

“But There’s More” **1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9**

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This is my last full sermon as your Interim Pastor. Curtis Hall is your new Pastor. I’m going to do something that I seldom have done. I’m going to give you an opportunity to ask a few questions at the end.

One of my first sermons here was about church leadership. In that sermon I identified two offices. One was the office of Deacon. The other was the office of Elder/Overseer/Shepherd. There are a few New Testament passages which indicate that these three terms for elders all refer to the same office. One of them is found in Acts 20:17, 28. In the NASB these three terms appear... elders... overseers... shepherds. The word “shepherd” is translated by another name (pastor) in only one verse of the New Testament (NASB Ephesians 4:11), and only in some translations. In fact, it never appears in the ESV.

Now remember, the terms Elder/Overseer/Shepherd all refer to the same church office. It is clear from Scripture that this office is limited to men. And these terms apply to all elders but especially to the ones we identify as pastors. But I want to focus specifically on the ones we call pastors this morning. Thanks to church history, our word “minister” is not a word that is biblically applied to this office, but to the office of deacon. There are two passages that give the qualifications for this office... 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9.

1 Timothy 3:1-2

above reproach – Or beyond reproach... not likely to be charged with sin This speaks of the pastor’s reputation both inside and outside the church. But this qualification comes with an unspoken line... what others know, and what they don’t. If everyone knew *everything* about me, what I do in private and what I think, would I still be considered “above reproach”? It reminds me to go far beyond what others see. This is one qualification that tasks me the most.

the husband of one wife – Do I have eyes only for my wife? There is so much discussion over this one qualification. Does it mean that he has never been divorced, either before or after becoming a Christian? Does it mean that he has been married? Does it mean that he is currently married? Does it mean that he has never been widowed? Does it mean that he has never been remarried after his wife has died? I have heard from those who support every one of these. Having considered all the reasons supporting each of these I have arrived at this understanding... He has eyes only for his wife.

sober-minded – clearheaded

self-controlled – prudent, thoughtful

respectable – honorable, modest

hospitable – *just what it says*

able to teach – skillful in teaching

1 Timothy 3:3

not a drunkard – *just what it says*

not violent – not a bully – Pastors I knew who were rough on staff and others

gentle – kind, yielding, tolerant

not quarrelsome – peaceable

not a lover of money – greedy

1 Timothy 3:4-5 We always raised our three boys to be able to make wise decisions once they turned 18. We did not seek to control them before or after that age. We sometimes picked up criticism from church people for raising our children this way.

1 Timothy 3:6 To be conceited means to have an overly high opinion of oneself, one’s abilities, or one’s appearance, often to the point of being vain, arrogant, or self-important.

1 Timothy 3:7

well thought of by outsiders – by those outside the church

And there is a second passage.

Titus 1:5-6 You never know how your kids are going to turn out. I've always said, "God doesn't have grandkids, only kids." Our goal for our boys was to see them accept Christ as their Savior. Another goal was to give them wisdom to make good decisions on their own as adults.

Titus 1:7

not be arrogant – self-willed, stubborn
or quick-tempered – inclined to anger

Titus 1:8

a lover of good – *just as it says*
upright – just, righteous, fair
holy – devout, pleasing to God
disciplined – in full control of oneself

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.

These are the biblical requirements for any pastor. They are qualifications I review periodically to see how I am doing. And they are qualifications that all elders should review periodically to see how they are doing.

But there's more.

Let me get into a little pastoral counseling for all of you as you welcome a new pastor. I want to move on from these biblical requirements for elders and pastors... and move to some other aspects that are true of pastors. These things are not biblical requirements, but they are true none the less... especially for Pastors. They are things that are peculiar to each pastor. Each pastor brings to his ministry his history, his personality, and his vision. And each pastor will also have both his strengths and his weaknesses.

History

We each grew up in a family with their own dynamics. This has created in each of us some strengths and some weaknesses. It causes us to have instinctive reactions against certain things and a strong draw to others. It gives us good skills in one area while making us short of good skills in another. These things are true of each of us who become pastors. They are true of me, and they are true of Curtis.

Personality

There are different types of leaders. How a person leads is almost hard-baked into their personality. Are they more inspirational... "Come my way"? Are they more of a driver... "Go this way"? Are they more status-quo... "Let's just get along"? Or are they more analytical... "Let's study this more"? Each of these has its strengths and weaknesses. I have one mix... Curtis may have another.

Vision

What are we seeking to accomplish? My vision as an interim is different that what Curtis's vision is.

Change

Will there be change as Curtis takes the helm? Absolutely! But he will be able to accomplish things I never could. Importantly, he will be here every week. Change can be challenging, but it is inevitable. Be looking ahead for what God can do.

Remember this passage as you move forward.

ESV 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. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.