



Qualification's For Leadership.

By Keith Malcomson

"Blameless" (I Tim.3:2; Tit.1:6-7), This means to be un-rebukeable, un-accused, un-reprovable and above reproach. After investigation nothing can be laid to their charge. No one can lay hold of or seize on anything in their life. Now we know there are false accusers and those who will look for anything and accuse of anything, but this term means to be blameless before God and the Scriptures, as well as before the Church that judges righteously according to the Word of God.

"The husband of one wife" (3:2, 12; Tit.1:6), Literally this means 'a one woman man.' This qualification has been more argued over than any other. Some have disqualified single men from leadership because of this statement, which would have disqualified the apostle Paul. Others have disqualified widows from leadership because of this, and still more so others have disqualified those divorced or married to someone divorced (This many times will be correct to do but Scripture and Christ is clear that divorce is allowable on the basis of adultery alone. Mt.5 and 19). Like the rest of these listed qualifications it is talking of present characteristics. This speaks of a man (if he is married) who has his heart and focus set on one woman, he is not a flirt or womaniser. The term "one" speaks of unity and oneness. It is possible for a man to be married to the same woman for life but to be disqualified by this statement because he is not "one" with her, or he is too loose or casual with other women. This term also deals with the error of Rome who would place on those who minister the regulation of 'no wife' which is a doctrine of demons (I Tim.4:1-3).

"Vigilant" (3:2), A literal translation of this is to 'abstain from wine' or 'be free from its influence.' This means one who is watchful, sober and ALERT. There is no influence of this world upon him that would hinder him from keeping watch on duty over the flock of God. This also is given as a quality for deacons wives, v11, and older men in the church, Tit.2:2.

"Sober" (3:2; Tit.1:8), This means to be 'sound or whole in mind.' To be self-controlled best defines this. This will be a man who is able to curb and control his feelings, thoughts and emotions. This instruction is given as well for the older men and woman in the church, Tit.2:2 (temperate), 5 (discreet) as well as the young men, Tit.2:6 (sober minded).

"Of good behaviour" (3:2), When believers look upon him what they see is a good or beautiful lifestyle. This word "good" means beautiful, virtues or valuable. This word is used by Christ in the parables for good ground, good fruit, good seed, good pearls and good fish. We could say that this man is beautifully ordered or that he conducts himself in a rare way.

"Given to hospitality" (3:2; Tit.1:8);, This means 'a lover' or 'friend of guests or strangers' or 'to entertain strangers.' This is a quality expected of all the members of a church and to be given to other believers around them, (Rom.12:13 I Pet.4:9). But for these leaders this is to be shown especially to those who come in from the outside. Of course this does not mean to be unwise or foolish with invites or to be very careful of who comes into your home. But we are told in Heb.13:1-2, "Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained (lodged) angels unawares."

"Apt to teach"(3:2; II Tim.2:24-26; Tit.1:9-11), He must have the ability to teach. He may not be greatly dynamic or profound but he must teach the people. Today there is a move away from leadership who preach the Word, Preach Christ and Preach Truth. Yet this is a fundamental thing for leaders. He must have the ability to correct those who oppose and disobey the truth of the Word. He must be able by sound teaching which he has learned to rebuke those who challenge the truth of the Gospel. He must be able to rebuke sharply and stop the mouths of those who are coming into the homes of the local believers with false doctrines and fictional stories. (Tit.1:9-14).

"Not given to wine" (3:3; Tit.1:7), "Given to wine" means to 'stay near wine' or to 'tipple.' It speaks of a characteristic and attitude, it is one who stays in the vicinity of drink, who has a casual relaxed attitude around it and is at home in such an environment. This means much more than not getting drunk. A leader in the church realises the dangers and fruit of social drinking and will avoid it.

"No striker"(3:3; Tit.1:7), A striker is one who will break forth in a quarrelsome way to the point of coming to blows. This term literally means to flatten and pound. He will strike and smite with the fist, he is violent. But an elder cannot be one who settles issues by fighting or who is willing to use his fist or the threat of it to get his own way. This is not how a godly leader deals with problems. Any man who could do this is certainly not ready for ministry.

