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SECTION 7 – The Attributes of a Leader

Lesson 25 - The Attributes of a Leader

1 Timothy 3:2-7 KJV *A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;*

3Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

What is a bishop?

A bishop simply means an overseer; someone that oversees a local church or ministry; a leader. It also applies to the leader or overseer of a smaller group.

It's not just some Pope like figure, for this applies to all of us, because we're all called to a level of leadership, and we should all aspire to these principles.

There are sixteen significant, personal attributes that a bishop is to have that are listed here. We are going to skip one of these, the husband of one wife. I don't want to spend time on that one; it's pretty self explanatory.

Attribute 1: A leader must be blameless.

God sets a standard here that a bishop, a leader, must be blameless. He must be one who does not live a life in such a way that it will bring blame or accusation upon his life. This was not an option. A leader must be blameless. I don't mean they've never had a bad day. I don't mean they never have to overcome situations, but they must live a life in such a way that it does not bring accusation or reproach upon themselves, and even more so upon the body of Christ.

Romans 14:16 *Therefore do not let your good be spoken of as evil;*

If you're going to be a mature leader you're going to have to live your life where you're not engaging in immorality. That's a no brainer, although today we have to bring it up again and again. There's a total lack of the teaching and understanding and revelation of the fear of God. There's no real fear of God, no real embracing of His holiness, and so these things creep into our

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lives. If we had a terrifying, trembling fear of God, a true reverence for God, we would be shaking in our boots to cross God. The Bible says it a fearful thing to fall into the hands of God. (Hebrews 10:31)

A leader is to not only live a life where he doesn't engage in those immoral things that bring reproach, but a leader must live his life in such a way that even his good deeds are not evil spoken of.

We believe in being blessed financially, but if I live my life in such a flamboyant way that it brings reproach, I have still violated this scripture of being blameless, even if my heart is right before God and even if there was no ill gotten gain. If I live in such a way that it brings such a negative report, I am not operating as a biblical leader.

What is a main area that a leader needs to grow in?

A leader must grow to the maturity that it is not all about him. He must live a blameless life.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Philippians 2:14-15 KJV *Do all things without murmurings and disputings:*

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world,

1 Corinthians 6:12 KJV *All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.*

You have to live your life as a leader in such a way that you consider how you're actions affect others. Consider those things that you may be doing that you are free to do, but it isn't expedient. There may be things we are free to do, but it brings reproach.

In dealing with the financial abuses in the body of Christ the Lord told me that He has been trying to speak to His people and they aren't hearing Him directly, so He's been trying to speak to them through the media. The media has no love for us and no desire for us to truly repent. They just want to use this to destroy us, but through that God is trying to speak to us, and tell us that we are not living our life in a way that is above reproach. We are not living our lives in a way that is above accusation as servants of God who are dead to this world. Many lust after the things of this world, or at least live their life in such a way that it appears that they desire worldly things. We have to be careful.

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There have been so many times when I've been on the road and the only place open to eat was at a bar. I won't go in there because even though I'm not going to drink, I don't want to have anything to do with drinking. I'm hungry and just want to go get a little food, but what is it going to look like if as a minister who travels all over the world I'm seen walking into a bar? I don't know if a young Christian might see me and stumble because he just saw a preacher going into a bar. He wouldn't know what I am doing, and that I'm not having a drink. I'm going to live my life in such a way that it's beyond reproach. I don't want my good to be spoken evil of. A true leader has this attitude in their heart; they aren't going to let their good be evil spoken of.

Ephesians 1:4 KJV *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love*

Colossians 1:22 *in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight*

We all have our shortcomings and faults, but a leader takes time to examine his life, to adjust those areas of his life that are not pleasing to the Lord and those areas that would cause reproach from without.

Attribute 2: Be vigilant.

What is the definition of vigilant?

The Webster's dictionary definition for vigilant is as follows: watchful, alert, circumspect.

It is a person who is watchful on all sides. That's what the word circumspect means, that you're looking at all sides. A leader must always be on the lookout. The word circumspect literally talks about one who is standing in a guarding position, looking at all sides, watching for an enemy to attack.

We have leader after leader falling, and one of the reasons they are falling is they are not living their lives in such a way that they're going into every situation expecting an attack of the enemy. Why in the world if you're wrestling with homosexuality are you going to get a massage from a gay man? Why in the world if you're wrestling with alcohol are you even going to spend two seconds walking inside of a bar? Why in the world if you're wrestling with lust and adultery in your heart are you going to spend 18 hours at the beach? Why are you putting yourself in those situations? You need to be vigilant, you need to be watching knowing that the devil is an opportunist and he already has plans. He knows your weaknesses. He knows what your vulnerabilities are. And with all due respect, we all have vulnerabilities. Every one of us has our weak spots. Everybody one of us has those areas where we are more susceptible than others. We need to recognize those things. We need to be sharing those things with our brothers and sisters

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who will stand guard with us on those things, who will pray with us, and we need to walk into every situation of life with our guard up.

So often we live too cavalier in our Christian experience. Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is turn tail and run. I had a young man in our youth ministry who really battled with lust. He'd see a pretty girl and it would hit him. And right in the middle of wherever he was he'd turn around and say, "Just call me Joseph," and start running. Praise God he was trying to overcome. Praise God he was dealing with it. Some of you might think it spiritual to face it all head on, but sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is run.

Matthew 24:42 KJV *Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*

Matthew 26:41 *Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*

Jesus told the disciples to watch and pray. He wasn't telling them to watch Him pray in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was telling them to watch out for the devil, watch out for the enemy, and pray lest you fall into temptation.

Do you wake up each morning thinking, focusing, praying, and asking God to help you have spiritual eyes to see, to help you see where the enemy is coming? Watch, pray, and be vigilant. As a leader you need to go into every single situation with the idea that the devil is looking to attack you, and you better have your guard up.

Our military have learned how to watch, how to stay alert, and how to stay circumspect. There could be an enemy around every corner that is trying to kill them. As Christians we need to understand that the devil is trying to tear us down and trying to destroy us. He's winning a lot of the time because we are not doing a simple thing of watching and praying. You need to be vigilant in every part of your life.

Luke 21:36 KJV *Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.*

1 John 4:4 *You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.*

You have the power inside of you to overcome. Watch and pray. Wake up every morning knowing there's a devil out there that has come to set you up. I can't tell you how many times I've gone into situations, and because I was watching, and because I was praying, God spoke to me about danger coming. I was watching, I was praying, and as a result I was not even tempted. The opportunity for that person to do what they wanted to do didn't even come to pass because I was watching and praying

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God says leaders must be watching and praying. When I get around people I'm always watching and praying, even when I get around ministers and preachers. I'm watching and praying cause some people are going to lead you in the wrong way; some of them are going to try to get you to compromise; some of them are going to try to dissuade you from living a life of righteousness and holiness. But if you're watching and praying you'll discern that thing right off, and you will be able to react to it and walk in victory!

As a leader you need to live your life blameless in such a way that it doesn't bring reproach. And second you need to live your life in a way where you're always watching and always praying lest you fall into temptation. If you're not watching and you're not praying, you will be falling.

For Further Study:

Titus 1:7 *For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,*

1 Peter 5:8 *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*