

The Qualifications Of Elders

By Ron Boatwright

Before a man is appointed as an elder, he **must meet** all of God's qualifications that are given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 11, Titus 1:5-9, and 1 Peter 5:2-3. "If a man desires the position of bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop **must** be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he **must** have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil...Likewise, their wives **must** be reverent, not slanderers, temperate, faithful in all things." (1 Timothy 3:1-7, 11).

"If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. For a bishop **must** be blameless as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, nor greedy for money, but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober minded, just holy, self controlled, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict." (Titus 1:6-9).

"Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock." (1 Peter 5:2-3).

Everything God has specified in the qualifications for an elder **must** be met. None of God's requirements can be overlooked or ignored. The word "**must**" makes them absolute. No man should ever be placed into the eldership who does not fully meet the Lord's qualifications.

1. **Blameless**-above reproach, must be good enough that people cannot rightly criticize him. He must be a faithful Christian that no charge of unfitness can be sustained.
2. **Husband of one wife**-must only have one wife and must not be divorced.

3. **Temperate**-self controlled, watchful and vigilant, carefully watches over God's flock.
4. **Sober minded**-serious minded, sensible, and wise.
5. **Of good behavior**-respectable, orderly.
6. **Hospitable**-concerned about the needs of others, ready to help other people.
7. **Able to teach**-one who is prepared and ready to effectively teach God's word.
8. **Not given to wine**-does not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs.
9. **Not violent**-gentle, peaceful and of a sound mind.
10. **Not greedy for money**-not one who loves money, not materialistic, not stingy.
11. **Gentle**-self controlled, considerate, not domineering.
12. **Not quarrelsome**-not contentious but does contend for the truth, no brawler.
13. **Not covetous**-does not envy what others have.
14. **Rules his own house will having his children in submission with all reverence**-his children are submissive and respectful to all people. Titus says, "having faithful children". American Standard Version says, "children that believe". His accountable children are to be faithful Christians.
15. **Not a novice**-not a recent convert, although some Christian men never mature spiritually but always remain a novice.
16. **A good testimony of those who are without**-must also have a good reputation with people not in the church.
17. **Their wives**-reverent, not slanderers, faithful Christians.
18. **Not self willed**-not overbearing, not domineering, does not lord it over the congregation or the other elders.
19. **Not quick tempered**-does not quickly become angry, able to control his reactions when provoked.
20. **A lover of what is good**-lover of goodness.
21. **Just**-upright, honest in the sight of God and man, always tells the truth.
22. **Holy**-devoted to God.
23. **Holding fast the faithful word**-confident of God's word and is able to use sound doctrine to correct those in error.
24. **Being an example to the flock**-a faithful example of how a Christian should live.

God requires the eldership to be made up of godly, spiritually mature men of high spiritual character. If God's requirements are ignored and men are placed into the eldership who do not fully meet all of His requirements, it will

lead to trouble and place souls of the congregation in jeopardy. The Lord's qualifications continue to apply also to those serving as elders. If an elder becomes disqualified after having been appointed, he should resign. If he doesn't resign then the congregation who appointed him has the right to remove him.