



Titus 1.7-9

"The Qualifications of an Elder"

By Mike Clark

Titus 1:7-9 *⁷ For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.*

INTRODUCTION –

This is week 3 in our study of the book of Titus and last week we looked at verses 5 and 6 of chapter 1.

There Pastor Jody taught us about the charge, the calling, and the command to be faithful in electing the Family Man, in marriage by the Family Man, and in childrearing by the Family Man.

Pastor Jody talked about how he and Pastor Bill have been straightening out what needed to be straightened here at HCC by calling elder candidates to a time of learning, testing, and trials.

Then we learned about how elders are to be above reproach and the husband of one wife, meaning not that they are without sin, but they are free from accusation and being faithful to their wives.

And then lastly elder's children are to be trustworthy and faithful, showing respect to their father and mother.

Now just to remind you, why we are studying this epistle.

Titus 2:11-12 *⁷ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.*

The gospel saves, trains, and fuels us to live on the Great Commission!

And now we come to verses 7-9, which covers the qualifications of an elder.

Preaching on the qualifications for an elder or pastor is very daunting because it calls me to always be in the process of examining my own heart and examining my own life.

And what I say to you out of the Word of God is a standard that is very high, a standard to which the Lord calls me and any other servant.



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And yet it's a standard which we can't fully attain in this life and only in some measure can attain by the goodness and grace of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit.

The spiritual qualifications for leadership in the church are non- negotiable.

Because if a man doesn't have these qualifications, I would submit to you that that man is not called to ministry.

I think there's a tremendous need to direct the church's attention back to the issue of who is qualified to be a pastor.

There are so many unqualified people in ministry today and because of that the church doesn't have the proper models that it should have for godliness and sanctification and righteousness and so the church has descended to a low level of spiritual living.

I believe I can speak for the elders and elder candidates that we have great concerns about the whole issue of church leadership.

We're concerned about the kind of person that is allowed to preach in the pulpit, that is allowed to preach the Word of God, that is elevated to the point of pastor or elder in the church.

I think we have to call the church back to evaluating people on the basis of the standards that are explicitly given in Scripture.

They're not hard to understand. They're clear, and they're very obvious, both in Titus chapter 1 and 1 Timothy chapter 3 and a number of other places in the pastoral epistles.

Pastor Jody and Pastor Bill want to pour their life into men, to build men who would be men who could effectively minister as pastors and elders in the church.

We want to set these standards and these principles down as the required character for pastors and elders.

The men who fit these standards and are therefore qualified for ministry do so not by their own talent but by the goodness and the grace of God, who works in them to make them suitable for ministry.



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In 2 Timothy chapter 2 Paul uses seven different metaphors to describe a spiritual leader. He calls the minister a teacher, a soldier, an athlete, a farmer, a workman, a vessel and a slave.

And each of those images gives the idea of sacrifice and labor and service and hardship. They speak about the complex and varied responsibilities of spiritual leadership.

And not one of those word pictures makes the ministry glamorous. That's because it's not supposed to be glamorous. It's hard work. It's requires a lot of time and sacrifice.

Spiritual leadership's requirements are faultless character, spiritual maturity, a willingness to serve humbly, and a skill in teaching.

Jesus' favorite metaphor for the spiritual leader in the church was the one He used most often to describe Himself, and that was "shepherd" – "one who tends God's flock."

Every church leader is a shepherd. Although Andy Stanley totally disagrees with that statement. But that really does sum up what a church leader does.

He feeds, leads, nurtures, cares, comforts, protects, and corrects - like a shepherd does his sheep.

God has ordained that this be a role of humble service, of loving service.

They're not called to be slick celebrities but laboring servants, they're not called to be charismatic and glamorous personalities but faithful shepherds.

The man who leads God's people must above all things demonstrate sacrifice, devotion, lowliness, and a love for and ability to communicate God's truth.

I think we're safe in saying that many of the best known and most visible religious leaders completely fail to measure up to the biblical standards.....

.....and that is certainly a grief to the heart of the Lord of the church, because as a result of poor shepherding you have a weak church.

In fact, churches can survive almost every kind of problem except the failure of the shepherds. The shepherds can destroy their sheep, and without the proper shepherds they go astray and are vulnerable.



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The Apostle Paul was passionately convinced that churches had to have the right kind of shepherds, the right kind of leaders. And all through his ministry he strove to that end.

