

## “Set In Order What Remains”

**TIT 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,**

1. “For this reason I left you in Crete” - Paul had left Titus behind “in Crete” to “set in order” the things that were lacking in the church.
2. “that you might set in order what remains” - He had the responsibility of taking care of unfinished business.
  - a. We do not know all the things that were lacking, but a major assignment given to Titus was to make sure the church there had qualified spiritual leaders.
  - b. A church without faithful and sound leadership is going to be a troubled church and may quickly go astray or destroy itself by disputes among the members.
  - c. A church without faithful and sound leadership is a church where the weakest member has as much to say as the strongest member and will most likely go astray or never reach its potential.
3. “and appoint elders in every city as I directed you” - Paul had already given Titus some instructions regarding the appointment of elders before he left Crete.
  - a. Acts 14:23 is more specific and indicates each congregation had a plurality of elders.

ACT 14:23 And when they had appointed elders for them in every church [congregation], having prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.

- 1) Cities might have more than one congregation.
  - 2) There is no evidence that a group of men governed two or more congregations in a city or area.
  - 3) It is a tremendous challenge to govern and lead by word and example one congregation, and it would be nigh impossible for elders to govern and take care of the sheep in multiple congregations.
- b. Timothy had been given the same assignment of appointing elders. (1 Tim. 3:1-7).
  - c. These examples do not mean that others did not participate in the appointment process.
    - 1) It would not set well with a congregation if elders were forced upon them.
    - 2) We can be sure that the men selected had the approval of the congregation at large.
    - 3) Though these scriptures are not speaking of the appointment of elders [bishops, shepherds (pastors)], they do indicate a pattern of believers having a say in appointments. (Acts 1:15-26; 6:1-6). See Acts 1:23-26; Prov. 16:33.
    - 4) The word of God does not designate the exact method of appointing elders, but it does give the qualifications that one must have to be appointed and serve as an elder.

**TIT 1:6 namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.**

1. “namely, if any man be above reproach” - He must be a man of unquestionable character.

a. This does not mean an elder must be sinless. (1 Jn. 1:8, 10).

b. It does mean they must be living godly lives, and have a good reputation among those in the church and even outside the church. (1 Tim. 3:7).

1TI 3:7 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.

c. Much of what is meant by the words “above reproach” are explained by the qualifications listed.

2. “the husband of one wife” - Lit. “a man of one woman”

a. He is to be a faithful husband to his one wife.

1) He is not to be a womanizer or a polygamist, but is to be faithful to his one and only wife.

2) Paul’s instructions to husbands, in the book of Ephesians, should be true of the elder and his wife. (Eph. 5:22-33).

b. It does not mean a man cannot remarry if his wife dies. (Rom. 7:3-5; 1 Cor. 7:39).

c. There is a lot of debate about if a man scripturally divorced can serve as an elder.

1) A man scripturally divorced is “the husband of one wife.”

2) For a scripturally divorced man to serve as an elder he must meet all the qualifications of an elder including having “a good reputation with those outside the church.” (1 Tim. 3:7).

d. There is not the slightest hint that Paul was only forbidding a polygamists from being an elder.

1) Polygamy was not a problem in church, and polygamy was wrong for all Christians including elders.

2) The New Testament only sanctions marriage of a man and a woman - not a man and several wives or a woman with several husbands. (Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Cor. 7:1-39; Matt. 19:3-8).

3) There is not a single example of polygamy in the church.

3. “having children who believe”

a. It can also be translated “having faithful children.”

1) The word “believe” comes from the Greek “pistos” [pis **stahs**] that usually has the meaning of “faithful.”

2) The word is used here with the meaning of “faithful.”

b. Paul is not giving different instructions to Timothy and Titus.

- 1) He is not telling Timothy an elder's children must be faithful children who are under control and then giving Titus a different requirement.
- 2) The meaning of this qualification is the same in 1 Timothy and Titus. An elder's children must be in subjection and be of good behavior.

c. Paul had taught Timothy that men having children in subjection are to be appointed. (1 Tim. 3:4).

1TI 3:4 He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity

4. "not accused of dissipation or rebellion" - The children of an elder must be obedient and not bring reproach upon the elder and the cause of Christ.
  - a. This does not mean their children must be perfect. There are no perfect children.
  - b. Though all children make mistakes, the children of an elder must not be open to charges of loose living or lawbreaking.
  - c. This does not mean an elder must resign if his children sin.
  - d. It does mean that this misconduct must not be ignored, but quickly corrected.
  - e. Some time, but not unlimited time, must be given for this correction.

### Additional Qualifications

**TIT 1:7 For the overseer [bishop] must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain,**

1. "For the overseer must be above reproach" - See comments Titus 1:6
2. "as God's steward" - Elders are called "God's stewards" here. Gr. "oikonomos" [oi kah **nah** mahs] "the manager of a household, a steward" (Lk. 12:42; 16:1, 3, 8; 1 Cor. 4:2; Gal. 4:2; Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 4:1; Tit. 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:10).
  - a. They have been entrusted with the flock [household] of God. (1 Tim. 3:15).
  - b. There is no responsibility greater than overseeing the flock of God.
  - c. They are to rule the flock and lead the flock by example. (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

1PE 5:1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed,

1PE 5:2 shepherd the flock of God among you, **exercising oversight** not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness;

1PE 5:3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but **proving to be examples to the flock.**

1PE 5:4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

3. "not self-willed, not quick-tempered"
  - a. An elder must not be "self-willed" - stubborn.
    - 1) He is not to be overbearing or self-pleasing.

