

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## Identifying Men of God, Pt 2

*1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-11*

**Keywords:** Leadership, Elders, Shepherding, Fighters, Men of God

**PowerPoint Presentation included:** NONE

**SermonAudio Blurb:** It is hard to grow well as a Christian if you do not have good examples to follow. The Apostles started out by following Jesus. The early church followed the Apostles. Quickly the Apostles began to train men to fill additional leadership roles within the young Church. Paul was a master discipler who called the people to follow him as he followed Christ. And so on down through the ages. For the men of any church there are two basic things they should be doing: Either they are leading as godly examples to follow or they are following godly examples. Anything else is wasted effort and time. The next few sermons describe what it looks like to be a man of God. The purpose is to help men identify who they should be following and to give them a plan of action to put into place in their spiritual walk.

### I. Introduction.

- A. Last message two character qualities why you try to identify men of God.
  - 1. Not just men. That is a biological reality that you have nothing to do with.
  - 2. But men who are devoted to God. Men who are God's men, doing God's work in whatever forum God has put them.
  - 3. The entire thing is being framed in the idea and office of Elder or Pastor.
    - a. This is not some holy office that is relegated to the so-called 'clergy.' The spiritual vs the mundane and earthly is a false dichotomy.
    - b. Rather, it describes the kind of character that should be present in the men who lead the local churches. Some who may be paid and others who may not. But they are the leaders and shepherds who watch over the soul's of God's people.
    - c. The elder is simply a man who has made this his pursuit and has come to the point where these character qualities exist in his life
    - d. But it also does not mean that he stops because he has somehow "made it." These character qualities are something he then seeks to build and enlarge all the more in his life.
- B. Read 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-11. Keep both sections open.

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1. Review:

- a. To **desire** this office is a good thing because the work is a noble work. It is defined by God as an excellent labor. This means it is to be held in high esteem by all Christians.
- b. Desire, however, is not required nor is it enough. There are objective qualities that must be already present in the life of each man.
- c. **Above reproachfulness/blamelessness** is the umbrella idea. His life is such that no valid charge can be leveled against him as a habit in his life. He shepherds his own heart first. He has learned what it means to die to himself. He considers all things in light of the Lordship of Jesus Christ and eternity.
- d. **Doctrinally sound.** These are not Christians who are vague about what they believe. They know it. They learned from those who went before them and have treasured the Word in their hearts. They go beyond memes and sound bites and into a life defined by the Word. They contend for the faith in whatever context they are in. They are doers of the Word and not merely hearers.

C. Today we will consider the broad category of the potential elder's life with regard to his home life.

1. The church is often seen in terms of a household or family. This is why we see the term "brothers" or "sisters."
2. In 1 Timothy 5 we are commanded to see a old man in the church as a father and older women as mother.
3. And in 1 Timothy as well as 1 Peter the church is described as the household of God.
4. And so in our passage Paul says simply that if a man can't manage his own household well then he cannot manage the household of God.

D. The big picture:

1. This aspect of an elder is huge. As he leads his family he is reflecting what he will produce as an elder.
2. Therefore, we should look at his wife and we should look at his children. And right there some will recoil. They don't want their home under that sort of scrutiny or observation.

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3. But remember, an elder is always on duty. He is a shepherd caring for sheep and he is one who must be able to tell others, “follow me.”
  4. Look at how a man lives with his wife and children. How much of what he does is defined by cultural expectations as opposed to biblical mandates?
  5. How does he care and raise his children? If the children are fully grown, what is their life?
  6. The reason for all of this is that an elder should be someone all other parents can ask for counsel. Not out of a negative perspective of what the elder did wrong, but out of a positive one. What they did and how they did it and why they did it.
- E. We will consider five key aspects of a proper household; one that is fitting for one who is considered for the office of elder.

## **II. Key Qualifications for Church Leadership.**

- A. Hospitable.
1. This is the first one because it does not require him to be either married or a father.
  2. The point of hospitality is to have a home that is intentionally made available and open to others. In other words, this is not a passive hospitality.
  3. It is a home that welcomes and invites both Christians and non-Christians into it.
    - a. When did you last invite people into your home?
    - b. What sort of plans do you make for Sundays with regard to visitors? Have you ever considered just making extra food with the goal of inviting new people over?
    - c. What is your plan for having a home that is open for the purpose of the gospel?
  4. This also means that the home is made to be comfortable for visitors. You decorate and furnish with the goal of making them glad they are there.
  5. It is a place where you can show others by way of example the qualities of prudence, generosity, respectability and sober-mindedness. In the context of hospitality so many other things can be modeled.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