For example, back in Acts 14, it says he went in and evangelized and then nurtured and then appointed shepherds, elders, overseers, pastors. That was the pattern.

Acts 14:21-23 gives you in one little passage what Paul did everywhere - lead them to Christ, nurture them along the path of sanctification, and give them leadership. That was Paul's passion.

He knew that they had to have spiritual leadership. The sheep without a shepherd are scattered and devastated.

Now Pastor Jody talked about this last week, but when you look at the New Testament you find three terms are used for the shepherd or the pastor - "elder," "overseer," and "pastor." And they're all interchangeable.

For example, look at Titus 1:5, and you will see the word "elders" there. Paul tells Titus to "appoint elders."

Then down in verse 7 he calls them "overseers." He says "the overseer must be above reproach."

He's using "elder" and "overseer" interchangeably. You could say "Elder" speaks of the age and maturity of the man and "overseer" speaks of his function of leadership.

And you could add the word "pastor," which speaks of his function of feeding the sheep. In Acts 20 you also have the same use of those terms interchangeably.

So under the plan of God, leadership is by men who are spiritually mature, who take the oversight and shepherd and feed the flock.

These men must exemplify spiritual virtue. Why? Because they are the models the people are following to spiritual virtue.

We're not to be godly for our own sake alone, but for the sake that we might establish a pattern for others to follow.



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The ministry, then, belongs to those who can meet by God's grace the qualifications. Not everyone can be an elder. Not everyone can be a pastor and an overseer.

This office is reserved for qualified men who meet the character standards outlined in the text before us, and also in 1 Timothy 3 and a number of other places where you have glimpses of it in the pastoral epistles.

The leadership of the church calls for teaching, it calls for preaching sound doctrine. It calls for decision-making. It calls for determining church policy.

It calls for careful stewardship of all funds. It calls for protecting and defending the flock, for disciplining sin, for praying, ruling, organizing, ordaining other leaders, exhorting, and rebuking.

In general, all that responsibility belongs to skilled and gifted and called and prepared men. And again, it's by God's grace that such men exist. We can't achieve this level on our own.

Our giftedness comes from God's Spirit, and whatever we are before God in terms of righteousness and virtue is by God's grace and God's grace alone.

Point 1 – What a pastor should not be.

Titus 1:7 ⁷ *For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain.*

So let's talk about the word overseer a little more. It's used five times in the New Testament, four times of pastors, once of Christ. It comes from the word *episkopos*.

The middle of that word, *skop*, is the word from which we get *skeptic* in English.

What's a skeptic? – A skeptic is someone who searches and examines everything very closely, they're very analytical and they want to look everything over very carefully.

And when you add the *epi* at the beginning, the preposition, you get a person who looks into everything. That's an “overseer,” that's a guardian, “paying close attention.”



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Paul then modifies the word overseer and says "as God's steward" which is very important. The word "steward" is *oikonomos* in the Greek. *Oikos* is the word "house."

And *nomos* is the "law." So the steward set the law for the house. So in biblical times a steward was the law of the house. He didn't own it; he was a steward of it.

He managed it; he managed the people; he managed the resources. He made sure the work got done. He took care of those who needed to be corrected.

He took care of those who needed to be trained. He took care of those who were wounded or ill. He managed the house. That was what a steward did.

And I want you to look back to 1 Timothy, because I want you to notice something.

1 Timothy 3:14-15 - *I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that, ¹⁵ if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.*

Paul says - Timothy, I'm writing so you'll know how someone is supposed to exercise his stewardship, his managing role, his oversight in the household of God.

And Paul is saying the church is a household - it's God's household; He owns it.

The children are God's children. They belong to God. And Paul tells Timothy that it's his responsibility to manage it for Him.

All the resources, all the people with their various gifts, feeding them spiritual truth, correcting them, disciplining them, caring for them, loving them, and restoring them.

That's also why Paul says back in 1 Timothy 3:5, "For if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?"

Because it is a household; it's God's household. And the family is the proving ground for the ability to manage God's household.

We are stewards; we don't own it; it doesn't belong to us. We are directly answerable to God.

1 Corinthians 4:2 - *Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.*



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1 Peter 4:10 - *As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.*

So, we manage for God His household, just like a steward managed a household for a land owner. It's a very sacred task because the Lord paid a high price for this household.