- 2) He must not always have his own way.
- b. An elder must not be short-tempered. He is not given to outbursts of wrath.
4. “not addicted to wine” - He must not be “addicted” to strong drink.
- a. “not addicted to wine” - “no brawler” - ASV - “not given to wine” - KJV, NKJV, Amp. “not given to drunkenness” - NKJ; NIV
- b. The Greek “me paroinon, **may pah** rah oi nahn” [not an excessive drinker] is “not given to wine.” (Tit. 1:7).
- c. The root meaning goes back to the effect of wine on the individual who tarries over wine. “no brawler” - RSV
- d. The word can be used to mean “not quarrelsome, insolent, overbearing.”
- e. See 1 Tim. 3:8 “me oino pollo prosechontas” - not being addicted or engaged to much wine. “prosecho” [prahs **eh** koh] - be addicted to, engage in, be occupied with.
- f. He is not one who lingers besides his wine.
- g. A common wine of that day was a mixture of three parts of water to one part wine.
- h. It is not a parallel to our modern wines, beers and other drinks that add alcohol not water.
- i. **It was not intoxicating if consumed in small amounts.** See 1 Tim. 5:23
- j. The drink must not impair the self-control of an elder.
- k. Any substance that causes a Christian to lose self-control is wrong.
5. “not pugnacious”
- a. Greek “plektes” [**playk** tace] - “not violent, not a striker, not quarrelsome.”
- b. He must not be a violent person and given and ready to come to blows.
- c. An elder who is “quick-tempered” or “violent” will do great harm to the flock of God.
- d. Paul also indicated that an elder must be “uncontentious” coming from the Greek “amachus” [**am** ah koos] meaning “not a fighter,” that is, peaceable.
- e. “avoiding quarrels - NEB - “not quarrelsome” - NIV
6. “not fond of sordid gain” - He must not be a greedy person nor seek gain by dishonest means. (1 Tim. 3:3).
- a. **“free from the love of money”** (1 Tim. 3:3). - **Gr.** “aphilarguros” [a fee **lar** goo rahs] - not avaricious, not loving money, not greedy. The elder, as all Christians, must be liberal and generous. (Heb. 13:5).
- b. “not greedy for money” McCord - See 1 Tim. 6:10; 1 Cor. 5:11
- c. It should be kept in mind that some elders were paid. (1 Tim. 5:17,18).

d. It is right for those who spend their time overseeing the flock to be paid, but they should not be greedy in their wages or in any other way even if they are not supported by the church.

e. Paul's affirmation about "the love of money" applies to all Christians including elders. (1 Tim. 6:10).

1TI 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. See also Matt. 19:23, 24.

**TIT 1:8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled,**

1. **"hospitable"** (philoxenos, fee lahx eh nahs) - "a lover of strangers"

a. All Christians are to be hospitable. (Rom. 12:13; Heb. 13:2; 1 Pet. 4:9).

b. Elders are not an exception to the rule, and they must be willing to open up their homes to believers and especially to needy strangers who are believers.

c. They must be ready to show hospitality to destitute, traveling, or persecuted believers.

d. This must be done "without complaint." (1 Pet. 4:9).

e. **Limitation of hospitality** (2 Jn. 9, 10)

2. **"loving what is good"** - Doing good is not enough, but must love "what is good." See Rom. 12:9.

3. **"sensible"** - Gr. "sophrona" [soh frah nah] - Use good judgment. NIV has "self-controlled."

4. **"just"** - Gr. "dikaios" [dee ki ahs] - "Upright, fair"

5. **"devout"** - Gr. "hosios" [hah see ahs] - "pious, devout, pure, holy." An elder must be a man living a holy life. He is one who performs his duties toward God and man.

6. **"self-controlled"** - He is one who is able to control himself. NIV has "disciplined."

a. All Christians must be "self-controlled." (Gal. 5:22,23; 2 Pet. 1:5-11).

b. The spiritual overseers should certainly be an example of self-control to the flock.

**TIT 1:9 holding fast the faithful [pistos]word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.**

1. "holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching"

a. This means elders must know "the faithful word," that is, the word of God.

b. One cannot hold fast to what he does not know.

2. "that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine"

a. Elders must be able to encourage other "in sound [healthy] doctrine."

b. Only "sound doctrine" makes those who hear and receive it healthy spiritually.

- c. One who is not well-taught in the word of God should not be appointed to this position no matter how likable he might be.
3. “and to refute those who contradict [oppose it]” - Elders must be able to defend the church against false doctrine.
    - a. Paul met with the elders from Ephesus at Miletus. (Acts 20:17).
    - b. He warned them to be on guard against false teachers that might even come from among themselves. (Acts 20:28-30).
    - c. Today the world and the church are full of false teaching.
    - d. The church needs godly men who know and love the truth to lead the flock by word and example.
    - e. A church without leaders who know and love the truth is doomed for apostasy.

