

# WHAT IS NECESSARY FOR OVERSEERS, PASTORS, ELDERS: 1 Timothy 3:1-7

**DOCTRINE:** Overseers must have the necessary **I) desire, II) character, III) diligence, IV) experience, V) reputation, and VI) giftedness** to fulfill the noble task of shepherding the flock of God.

## **I. OVERSEERS MUST HAVE THE DESIRE NECESSARY TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD (1 Timothy 3:1)**

**1 Timothy 3:1** "The saying is trustworthy: If *anyone* aspires to the office of overseer, *he* desires a noble task."

**CALVIN:** "Having forbidden women to teach, he now takes occasion to speak of the office of a bishop. **First**, that it may be more clearly seen that it was not without reason that he refused to allow women to undertake so arduous a work; **secondly**, that it might not be thought that, by excluding women only, he admitted all men indiscriminately; and, **thirdly**, because it was highly proper that Timothy and others should be reminded what conscientious watchfulness ought to be used in the election of bishops."

**Q.** Why is it a noble task?

### **I) Pastors must set an example to Christ's flock (1 Timothy 4:12).**

- **1 Timothy 4:12** "Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity."
- **1 Corinthians 4:16** "I urge you, then, be imitators of me."
- **1 Corinthians 11:1** "Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ."
- **Philippians 3:17** "Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us."
- **2 Thessalonians 3:7** "For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you. . ."
- **Hebrews 13:7** "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith."
- **1 Peter 5:2-3** "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; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock."
- **Faithful pastors are not generals who send infantrymen into battle while giving orders safely from the rear through a radio; Faithful Pastors are like that general who leads the charge and bids all the soldiers follow him into the fray!**
- **Faithful pastors are not the gate that keeps Christ's sheep pinned up**

for their comfort; faithful pastors are shepherds who lead the flock into the green pastures of loving God and loving neighbor, no matter the cost!

- Many seem to be more concerned with entertaining goats than leading sheep!
- It seems that many pastors are more afraid of offending goats than offending the chief Shepherd! It must not be so with any of us.
- Voddie Baucham once said he would not follow a typical American pastor out of a burning building. To that I say, "If you can't say amen, you ought say ouch."

Q. Why is it a noble task?

II) Pastors will be judged more strictly (James 3:1).

- James 3:1 "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness."

Q. Why is it a noble task?

III) Pastors will give an account for how they have cared for Jesus' flock (Hebrews 13:17).

- Hebrews 13:17 "Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account."

Q. Why is it a noble task?

IV) Pastors must ultimately aim to please the Lord Jesus not man (Galatians 1:10; Galatians 4:16; 1 Peter 5:4).

- Galatians 1:10 "For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ."
- Galatians 4:16 "Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?"
- 1 Peter 5:4 "And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory."

## II. OVERSEERS MUST HAVE THE CHARACTER NECESSARY TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD (1

Timothy 3:2-3)

- MATTHEW POOLE: "In the following description there is the complete character of an evangelical bishop, with respect to the virtues wherewith he must be adorned, and the vices from which he must be exempt, and as to the conduct of his person, and the government of his family, and his carriage to the church, and to those that are without."

1 Timothy 3:2-3 "2 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money."

- I) Above reproach: "not able to be held" / Blameless
- II) The husband of one wife: "one woman man" / not simply referencing marriage, but faithfulness to his wife.

- **III) Sober-minded:** alert, watchful, clear-headed, vigilant.
- **IV) Self-controlled:** prudent (wise), well disciplined, one who “buffets his body to make it his slave” like Paul himself did.
- **V) Respectable:** this stems from being self-controlled—a man self-controlled in his mind will live an orderly and disciplined life.
- **VI) Hospitable:** to love strangers.
  - **MACARTHUR:** “The door of the Christian home. As well as the heart of the Christian family, ought to be open to all who come in need.”
- **VII) Able to teach:** He must be a highly skilled teacher.
- **VIII) Not a drunkard:** Literally “not addicted to wine.” Someone giving themselves over to alcohol or other substances is not qualified to be a pastor. “Do not get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit,” says Paul to the church at Ephesus.
- **IX) Not violent but gentle:** “not a giver of blows,” “not a striker.” He must not be one who reacts with physical violence.
- **X) Not quarrelsome:** peaceful, not always wanting to quarrel or fight.
- **XI) Not a lover of money:** Love of money is frequently said to be in the heart of false-teachers.

By the way,

#### **Titus 1:6-9 adds,**

- **XII) Not arrogant.**
- **XIII) Not quick-tempered.**
- **XIV) A lover of good.**
- **XV) Upright.**
- **XVI) Holy.**
- **XVII) Disciplined.**

In addition to 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1,

#### **1 Peter 5:2-3 adds,**

- **XVIII) Willingness** (not under compulsion).
- **XIX) Eagerness** (not for shameful gain, i.e. money or self-glory).
- **XX) Exemplariness** (not dominerring).

**Q. Why is this so crucial?** Well all of these qualifications are crucial because of the very last thing I pointed you to in 1 Peter 5:3.

***Pastors must set an example to the flock!***

### **III. OVERSEERS MUST HAVE THE DILIGENCE NECESSARY TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD (1 Timothy 3:4-5)**

**1 Timothy 3:4-5** “**4** He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, **5** for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?”