Paul then says that an overseer as God's steward "must be above reproach." And that phrase is repeated twice and it's repeated also in 1 Timothy 3.

And Pastor Jody talked about that last week. It means there's no cause for criticism of his life, of his character, no mark, no blight, no issue of unrepentant sin. He's to be the model of spiritual life.

His unrepachable character, his blameless character, makes him suitable and unique and specifically set for this kind of work.

Back in verse 6 it says, "if anyone is above reproach." Verse 7 adds the word "must." So, it's a necessity. It's not an option.

Why? Because he's responsible to lead the flock of God as God's steward, and to lead that flock to the kind of life that God wants, which must be the kind of life that he exemplifies.

And to be honest church, that is scary. It's a frightening standard, for anyone who stands in this kind of responsibility. He's not able to be accused.

He's not able to be laid hold of because of some scandal or sin that mars him. On the contrary, he's a man without reproach who can establish a pattern that others can follow.

Now Paul is going to further flesh that out – what it looks like to be above reproach.

And verse 7 gives a list of negatives and verse 8 gives a list of positives. There are five negatives and there are six positives.

Firstly, Paul says that an overseer should not be "arrogant." And it means "to have a self-loving arrogance or to be self-willed."

Literally it means to be consumed with yourself, seeking your own way, your own satisfaction, your own gratification," to the point that you disregard others.



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In our day we could say a "head-strong person" or a "self-seeking person" or a "stubborn person."

Interestingly false teachers are described in the same terms.

2 Peter 2:10 – *Those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones.*

They're so arrogant and daring and bold in their arrogance and so self-willed that they will go where angels fear to tread.

In our society, it seems like the first thing people look for in looking for a leader is somebody who is strong, who is aggressive, and who is a natural leader.

However, just the opposite of that kind of person should lead in the church. It doesn't mean he's not strong. It doesn't mean that this man should be without convictions.

But very often the man who leads in the church is selected because of his strong natural leadership ability, and what drives it is not concern for God and truth.....

.....but a sense of ego fulfillment or a need to be in charge. No one who is dominated by self is fit for the ministry.

And listen beloved we all have to examine our heart all the time on this one. We all fight the battle of the flesh and self-will and self-desire.

But a man who is to be a leader in the church is a man who is not self-willed. He has to continually suppress his own desires, the desires of his flesh, the desires for his own self-glory and self-gratification.

He must not despise others because they get in the way of fulfilling his own desires.

Matthew 20:25-28 - *But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ²⁶ It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ²⁷ and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, ²⁸ even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

So the man who is chosen for this role of leadership must not be a self-willed man. He has to give space for other people and other people's leadership and direction.



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Most of all he seeks out to know the mind and the heart of God and to do only what He would desire done in His church.

Next Paul says that an overseer is not to be “quick-tempered.” – That word is used only here, and in the Greek it’s *orgilos* from which we get the word *wrath, anger*.

It’s a smoldering kind of anger that resides under the surface. And I want to make a distinction here though. Everybody is going to lose it now and then a little bit and get upset about something. We all have to face the reality of that.

But this is talking about a person who has a temper that's always under the surface and at given points it just erupts.

It's constant, lasting, nurtured hostility maintained in the heart, and periodically it bursts out.

2 Timothy 2:24-25 – And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, ²⁵ correcting his opponents with gentleness.

A qualified elder won’t be angry, he won’t be hostile, he won’t be quarrelsome, he won’t be fuming on the inside because he's not getting his way.

On the contrary, a qualified elder is one who can take being told no, he’s a man who is willing to defer his own interests for others.

He’s a man who can turn things over to other people who do it in ways that he might not think are the best, but can deal with that with joy in his heart and gratitude and kindness and patience.

He’s a man who can allow people around him to fail until they learn to succeed, because he doesn't tie his ego up in everything they do.

Next Paul says that an overseer should not be a drunkard. – The word in the Greek is *paroinos*, and it’s the combination of two words *oinos*, “wine,” and *para*, “alongside.”

This requirement, by the way, is also given in 1 Timothy 3:3. Then in verse 8 it talks about deacons not being “addicted to much wine” as well.

Later in Titus, 2:3, it says that older women are not to be “slaves to much wine.”



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So, we find that not only those in leadership but even those in the church are not to be the kind of people who are associated with wine.

Now we could get into a long discussion on this topic of drinking, but that will have to be another sermon. But I want you to notice the way Paul describes this vice.

