **husband of one wife** has stirred quite a controversy in many churches. There are many who say if a man has been divorced he can never be an elder. While I do think that there is clearly a higher standard for elders, I would align myself with those who say that this is talking about the man's relationship with his wife. I find it hard to think that a man like Paul, who had the blood of Stephen and others on his hands, can be an elder and an apostle, while a man whose wife left him can not be an elder. I agree with the camp that says this is talking about a man whose commitment is to his wife. His eyes are not on other women. He is a faithful husband. He has moral purity.

He must be a good manager of his house. It says he must **manage his household well**. Paul asks a great question. If a man cannot take care of his own household, how can he take care of the household of God. I would say that this encompasses many areas. We will look at this more in depth under being a manager. In the context of family, **he must keep his children under control with all dignity.**

This passage has caused one group of churches to force many of their pastors to step down. One pastor in Virginia was forced to step down because his children toilet-papered a tree. This particular pastor had written an excellent book on rearing children, but was forced to leave a large church because of this one incident. Another pastor in Atlanta that was part of this same network of churches was also forced to resign over the behavior of his children.

All of us have the ability and tendency to sin. I sin. My children also sin. The passage does not say that if a child of a pastor sins that he is unqualified. It says that he keeps them under control with all dignity, or gravity. What a church should be upset about is if a pastor is like Eli, who did not rebuke

his sons for living in sin. A pastor should lovingly discipline and correct his children. A man should teach his children respectful behavior.

B. Above Reproach in his Character.

The second area that he must be Above Reproach is in the area of character. Paul gives eight specific character qualities that the man must possess and be an example to the church. He must be temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, not addicted to wine, pugnacious, gentle, uncontentious, and free from the love of money. Let's take a quick look at these areas.

(1 Timothy 3:2-3) "An overseer, then, must be ...temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, {3} not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money."

Temperate means cool tempered, calm or stable. It means that he is even keeled. He is cool tempered. He is stable and steadfast. He does not get rattled easily. The dictionary says that a temperate man is not an extremist. You need a calm person at the helm of a ship in a storm. Anyone can be the captain in calm seas, but you need a temperate man in place for the rough seas.

The Greek word that is used is nephaleos (Strong's G3524), which means to be sober, temperate, or self-controlled, especially in regard to wine. If a man has self control, he will have self control in his drinking. He will have self-control in his thought life. He will have self control in his eating habits. He will have self control with his tongue. A man who has a loose tongue is not ready to be an elder. Much damage can be done by a man who has no control over his words. A man who struggles with self control should begin renewing his mind in this area. There are lots of Scriptures to help a man to overcome this area.

Prudent means wise, cautious, or careful. A prudent man is discerning and not easily deceived or led astray. A prudent man is alert and prayerful. A prudent man stops and looks both ways before pulling into an intersection. The Greek word is sophron, which means sober in mind. There are twenty-four verses in the Bible that talk about being prudent. Fifteen of those are found in the book of Proverbs. In fact, in chapter one of Proverbs, Solomon tells us that one of the purposes of Proverbs is to give prudence to the naive. Elders need a good dose of Proverbs in their minds.

(Proverbs 1:1-4) "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel:...{4} To give prudence to the naive, To the youth knowledge and discretion,"

G4998. sophron, so'-frone; from the base of G4982 and that of G5424; safe (sound) in mind, i.e. self-controlled (moderate as to opinion or passion):--discreet, sober, temperate.

Respectable means someone who you can respect. The Greek word is kosmios, which means to orderly or decorous. We get our English word cosmetics from it. The lives of a leader need to adorn the message of the gospel.

G2887. kosmios, kos'-mee-os; from G2889 (in its prim. sense); orderly, i.e. decorous:--of good behaviour, modest. [G2889. kosmos, kos'-mos; prob. from the base of G2865; orderly arrangement, i.e. decoration; by impl. the world (in a wide or narrow sense, includ. its inhab.,

lit. or fig. [mor.]):--adorning, world.]