### Names For This Office

- “office” - There is no word in the original corresponding to this word, but the translators have rendered “episkope” [eh pis kah pay] by the phrase “office of a bishop.” Lit. “If anyone aspires to oversight.”
  - It is used 4 times in the New Testament. See KJV
    - 1) “visitation” - Lk. 19:44; 1 Pet. 2:12.
    - 2) “bishopruck” or “office” - Acts 1:20.
    - 3) “office of bishop” - 1 Tim. 3:1.
  - The verb form of this word is “episkopeo” [eh pis kah **peh** oh] and occurs 2 times in New Testament “oversee, take the oversight.” (Heb. 12:15; 1 Pet. 5:2).
    - 1) “Office” is used in the older sense of “function, work, duty.”
    - 2) It is not used in the modern sense of a office to which one is appointed or assumed for a period of time - long or short. It is best to think of it as a work or service.
  - “work” - Gr. “ergon” [**ehr** gahn] is a task or function or service.
  - Lit. “faithful” [Gr. pistos] [is] the word, if anyone aspires to oversight, he desires a good work.”
1. **Bishops** (episkopos, eh **pis** kah pahs) - “bishop, overseer, ruler”
    - a. It occurs 5 times in New Testament. (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:7; Phil. 1:1; 1 Pet. 2:25).
    - b. It appears 2 times in the uninspired footnotes of the KJV in 2 Tim. 4:22; Tit. 3:15.
  2. **Elders** (presbuteros, pres **boo** the rahs) - “Older one.”
    - a. It does not necessarily mean one in advanced in years.
    - b. The men described have children under their control. (1 Tim. 3:4).

- c. Most men are not advanced in age at that point in their lives.
  - d. New Testament churches had a plurality of elders. (Acts 20:17, 28; 14:23; Tit. 1:5).
3. **Shepherds** (poimen- poy\_ **mane**) - One who tends a flock - feeding, protection. etc. See Eph. 4:11.
- a. Acts 20:17, 28.
    - 1) Elders called “bishops, overseers, shepherds [pastors].”
    - 2) They are instructed to “poimaino” [poy **mi** no] meaning to “feed, tend shepherd.” See 1 Pet. 5:2.
  - b. Peter gave these instructions to “elders” (shepherds). (1 Pet. 5:1-4).
4. **Pastors** (poimen, poy **mane**) - It means “shepherd, pastor.”
- a. The word comes from a Latin word meaning “shepherd.” See Eph. 4:11
  - b. This word translated “pastor” is elsewhere translated “shepherd.”
  - c. It is a word that does not apply to preachers unless they meet the qualifications of elders and are appointed to that position.
5. **Presbyters** (presbuterion - pres boo **tayr** ee on) - presbytery, a body of elders.
- a. It occurs 3 times in New Testament.
    - 1) It is used in Luke 22:66 of the assembly of elders [the Sanhedrin].
    - 2) Again in Acts 22:5 it is used in this way. “whole council of elders” ESV “”all the eldership” YLT “all the council of the elders” - NASB.
    - 3) The singular of the word is “presbyter” and has the idea of “older one” in an official sense.
    - 4) The plural is used of a body of elders in a local congregation.
6. **Stewards** (oikonomos, oi kah **nah** mahs) - “one entrusted with something, a steward.”
- a. Titus.. 1:7
  - b. Elders have been entrusted with the family of God, and must give account for this stewardship. (Heb. 13:17).

### **New Testament Churches Were Autonomous**

1. A plurality of elders [bishops, shepherds] governed a single church. (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Phil. 1:1).
2. The idea of one man governing a congregation or a plurality of congregations is foreign to the New Testament.
3. A church, not having elders, should be governed by the men of congregation since men are to be the leaders. This does not mean scriptural suggestions from women must be ignored.
4. This arrangement [a church not having elders] should not be encouraged, but should be used only until men are

qualified to serve as elders.

5. Some preachers or congregations do not want elders because of a power struggle.
6. This is usually a question of control or power.

### **Churches**

1. New Testament autonomous churches had a plurality of elders or bishops. (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Phil. 1:1).
2. These men had authority over the church as under-shepherds of Christ. (1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20:28-30).
3. They were to lead both by authority and by example. (1 Pet. 5:1-4; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7, 17; Tit. 1:10, 11).

### **Aspiring To Office**

1. It is right and proper to aspire to be a spiritual overseer of the church, but it is not a qualification - "If anyone"
  - a. One should take the office willingly. (1 Pet. 5:2).
  - b. No one should be forced or pressured to serve. (1 Pet. 5:2).
  - c. It does take a lot of preparation to be a good elder, and it takes continuous preparation to remain a good and effective elder.
2. It takes years of study and submission to the will of God.
3. We should encourage more of our young men to aspire one day to be elders.
4. Good elders do not happen by accident, and the church should train men to one day accept this responsibility.
5. **"it is a fine work he desires to do"**
  - a. There is no greater work than to oversee God's family (the church).
  - b. It is a work that should be accepted with great faith, great humility, great zeal, great dedication, and with great love.
    - 1) Elders are not mere controllers of the building and money, that is, mere keepers of the church building.
    - 2) They are to be dynamic leaders working under the "Chief Shepherd" - Jesus Christ.
    - 3) They have responsibility to take care of the whole flock.
  - c. Observe Paul affirms it is "a fine work."
    - 1) It was not merely an honor
    - 2) It was not a office [work] to wield autocratic power.
    - 3) It is a work with awesome responsibility.



## Authority Of Elders

1. Those who believe elders have no authority are ignorant of the New Testament. (Acts 20:28-30; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
2. Though they are not to “Lord it over” the flock, they are to exercise leadership and authority over the flock.
3. They are under-shepherds of the Great Shepherd - Jesus. (1 Pet. 5:4).
4. Hebrews 13:17 seems to be a reference to elders.

