

QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS (1:6-9)

TITUS



- Welcome
- Prayer



Paul likely wrote Titus around the same time as 1 Timothy. Really if we wanted to study the pastoral epistles in chronological order we probably should have studied Titus first.

It was written sometime between Paul's first imprisonment and his second. (Sometime in the mid 60s)

You will notice a great many similarities between 1 Timothy and Titus, this suggests the two were written close together.

If I could summarize Titus into three main categories it would be there is:

1. An Occasion: Proper Leadership Needed
2. A Problem: False Teachers
3. Christian living in contrast to the problem

TITUS OUTLINE

3:1-7

06

Human Depravity

07

Final Charge to Titus

3:8-11

3:12-15

08

Final Greetings



- ▶ Tonight, we will be dealing with the need for good leadership in the church and what the qualifications are for good leadership.
- ▶ I would also like to recommend a book titled “Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Leadership,” written by Alexander Strauch.
- ▶ Much of tonight’s teaching has utilized outlines, quotes, and categorization from his work.
- ▶ I highly recommend it for everyone, not just those looking to become elders.

TITUS 1:6-9

If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 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.



6 If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 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.

MANY BUILD CHURCHES NOWADAYS; THEIR WALLS AND PILLARS OF GLOWING MARBLE, THEIR CEILINGS GLITTERING WITH GOLD, THEIR ALTARS STUDDERED WITH JEWELS. YET TO THE CHOICE OF CHRIST'S MINISTERS NO HEED IS PAID.



Jerome in a letter to Nepotian (A.D. 394)

- ▶ We are 1,631 years away from this quote and yet the problem exists today. I could easily say something like this:
- ▶ “Many build churches with massive sanctuaries that can hold 10,000+ people, with state-of-the-art lighting and sound. They have bookstores, coffee shops, parking attendants, and multiple campuses. Yet to the choice of Christ’s ministers, they seem to care very little.”
- ▶ Did you know that more time is given in the NT to the qualifications of elders than there is to the procedure of being an elder?
- ▶ Why do you think that so much care is given to the type of men who are to be selected?
 - ▶ Consider the intimate knowledge that elders possess about people’s personal situations. They need to be trustworthy.
 - ▶ Consider also that the spiritual example that these men have to show the church. John MacArthur said it well (NEXT SLIDE)

WHATEVER THE LEADERS ARE, THE PEOPLE BECOME. AS HOSEA SAID, 'LIKE PEOPLE, LIKE PRIEST' (4:9). JESUS SAID, 'EVERYONE, AFTER HE HAS BEEN FULLY TRAINED, WILL BE LIKE HIS TEACHER' (LUKE 6:40). BIBLICAL HISTORY DEMONSTRATES THAT PEOPLE WILL SELDOM RISE ABOVE THE SPIRITUAL LEVEL OF THEIR LEADERSHIP.



John MacArthur

COMPARISON OF ELDER QUALIFICATIONS

1 Timothy 3:2-7	Titus 1:6-9	1 Peter 5:1-3
Above reproach	Above reproach	Not under compulsion but voluntary
Husband of one wife	Husband of one wife	
Sober-minded	Children are believers	Not greedy for gain but with eagerness
Self-controlled	God's steward (not self)	
Respectable	Not arrogant	Not lording over people, but being examples
Hospitable	Not quick tempered	
Able to teach	Not a drunkard	
Not a drunkard	Not violent	
Not violent	Not greedy for gain	
Gentle	Hospitable	
Not quarrelsome	Lover of good	
Not a lover of money	Self-controlled	
Manage household well	Upright	
Not a new convert	Disciplined	
Well thought of by outsiders	Hold firm the Word	

- It is no wonder you see so many shallow churches with hypocrites in the pews
 - If the elders won't hold firm to the Word, the people will not hold to it
 - If the elders are quarrelsome, the people will be quarrelsome
 - If the elders are not hospitable, the people will be cold
 - If the elders love money, the people will love it too
- Three primary texts in the NT that give qualifications for church eldership are 1 Timothy, Titus, and 1 Peter
- Alexander Strauch categorizes them into three broad categories, let's take a look (NEXT SLIDE)