Paul says elders, deacons, and all Christians are not to be drunkards. They are not to be addicted or slaves to drinking. Notice he doesn't say they are not to drink.

Paul is talking about a person who has some kind of addiction to alcohol or some kind of need to indulge himself in it to some degree of being incapacitated.

And so he basically says that anybody who is a spiritual leader can't be involved in any of this kind of behavior, any kind of addiction to wine, any kind of coming alongside wine, any lingering around wine.

The implication being you're hanging around it, you're not just drinking it for the sake of quenching your thirst or the sake of the refreshment of it.

You're hanging around it, you're alongside of it, it's a major part of your life, and it has some impact on your thinking.

The idea could be one who goes to the bar, places associated with drinking.....

.....where there is potential for drunkenness, where there's potential for indiscretion, where there is a potential for losing control of yourself.....

.....to the degree that you say things or do things that are inappropriate, where there is obviously the association with those who are drunkards and those who are sinners.

No man who has any of that kind of stuff in his life is fit to be a pastor or an elder.

Another thing that we have to think about is that it can be potentially damaging. Paul talks about this in 1 Corinthians 8 and Romans 14.

He says I don't want to do anything that's going to cause another believer to stumble.

But what Paul is saying is no man who is irresponsible with regard to those things, which can lead to drunkenness, has any business being in spiritual leadership.



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Then fourthly, he says, "not violent." Drunkenness can sometimes lead to violence right? "Not violent" is used only here and in 1 Timothy 3:3 and has the idea of someone who hits you.

It's basically someone who punches you. It's one who is "a giver of blows," somebody who uses his hand, fist, or whatever to hit you.

Some of you may or may not know who Todd Bentley is. He is a so called "pastor" who has gone around hitting and kicking people to try to heal them!

You can Youtube this guy and see some of this stuff. One time He said the Holy Spirit told him to go and kick a woman in the front row of the church in the face with a biker boot in order to heal her.

He's choked people in attempted so called exorcisms. He kicked a guy in the leg with polio. He punched a guy with stage 4 colon cancer in the stomach.

Interestingly there's a video of Justin Peters rebuking him to his face.

Anyway, anybody who goes around punching people doesn't belong in spiritual ministry.

In contrast a spiritual leader is to resolve conflict peacefully, biblically, in a godly, gentle, meek, and humble manner.

And the last of the vices Paul spells out is "not greedy for gain." This phrase has two Greek words - *aischros*, which means "shameful"; and *kerdos*, which means "gain." So, it's a person who is "after personal gain shamefully."

This kind of person doesn't care how he makes money and he doesn't care how he glorifies himself; he doesn't care how he gets material things. He lacks integrity and he lacks honesty.

1 Peter 5:2 - *Shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly.*

Now that doesn't mean that because of that temptation that we just don't pay pastors.



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No, there’s nothing wrong with paying the preacher, 1 Corinthians 9:14 says, “The Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.”

1 Timothy 5:17 - *Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.*

The faithful elder or overseer isn’t in the ministry for money.

But do you want to know who is in it for the money? - False teachers. False teachers do it for money. They want money. They seek the “greedy gain.”

1 Timothy 6:3-10 - *³ If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, ⁴ he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, ⁵ and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. ⁶ But godliness with contentment is great gain, ⁷ for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. ⁸ But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. ⁹ But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰ For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. ¹¹ But as for you, O man of God, flee these things.*

Man of God is a technical term for a pastor, an elder in a church, a preacher of the Word. It's a term used to describe the prophets of the Old Testament.

Any man who is captivated by money will compromise himself and somehow will gain in a greedy or sordid way.

The man who is in spiritual leadership is not to be greedy. He is not to be indulgent because he handles God's money.

If you have a man who is selfish and greedy and you put him in charge of the money in the church, you have a very volatile situation.

Now let's look at the positive side in verse 8 –

Point 2 – What a pastor should be.

Titus 1:8 *⁸ But hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.*



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The first positive characteristic of a pastor is that he is to be hospitable. The Greek word is *philoxenos* from two words: *phileo*, “to love”; *xenos*, “strangers” – so “to love strangers” is what it means.

It's used also in 1 Timothy 3:2, Romans 12:13, Hebrews 13:2 and 1 Peter 4:9. It's an attribute of Christian character.

