

## Qualifications of an Overseer (1 Tim 3:1-7)

### Introduction

We are in the midst of a mini-series on Leadership taken from Philippians 1:1. Healthy and growing churches are always developing leaders. They are committed to the growth and development of their members.

(Philippians 1:1) "Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons:"

The first message was on phases of team leadership. Paul and Timothy are a team and they are writing to the saints in Philippi. Paul was always putting together teams. As we look at the various letters that Paul wrote to the churches, we see a number of teams. If we looked through the book of Acts, we would find many more team members.

- 1 Corinthians (Paul and Sosthenes)
- 2 Corinthians, Colossians (Paul and Timothy)
- 1 & II Thessalonians (Paul, Sylvanus, and Timothy)

Healthy and growing churches are always developing teams. We need greeting teams. We need a sound team. We need a worship team. We need an outreach team. We need more on the worship team, specifically a keyboard player and percussionist. We need more on the leadership team. Churches are not supposed to be run by one person. The pattern we see in the New Testament is a plurality of elders.

Our second message was on Servant Leadership. Paul and Timothy identify themselves as bond-servants of Christ Jesus. We saw how the leaders in the Bible, both Old and New Testament, were identified as servants. We used Jesus as our model for servant leadership. We looked at Jesus' Mindset, Jesus' Message, and Jesus' Mission. We ended by asking some questions about what a church would look like that was full of servants. The East Mountains and the world would be turned upside down with a people that laid down their lives for the sake of the gospel.

Our third message was on the work of an overseer. We saw that the overseers are not the only one that oversee the church. Each of us is called to oversee four things in the church. We are to see to it that no one falls short of the grace of God, that there are no immoral people, that there are no profane people like Esau, and that there are no roots of bitterness springing up that cause many to be defiled.

Our fourth message was about how overseers were to pastor the flock. The significance of how overseers pastor the flock is that it is a model or example for all ministry that is done in the church. We saw that a pastor needs to have the right mindset. He needs to have a desire and willingness to pastor, rather than a compulsion to pastor. It must be something that he wants to do, rather than is made to do.

Our fifth message was on how to recognize the call of an overseer. We looked at five fingers that point to the calling of a man. A man must aspire to the office of overseer. There must be a desire to do the work of an overseer. It is the Holy Spirit that makes men overseers, so the finger of God must be pointing to the calling. We also saw how the presbytery and the congregation must recognize the

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call. The fifth finger was the apostle. Paul wrote Titus and gave him a list of qualifications to help him determine if a man is qualified. These qualifications must be in place for a man, or he is not ready. These qualifications do not make a man an overseer. There are many people with the qualifications, but that does not mean that they are called. The man must have a desire to do the work. The man must be called by God to do this work. The leadership and the congregation have to affirm this call.

We also saw that the significance of this is that the Lord has a place in the body for every member. There is a calling on each one of us. The Lord puts desires in each of us and it is important for us to recognize the calling. One emphasis that the Lord has given our body is that every joint is to supply. The body will be built up and mature by the proper working of every individual part. We must learn to recognize the calling in people, equip them, and release them into ministry.

(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."

The qualifications that an elder must have are the things that God wants in place in all of our lives. An elder is a topos or example. An elder is a pattern for all of us to use. An elder is a form letter that we can put our names into. An elder is a die or mold that all of us should use. If the elders are doing a good job, the church should be full of people that have the qualifications of an elder. And if it had a church full of people that met these qualifications, they would not all be elders. The ones that the Holy Spirit made overseers, the ones that God placed a desire within, the ones that God called to be overseers would be the overseers.

The office of overseer is not a reward, or status symbol. The office of overseer is an office established to manage the household of God. It is a job of leading, feeding and caring for the flock of God. It is a call to lay your life down for the church. It is a fine work, and can be a rewarding work, but it is still a work.

Two weeks ago our government and country was downgraded by Standard and Poor's from a AAA rating to a AA credit rating. The rating was given because of the growing budget deficit and our government's lack of care and resolve to correct the problem.

*WASHINGTON— The United States has lost its sterling credit rating from Standard & Poor's. The credit rating agency on Friday lowered the nation's AAA rating for the first time since granting it in 1917. The move came less than a week after a gridlocked Congress finally agreed to spending cuts that would reduce the debt by more than \$2 trillion – a tumultuous process that contributed to convulsions in financial markets. The promised cuts were not enough to satisfy S&P.*

*The drop in the rating by one notch to AA-plus was telegraphed as a possibility back in April. The three main credit agencies, which also include Moody's Investor Service and Fitch, had warned during the budget fight that if Congress did not cut spending far enough, the country faced a downgrade. Moody's said it was keeping its AAA rating on the nation's debt, but that it might still lower it.*

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In our church government, we want to keep a triple A rating. Our church government rating is not a credit rating. There are three A's that are required for the office of overseer. The first A is that an overseer must be **Above Reproach**. The second A is that an overseer must be **Able to Teach**. The third A is that an overseer must be **Able to Manage**.