CATEGORIES FOR QUALIFICATIONS

MORAL AND
SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER

ABILITIES

SPIRIT-GIVEN
MOTIVATION



CATEGORIES FOR QUALIFICATIONS

MARITAL/SEXUAL
INTEGRITY
SELF-CONTROL

ABILITIES

SPIRIT-GIVEN
MOTIVATION



- ▶ Moral and Spiritual Character
 - ▶ Most of the qualifications for elders relate back to their moral and spiritual character
 - ▶ In both Timothy and Titus the first of these is the husband of one wife
 - ▶ He must be above reproach in his marital life
 - ▶ He must have the greatest amount of integrity and self-control
 - ▶ Much of the issues we've seen from fallen pastors deals with these areas
 - ▶ When something like this happens, when a pastor falls, we often talk about what he did, how he fell, what type of sin it was
 - ▶ I want to back that question up to the start and ask, how did he gain eldership in the first place? Was there no examination into his life? What did that examination look like?

CATEGORIES FOR QUALIFICATIONS

MORAL AND
SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER

MANAGE FAMILY
MODEL TO FOLLOW
TEACH/DEFEND

SPIRIT-GIVEN
MOTIVATION



Abilities

- ▶ Manage his family well; managing a business is not like managing a family.
 - ▶ There is however some similarities between that and the church, the family of God.
 - ▶ If you can't shepherd your own family, how can you do that with the household of faith?
- ▶ Able to provide a model for others to follow
 - ▶ Paul said to imitate him as he imitated Christ
 - ▶ The personal example of the shepherd is incredibly important
 - ▶ I think we can attest to the fact that men and women are drawn to and crave authentic examples of Christianity
 - ▶ Look no further than what we have witnessed over the past couple of weeks with the assassination of Charlie Kirk
- ▶ Able to teach and defend the faith
 - ▶ Paul tells Titus that the elders must hold tightly to the faithful Word
 - ▶ We cannot have elders that are toying around with flippant new doctrines
 - ▶ They have to be rock solid in the pillars of sound doctrine
 - ▶ Apostolic, biblical doctrine have to be at their core and they have to be able to defend it logically with reason and an ability to teach others to do the same

CATEGORIES FOR QUALIFICATIONS

MORAL AND
SPIRITUAL
CHARACTER

ABILITIES

DESIRE TO LOVE
AND CARE FOR
GOD'S PEOPLE



- ▶ Spirit-given motivation
 - ▶ This should be obvious, but honestly I've met people who've worn the title of elder that did not do this
 - ▶ There should be a desire to love and care for God's people
 - ▶ That desire is Spirit-given
 - ▶ There has to be a Spirit given pastoral desire inside of their hearts

COMPARISON OF ELDER QUALIFICATIONS

**ABOVE
REPROACH**

**BLAMELESS
UNACCUSED**



Above reproach means blameless or unaccused. I think Calvin summed this up the best.

BY BLAMELESS, HE DOES NOT MEAN SOMEONE WHO IS FREE FROM EVERY FAULT, FOR NO SUCH MAN COULD EVER BE FOUND, BUT ONE MARRED BY NO DISGRACE THAT COULD DIMINISH HIS AUTHORITY – HE SHOULD BE A MAN OF UNBLEMISHED REPUTATION



John Calvin

Now, how is an elder to be above reproach? Paul talks about two critical factors... his marital-sexual life and the management of his children

HUSBAND OF ONE WIFE

mias, one
gynaikos, wife or woman
andra, husband or man



We can translate the phrase into English in the following ways:

