

The Qualifications of Elders (2)

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Introduction: The kind of leadership in a church will determine the future of the church.

A. When God called Israel to task, He first called the leadership into account.

(Isa 56:10-57:1)

1. Because of these qualifications in the word of God this need not be the kind of leadership within the church.

2. When we decide to rationalize and dilute these qualifications we will end up with a greater problem than having a church with no elders!

B. We will be dealing with the most controversial area of qualifications tonight, the domestic qualifications of an elder.

1. In all controversy we need to distinguish between opinion and conviction.

2. If we find ourselves dealing with an areas of opinion, then we should be willing to yield. We however must never yield in matters of faith.

3. In we appoint men who have all the qualifications in these verses, then it can be rightly said that God, not men appointed these elders! **(Acts 20:28)**

I. The Domestic Relations of an Elder

A. He must be the husband of one wife. **(1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6)**

1. This literally means "a one wife man."

2. This would eliminate an unmarried man and those with two or more wives.

3. When does a man not have one wife?

a. Does a man whose mate has died and then he later remarries cease to have but one wife? **(Rom 7:2-3)**

b. Does a man who has put away his wife for fornication and then have remarried have but one wife? **(Mt 19:9)**

c. Both polygamy and fornication are forbidden for all Christians.

(1 Cor 7:2; Mt 19:9)

B. He must have faithful children. **(1 Tim 3:4-5; Titus 1:6)**

1. In this case God has explained to us why He gave this qualification: "for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?"

2. An elder must have a family and within that family have faithful children.

a. What does it mean to be "faithful?" 1) trusty, faithful 1a) of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties. 2) in the NT one who trusts in God's promises.

b. We should conclude that this would involve believing children.

(Titus 1:6 NASB) "namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion."

c. Should a man be disqualified for what a child does when he leave home?

3. May an elder be qualified having only one child?

1. Yes, the plural is often used to include the singular. **(1 Tim 5:4, 10; Mk 10:29; Gen 21:7; Acts 2:38-39)**

4. Let us be careful about reasoning in additional qualifications.

II. The Experience of an Elder

A. He must be temperate. **(1 Tim 3:2)**

1. This means: "abstaining from wine, either entirely or at least from its immoderate use 1b) of things free from all wine, as vessels, offerings"
2. It also can be used to denote a man's attitude toward life! He is to be "sober."
(Acts 20:28)

B. He must not be a novice. **(1 Tim 3:6)**

1. This means: "newly planted 1a) a new convert, neophyte (one who has recently become a Christian)."
2. There is a real danger of pride when a man is given a great responsibility!
(1 Cor 8:1-2)
3. You could destroy a man by putting him into the eldership when he does not have the experience.

III. The Habits of an Elder

A. He must be self-controlled. **(Titus 1:8)**

1. This means: "1) strong, robust 2) having power over, possessed of (a thing) 3) mastering, controlling, curbing, restraining 3a) controlling one's self, temperate, continent."
2. He must be able to bring his own body into subjection and thus be an example to the church. **(1 Cor 9:27; 1 Pt 5:3)**
3. He would not have any addictions!

B. He must be sober-minded. **(1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8)**

1. This deals with the common sense that allows one to avoid danger.
2. Both how a person avoids problems and is able to handle delicate matters will show this ability.

C. He must not be quick-tempered. **(Titus 1:7)**

1. This can be described as a "short fuse."
2. Every Christian must avoid this! **(Jas 1:19)**

D. He must not be self-willed. **(Titus 1:7)**

1. This denotes one who is: "self-pleasing, self-willed, arrogant."
2. This "wisdom" is not from God! **(Jas 3:13-17)**
3. If a man must have his way in matters of opinion, there will be trouble.

E. He must not be given to wine. **(1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7)**

1. This would include drunkenness as well as habitual drinking.
2. All Christians should forsake the modern day alcoholic beverages.

IV. The Abilities of an Elder

A. He must be able to teach. **(1 Tim 3:2)**

1. He must possess this skill in order to do his work. **(Tit 1:9)**
2. How can we know if a man has this ability?

Conclusion: Let us trust God and appoint only qualified men.