HEB 13:17 Obey your leaders, and submit to them; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you.

## Selection Of Elders

1. There is no method designated in the New Testament. All methods are a matter of judgment - not scripture.
2. Here are some scriptural ways it can be done.
  - a. Members nominate and objections evaluated by elders assuming there are elders.
    - 1) Members at large can raise objections or give approval.
    - 2) Someone or a group must still decide if one is to be appointed as an elder.
  - b. Certain number of members must nominate before a man is considered.
    - 1) Though the eldership is not a popularity contest, it may be unwise to consider someone who has been nominated by only one person.
    - 2) This is especially dangerous where the membership does not get involved in the selection and go along with about anyone nominated and do not want to rock the boat.
    - 3) Elders must be qualified, and must have the respect of the congregation - not a select few.
  - c. Elders nominate and permit congregations to raise objections.
    - 1) Most elders are open to the suggestions of the congregation on these nominations.
    - 2) One danger is that lukewarm or compromising elders appoint men like themselves.
    - 3) One plus is that this method holds down confrontation from one who comes into the eldership to become a troublemaker.
    - 4) Faithful elders will only nominate those who are faithful and who are not troublemakers.
    - 5) **The congregation must have the courage to reject those not qualified.**
  - d. If there are no elders, a committee or members at large might nominate.
    - 1) The church can raise objections.

- 2) One should not be appointed if he is not scripturally qualified.
- e. It appears that it is scriptural for an evangelist to appoint men to the eldership. (Tit. 1:5).
  - 1) The details of these appointments are not given.
  - 2) It is clear the men appointed must meet the qualification for an elder.
  - 3) It is assumed members are involved in these appointments.
  - 4) There is no evidence that elders were appointed in congregations and the membership had no input.
- f. The apostles appointed the seven selected by the church. (Acts 6:1-6). The people found the men qualified (Acts 6:3), and the apostles appointed them. (Acts 6:6).

### **Some Observations About Elders**

1. An elder must be able to **deal with problems** on a daily basis.
  - a. Our literal, fleshly families have problems.
  - b. The best of spiritual families will have many problems, and there must be some tolerance for problems especially temporary problems.
  - c. Even the wife and children of the elder are affected by problems. How they are affected has strong influence on an elder and his ability to serve.
  - d. Many elders wear down and become discouraged because of the constant daily demands or other problems.
2. He must be able to **keep information confidential** - business meetings, working with members.
3. He must be able to **get along with others** - fellow-elders, deacons, members, etc.
4. He must be **willing to compromise on non-scriptural matters**.
  - a. Much of what goes on in a congregation is a matter of judgment or preference.
  - b. It is vital that elders learn the difference, and not be dogmatic or divisive over these matters.
5. He must be able to **accept criticism**.
  - a. Elders receive some praise.
  - b. They receive a lot of criticism and cannot serve effectively if they cannot handle it.
  - c. An elder who does not have tough skin will be miserable and likely will end up resigning or being utterly miserable or both.
6. These qualifications listed in Timothy and Titus are not for elders only.
  - a. Most of them are required of all Christians.

- b. Elders are not exempt because they are leaders, but should show great maturity in these traits.
7. One should not feel guilty or useless or rejected because he does not qualify to be an elder.
- a. God never intended all be elders.
  - b. Some of the best people in the church are not qualified or suited or motivated for the eldership.
  - c. Each member of the body of Christ is vital. (1 Cor. 12:14-31).

### **Some Questions About Wives**

1. **Must they [elders' wives] be Christians?** Yes.

- a. This is implied by the kind of family the elder must have to serve. He is to have an exemplary family.
- b. 1 Tim. 3:11 seems to refer the wives of both elders and deacons.
  - 1) The word “women” is from the Greek “gune” [goo **nay**] meaning “wife, woman.”
  - 2) They must be faithful believers.
  - 3) See 1 Cor. 9:5. The apostles were married to wives who were believers.
- c. A man married to a non-Christian would not be “above approach” in the church and would find it difficult, if not impossible, to fulfill all his duties as an elder.
- d. It takes a very special woman to be an elder’s wife.
- e. It is a every day job with great responsibility, and at times great stress.
- f. An elders wife has great impact on the effectiveness of the elder.

2. **What if an elder’s wife dies while he is in office?**

- a. It does not seem logical this would automatically disqualify him.
- b. This does not take away from his spirituality or the spiritual qualities he has already demonstrated.
- c. He should resign if his reputation has been harmed, but resignation should not be automatic.

3. **What if an elder’s wife becomes sick or disabled for a period of time or permanently.**

- a. Most believe the elder could continue to serve if the sickness or disability were for a short period of time.
- b. There would not be full agreement on long term sickness or disability.
- c. The answer is probably determined by considering if the elder is able to fulfill his duties.

4. **What if an elder’s wife becomes unfaithful while he is in office?**

- a. This would disqualify him by bringing disgrace on his family and in some instances him.

- b. He does not have control of his family and would find it difficult to serve as an elder in respect to duties and reputation.
- c. Elder, like all husbands, are the leaders in the home. (Eph. 5:22, 23).

EPH 5:22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

EPH 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.