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6. It also means that your home will get dirty and things will get broken and you will not get to sit in your favorite chair perhaps or you may lose out on watching a show you like.
  7. It means you don't become angry when the carpet gets stained or the wall marked up or the chair is knocked over. Because hospitality means that you welcome your privacy and space and comfort to be invaded.
- B. Husband of one wife.
1. The first comment here is to understand that this is not a requirement that an elder must be married although in most of the world that is the norm for men. The emphasis is upon one wife, not having a wife.
    - a. There are many views to this statement, which makes it a bit complex. Most do see it as a prohibition of any man who is known for promiscuity or polygamy (which is now gaining ground in America).
    - b. One key view is only one marriage, ever.
      - (1) Very old view, extending back to at least A.D. 300-400.
      - (2) Literally the phrase is "one woman man."
      - (3) The word "one" is emphatic; therefore, part of the argument is that Paul said that the elder can only have had one wife.
      - (4) The elder, we have seen, is to be an example for all the church to follow.
      - (5) 1 Timothy 5:9 use the same phrase referring to a "one man woman." as a widow who can be helped by the church. But earlier Paul commands the younger widow to remarry. Why would he do this if he knew that it would then disqualify them from ever receiving help from the Church?
    - c. The second view, which I hold to, is that the man is devoted to only one woman.
      - (1) He is a "one woman kind of man." It is emphasizing the quality, or character, of the man.
      - (2) He is, by quality of his life, devoted to one woman; there is a loyalty and single-minded devotion.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

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- d. A third view is that it prohibits a divorced man. This is connected to the other views but I want to briefly talk about it.
  - (1) Divorce in Paul's day was rampant as it is today. This is a real issue and one that requires careful thought. Due to the emotion it carries it is a hard one to think well on.
  - (2) A natural question then arises with regard to divorce; can a man who has been divorced hold this office?
  - (3) I believe that there are only one thing is allowable in the bible regarding divorce, which is an unbelieving spouse divorcing the believer.
    - (a) I would add that if a professing Christian spouse seeks to divorce there is nothing you can do. But the key point in all of it is to then remain in that state of divorced.
    - (b) I dealt with divorce and remarriage in great detail in past sermons. (Sermonaudio to our page and search for divorce and remarriage.)
  - (4) With regard to remarriages, apart from death of the spouse I see it as wrong. Again, you should carefully listen to the divorce and remarriage sermons before you freak out.
    - (a) The obvious question is what about those who have remarried? To ask them to divorce would merely compound the sin.
    - (b) At the same time, we must understand that though the sin is forgiven, assuming that it was confessed, the consequences do not disappear.
    - (c) One would be that the person is not, in most situations, qualified to fill the office of elder or deacon.
      - i) He is called to be an example for the flock on how a marriage should function. A possible exception would be if the divorce occurred by an unbelieving spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-16).

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

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- ii) The application to our topic would be that if a man's unbelieving spouse divorced him (assuming that he exemplified a godly husband and in no way acted in a manner that encouraged her divorce) then he, if he does not remarry, would then be qualified to serve as an elder.
  - iii) For a Christian, to divorce and remarry, the consequences would be that to hold the office of elder or deacon would be forfeited. This does not prevent them from having tremendous ministry within the Body, simply that because of the qualifications and the fact that these offices are examples for the Body to follow, that they cannot hold them.
- (5) What about divorce and remarriage that occurred prior to salvation.
- (a) A saved man divorced and remarried, except for adultery on his former spouses' part, cannot fill this office.
  - (b) A saved man divorced but not remarried may fill this office.
  - (c) A saved man who while unsaved was divorced and remarried may fill this office.
- C. Faithful children.
- 1. This is found in Titus and it can be translated as "believing children" or "faithful children." And this is important to know.
  - 2. It is best to see this as dealing with faithful children and likely is seeing them primarily as old children.
    - a. The reason for this is that they are not to be accused of dissipation and rebellion.
    - b. These speak not of young children but older ones who are now living out their convictions or lack there of.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

- (1) A debauched lifestyle, which means a life lived for self. Little self-control; rather, it is living in self-indulgence. This is a description of an older child, even on outside of the home now.
  - (2) Rebellious is simply the act of openly resisting God's standards as well as their father's. They may give a head nod to dad, but this changes nothing in their choices made.
- c. These are thoroughly "christianized" children who are now older. They are reflecting an upbringing that was done with care. One that reflected a deep grasp of raising children in the instruction and discipline of the Lord.
  - d. These are sons and daughters who seek to honor their father in their life choices rather than to shame him. They know what is right and they do it.
- D. Children in control.
1. This is the one Paul uses in 1 Timothy. I think here he is looking more at the younger children, though all ages would be in view. These, however, are in his home.
  2. This means a man focuses upon *his* children first. He is not busy sticking his nose into other homes until his household is functioning in a God-honoring, Gospel-focused way.
  3. It means this is a man who has a plan and this plan is overtly biblical. Not just for the early years but throughout the 18-22 years he will have that child in his home.
  4. It means he trains and raises his sons and daughters so as to raise godly children more than happy ones. He is their influence and he is their teacher in all things good and right.
  5. He is not interested in raising children who are on display for his praise. He is not interested in children who make his life easy and comfortable. He is interested in raising sons and daughters who will stand firm in the face of an age that is opposed to Christ in every possible manner.
  6. The key term here is "control." It speaks of ruling. He does not just shrug and the kids or roll his eyes. He doesn't allow excuses to be given when they are acting improperly. He doesn't blame his wife.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known  
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