- **JOHN TRAPP:** “[He must be] a good priest in his own family, which he daily perfumes with evangelical sacrifices.”

### **A pastor must first be a faithful pastor of his wife!**

- **Ephesians 5:25-26** "25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,"

### **A pastor must also first be a faithful pastor of his children!**

- **Deuteronomy 6:6-7** "6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."
- **Ephesians 6:4** "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

***If a man is not a faithful Pastor of his home, he cannot be a Pastor of Christ's church. It is that simple!***

## **IV. OVERSEERS MUST HAVE THE EXPERIENCE NECESSARY TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD (1 Timothy 3:6)**

**1 Timothy 3:6** "He must *not* be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil."

- **JOHN TRAPP:** "No ignorant...ass may plough in God's field the Church. . . Christ chose illiterate men, but made them learned and teachers of others."
- **If he is a new convert, he may easily become like the devil, drunk on pride.**
- **He needs to walk with a limp, like Jacob, having truly wrestled with God and somewhat seasoned in working out his own salvation with fear and trembling.**

## **V. OVERSEERS MUST HAVE THE REPUTATION NECESSARY TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD (1 Timothy 3:7)**

**1 Timothy 3:7** "Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a *snare* of the devil."

- **If he has a reputation for acting disgracefully among those outside the church, he may very well bring disgrace into the church.**

## **VI. OVERSEERS MUST HAVE THE GIFTEDNESS NECESSARY TO SHEPHERD THE FLOCK OF GOD (1 Timothy 3:2b)**

**1 Timothy 3:2** "Therefore an overseer must be...able to teach."

- **Q.** Why must a pastor be "able to teach"?

## **I) A pastor's primary duty is to pray and preach, and so feed Christ's flock (selected Scriptures).**

- **The LORD promises His people in Jeremiah 3:15** "I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding."
- **In Ezekiel 34:2, the LORD sends the Prophet to condemn Shepherds among His people that do not feed the sheep:** "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep?"
- **In John 21:15-17, Jesus said to Peter, who was to function as a leader among the Apostles,** "Feed my lambs." . . . "Tend my sheep." . . . "Feed my sheep."
- **Acts 6:4** "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."
- **The Prophets of God came "preaching." John the Baptist came "preaching." Jesus came "Preaching." Jesus sent out his Apostles to "preach."**
- **In 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul commands Timothy to** "Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching."

## **II) As a pastor fulfills His primary duty, he must have good doctrine and be willing and able to rebuke those who contradict it (Titus 1:9).**

- **Titus 1:9** "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."

### ***And all of this preaching must center on the gospel of Jesus Christ!***

- **The primary mission of a pastor of Christ is to preach the gospel!** All the rest is subordinate to this, flowing out of this primary role.

### ***I) The preaching of the gospel is primary because it is the only way sinners can know how to be forgiven of their sins!***

- **Ephesians 1:7** "In [Christ] we have redemption *through his blood*, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,"

**Q.** Have you repented of your sin and put your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? **A.** If not, do it now! If so, the guilt of your sins is washed away.

### ***II) The preaching of the gospel is primary because it is the primary way saints are strengthened to keep killing their still indwelling sin and therefore grow in holiness!***

- **Colossians 3:3-5** "3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. 5 Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

### ***III) The preaching of the gospel is primary because believers need***

## **to be constantly reminded of their position in Christ!**

- **Romans 8:1** "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

## **IV) The preaching of the gospel is primary because it is the only way saints can adequately put to death their sinful worries and anxieties!**

- **1 Peter 5:7** "[cast] all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you."
- **Q.** How do I know that He cares for me?
- **A. Romans 8:32.**
- **Romans 8:32** "He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?"

## **V) The preaching of the gospel is primary because it reminds suffering saints of the eternal weight of glory that they will experience one day with Christ!**

- **Romans 8:18** "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

## **VI) The preaching of the gospel is primary because it assures those in Christ of God's love for them!**

- **1 John 4:10** "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."
- **Romans 8:35-39** "**35** Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? **36** As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." **37** No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. **38** For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, **39** nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

## **VII) The preaching of the gospel is primary because it the chief way that God stirs up praise in His people!**

- **Hebrews 13:14-15** "**14** For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come. **15** Through him then let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that acknowledge his name."
- **What good is BAPTISM without the preaching of the gospel?** It is simply getting wet!
- **What good is teaching THE LAW without the preaching of the gospel?** It is simply showing people a mirror that exposes their filth, without provided the soap to wash themselves clean; this, at best, makes them self-righteous moralists whose pride is in an ivory tower, at worst this crushes their spirits into the mud.
- **What good is FEEDING THE POOR without the preaching of the gospel?** It is but sending sinners to hell with full bellies, or saints to heaven with empty

souls.

- **What good is *HELPING THE NEEDY* without the preaching of the gospel?** It is but dealing with temporary needs and ignoring the eternal.

**This is why Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:2,** "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified."

**DOCTRINE:** Overseers must have the necessary **I) *desire*, II) *character*, III) *diligence*, IV) *experience*, V) *reputation*, and VI) *giftedness*** to fulfill the noble task of shepherding the flock of God.

## **CONCLUSION: We need men like this!**

**Luke 10:2** "[Christ] said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."