Hospitable means to show hospitality to strangers. Someone who is hospitable loves to have people over to his house for meals or to stay. The Greek word is *philoxenos*, which literally means lover of strangers. Hebrews 13:2 says that we should not neglect to show hospitality to strangers. This is really at the heart of what hospitality is all about. Many people are willing to have their family or a friend over, but how many are willing to open up their homes to strangers. An elder is one who shows hospitality to everyone.

(Hebrews 13:2) "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."

G5382. *philoxenos*, fil-ox'-en-os; from G5384 and G3581; fond of guests, i.e. hospitable:--given to (lover of, use) hospitality.

There are many pastors today who build walls around their lives. They have privacy walls and do not want people to see into their lives. They build protective walls around their lives so that they will not be hurt by people. They build exclusive walls because they want to protect their position. God says that an elder needs to invite strangers into his life and home. He needs to tear down the walls and be with the people. Overseers need to be models of hospitality, because God wants a church full of people who show hospitality.

Karen and I used to have a different family over for lunch on Sunday every week. We were cooking for ten plus people anyway, what was a few extra? There is something very special about sharing meals with one another. We developed some very special relationships with people, and also had the opportunity to minister to many people through the platform of hospitality.

Overseers need to model hospitality, but the church needs to follow the example. In Romans 12:13, Paul writes that we all need to practice hospitality. In 1 Timothy 5:10, when a church is considering whether to take on the responsibility of caring for a widow, one of the considerations is whether she has shown hospitality to strangers. In Hebrews 13:2, we are commanded not to neglect showing hospitality to strangers. There is an added benefit given there, that through hospitality some have entertained angels without knowing it. Do you need or want a message from God? Learn to practice hospitality on a regular basis, and you may entertain a messenger from God.

(Romans 12:13) "contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality."

(1 Timothy 5:10) "having a reputation for good works; and if she has brought up children, if she has shown hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the saints' feet, if she has assisted those in distress, and if she has devoted herself to every good work."

(Hebrews 13:2) "Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it."

Not addicted to wine is pretty self explanatory. Scripture does not preclude Christians from drinking wine. There are some good guidelines for its use. Paul tells Timothy to drink some wine for his frequent stomach ailments. Hence, there are medicinal purposes.

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(1 Tim 5:23) "No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments."

In Proverbs, Bathsheba told Solomon to give wine to him whose life is bitter and strong drink to those who are perishing. We give opium to people with cancer or who are suffering. That is Scriptural. We want to comfort those who are suffering and in much pain. She also tells Solomon that it is not for kings to drink wine, lest they forget what has been decreed and pervert the rights of the poor. People in authority need to be clear-minded. Even though I have the freedom to drink wine, I have chosen not to partake of any alcohol for the purpose of always being clear minded.

(Pro 31:4-9) "It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Or for rulers to desire strong drink, {5} Lest they drink and forget what is decreed, And pervert the rights of all the afflicted. {6} Give strong drink to him who is perishing, And wine to him whose life is bitter. {7} Let him drink and forget his poverty, And remember his trouble no more. {8} Open your mouth for the dumb, For the rights of all the unfortunate. {9} Open your mouth, judge righteously, And defend the rights of the afflicted and needy."

A second reason for me is not to cause a brother to stumble. In Ephesians, Paul tells us not to be drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but to be filled with the Spirit. An elder must not be addicted to wine or be a drunkard.

(Eph 5:18) "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,"

(Rom 14:21) "It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles."

Pugnacious means quarrelsome. The Greek word is plektes, which means a striker, which is how the KJV translates it. In 2 Timothy 2:24, Paul says that the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged. We are to be peace-makers, not those who sow strife. We are to be patient and gently people who can turn away strife and help people come to repentance.

(2 Tim 2:24) "And the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,"

G4131. plektes, plake'-tace; from G4141; a smiter, i.e. pugnacious (quarrelsome):--striker.

Gentle means forbearing, equitable, fair, or reasonable. The KJV translates this as patient. The Greek word used here is epieikes, which means forbearing, equitable, fair, or reasonable. Jesus said for us to learn from Him, for He is gentle and humble. Without a gentle spirit, people will not be as receptive to your message. It is essential for elders to have the character quality of gentleness. It is important for the overseer to correct people in a spirit of gentleness. Sheep go astray and they need a gentle shepherd to gently bring them back into the fold.