- one-wife husband
- one-woman man
- husband of one wife

INTERPRETATION POSSIBILITIES

OPTION 1 ELDERS MUST BE MARRIED

OPTION 2 ELDERS MUST NOT BE POLYGAMISTS

OPTION 3 ELDERS MAY MARRY ONLY ONCE

OPTION 4 ELDERS MUST BE MARITALLY AND SEXUALLY ABOVE REPROACH

- ▶ Option 1 is a common inaccurate interpretation
 - ▶ Why is it inaccurate?
 - ▶ Paul would contradict himself in 1 Corinthians 7 where he discusses the advantages of singleness
 - ▶ The three words that Paul wrote in the Greek do not say “an elder must be a man who has a wife” what it says is a “one-wife man”
- ▶ Option 2 is preferred by some commentators and they say that Paul’s primary intent was to prohibit polygamists from becoming elders
 - ▶ Surface level this seems ok but in 1 Timothy 5:9 Paul uses a similar phrase when discussing a widow, the phrase translates to “the wife of one husband”.
 - ▶ Paul using such a similar phrase to outline the qualifications of a widow makes the Option 2’s interpretation almost impossible.
 - ▶ If it were applied to a woman it would be polyandry that he was forbidding for widows (the practice of having multiple husbands) and this practice was EXTREMELY abhorrent to the Jews
- ▶ Option 3 would mean married only once in a lifetime
 - ▶ Proponents of this argument would say that Paul forbids remarriage for any reason whatsoever, even remarriage following the death of a spouse
 - ▶ This would disqualify any person who has ever been divorced and remarried or someone whose spouse has died and remarried
 - ▶ The biggest problem with this interpretation is “one-wife husband” doesn’t say anything about remarriage
 - ▶ As a matter of fact there is nowhere in the NT where there is an ordinance against second marriages
 - ▶ The phrase has to be interpreted in light of more scripture and Paul’s overall teachings
- ▶ I think option 4 is the most likely because its the simplest and doesn’t create problems
 - ▶ The elders must be maritally and sexually above reproach
 - ▶ They must be faithful and true to one woman
 - ▶ It is a promotion of faithful monogamous marriage

- It is a prohibition of deviation from faithful monogamous marriage
 - Examples: polygamy, homosexuality, concubines, etc...

**CHILDREN
WHO BELIEVE**

Having faithful children

No debauchery or rebels



- ▶ In Timothy, if you recall, it says that he must keep his children under control with all dignity
- ▶ Wild, unbelieving children reflect terribly on the home life and if the pastor can't lead his home how can he lead the church?

This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and **appoint elders** in every town as I directed you— If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. **For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach.** He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 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.

ELDER (HONOR) OVERSEER (FUNCTION)



- ▶ I've added verse 5 here to help with this next part.
- ▶ Some people try to say that Paul changes subjects here because the title switches from elder to overseer
 - ▶ They will say that, really, the elders are like a group of senior members, and from the elders must be an overseer, and he is really the one in charge
 - ▶ The problem is that this election process they talk about doesn't exist in the text at all
 - ▶ The interpretation doesn't even read naturally, either
- ▶ The subject hasn't changed overseer can be used interchangeably with elder, where elder seems to be more of a title of honor and overseer a title of function
 - ▶ As a steward he is a manager, administrator of someone's house, namely, God's house

5 SINFUL VICES THAT DISQUALIFY AN ELDER

ARROGANT

QUICK-TEMPERED

DRUNKARD

VIOLENT

GREEDY FOR GAIN

- ▶ Arrogant
 - ▶ Opposite of gentle
 - ▶ Wants his own way
 - ▶ Inconsiderate of others
 - ▶ Headstrong not willing to defer to others
 - ▶ It is essential for elders to be able to work as a team
- ▶ Quick tempered
 - ▶ Must be slow to anger
 - ▶ Proverbs 29:22 - A man of wrath stirs up strife, and one given to anger causes much transgression.
 - ▶ This will destroy the peace and unity of the family of God
 - ▶ Must be patient and self-controlled
 - ▶ Anger is experienced by everyone but the issue is whether the elder can recognize and control it
 - ▶ Losing his temper frequently is disqualifying behavior
- ▶ Drunkard
 - ▶ Not that a pastor can never have a drink of alcohol, but he must not be given over to it, or addicted to it
 - ▶ There is a difference between having a drink and being a drunkard
 - ▶ Drunkenness is sin, and if someone is consistently this way it could require church discipline (1 Cor 5:11, 6:9-10; Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18; 1 Peter 4:3)
 - ▶ Other translations render this not addicted to much wine, and I think that works just fine too.
 - ▶ The bottom line is this is about drunkenness which has ruined many many lives
- ▶ Violent