And I'm not going to spend a whole lot of time on this one because we went over this in 3 John and I would encourage you to go back and listen to that message.

But briefly what we mean by hospitality is that it's the idea of opening your life and you're your home and your resources to people, but especially to believers.

Next, Paul says a pastor is to be a lover of good.

And again, we have a combination of two words: *phileo* - to love and *agathos*, - good.

So, it's to love what is good. It means he's a lover of God since God is good and it means he's a love of good men and a lover of good things.

Paul basically has the same idea in Philippians 4.

Philippians 4:8 – *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*

So, a godly pastor will love those kinds of things. You can tell so much about a person by what he loves, by what he involves himself with, and by who he loves and who he associates with.

Paul then says an elder must be self-controlled. The Greek word is *sophron*.

The first part of that word comes from the word “to save” and the last part means “mind.” The Greeks used to say, “he is a man who has saving thoughts,” or “he's right minded.”

In other words, he's in control of his mind, and his thoughts are redeemed thoughts; they're saved thoughts. It's a form of *wisdom*, of disciplined wisdom. This is the kind man a pastor is to be.



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And then the fourth one is "upright," in the Greek - *dikaios*. It's sometimes translated as "righteous." It describes conduct that meets God's standard.

So, this is a man whose life is approved by God. It's a legal term indicating that the divine verdict on his life is positive.

God looks at him and says, "this man is right; this man is good; this man is righteous; this man meets My standard." He's a man whose life is approved by God.

And then he adds "holy." That's *hosios*, in the Greek. It can also mean devout. It means "pure, unpolluted, free from any stain of sin."

And here we are back to that stainless life again, "above reproach." In every area of his life - everywhere you look - every area of his life is admirable; there's no stain of sin there.

And then lastly, the sixth qualification, "disciplined," literally "restrained." He's a man who has control of his life.

He has the grace of God in his life to the degree that he is mature, and he can apply it in dealing with the temptations of life.

Now in verse 9 we come to the last section of qualifications, and it introduces the primary task or duty of the pastor, elder, and overseer.

Point 3 – What a pastor must do.

Titus 1:9 ⁹ *He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.*

Holding firm to the Word is the necessary foundation. If you're not holding on to the faithful Word, then you're in no position to be teaching it.

No one can teach or preach effectively without a strong, personal, compassionate commitment to the truth.

And I really believe this is the real issue in the church today in terms of weak, shallow preaching.

They're not clinging to the Word. The word "hold firm," means "to cling, to hold tightly."



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It's used in Luke 16:13 where Jesus said, "No man can have two masters, he will cling to the one or despise the other." Same Greek word.

So, to cling to is to have a strong affection, to have a strong devotion, to love, to adhere to, to believe in.

And it's not just a commitment to the inspiration of Scripture, it's not just a commitment to the inerrancy of Scripture, as important as that is.

It's a commitment to the uniqueness of Scripture. In other words, it's to hold fast to the faithful Word and nothing else as the source.

And here Paul describes Scripture as the trustworthy Word.

It's the reliable, dependable, sufficient Word, as opposed to the word of men which is not reliable, not trustworthy, not dependable, and not sufficient.

As Psalm 19 says, "The law of the Lord is perfect."

Now what is Paul talking about when he says the trustworthy word "as taught?"

Well, I believe he is referring to the apostolic doctrine that had verbally been passed down, and which Titus had already been taught by Paul.

The apostles' doctrine had become the basic, recognized dogma of the church. In the Greek it was the *didache*, the recognized body of Christian truth taught by the apostles.

And so, what Paul is saying to Titus is, "Look, you hold firm the reliable, trustworthy, dependable, sufficient Word of God, which will be in perfect agreement with what you've learned from the apostles.

It hasn't changed; you don't need a new message. It doesn't need to be redacted, edited or updated.

You must whole-heartedly cling to the revealed truth of God built on and consistent with the apostolic doctrine, the recognized body of Christian truth."

And "Hold firm" not only has the sense of loyalty but it has the sense of exclusivity - we are loyal to it and exclusive in terms to our devotion.



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So why was Titus to hold firm to the trustworthy Word? – For the purpose of both giving instruction in sound doctrine and rebuking those who contradict it. It's the necessary duty.

Notice one is positive and one is negative. Positively, we use the Word of God "to exhort with sound doctrine." Negatively, we use the Word of God "to refute those who contradict it."