(Gal 6:1) "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted."

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G1933. epieikes, ep-ee-i-kace'; from G1909 and G1503; appropriate, i.e. (by impl.) mild:--gentle, moderation, patient.

Uncontentious means one who avoids quarrels, strife and arguments. He is a peaceable man. Solomon tells us that strife is like letting out water, and that we must abandon the quarrel before it breaks out. We have to quickly recognize things that will lead to strife and contention. We must learn how to abandon quarrels very early, so they do not break out. How do we learn this?

(Proverbs 17:14) "The beginning of strife is like letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out."

Solomon tells us that any fool will quarrel. We need God's wisdom to help us recognize the things that lead to quarrels, and how to abandon the quarrels. We need to ask God for wisdom. We need to spend time in His word, seeking and searching for His wisdom. An overseer has learned how to recognize and abandon quarrels.

(Proverbs 20:3) "Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel."

All of us need to learn to be peacemakers and how to avoid strife and contention. We saw in the church at Corinth how Paul had to address the strife that was there. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and if we want the presence of God in our midst, we must not have strife and contention.

(1 Corinthians 3:3, 16) "for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?... {16} Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?"

Free from the love of money means that he is not worldly minded. He is not driven by money. In the church at large, many people in ministry have built kingdoms. They have airplanes, boats, extravagant estates, and the things that money can buy. A minister must have his heart set on the kingdom of God, not the things that are on the earth. John tells us not to love the world, nor the things in the world. He goes on to say that if anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. A pastor needs to be full of the love of the Father, not the love of the world.

(1 John 2:15-17) "Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. {16} For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. {17} And the world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God abides forever."

He also says that the man **should not be a new convert**. The Greek word is neophutos, which means a new plant or new sprout. Paul says that the danger is that he will become conceited and fall into condemnation.

G3504. neophutos, neh-of-oo-tos; from G3501 and a der. of G5453; newly planted, i.e. (fig.) a young convert ("neophyte")--novice.

C. Above Reproach with Outsiders

An Overseer must be above reproach with outsiders. The third area that an elder needs to be above reproach is with the outside world. Paul says that he must have a good reputation, so that he won't fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. The KJV says he must have a good report of them which are without. The Greek word that is used is *marturia*, which means witness, testimony, or report. We get our English word martyr from it. A martyr is one who is willing to give witness of something to the point of death. The Lord does not want any shame or dishonor coming to his house, and an elder who has a bad reputation or witness outside the church can bring much dishonor to God's house.

G3141. *marturia*, mar-too-ree'-ah; from G3144; evidence given (judicially or gen.):--record, report, testimony, witness.

3. Ability

The third area that Paul address is his ability to pastor. He gives two specific areas of ability. He must be able or apt to teach. He must be able to manage or rule. We will look at both of these areas.

A. Able to Teach

The first Ability is the Ability to Teach. The NASB says an overseer must be able to teach. The KJV says that a man must be apt to teach. The actual Greek word is **didaktikos which means instructive**. The root word is *dao*, which means to teach. Literally, an overseer is instructive. He has a heart to instruct people. He has the knowledge and ability to instruct people. He has the word ministry skills to instruct people. He has the counseling skills to instruct people in the word. He is instructive.

G1317. *didaktikos*, did-ak-tik-os'; from G1318; instructive ("didactic"):--apt to teach.

This does not mean that he teaches all the time, but he must be apt or able to teach. The primary difference in the qualifications given for deacons and for elders is the ability to teach the word of God. The word shepherd (*poimaino*) means to tend, feed, shepherd, or rule. In 1 Timothy 5:17, Paul tells us the elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.

(1 Tim 5:17) "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching."

This tells me that there are some elders who do not work hard at preaching and teaching. It may be that their gifting is administrative and they work hard in that area. He may work hard as an overseer and do a great job overseeing things, but is not as gifted in the area of teaching. One of the primary things a shepherd does is feed the flock, but there are other aspects of the job as we saw in the different words that describe the office and function of an elder.