- I think this relates right back to the wives and children thing, if you have a violent individual the first people that have probably felt that violence has probably been the wife and children
- Pastors are often at the center of some very tense situations, someone who is quick-tempered and violent is not someone you want to be shepherding a tense exchange
- Greedy for Gain
 - This is probably the most violated one in our day and age
 - The love of money is a root of all sorts of evil
 - They cannot be men who have one goal in mind, to fill the coffers and fund their mansions

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- ▶ Hospitable and lover of good
 - ▶ This is a direct contrast to being stingy or greedy
 - ▶ A just leader lives among others and doesn't cause them harm; he loves good things
 - ▶ Think about our study on Sunday mornings, David was a lover of goodness
 - ▶ 2 Samuel 9 David shows hospitality, kindness, love to Jonathan's crippled son Mephibosheth into his house
- ▶ Self Controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined
 - ▶ Internal conflicts in the church can be destructive to a church community
 - ▶ Paul highlights these attributes and virtues
 - ▶ The leader has to be disciplined, he can't teach effectively if he is also not willing to learn
 - ▶ Augustine said that a leader should be "as patient to learn as they are skillful to teach"
- ▶

TITUS 1:6-9

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.

**ELDER'S
PRIMARY
JOB**



▶ Teach

- ▶ A church cannot be guided without the word of God
- ▶ Pure, God-given doctrine
- ▶ Don't only be well versed, be steadfast
- ▶ Don't be swayed by "new" teachings
- ▶ Don't be swayed by fear
- ▶ Choose leaders with spine and backbone who have fully embraced the truth of God
- ▶ An unreliable leader is incredibly dangerous

TITUS 1:6-9

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BE WELL VERSED

FIRMLY HOLD

BUILD THE
CHURCH



- ▶ The teaching of the elder must build up the church
- ▶ He should be well-versed in sound doctrine
- ▶ Firmly hold to their beliefs with courage
- ▶ Focus their teaching on building up the church not on personal recognition or pointless debates

Listen to what Richard Baxter said in his classic “The Reformed Preacher”

ALL OUR TEACHING MUST BE AS PLAIN AND EVIDENT AS WE CAN MAKE IT... HE THAT WOULD BE UNDERSTOOD, MUST SPEAK TO THE CAPACITY OF HIS HEARERS, AND MAKE IT HIS BUSINESS TO MAKE HIMSELF UNDERSTOOD. TRUTH LOVES THE LIGHT, AND IS MOST BEAUTIFUL WHEN MOST NAKED. IT IS A SIGN OF AN ENVIOUS ENEMY TO HIDE THE TRUTH; AND A SIGN OF AN HYPOCRITE TO DO THIS UNDER PRETENSE OF REVEALING IT; AND THEREFORE PAINTED, OBSCURE SERMONS ... ARE TOO OFTEN THE MARK OF PAINTED HYPOCRITES



Richard Baxter, "The Reformed Pastor", First published in 1656

All our teaching must be as plain and evident as we can make it... He that would be understood, must speak to the capacity of his hearers, and make it his business to make himself understood. Truth loves the light, and is most beautiful when most naked. It is a sign of an envious enemy to hide the truth; and a sign of an hypocrite to do this under pretense of revealing it; and therefore painted, obscure sermons ... are too often the mark of painted hypocrites

TITUS 1:6-9

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.