On the positive side we have to be able to strengthen and build up. On the negative side, we have to be able to comprehend and understand error and know how to deal with it.

It's a tender and passionate and powerful pleading for obedience. That's what we do. We plead with you to be obedient, and we use the Word of God for that pleading.

And he's saying, "pastors must teach sound doctrine, come alongside, strengthen believers in the path of righteousness using the Word."

And that word "sound," by the way, *hugiaino*, is where we get the word *hygienic*, which means "healthy, life-giving, life-preserving."

So here is a call for biblical, theological, God-centered preaching and teaching that exposit the Scripture.

Ezra 10:7 - For Ezra had set his heart to study the Law of the LORD, and to do it and to teach his statutes and rules in Israel.

A pastor studies the law of the Lord, practices it in his own life, and then teaches it.

On the negative side he tells Titus, "To rebuke those who contradict." Now there are false teachers behind the scenes here.

We see that indicated in chapter 1, verses 10 and following, and over again in chapter 3, as we will see in the future.

There were false teachers there who were difficult to deal with. And interestingly all of the pastoral epistles are set against a back-drop of people teaching error.

That is still true. They're always around, and so one of the roles of the pastor is to defend the sheep against the wolves.



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We have to defend the sheep against the false shepherds, those teaching error. We have to be able to see something and to analyze it biblically, and show the error of it, and lead people to the truth of it.

Rebuke means literally "to convince them of their error." It isn't to humiliate them; it isn't to chastise them; it isn't to speak evil of them. It's to effectively show them their error.

We must use Scripture to reveal error, to reveal Satanic lies and false teaching. And we must make it known to the church.

So, what we do is preach and teach the Word of God to strengthen believers and to bring them to obedience to God and then to convince people of error and show them the path of truth.

Sound doctrine does both. If a man has the necessary foundation, that is, he holds loyally and exclusively to the Word of God as the source, then he can do the necessary duty with power and blessing.

Those who are pastors and elders and overseers in the church are called to use the Word of God effectively to strengthen believing people and to defend the church against attacking error.

CONCLUSION –

Now you might be thinking – Mike why are the standards so high for an elder's general character?

Answer - because that's how God wants you to live. Did you know that?

God does not want you to be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain. He wants you to be hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

And that's why He wants your leaders to be like that because how are you going to get to that point if you don't have somebody to follow?

It isn't that these people are to be different than everybody else; they are to be what everybody else is to be. That's what leadership is all about.

Luke 6:40, "And when a man is fully disciplined, he will be like his teacher."



Titus 1.7-9
"The Qualifications of an Elder"
By Mike Clark

The standard is high because God wants his flock to be holy, even as He is holy.

So, I exhort you to examine your own heart and ask the Lord to reveal to you where you may be stumbling in some of these vices and where you may be lacking in fruits of the Spirit.

Maybe you're struggling with arrogance or a quick temper. Maybe you've not been self-controlled in both your actions and your thoughts. Confess that to the Lord and ask for his help in overcoming those things.

And realize this – That there is one who was never arrogant, even though He is the greatest, there is one who was never sinfully angry, never got drunk, was never violent or greedy.

There is one who was always hospitable, always loved good, always had self-control, and was absolutely and completely upright, holy, and disciplined.

There is one who taught perfect doctrine and was not afraid to correct those who were in error.

That one is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Shepherd. He is our Overseer, and our Great High Priest.

He is the one who endured the cross to pay for sins of commission and sins of omission.

And if you're here today or watching online and maybe you're struggling to control your arrogance or anger or drinking too much.....

.....Maybe you're realizing that you can't stop doing those things without the Lord's help.

Maybe you're realizing that you have failed to show hospitality and not loved good but loved evil and that you have very little self-control.

If that's you, I have good news and bad news. The bad news is that on your own, you have no ability to free yourself from arrogance and anger and drinking and from whatever sin you may be struggling with.

You have no ability to stop doing whatever it is that you know is wrong.

But be encouraged, the Lord can set you free from those things.



Titus 1.7-9
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You have His promise that if you repent of your sins and trust in Jesus Christ and what He did on the cross, He will forgive you of your sins and set you free from the slavery of sin.

He will give you a new heart with new desires and give you by His power and grace, the ability to live for Him.

So cry out to the Lord in humble faith and He will grant you everlasting life.

Prayer.