## Questions

### 1. Can a man who has been divorced be an elder?

- a. This is much debated.
- b. A man who is scripturally divorced from his first wife is “the husband of one wife.”
- c. Though one be technically “the husband of one wife,” there may be a lot of questions from those within the church and those outside the church about his character and his ability to manage his household well.
- d. The complication of two households likely would make the eldership more difficult and perhaps create problems. The same problem might occur in any second marriage even if it does not involve the eldership.
- e. Many scholars do not think it is an automatic disqualification, but all the facts must be considered.
- f. Churches sometimes have teachers or preachers who have been married before and claim to be the innocent party.
  - 1) These people often have great influence on the church.
  - 2) In some instances they may have as much or more influence on the church as the elders do.
  - 3) Assuming one is scripturally divorced and meets the qualifications of the position, one should not be penalized.

### 2. Can a man become an elder if his first wife died?

- a. Yes. See 1 Cor. 7:39, 40; Rom. 7:2,3.
- b. He would have to be married and meet all the qualifications.
- c. Having two families might make it more difficult to qualify.

### 3. Can a man become an elder if his wife has been married before?

- a. The New Testament does not deal with this question.
- b. It is certain that she must be a very spiritual person, and should be role model for the congregation.
- c. A woman who was scripturally divorced would be free to remarry.
- d. Such an appointment, if it takes place, should certainly be carefully scrutinized to be sure it does not cause reproach to come on the eldership and the church and the Lord.

**Husband Of One Wife - “the husband of one wife” - lit. a man of one woman (wife).**

1. This means a **bachelor** cannot be an elder. Even Paul did not qualify as an elder, but Peter did. (1 Cor. 9:5; 1 Pet. 5:1-4).
2. This means a **woman** cannot be an elder.
3. This means an elder **must be married when appointed** and **not have more than one wife or less than one wife.**
  - a. Polygamy was not generally practiced in the 1st century.
  - b. There is no evidence it was practiced in the church.
  - c. Marriage is not required for all Christians. (1 Cor. 7).

1) Apostles and preachers were not required to be married., but they had the right. (1 Cor. 9:5).

1CO 9:5 Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

2) Under some circumstances widows were not encouraged to marry. (1 Cor. 7:39, 40, 26) and under some circumstances they were. (1 Tim. 5:14).

1TI 5:14 Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach;

3) Elders and deacons only are required to be married. (Tit.1:6;1 Tim. 3:2, 12).

4. It means an elder must be **faithful to his one wife**. “faithful to his one wife” - NEB

- a. He must not be unfaithful to his wife - not a fornicator or womanizer.
- b. It means he is to be a good and faithful husband.

5. It must not be a second marriage that violate God’s will or violates the qualification “above reproach.”

<p>Not unscripturally Divorced The one who is scripturally divorced is “the husband of one wife.”</p>	<p>Not unmarried</p>	<p>Not unfaithful to his wife See NEB “faithful to his one wife”</p>	<p>Not in a homosexual marriage 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Rom. 1:18-31</p>
<p>Not a polygamist  This was practiced by some Jews and Greeks, but did not exist in the church.</p>	<p><b>Some say not a digamous</b> A second marriage after the termination of the first. (This is not forbidden in scripture. (1 Cor. 7:39, 40; 1 Tim. 5:14). This doctrine was not developed until 2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries. Moffit “he must be married only once” is not what the text says.</p>	<p>Not a womanizer or fornicator.  We know some who claimed to be teachers were womanizers.</p>	<p>Not a bigamist  Act of entering into a marriage while still legally married to another.</p>

## Additional Notes:

1. See 1 Tim. 5:14 - “*having been* wife of one husband”
  - a. There is no evidence for polyandry [having more than one husband at a time] in New Testament times.
  - b. The widow must have been faithful to her husband - not a fornicator and not have been in an unscriptural marriage.
  - c. Widows who did not meet this qualification were not to be included in the “enrolled widows” who served the church and were supported by it. (1 Tim. 5:9).
  - d. This did not mean they could not be helped. (Acts 6:1-3; Jas. 1:26, 27; Gal. 6:10; 1 Jn. 3:17, 18).
2. It is not logical that Paul would penalize a widow for a second scriptural marriage and this mate also died. (Matt. 19:9; 1 Tim. 5:14; 1 Cor. 7:39, 40).
3. The Greek words of 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; 5:9 are literally translated “a man (**aner**, ah **nayr**) of one woman” and “one man woman.(**aner**).”
  - a. Greek **henos andros gune** - Lit. one man [husband] woman [wife] or wife of one man [husband]
  - b. “having been” is from “gegonuia.” [geh gah **wee** ah]
    - 1) This is 2 Perfect active participle nom. sing. of “ginomai.”
    - 2) NIV “has been faithful to her husband.”
  - c. The word “woman” (**gune**, goo **nay**) is used in the sense of a “wife.” The word “man” (**aner**) is used in the sense of “husband.”

## Questions about children

1. **Must an elder have more than one child?**
  - a. The word “children” is used generically. (1 Tim. 5:4; Gen. 21:7; Lk. 14:26; Eph. 6:2; Matt. 22:24; 1 Tim. 5:9).
  - b. It often means one or more, but it can be used in strictly a plural sense. (Matt. 2:18; 3:9).
  - c. It is used generically when used as a command.
  - d. Some, especially those with a lot of children, say 1 child is not much of a test.
    - 1) Some say 2, 3, 4, 5 is not much of a test.
    - 2) This kind of argument is interesting and may have some validity, but it goes beyond the scriptures.
    - 3) We should be concerned about the faithfulness of the children - not the number.
2. **What if the children die while he is in office?**
  - a. The Bible does not discuss this. It is difficult to see how this would disqualify an elder.