GATHER THE SHEEP

DRIVE AWAY
WOLVES



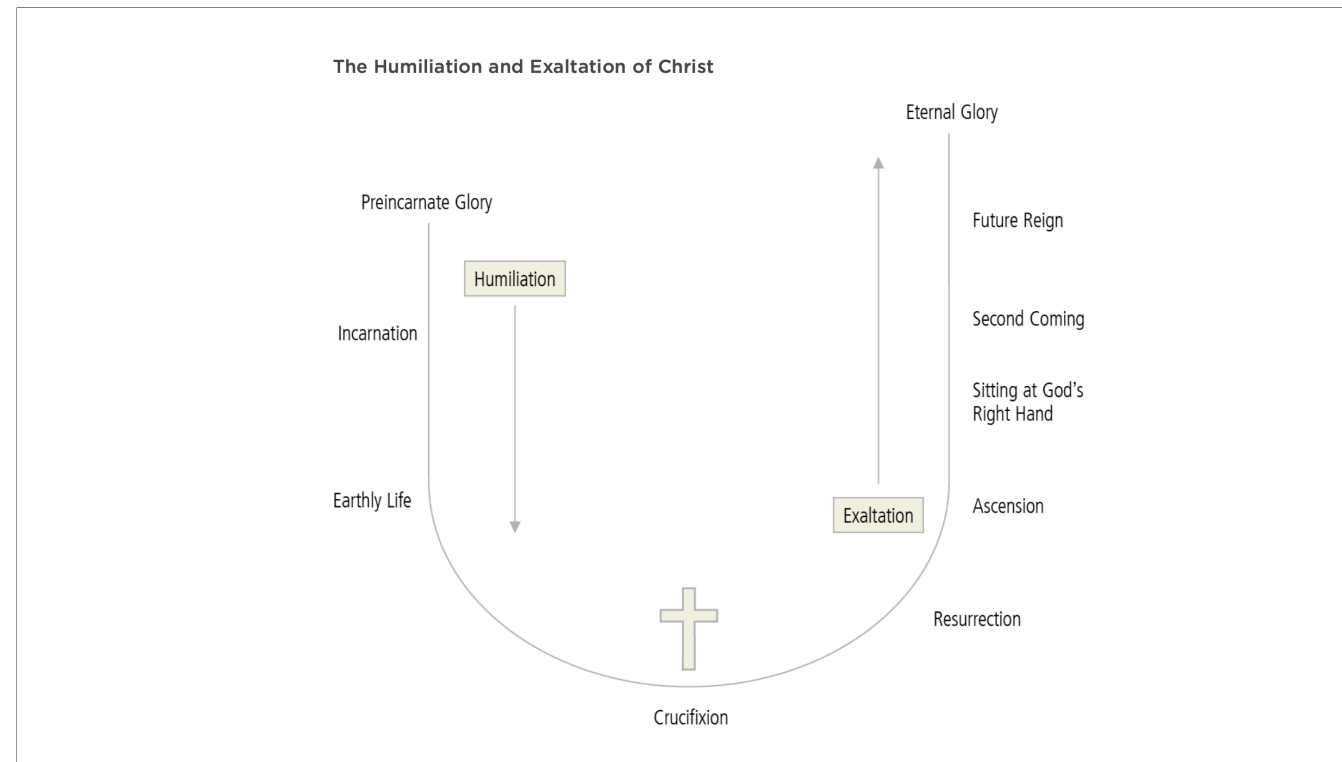
- ▶ The elders need two distinct voices
 - ▶ The Scriptures give them tools for both of these
 - ▶ A leader who knows the Word can guide the sheep and refute the enemies of the truth
- ▶ This shows true wisdom for a leader: its not just holding the right faith but using that to build the church
 - ▶ The Bible is sufficient for guiding believers and overcoming enemies of the truth
 - ▶ The truth of God can easily defeat all lies

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think biblical qualifications focus so heavily on a leader's personal life—specifically their marital and family life—as a prerequisite for public ministry? What does this emphasis on "above reproach" tell us about God's priorities for church leadership?
2. The statement was made, "Whatever leaders are, the people become". Can you think of any examples from history or your own experience where you have seen this?
3. What dangers arise when we select leaders without using biblical qualifications?



BACK-UP SLIDES



- He came from the highest glory
- down to the deepest humanity
- took the form of a slave
- having accomplished his work by dying the death on the cross
- he then was highly exalted seated at the right Hand of God the Father
- You see this pattern wonderfully demonstrated in this parable that Jesus is physically acting out for his disciples
-

DOCTRINES OF GRACE

- ▶ Total Depravity
- ▶ Irresistible Grace
 - ▶ Also known as efficacious grace
- ▶ When we come to a full understanding of how serious our fallen state is our perspective on these doctrines changes dramatically
 - ▶ We will not flatter ourselves in thinking that we are saved thinking we made the first move to come to God
 - ▶ We will fall down on our knees and thank God every day for His amazing grace

