

Sunday, July 11, 2010—Titus: The Practice of Grace—Titus 1:6-8: Qualifications for Church Leadership, Part One

Introduction/Review

- Last week we say in Titus 1:5 that the reason Paul left Titus on Crete was to “set in order the things that are wanting.” This statement indicates that the churches on Crete were not functioning in an orderly fashion.
- The way in which Titus is instructed bring order to the churches is by “ordaining elders in every city.”
- The word “ordain” here in Titus 1:5 is the same Greek work translated “order” in I Corinthians 11:34. Order would be established on Crete to the ordaining of elders.
- Paul’s ministry model was never to stay in one location but to organize local churches under the leadership of duly appointed elders to oversee the work when he left. This is what Paul appointed Titus to do on the Island of Crete.
 - Acts 14:23—Paul ordained multiple elders in every church.
 - Titus 1:5—Paul tells Titus to ordain multiple elders in every city. This is critical when one considers what elders were.
- Titus 1:7—the titles “elder (*presbyteros*)” and “bishop (*episkopos*)” are used interchangeable in this passage. That means there were multiple bishops in each city and in each church.
 - Acts 20:17—Paul calls a meeting with the Ephesians elders (*presbyteros*).
 - Acts 20:28—Still talking to the Ephesian elders calls them overseers (*episkopos*). This is the same Greek word translated Bishop in Titus and I Timothy.
 - Acts 20:28-29—What do these elders, overseers, or bishops do? They oversee or feed the flock. What is the flock according to the verse? The church of God.
- Philippians 1:1—we see this exact model being practiced when Paul address the “bishops” in the city of Philippi.
- The word “elder” refers to the person. While the words “bishop” or “overseer” refers to the work the elders do in caring for the assembly. It is the same type of care that a shepherd provides for his flock.
- This morning we are going to study the Scriptural qualifications for those who would fill this office.

Titus 1:6

- ***“If any be blameless”***
- Blameless—according to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* means: “Without fault; innocent; guiltless; not meriting censure.”
 - I Timothy 3:2
 - Colossians 1:22—“that cannot be called into to account, unproveable, unaccused, blameless” (*Strong’s Concordance*)
- ***“the husband of one wife”***
- This qualification is important because it speaks to two commonly held misconceptions. 1) Clergy should not be married (vow of celibacy). 2) Ordination of female elders.
- I Corinthians 7:7-9—it is true that Paul does teach that if one can refrain from sexual sin and temptation that one should remain unmarried.
- I Corinthians 9:5—Paul had the power and the right to have a wife. God the Holy Spirit says that Peter the so-called first Pope was married.
- Genesis 2:24—the man (husband) is to leave his father and mother cleave unto his wife (woman).
- Ephesians 5:22-33
- I Timothy 3:2
- I Timothy 2:11-14—there is a divine order in creation that God wants reflected in the local church. This does not mean that God is sexist or oppressive towards women.
- This is issue is not a cultural thing that needs to be altered to suit the times. Remember, Paul told Titus to set things in order. Therefore, the qualifications for eldership reflect the divine order God established in creation.
- ***“having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly.”***
- Only the union of one man and one woman is capable of producing children.
- I Timothy 3:4-5—someone who’s family is a mess is not qualified to “take care of the church of God.”

Titus 1:7

- **“For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God;”**
- Steward—comes from the Greek word *oikonomos*. This word the manager of household or of household affairs.
 - Luke 16:1-8
 - I Corinthians 4:1-2
- **“not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;”**
- Not self-willed—self pleasing or arrogant.
- Not soon angry—prone to anger
- Not given to wine—drunkard (I Timothy 3:3), vigilant— abstaining from wine, either entirely or at least from its immoderate use (I Timothy 3:2).
- No striker— bruiser, ready for a blow, contentious, or quarrelsome person (I Timothy 3:3).
- Not given to filthy lucre— eager for base gain, greedy for money (I Timothy 3:3, 8).
 - Titus 1:11—the people in this verse are teaching whatever will bring them the most money. This is why the bishop must not be given to filthy lucre.

Titus 1:8

- While verse 7 was more negative in outlining what the Bishops should **not be**, verse 8 positively states what the elders **should be**.
- **“But a lover of hospitality”**
- According to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary* hospitality means: “The act or practice of receiving and entertaining strangers or guests without reward, or with kind and generous liberality.”
 - I Timothy 3:2
 - I Peter 4:9
- **“a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;”**
- A lover of good men— the Greek expression simply means “loving goodness” according to *Strong’s Concordance*.
- Sober—in this sense sober deals with one’s mental state not alcohol. Sober means 1) of a sound mind, sane, in one's senses, 2) curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate

- I Timothy 3:2
- Titus 2:2—temperate—moderate, not marked by excesses
- Titus 2:5—discrete
- Just—the Greek word translated just carries many meanings according to *Strong's Concordance* some of the more pertinent meanings given the context include:
 - in a wide sense, upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God
 - innocent, faultless, guiltless
 - used of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God, and who therefore needs no rectification in the heart or life
 - in a narrower sense, rendering to each his due and that in a judicial sense, passing just judgment on others, whether expressed in words or shown by the manner of dealing with them
- Holy— undefiled by sin, free from wickedness
- Temperate—deals with the ability to master and control ones appetites.

Other Qualification Not Listed in Titus

- I Timothy 3:3—elders are not supposed to be covetous but content with what they have (Hebrews 13:5).
- I Timothy 3:6—a bishop is not supposed to be a new believer lest pride get a hold of them.
- I Timothy 3:7—a bishop should be know by these characteristics outside of the local church.
- I Timothy 3:2—an elder needs to be apt to teach (or skillful in teaching) the Scriptures.
 - I Timothy 5:17-18