- b. His ability to lead has not changed.
- c. His reputation has not been destroyed.
- d. Those who would ask an elder to resign on the death of his children usually would not apply this to an older elder who has grown children away from home.

**3. Can the children be adopted?**

- a. The Bible put no emphasis on how he got the children as long as it was lawful.
- b. There is no evidence Paul would make a distinction between adopted and natural children or some combination.

**4. What if the children become unfaithful?**

- a. Nearly all agree this would disqualify the elder if they are still under his control or management.
- b. There has been a lot of discussion about children who have left home and in some instances been away from home many years.
- c. It is difficult to see how their later unfaithfulness would disqualify the elder.
  - 1) They are not under his control.
  - 2) He cannot legally or in any other forceful way control these adult children.
  - 3) Influence is the only way, and this influence tells you a lot about the man.
  - 4) There have been, however, weak Christian men and non-Christian men who have raised faithful Christian children.
  - 5) This is a reason why this is not a stand alone requirement.
- d. Some elders raised faithful children who continued in this faithfulness for many years, and then at some later time fell from the faith. It is very questionable, at best, that this is the fault of the elder.
- e. **This does present some problem.**
  - 1) It leaves a very short window in which some men would have older, obedient children at home.
  - 2) Some are quite strict with children who are at home, but very lenient in regard to older men who are appointed elders.
  - 3) Some are appointed who never had faithful children, and this qualification is ignored.

**Notes:**

- 1. All of God's children have not been faithful - Israel, Christians.
- 2. Some contend that if a black sheep disqualifies an elder that this disqualifies God as a parent since He has black sheep.

- a. Such is ridiculous.
  - b. We have been created free moral agents, and He does not seek to control us or force us to obey Him.
  - c. On the other hand, parents are held responsible to train children. (Prov. 22:6; Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21).
3. The influence of the elder is not the only factor, but it should be a major part in deciding to appoint an elder.
4. One elder had raised five faithful children and one unfaithful.
- a. Should he serve or not?
  - b. It is hard to see he is automatically disqualified without proof of bad training.
  - c. What if the child became unfaithful after he was grown and left home?
  - d. The unfaithful child is a free moral agent.
5. **What if one of the children is mentally retarded?**
- a. This is difficult. The child may or may not be a Christian, and may not even be accountable.
  - b. It is not likely this would disqualify a man especially if he is faithful in caring for the child and he meets the other qualifications for elders.
  - c. An elder would have to have accountable children to qualify.
  - d. Having only a mentally retarded child would not meet the qualification.

6. **Must the children be Christians?**

- a. The word “pistos” [pis **tahs**] used here can mean “believing” or “faithful”. (Tit. 1:6).
  - 1) A comparison with Titus 1 would suggest that the word be translated “faithful.” An elder must have his children in submission.
  - 2) It does not seem reasonable that Paul gave one rule for those at Ephesus and another for those at Crete.

**TIT 1:6 namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. NASB - See also ASV**

**Tit. 1:6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination NKJV - See KJV**

- b. “having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.” NKJV.  
 “having children steadfast, not under accusation of riotous living or insubordinate.” YLT  
 “whose children believe” - NIV  
 “having believing children” - Marshall



- c. Having faithful children does not mean per se that the children be Christians.
- d. The context may demand it since the elder is to be “above reproach” and be of good reputation within and without.
- e. It is difficult to see how an elder could meet these qualifications if his older children are not Christians.
  - 1) There is a debate if this means faithful to his earthly father or his heavenly Father.
  - 2) It probably means both since one faithful to his earthly father who has taught him godliness would also mean he would be faithful to his heavenly Father.
- f. This would not demand all the children be Christians, provided those old enough to become Christians were Christians. Can an elder have a baby? Can an elder raise a grandchild or some other relative?
- g. It is possible to translate “faithful” as “believing.” This does not seem to be a good rendering considering (1 Tim. 3:7).

**7. Must the children of elders be sinless?**

- a. The answer is obviously no - No such children exist. No such accountable human being exists. (Rom. 3:23).
- b. The children are to be obedient, but even obedient children have problems and church should not be harder on them than on the elder and his wife.

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

**Note:**

1. The word “believing” (**pistos**) is often rendered “believing.” (Acts 16:15; 1 Cor. 16:15; Eph. 1:1; 1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Tim. 6:2).
2. The words “having children who believe” can be rendered “having faithful children.”
  - a. The Greek “**pistos**” can mean “believing, faithful.”
  - b. Faithful, true, trusty (Matt. 24:45; 25:21, 23; Lk. 12:42; 2 Tim. 2:12).
  - c. Trustworthy - 1 Cor. 7:25; 1 Tim. 3:1
  - d. True, veracious - Rev. 1:5; 2:13.
  - e. Credible, sure, certain, indubitable - Acts 13:34; 1 Tim. 1:15.
  - f. Believing, yielding belief and confidence - John 20:27; Gal. 3:9.
  - g. The Christian believer - Acts 10:45; 16:1; 2 Cor. 6:15.

ACT 10:45 And all the circumcised **believers [pistois]** who had come with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out upon the Gentiles also.

ACT 16:1 And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son

of a Jewish woman who was a **believer**, but his father was a Greek,

2CO 6:15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a **believer** [pistos] in common with an unbeliever [apistos]?

h. “Faithful” in 1 & 2 Timothy & Titus.