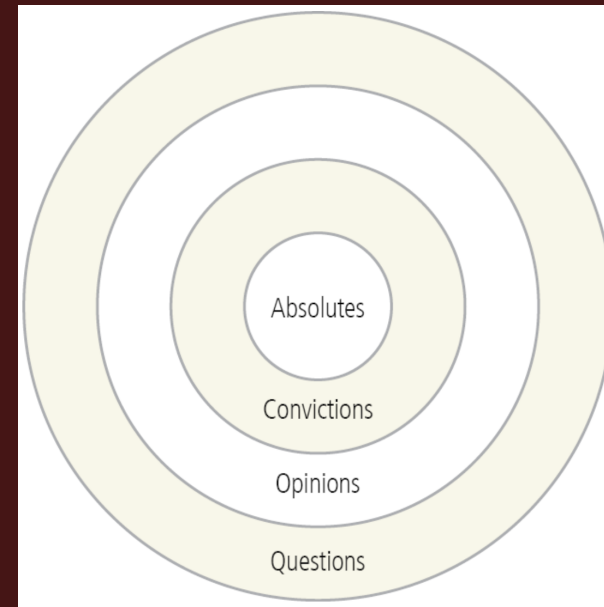
- Now a few weeks ago I mentioned that we have been taught in John over and over again the Doctrines of Grace
- Tonight in Jesus' words and in Paul's letter to the Ephesians we've actually learned about two more of these doctrines, namely Total Depravity and Irresistible Grace
- As a matter of fact the entirety of Chapter 11 I think is one of the strongest pictures of the doctrine of Irresistible Grace so I thought that I would take the time to teach the concept of this so that when we begin the New Year and Ryan gets there you will be prepared for what's to come
- I think this is proper as well with the text we are given because before Christ performs the miracle he makes this amazing statement to Martha
 - When we go out and preach the gospel we preach in a graveyard.
 - Lazarus cannot obey Christ's command until he is given new life, and this is something only God can do (John 11:1-44).
 - When Lazarus is given new life, he immediately responds and exits the tomb.
 - In the same way, the spiritually dead sinner cannot respond to the gospel until he is given new life through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.
 - Once he is regenerated, however, he immediately responds, placing his faith in Jesus. He is then justified by God.
 - Predestination
 - Election
 - Calling
 - Regeneration
 - Faith
 - Repentance
 - Justification
 - Adoption
 - Sanctification

- Perseverance
- Glorification

- Irresistible, or efficacious, grace is a glorious biblical doctrine, for without the efficacious work of the Holy Spirit, we would all be without hope in this world and the next.
- When we come to a full understanding of how serious our situation is as fallen human beings, our perspective on these doctrines changes dramatically.
 - *Think about nonbelievers who may have witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus, though they just saw the most amazing miracle ever, we would think surely that should be enough to prove to them Jesus is God, but what if they are jealous that he didn't heal their dead relative, why did he pick Lazarus (that gets into limited atonement)....*
- If we view fallen man as merely disabled or sick, we will never understand the full riches of God's grace.
- When we see ourselves as God sees us, however, the truth of the matter is sobering.
- When we realize that we were spiritually stillborn, rebels against the Almighty and Most Holy God, the Creator of heaven and earth, wicked to our core,
- We will not have an overinflated sense of our own goodness and abilities.
- We will not delude ourselves into thinking that God chose us because of some innate goodness within us.
- We will not flatter ourselves in thinking that we are saved because we made the first move to come to God.
- On the contrary, we will fall down on our knees and thank God every day for His amazing grace.
 - We will thank God that He came to our tomb, when we were dead and helpless in sin, and cried out to us, "Come forth!"
 - We will thank Him for giving us new life, for turning our wills from evil, for granting us faith and repentance, for bringing us out of the tomb and loosing us from the burial cloths in which we were bound.
 - If we walked out of the tomb, it was not because of any power in us.
 - It was not because we made a decision for Christ.
 - Rather, it was solely because of the irresistible grace of God, the sovereign and mysterious work of the Holy Spirit, who gave us new life.
 - When we finally learn this, we will, along with our reformed forefathers, ascribe all glory to God alone for our salvation.

