**Learning to Be Self-Controlled**

**by Pastor Fee Soliven**

**Titus 1:6-9**

**Wednesday Evening**

**November 9, 2022**

**Titus 1:6-9**

6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination. 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,

8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, 9 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.

**6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.**

Saints, Paul briefly described some qualifications that an elder should have. Paul had given Timothy a similar set of instructions for choosing leaders in the Ephesian church.

**1 Timothy 3:1-7**

1 This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. 2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);

6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. 7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

**1 Timothy 5:22**

“Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure”

Saints, notice that most of the qualifications involve character, not knowledge or skill. A person’s lifestyle and relationships provide a window into his character. Consider these qualifications as you evaluate people for positions of leadership in your church.

It is important to have leaders who can effectively preach God’s word; but even more importantly, they must live out God’s word and be examples for others to follow.

The first qualification is to be well thought of for his good life. An elder must have no conduct that would be grounds for any kind of accusation. He must be above reproach.

Again, the point here is not that the leaders cannot be blamed, but rather that when blamed, their life will prove the falsehood of the blame.

He must be faithful to his wife means that a church leader should not be promiscuous but should be faithful in his marriage. This did not prohibit an unmarried person from becoming an elder.

That his children must be believers who are not wild or rebellious would show that the church leader has proven that he can lead his own household. An elder’s children should have received spiritual training and should be believers.

This will prove that they care about teaching correct doctrine and discipling others. Obviously, those whose children are rebelling, running wild, and refusing to obey would not be fit for the important position of leading God’s people.

How one’s children live attests to how the Christian life is practiced at home.

**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,**

Saints, an elder must live a blameless life, emphasizing that this quality is essential in any person who is God’s minister. Church leaders who act unworthily and bring blame and reproach on themselves also damage God’s work.

**1 Timothy 3:2**

An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

**1 Timothy 3:3**

not dependent on wine, not violent but gentle, peaceable, and free of the love of money.

**1 Timothy 3:8**

Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued or given to much wine or greedy for money.

**2 Timothy 2:24**

And a servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome, but must be kind to everyone, able to teach, and forbearing.

Saints, Paul’s guidelines take on added significance in the Cretan setting, for Cretans were known as having disreputable character.

Sometimes the leadership guidelines from Scripture will harmonize with the prevailing standards for mature leaders in a culture, and, at other times, they will conflict. Apparently, Titus was to be careful with the Cretans.

Saints, a pitfall of leadership is becoming arrogant. But pride can seduce emotions and cloud reason, making a church leader ineffective. Pride and conceit were the Devil’s downfall, and he uses pride to trap others.

In addition, a quick-tempered person will speak and act without thinking—hurting people and damaging the church’s work and reputation.

These last three prohibitions had particular significance for Titus’s search for church leaders in first-century Crete.

A church leader must not be a heavy drinker or violent (often the result of being quick-tempered or drunk). Furthermore, the leaders Titus chose should serve out of love, not because they are greedy for money.

**8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,**

Saints, after listing characteristics a church leader should not have, Paul lists these positive qualities. Hospitality was of primary importance in this culture. Believers were commanded to be hospitable (see 3 John), so their leaders should enjoy having guests, revealing devotion and concern for the welfare of others.

**3 John 1-8**

1 The Elder, to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth: 2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers. 3 For I rejoiced greatly when brethren came and testified of the truth that is in you, just as you walk in the truth.

4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. 5 Beloved, you do faithfully whatever you do for the brethren and for strangers, 6 who have borne witness of your love before the church. If you send them forward on their journey in a manner worthy of God, you will do well,

7 because they went forth for His name's sake, taking nothing from the Gentiles. 8 We therefore ought to receive such, that we may become fellow workers for the truth.

Saints, Paul insisted that the leaders be known for loving all that is good.

This person displays that goodness in the spiritual realm as he lives wisely and is fair to others. A believer who is devout will most likely also have a disciplined life, picturing a person who, like an athlete, is constantly “in training” in his Christian life and service.

**1 Timothy 3:2**

An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

**9 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.**

Saints, the church leader must meet moral and spiritual requirements in his personal life, and be reliable in his understanding and teaching of the message he was taught.

The last phrase actually occurs first in the Greek for emphasis. The message as it had been taught by the apostles was the trustworthy message that church leaders must teach their congregation.

They must be strong and steadfast so that they can encourage others with right teaching and point out the errors of those who oppose them.

Pastors must fulfill a positive and a negative function in handling the truth. They must encourage by preaching, supporting, and reinforcing people as they follow the truth.

But pastors must also confront and refute false ideas. Confident leaders with backbone, courage, and an irrefutable message would stand in strong contrast with Cretan lifestyles, character traits, and false teachers (described in the following verses).

**2 Thessalonians 2:15**

Therefore, brothers, stand firm and cling to the traditions we taught you, whether by speech or by letter.

**1 Timothy 1:10**

for the sexually immoral, for homosexuals, for slave traders and liars and perjurers, and for anyone else who is averse to sound teaching

**1 Timothy 1:19**

holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and thereby shipwrecked their faith.

**2 Timothy 1:13**

Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching you have heard from me, with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

**2 Timothy 3:14**

But as for you, continue in the things you have learned and firmly believed, since you know from whom you have learned them.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.” In Jesus Name!**