One of the elders of another church in our area is named Chris. He is a precious man and an excellent elder. He cares for people. He is a man with a heart for the Lord and for the Lord's flock.

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He and his wife are always meeting with people, counseling people, and caring for them. He leads a men's Bible study on Saturday mornings. He is able to teach. He meditates on the word and has rich insights. He has a solid Biblical foundation. However, teaching is not Chris' primary gifting. He has his own architectural firm and has good management skills. He is a good leader and is full of wisdom. He is able to teach, but that is not his primary gifting or calling. Is he an elder? Absolutely!

God wants all of us to be able to teach. What is keeping you from knowing God's word? Purpose in your heart to start a reading plan. Purpose in your heart to begin studying God's word. Begin to memorize Scripture. The Navigators have a wonderful memory program called the Topical Memory System. You can pick it up from a Christian book store or order it online. If you need help in learning to study, we have people in the church who would be glad to help you learn how to study.

B. Ability to manage the household of God

The second ability that a pastor must have is the ability to manage or rule. We saw in 1 Timothy 5:17 that those who rule well should be considered worthy of double honor. Guess what? A pastor who manages and preaches well will usually have a growing church. A large and growing church can afford to pay a pastor well. A pastor that does not manage or preach well will not have the support base to give a good salary.

- **Management includes planning, administration, supervision, decision making, and communication.**
- **Any leadership position requires these different disciplines to continually be used.**

Not too long ago I heard a pastor tell me that He was not to make any plans for His church. He was simply to trust the Lord. This pastor did not understand that planning does not have anything to do with trusting the Lord. Trusting simply means that you are believing God to do certain things. You can trust God to provide for you daily, or you can trust in your own resources. Whether you plan or are negligent in planning, you can trust in God or your own flesh. You can trust God to fulfill His promises or live with unbelief; it does not involve planning. God has given us the responsibility of planning. We can trust God to help us accomplish the plans we make, or we can trust in our own resources to accomplish our plans.

We serve a God who makes lots of detailed plans. He also gives us the responsibility of making plans. Part of management, in the church and also in the business community, is planning. Church services must be planned. Church events must be planned. Worship must be planned. Messages must be planned. Meetings must be planned. There should be financial plans for a church. In order to plant a Vineyard Church, they require lots of plans to be made. They want to make sure that a pastor will be able to manage the household of God.

1 Corinthians 14 tells us that God is a God of order. He says that everything must be done in an orderly manner. In order for things to be done in an orderly manner, the leaders of the church need to establish some guidelines, and then preside over the meetings. The Greek words that is used for manage is proistemi, which means to stand before, preside, or to rule. The KJV translates it as rule.

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G4291. proistemi, pro-is'-tay-mee; from G4253 and G2476; to stand before, i.e. (in rank) to preside, or (by impl.) to practise:--maintain, be over, rule.

It is very difficult to stand before or preside, if you are not organized, have a plan, and are prepared. Proper preparation brings calmness, peace, and order. One of the marks of good leadership is proper preparation.

(1 Timothy 3:4-5) "He must be one who manages (proistemi) his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity {5} (but if a man does not know how to manage (proistemi) his own household, how will he take care (epimeleomai) of the church of God?);"

(1 Cor 14:33, 40) "for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints....{40} But let all things be done properly and in an orderly manner."

When a man is managing his own household, it means that he is managing the relationships in his family. It means that he is managing his finances. It means that he is caring for his family. He is making sure that their needs are met. Financial stewardship and management is all part of the job of an overseer. The seminaries do a pretty good job teaching people Hebrew and Greek. They do a pretty good job teaching people how to put a sermon together. They do a very poor job turning out people with management skills.

The test of whether a man can manage the household of God is whether he is managing his own house well. Again, an overseer is an example or model to the church in how to manage his house. Every one of us is called to manage his own house. Each one of us needs to put our houses in order. What are the areas of your life that are out of order? Are your finances out of order? There is help available. We have people who can give you financial counsel and help you put your house in order. Whatever area of your life needs to be set in order, God wants to bring order to your life.