7. Rather, he leads his household and rules over it with the wisdom of a man of God. He calls his children to obey and he then expects them to do so. He leads by example and expects the children to follow. And if this is not done then he enforces it through godly discipline.
  8. He teaches. He explains. He rebukes and He praises. All within his home with his children.
  9. If you want to see how a man will deal with his church just look at his home. Look at it carefully, for he welcomes that. Look at how the bible informs his decisions for the home. Look at how the gospel controls his decisions. Is God central? Is sin confronted? Is Christ lifted up? A broken or unbiblical home will result in a broken, unbiblical church.
- E. A well-managed home.
1. This is the reason given for why a man must first have children under control. In 1 Timothy 3:5 we learn that how he leads his home is how he will lead the church. It is really that simple.
  2. A well-managed home is one where he sets standards and they are derived from biblical principles.
  3. He sets the direction and expectation for the entire home. Again, shrugging with a look of, “What can I do?” is not acceptable to him.
  4. A man of this character is not a man ignorant of his home and family. He knows the state of debt, education, leisure and such. He knows the heart of his wife and his children. He knows their unique tendencies, weaknesses and strengths.
  5. In other words, he is present and involved. This is incredibly counter-cultural to so many households in this world.
  6. The idea of “managed” is one of ruling and oversight. And notice the word, “own.” He is not so busy telling others what they should do that he is not caring for his own.
  7. The reason for this is that a man should first worry about the state of his own household so as to prepare himself for the later years so that he can be an example.
- F. A dignified home.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

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1. Again this is found in 1 Timothy 3:4 and it is only used three times in the bible. All three are found in this little letter.
  2. Its use speaks of weightiness and seriousness. He takes his role as husband and father very, very, very seriously. And he guards it.
  3. It means that there is a clear line of familiarity that exists with his children. He is not their buddy but their father in all of its glory. He invites them to himself to enjoy and to learn, but as father.
  4. This is hard to describe well but it is easy to see. He controls the room when he walks in. You see the family taking their cue from him when they are young. He is always aware of his family.
- G. This whole category is so very important and I urge you to give it much thought.
1. So many men start well here but end poorly. They become distracted or discouraged and lose their way.
  2. If you are an older man, what lessons have you learned along the way that you can give to the younger man? Even if it is by way of humble warning not to follow your example. Have you invited young fathers to eat with you just so that you can listen to them talk? How are you praying for the younger men of this church? If you have a bible study that is primarily made up of other men, may I ask you to devote a time each gathering merely to pray for the young men to be true men of God with their homes?
  3. If you are a middle-aged father do not lose heart. Reorient yourself back to the bible if you must. Confess your failings to your family and your Lord for He cares for you. Stiffen your back and square your shoulders if you are doing well and keep moving forward. It is not a wasted life no matter how much the evil one is whispering in your ears.
  4. If you are a young father start now to put into action some clear, broad principles of leading your home. Get your finances under control. Get your career stabilized. Begin now the simple discipline of being in the Word of God daily and bringing it into your conversations with you wife and children.

### **III. Conclusion.**

- A. A wise son sees his upbringing as a training ground for becoming a father and husband. He should be asking what he can use and what he must discard.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

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- B. A wise man sees his wife and children as a training ground with the goal of leading the church.
- C. A wise church watches a man in his home. The church should observe and consider what they see? What is the fruit or outcome?
- D. The role of a man is hard when he is married and has a family. He is the example and the picture of God.
  - 1. To the wife he is to reflect Jesus Christ. His life is to constantly preach Christ to her in word and deed. He is to wash her in the gospel. He is to rule by grace and wisdom. He is to love her in such a way that she grows old with grace and grows in wisdom.
  - 2. To the family he is to reflect the Father. He is to be a man who rightly preaches the love of the Father to his children. He loves them. He instructs them. He guides them and grants them wisdom and good things. He disciplines them for their own good. When an older son thinks of God the Father there should be a sense of his own father in those thoughts.
- E. This is a good calling for all fathers and husbands. To shake off the effects of a culture that diminishes this holy calling and the take hold with both hands the high and good task of leading the next generation into the battle for the Kingdom of God.

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## Community Group Questions

- **What resources can your elders bring to you to strengthen you and your home?**
- **No where does the bible prohibit a single man as an elder. What challenges are present in considering a man who was never married? How would you look at him?**
- **What possible effect of people waiting longer and longer to get married have on the church and the office of elder? Think this through.**
- **As a group list out every realm that is part of a household. Then talk through what each would look like well-managed. Example of realms would be education, finances, spiritual, etc.**