

1 Timothy 3:1–7
Pastor Shawn Newberry, February 15, 2026

1. Not Violent, But Gentle

A leader must not use force, intimidation, or positional authority to control others.

Violence can take many forms:

- Physical aggression
- Verbal harshness
- Manipulation
- “Pulling rank” to win an argument

Gentleness means:

- Considerate and fair
- Patient with weakness
- Moderate in judgment
- Strong, yet restrained

2. Not Quarrelsome

The word means non-combative and peaceable.

A quarrelsome person:

- Escalates disagreement into conflict
- Loves controversy
- Wounds with the truth
- Turns correction into rivalry

A godly leader does not avoid confrontation — but refuses to become combative while confronting.

The Word of God is not a weapon to crush people — it is a surgeon’s tool meant to heal.

3. Not a Lover of Money

This qualification addresses the heart.

It does not require poverty.

It requires contentment.

Hebrews 13:5 — “Keep your life free from love of money...”

A shepherd must:

- Not exploit his position for gain
- Not be driven by profit
- Not see people as financial opportunity

A leader may possess money — but money must not possess him.

These three qualifications protect the church from three dangers:

- Violence protects against pride
- Quarreling protects against ego
- Love of money protects against greed

A man who cannot restrain:

- His temper
- His tongue
- His appetites

Cannot shepherd souls.

In 1 Timothy 3, Paul teaches that church leadership (elder/pastor/shepherd) is a noble calling that requires visible evidence of inward transformation. The qualifications “not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money” reveal a shepherd whose life is ruled by Christ rather than by pride, ego, or greed. A godly leader does not use force, intimidation, or position to control others, but reflects Christlike gentleness, which is really strength under control. He does not turn truth into combat or controversy but speaks with peaceable wisdom that heals rather than wounds. The elder/pastor/shepherd/leader is not driven by financial gain, but by contentment and love for the flock. Together, these traits show that biblical leadership is not about force, fight, or finance, but about reflecting the self-giving character of Jesus, the Chief Shepherd. These qualifications are essential for church leaders, but are also part of the spiritual maturity of all believers.

Discussion Questions:

1. **Gentleness and Power:**

When you feel misunderstood, challenged, or disrespected, how do you typically respond? Do you tend to press your authority, defend yourself strongly, or withdraw? What would Christlike gentleness look like in those moments?

2. **Conflict and Quarreling:**

Do you find yourself drawn to debate or easily pulled into arguments — especially when you believe you are right? How can you hold firm convictions without becoming combative?

3. **Speech and Tone:**

Think about your words this past week. Did they bring life and healing, or did they leave marks? How can you cultivate a “gentle tongue” in your home, workplace, or church?

4. **Money and Motivation:**

What role does money play in your sense of security, identity, or decision-making? How can you evaluate whether you possess money — or whether it may be possessing you?

5. **Submission Before Leadership:**

In what areas of your life is God currently teaching you restraint — over your temper, your tongue, or your desires? How might deeper submission to Christ shape the way you influence others?