Conclusion

These qualifications for elders are not just for the elders. This is what God wants for everyone. The Lord wants His church, His bride to be above reproach. He wants His family to be in order. He wants His church to have the character of Christ. He wants His bride to be above reproach to those outside the church. In Philippians 2:14-15 Paul says that we are to prove ourselves blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom we appear as lights in the world. The world is looking for authentic Christianity. They are searching for truth. They are looking for answers in their lives, and in their families. They are searching for purpose. We have the answers, but we must prove ourselves above reproach.

(Philippians 2:14-15) "Do all things without grumbling or disputing; {15} that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world."

The elders need to be apt or able to teach. Hebrews 5 tells us that by now many of us should be teachers. God wants a whole church full of people who know the word and can share the word with others.

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(Hebrews 5:12) "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food."

The elders need to be models to the church of people who have a heart to instruct and make disciples. But all of us are called to the great commission. All of us are called to baptize and teach people to observe all that He commanded us.

(Matthew 28:18-20) "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. {19} "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, {20} teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"

Let's pray.

Introduction (1 Tim 3:14-15)

Five Reasons To Entitle This “Order”

1. Paul told Titus to set in _____ what remains in Crete by appointing elders. (Titus 1:5, 1:10-11)
 - When a _____ is not established, people are prone to do whatever is right in their own eyes. (Judges 17:6, 21:25)
2. Government is needed so that things are done _____ and in an _____ manner. (1 Cor 14:40, 14:3-5, 29:33)
3. Qualified elders are needed so that the _____ of the church are in good order. (1 Tim 5:17)
4. There is order and arrangement when there are ministry team _____ in place. (1 Tim 3:8-14)
5. There is order in the church when leadership helps people find their _____ of _____ in the body. (1 Pet 5:5, Eph 4:16)
 - Submission (hupotasso) means to be under proper _____ or arrangement.
 - Rebellion or insubordination means to not be under proper _____. (1 Sam 15:13-14, 23)

1. **Aspiration** (1 Timothy 3:1)

- Aspire (oregimai, G3713) means to _____ oneself or to reach out after.
- A person with a _____ heart will shepherd with or without a title.
- Raising up leaders is a _____. (1 Tim 1:1-7, Luke 16:10-12, Acts 20:26)

2. **Above Reproach**

- Above reproach (anepileptos, G423) means not _____.
- Above reproach (oneidismos, G3680) means not _____.

A. **An elder must be above reproach in his _____ life. (1 Tim 3:2-5)**

- He must be a faithful and committed _____.
- He must be a good _____ of his house.
- He must keep his children under _____ with dignity.

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B. An elder must be above reproach in his _____ . (1 Tim 3:2-3)

- Temperate (nephaleos, G3524) means _____ - _____, calm or stable.
- Prudent (sophron, G4998) means _____, cautious, or careful. (Pr 1:1-4)
- Respectable (kosmios, G2887) means _____. It means someone who you can respect.
- Hospitable (philoxenos, G5382) means to show hospitality to _____. (Heb 13:2, Rom 12:13, 1 Tim 5:10)
- Not addicted to wine. (1 Tim 5:23, Pr 31:4-9, Eph 5:18, Rom 14:21)
- Pugnacious (plektes, G4131) means a striker or _____. (2 Tim 2:24)
- Gentle (epieikes, G1933) means _____, equitable, fair, or reasonable. (Gal 6:1)
- Uncontentious means one who avoids _____, strife and arguments. (Pr 17:14, 20:3, 1 Cor 3:3, 3:16)
- Free from the love of money means not _____ - _____. (1 John 2:15-17)
- Not be a new convert (neophutos, G3504) means a new _____ or a new sprout.

C. An elder must be above reproach with _____ .

- An Overseer must have a good witness (marturia, G3141).

3. Ability

A. An elder must be able to teach or _____ (didaktikos, G1317). (1 Tim 5:17)

B. An elder must be able to _____ the household of God. (1 Tim 3:4-5, 5:17, 1 Cor 14:33, 14:40)

Conclusion

- These qualifications are what God wants for _____. (Phil 2:14-15, Heb 5:12, Matt 28:18-20)

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