



SUNDAY EVENING

AT BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH

Title: A Pastor Above Reproach

Passage: 1 Timothy 3:1-7

Speaker: Pastor Dan Preston

Introduction: Paul reminds us that the office of pastor is not a title to be admired but a work to be carried out. When churches forget the weight of that calling, and when pastors drift from the character God requires, trust erodes and the church suffers. That is why passages like 1 Timothy 3 matter so deeply. They remind us that this office is a noble work that requires faithfulness, humility, and a life that reflects the seriousness of standing before God's people and one day giving account to Him.

I. The Office is a Noble Calling — Not a Position of Status

The church does itself great harm when it treats pastors as performers, administrators, or religious professionals rather than as men called to labor for the health of souls.

The same desire that can be holy can also become dangerous if it is detached from the weight of the calling.

Pray for your pastors, support them, and encourage them, but also expect their lives to match the calling.

II. The Man Must Be Above Reproach — Character Comes Before Competence



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Blameless means nothing can stick. There is no charge that holds. There is no pattern of life that brings reproach on Christ or His church.

A. Blameless in His Marriage

The pastor must be morally faithful and covenant-keeping. His heart, his eyes, and his affections must not be divided.

B. Blameless in His Self-Control

A pastor must be watchful, not careless.

A man who cannot govern his impulses cannot shepherd souls.

The church does not need men who draw attention to themselves. It needs men who quietly protect the flock.

C. Blameless in His Relationships

A pastor must be approachable. His life must be open, not guarded. Hospitality is love made visible. It is the willingness to share space, time, and care.

D. Blameless in His Teaching

A pastor must know the Word, love the Word, and be able to explain it accurately.

III. The Man Must Not Be Mastered by His Appetites — Self-Control Protects the Church

A man who cannot govern himself will eventually damage everyone entrusted to his care.

A pastor must not be a man whose judgment, emotions, or discipline are dulled by indulgence. Nothing must sit on the throne of his life except Christ.



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An undisciplined shepherd will inevitably damage God's bride.

We live in a culture that celebrates charisma and tolerates excess. God does the opposite. He values restraint. He honors discipline. He protects His people by requiring shepherds who are ruled by Christ, not cravings.

IV. The Man Must Prove His Leadership at Home — The House is the Training Ground for the Church

The home is not separate from ministry. It is the first ministry.

A man who rules well is present, consistent, engaged, and trusted. His household is not perfect, but it is ordered. There is clarity, not chaos.

Leadership is not proven by authority claimed, but by responsibility carried. The home is where spiritual leadership is either learned or forfeited.

V. The Man Must Not Be Spiritually Immature — Pride is a Greater Danger Than Inexperience

Spiritual authority exposes the heart. When a man is placed into leadership before he has been tested, before he has learned humility through failure and endurance, the position itself becomes fuel for pride.

Leadership accelerates exposure. It magnifies whatever is already present in a man's heart.

God is never in a hurry. Time is not wasted when it is spent being shaped.

VI. The Man Must Have a Good Testimony Without — The Church's Witness is at Stake



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Moral failure among pastors is never a private matter. It ripples outward.

A man who repents when he sins, tells the truth when it costs him, treats people fairly, and lives transparently before the watching world gives credibility to the message he preaches.

Conclusion: Paul ends this passage with a warning. Satan often targets church leadership, knowing that if the shepherd is compromised, the flock will suffer. History and experience both show the damage that follows when spiritual leadership fails. That is why God raises the standard for pastors. They are entrusted with the care of souls purchased by the blood of Christ. These qualifications are not about perfection but about credible holiness, calling for men whose lives support the message they preach and whose character gives weight to their words.

1. This Text Calls Us to Sobriety

Leadership is not built on charisma, availability, or popularity; it is built on spiritual steadiness.

2. This Text Calls Men to Examine Themselves Honestly

The question is, “Do I meet God’s qualifications?” Every pastor worth his calling will always concern himself more with what God thinks than what people think.

3. This Text Calls the Church to Pray for its Pastors

Pastors do not need praise. They need prayer.

A praying church is a protected church.