Today, we are going to look at these three qualifications. We will be using the passage in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 to review the required qualifications.

(1 Timothy 3:1-7) "It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. {2} 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."

### 1. Above Reproach

The text says that a man must be above reproach. There are three different areas that a man must be above reproach. Notice in verse two that he must be above reproach. Paul then speaks about being the husband of one wife. In verse four he speaks about managing his household, and keeping his children under control. A man must be above reproach in his family life. In verse two, Paul begins giving different areas of a man's character. A man must be above reproach in his character. In verse seven, Paul says that he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he does not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. He must be above reproach to those outside the church. These are the three areas that a man must be above reproach.

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.

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.**

There are three areas that Paul mentions that he must be above reproach. First, he must be above reproach in 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.**

He must also be above reproach 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.

(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

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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.

People come from all over the world every month to sit under my father’s teachings about supervising drilling operations. He tells companies to make sure that in a difficult well control operation that they have a calm man running the operation. Having a screamer in charge just rattles everybody. A person who is calm has a calming effect on everyone. The church is no different, and it can be a difficult operation to supervise. Churches need to have calm or temperate men managing the affairs of the church.

**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,"

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

**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."

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

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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.

(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,"

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(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,"

**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."

**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,

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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.

### 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.

### 2. Able 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.

There are a couple things that we can glean from this. First, one of the main jobs that an elder has is to rule well. The Greek word is proistemi, which means to stand before, preside, be over, or rule. An elder must do a good job leading or standing before the church.

(1 Tim 5:17) "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially



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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.

Next, we can see that part of standing before or ruling is feeding the flock. Those who work hard at preaching and teaching are especially to be considered for good pay. 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. 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.

### 3. Ability to manage the household of God

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

Recently, 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.

Last month, I gave a message to our men about planning. 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

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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 word that is used for manage is proistemi, which means to stand before, preside, or to rule. The KJV translates it as rule.

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 success. 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.

**God desires the church to be set in order.** In the parallel passage in Titus, Paul tells him to set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city. Overseers are needed to set, establish, and maintain order in the church. The word for submission in Greek is hupotasso, which means under proper order and arrangement. It is a military word, and implies the lining up and formation of the troops. In addition to the formation of the troops, there is order in their chain of command. There is order in the way they conduct military affairs. There is order in their training and carrying out of assignments. For the church to be in order, the overseers must do a good job managing the household of God.

(Titus 1:5 NASB) 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."

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.

(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 not just have a government with a AAA rating. Let's be a church with a AAA rating. Let's not make excuses and skirt the issues that will downgrade our rating. Let's commit ourselves to make the tough choices in our lives to get our rating where God wants it to be.

Let's pray.

Introduction (Phil 1:1, Eph 4:16, 1 Tim 3:1-7)

**1. Above Reproach**

- a. An Overseer must be above reproach in his \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. (1 Tim 3:2-5)
  - i. He must be a faithful and committed \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ii. He must be a good \_\_\_\_\_ of his house.
  - iii. He must keep his children under \_\_\_\_\_.
  
- b. An Overseer must be above reproach in his \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. (1 Tim 3:2-3)
  - i. Temperate means \_\_\_\_\_, calm,  
or stable.
  
  - ii. Prudent means \_\_\_\_\_, cautious, or careful. (Pro  
1:1-4)
  
  - iii. Respectable means someone who you can respect. The  
Greek word is kosmios, which means to  
\_\_\_\_\_.
  
  - iv. Hospitable means to show hospitality to  
\_\_\_\_\_. (He 13:2, Ro 12:13, 1 Tim 5:10)
  
  - v. Not addicted to wine (1 Tim 5:23, Pro 31:4-9, Eph 5:18,  
Rom 14:21)
  
  - vi. Pugnacious means \_\_\_\_\_. (2 Tim 2:24)
  
  - vii. Gentle means \_\_\_\_\_, equitable, fair, or  
reasonable. (Gal 6:1)
  
  - viii. Uncontentious means one who avoids  
\_\_\_\_\_, strife and arguments. (Pro 17:14,  
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ix. Free from the love of money means that he is not \_\_\_\_\_ . (1 John 2:15-17)

x. Not be a new convert.

c. An Overseer must be above reproach with \_\_\_\_\_ .

**2. Able to Teach** (1 Tim 5:17)

- Didaktikos (G1317) means \_\_\_\_\_ .

**3. Ability to manage the household of God** (1 Tim 3:5)

- \_\_\_\_\_ includes planning, administration, supervision, communication, decision making, and communication.
- Any \_\_\_\_\_ position requires these same management skills.
- God desires the church to be \_\_\_\_\_ . (Tit 1:5, 1 Cor 14:33, 40)

**Conclusion** (Phi 2:14-15, Heb 5:12, Mat 28:18-20)

- These qualifications are not just for \_\_\_\_\_ .
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