1TI 1:12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me **faithful**, putting me into service;

1TI 3:1 It is a **trustworthy** statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do.  
Lit. “faithful (is) the word”

1TI 3:11 Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, **faithful** in all things.

1TI 4:10 For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior [potentially] of all men, **especially of believers**. Lit. “especially faithful ones.” “especially” is “actually, specifically, particularly” in this context.

1TI 4:12 Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe. Lit. “example (pattern) of those the faithful ones”

1TI 6:2 And let those who have **believers as their masters** not be disrespectful to them because they are brethren, but let them serve them all the more, because those who partake of the benefit are believers and beloved. Teach and preach these principles. Lit. “faithful masters.”

2TI 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, these entrust to **faithful** men, who will be able to teach others also.

2TI 2:13 If we are faithless, He remains **faithful**; for He cannot deny Himself.

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

<sup>Tit. 1:6</sup> if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having **faithful** children not accused of dissipation or insubordination **NKJV**

TIT 1:9 holding fast the **faithful** word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

### **An Elder Must Not Be A New Convert**

- **“not a new convert”** - (neophutos, neh **ah** foo tahs) - lit. newly planted meaning not a novice, neophyte, recent convert” - KJV
  - There was a danger of a new convert becoming “conceited” (puffed up) - 1 Cor. 4:6, 19; 5:2; 8:1; 13:4).
1. He must not be a beginner in the faith, that is, a new Christian.
  2. He does not define how long one must have been a Christian.
    - a. Paul appointed elders near the end of his second missionary journey, about 45-49 A.D. (Acts 13, 14).
    - b. It would seem some of them had been Christians only for 4 or 5 years.
    - c. Some men grow and mature much faster than others.
    - d. Maturity involves knowledge, but not knowledge only. (1 Cor. 8:1; 13:4).
  3. We know nothing of the spiritual background of these elders.
    - a. One assumes these early elders were held to the same high standard Paul laid down in 1 Timothy 3 & Titus 1.
    - b. Some may have had strong religious training in Judaism, but this is not certain.

4. It is possible, though assumed, there could have been problems with some of these elders being appointed too soon. (Acts 14:23).
  - a. The 1<sup>st</sup> missionary was about 45 to 49 A.D.
  - b. This book was written about 62 to 67 A.D..
  - c. There were elders among the Jewish Christians prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> missionary journey. (Acts 11:30).
5. This might explain the rule “not a new convert.”
  - a. There may have been some bad experiences with appointing elders too soon.
  - b. It is possible additional revelation was given to Paul on this matter, but this is conjecture and speculation.
  - c. 1 Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1 are the primary biblical qualifications for elders.
  - d. See also 1 Pet. 5:1-4; Acts 20:28-30.

### **Reasons He Must Not Be A New Convert (1 Tim. 3:7).**

1. **“lest he become conceited”**
  - a. He might be filled with pride because he was chosen too soon. He might get “the big head.”
  - b. This can lead to all kinds of problems in the church.
2. **“and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil”**
  - a. “and incurs the doom passed on the devil.” Mof.
  - b. “fall under the same judgment as the devil” - NIV
  - c. “and come under the same condemnation as the Devil.” Wey.
  - d. Greek - “lest being puffed up into judgment he fall of the devil”
3. Pride leads to sin and destruction (Prov. 16:18), and it is an abomination to God. (Prov. 6:16-19).

### **Observations About Qualifications Of The Children Of Elders And Deacons**

1. It appears there is no real difference between the qualification of elders and deacons in regard to children.
2. What is required in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:6 is that the children of elders or deacons must be in subjection to parents (that is be obedient to them).
  - a. They must not be guilty of wild behavior.

TIT 1:6 namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, **not accused of dissipation or rebellion.**

LUK 15:13 "And not many days later, the younger son gathered everything together and went on a journey into a distant country, and **there he squandered his estate with loose living.**

- b. The language here is descriptive of older children - not little children.
3. One could not be appointed as an elder or deacon whose children under his control were disobedient.
  4. This does not mean the elder or deacon became disqualified to serve if the children after leaving home as adults became unfaithful.
  5. God is a perfect Father, but He has children who become unfaithful. Jesus is a perfect Savior and Shepherd, but not all of His followers remained faithful. Paul was a great apostle, but not all of his converts remained faithful.
  6. Though the language in Titus 1:6 could mean that an elders children must be Christians, the evidence is not conclusive.
    - a. It seems better to allow 1 Tim. 3 and Tit. 1:6 to have the same meaning.
    - b. God does not force His children to be Christians, and it is far from certain that He puts this requirement on elders or deacons.
    - c. The children must be obedient to parents and this would include good behavior, church attendance, etc, but not forced obedience to the gospel.
    - d. If none of an elder's children are Christians, this might very well be a cause of alarm and may effect his ability to shepherd if appointed. It most likely will effect his influence among members.

### **Reputation Outside The Church**

**1TI 3:7 And he must have a good reputation** [well spoken of, a good name] **with** [among] **those** [unbelievers] **outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach** [disgrace, condemnation, scandal] **and the snare** [trap] **of the devil.**

1. Churches usually ask their members to evaluate prospective elders concerning willingness to serve and qualifications.
2. They should also carefully consider the reputation of the man outside the church.
  - a. Some men have a good reputation in the church.
  - b. Some of these same men have a notorious reputation outside the church.
  - c. This qualification is not always emphasized or considered, but it must be to please God.
  - d. A man who has good character among the brethren, but bad behavior elsewhere will do great damage to the church.