DISPUTABLE MATTERS AND DOCTRINE

- ▶ Absolutes
 - ▶ Define the core beliefs of the Christian faith
- ▶ Convictions
 - ▶ May have significant impact on the health and effectiveness of the church
- ▶ Opinions
 - ▶ Less-clear issues that generally are not worth dividing over
- ▶ Questions
 - ▶ Currently unsettled issues

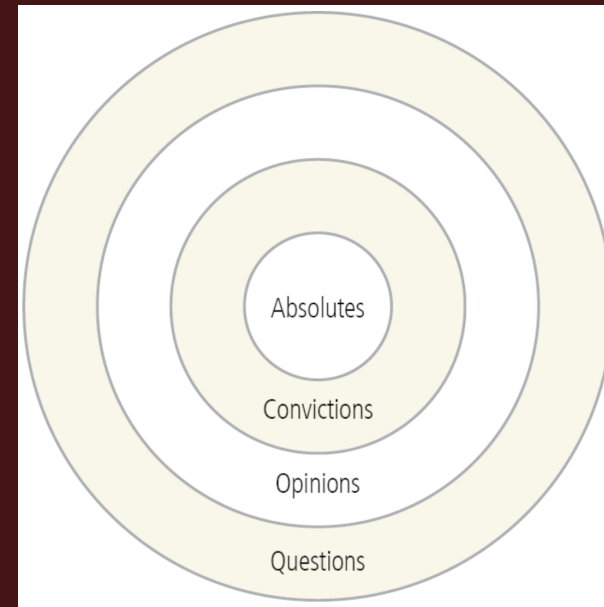


- So one of the questions we had from the first week of our study in chapter 14 was “Where do we draw a line between Christian liberty and sin?”
- Again Members of the church in Rome were united in their faith in Jesus Christ, but the apostle Paul recognized a division between the Jewish and Gentile believers among them.
 - The two groups of Christians were arguing and passing judgment on one another, and Paul told them to stop “quarreling over disputable matters” (Romans 14:1).
- While many things in the Christian life are essential, some are not.
 - The two specific disputable matters that Paul addressed in Romans 14 were chiefly regarding which foods were acceptable to eat (verses 2–3) and the observance of certain holy days (verses 5–6).
 - He also touched on drinking wine in verse 21.
- The Roman Christians had become partisan.
 - Love and unity were being forgotten amid their disputes.
 - Some of the believers in the church felt freedom in Christ to eat all kinds of foods without restriction.
 - It is unclear whether these restrictions dealt only with kosher regulations as spelled out in the Jewish law, or also included eating meat that had been offered to pagan idols.
 - Those who were weak in faith may have felt too much temptation when eating meat and thus gave up anything that reminded them of their pre-Christian life.
 - Likewise, some Christians who had always worshiped God on the required Jewish holy days may have felt hollow and faithless if they didn’t continue to dedicate those days to God.

- The overarching lesson of the chapter is that harmonious relationships in the body of Christ are critical to God.
 - Unity in the church is more important than agreement on debatable, less significant matters in the Christian life.
 - Disputable matters should not disrupt Christian oneness.
- However the question still stands, how do we tell if something is disputable or an opinion?
 - That is the key here because part of Christian oneness is also sound doctrine.
- The ability to discern the relative importance of theological beliefs is vital for effective Christian life and ministry.
 - Both the purity and unity of the church are at stake in this matter.
- The relative importance of theological issues can fall within four categories:
 - (1) absolutes define the core beliefs of the Christian faith;
 - (2) convictions, while not core beliefs, may have significant impact on the health and effectiveness of the church;
 - (3) opinions are less-clear issues that generally are not worth dividing over; and
 - (4) questions are currently unsettled issues. These categories can be best visualized as concentric circles, similar to those on a dart board, with the absolutes as the “bull’s-eye” (see diagram).
-

DISPUTABLE MATTERS AND DOCTRINE

- Biblical clarity
- Relevance to the character of God
- Relevance to the essence of the gospel
- Biblical frequency and significance (how often in Scripture it is taught and what weight Scripture places upon it)
- Effect on other doctrines
- Consensus among Christians (past and present)
- Effect on personal and church life



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