### **“Able To Teach”**

**“able to teach”** (didaktikos, dee dahk tee **kahs**) - apt or qualifed to teach - 1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:24. “and with a gift for teaching”-Wey

1. “qualified to teach” - Berkeley “A ready teacher” - Bas. - “able to teach” - NIV
2. It is unthinkable that one would be appointed as a spiritual shepherd who could not teach (feed) the flock with the

word of God. Elders (shepherds) are to feed the flock. (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet. 5:2).

3. It is unthinkable that one would be appointed as a spiritual shepherd to the church who was not knowledgeable enough to stop the mouths of the false teachers. (Tit. 1:11; Acts 20:28-30).
4. One must be able and willing to teach, and defend God's word.
5. He does not have to be a preacher, though some were. (1 Tim. 5:17).

## The Family Test

**1TI 3:5 (but if a man does not know how to manage [rule, preside over] his own household [family], how will he take care of the church [congregation] of God?);**

1. Paul's argument is that if one cannot control his own family how will he be able to control the church family.
2. One must prove himself by first controlling his family.
3. The comparison here suggests the children old enough should be Christians or at least children of good character.
4. One who had control without spirituality on the part of his children has not proven much.
5. There is a difference, however, between a young person who is living a good life and is in submission to his father and mother, and a young person who is living in rebellion to his parents and other authorities.
  - a. It is questionable that pressure should be put on a 10, 12, 13,14 year olds to obey the gospel so the father can qualify to be an elder.
  - b. This probably does not prove much, but on the other hand if there are not Christians among the other children the man is not likely "above approach" among those in the congregation.
  - c. Deacons must also meet this qualification. (1 Tim. 3:12).

**Elders Must Be "Above Reproach"** - They were to be godly men with no scriptural objections to their appointment.

1. No man is sinless (Rom 3:23; 1 Jn. 1:7, 9).
2. "Must be a good man whose life cannot be spoken against." Tay.
3. He must have a reputation beyond reproach and not open to censure.
4. Heresy must not be used to disqualify a man, but only fact.
5. "He must have a good reputation with those outside the church." (1 Tim. 3:6a).

## Additional Qualifications

**"temperate"** (*nephalios*, neh **fah** lee ahs) - sober[serious], temperate [not excessive, moderate], abstinent in respect to wine; N.T. met. - vigilant [alert, watchful], circumspect.

1. Metonymy is used of one word for another: (1) The container for the thing contained (2) A man keeps a good table

instead of good food..

2. 1 Tim. 3:2, 11; Tit. 2:2. See 1 Tim. 3:13
3. It is used figuratively here for “self-controlled, restrained.”
4. It can also mean “alert, watchful, vigilant”
5. McCord has “clear-headed.”

**Note:**

- The original word sometimes meant a non-drinker, a complete abstainer even from mild use of wine.
- The secondary meaning is that of soberness or sanity of mind.
- It does not appear to have been used in the original sense here. (1 Tim. 5:23).
- Strong drink is certainly dangerous and should be avoided.

**“prudent”** (*sophron*, **soh** frohn) - of sound mind, sane, temperate, discreet, cautious, wise, good judgment - 1 Tim. 3:2; Tit. 1:8; 2:21). Modest, chaste - Tit. 2:5.

1. NIV “self-controlled” - Mof. “master of himself” - NKJV & ASV - “sober-minded” “sensible” - McCord, RSV “self-restrained” – Con
2. A virtual synonym of the preceding word “temperate.”
3. See Tit. 2:5; 1:8; 2:2.

**“respectable”** (*kosmios*) - decorous, decent, modest, orderly, well-ordered - 1 Tim. 2:9; 3:2. “of good behavior” - NKJV McCord “orderly.”

1. Adjective signifying “decent, modest, orderly.” (1 Tim. 2:9).
2. The idea may be “of good behavior, orderly behavior, well-ordered behavior.”
3. “and leading an orderly (disciplined) life” – Amp.

**One Who Manages His Own Household Well**

1. **1TI 3:4 He must be one who manages [rules] his own household [family] well, keeping his children under control [in subjection] with all dignity [respectfulness]**
2. **“He must be one who manages [rules, controls] his own household well”**
  - Gr. “proistemi” [prah is **tay** mee] “Able to manage his own household properly” – Mof.
  - “having his children in subjection” - KJV
  - “hupotasso” [hoo pah **tahs** soh] - to be in subjection - See Tit. 2:5; 1 Tim. 2:12; Luke 2:51.

- a. His control over the household will show his ability to direct.
- b. A man who is dominated by his wife or children or both would not qualify.
- c. This does not mean he is a dictator or is harsh or brutal with his family. See Eph. 5:22-31.

**3. “Keeping his children under control [in submission]”**

- a. Gr. “hupotage” [hoo pah tah **gay**] - subjection, subordination, obedience.
- b. “And whose children are kept under control and well-behaved.” TCNT – “having faithful children” - KJV - Tit. 1:6.

**4. “with all dignity” - Gr. “semnotes” [sem **nah** tace] - reverence, dignity holiness, seriousness.**

- a. “See that his children obey him with proper respect” - NIV
- b. “keeping his children submissive and respectful in every way” - RSV
- c. “and whose children are kept under control and well-behaved” - TCNT
- d. “having his children in submission with all reverence” - NRSV

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