"Not greedy of filthy lucre" (3:3; Tit.1:7), "Not a lover of money." This means that he is not to labour or desire to labour in the church for money. Now we know that Paul teaches a number of times that these local leaders ought to be provided for financially, but this qualification shows that the money is a practicality. This is not a job or a means to make money. Peter instructs in 5:2, "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;" Again Paul speaks of those who go from home to home "teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." Paul says that these itinerant preachers were teaching things that were wrong in order to gain money. There is to be no greed for shameful money, we know that money is not shameful or evil, but your desire for it and how you get your money can be a great shame before all. (I Thess.2:5; II Pet.2:3, 14; Lev.10:8-9).

"But patient" (3:3; II Tim.2:24), This is the characteristic of being mild and gentle. Tit.3:2, "...but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men." Gentleness of spirit is shown by meekness to those around you. Phi.4:5 "Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand." (Jm.3:17)

"Not a brawler" (3:3; II Tim.2:4; Tit.3:2), You cannot be gentle and a brawler at the same time, these two are opposites. A brawler is one who disputes, quarrels, strives and argues. II Tim.2:14, "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. And in v24, "And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;"

"Not covetous" (3:3), The previous qualification concerning money had to do specifically with the ministry. This one has to do with his love of money in his own heart, lifestyle and home. Those who are covetous will not inherit the kingdom of God and this will especially be a mark of the 'last days.' A love of money is the product of a love of self (I Cor.6:10; II Tim.3:1-2). Peter speaks of those who have "an heart exercised with covetous practices." These have given themselves to this one task of making money. This love of money is very dangerous and those who desire or think about getting rich or gaining this world's goods are in great danger. I Tim.6:10 "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things" (Lk.16:13-15; I Tim.6:5-10). To be covetous is broader than the desire for money. It can be for another man's wife, house, land or job (Ex.20:7).

"One that ruleth well his own house" (3:4-5; 3:12; Tit.1:6), The order of your home will either prepare and qualify you or obstruct and disqualify you from leadership. The home is the basic building block of the church. This is one who 'stands before' his family to lead them and care for them in an excellent manner. If this is done with "all gravity" or with dignity and honour, in a fair manner or honestly, the fruit will be children who respect him and obey him. "...having faithful children (those who believe and trust in Christ) not accused of riot or unruly (without rule)." (Tit.1:6). "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" This ability to rule his own home will enable him to take care of the church. "He that ruleth with diligence." This means quickly, in other words he will not neglect dealing with issues quickly or leave them undone. (Rom.12:18; I Tim.3:12)

"Not a novice" (3:6), The literal meaning is 'newly planted' in the sense of a newly planted tree that is only beginning to grow. The root meaning is 'newly born' or 'youthful and fresh.' This speaks of a new convert, one who is not long saved. In v10 instruction is given concerning Deacons, to let them be "first proved" before making them such. This means to 'test, examine and scrutinise' in order to make sure they qualify. Now it goes on to tell us the reason, "lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Lest pride cause a smoke that gets in his eyes and so causes him to fall just as Satan did through pride over his exalted position, who was then condemned and cast out of heaven. It is worth remembering that the mature Paul was given a thorn in the flesh to stop him getting proud over the revelations he was receiving, (II Cor. 12:7).

"He must have a good report of them which are without" (3:7), that is 'them that are outside the church, the unsaved.' He must have a good testimony or report with the unsaved. The reason given is "lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." If he loses his testimony and good standing through open sin or bad character he then has fallen into the devils trap who wants to discredit the church before the world. All of this will hinder the work of evangelism in a community. As far as possible we must maintain a good testimony in the community as long as it does not mean compromise or curtailing our God given responsibilities. Again it is possible even when in the midst of enemies to give a good report, I Tim.6:13, "Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;" John in his third letter speaks of Diotrephes who was a leader who loved to be first, he would not receive any of the apostles into the church and threw out any of the disciples who disagreed. John contrasts this man with another faithful brother who may have suffered through this proud man, "Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true." (III Jn.1:12).

"Not self-willed" (Tit. 1:7), That is, 'not self pleasing.' A self pleasing person is dominated by self interest, they are inconsiderate of others and they tend to assert their own will. Basically they are selfish with a high opinion of themselves. They think only of their own pleasure. How contrary this is to the Gospel of the Cross. Such tend to be arrogant and confident, they are not scared to speak, they walk after the flesh. It is interesting that one of the main thoughts in the Greek for the term self is a 'baffling wind.' But Christ's servants are not such, for their self must die, they are marked by self-denial. Paul says in Gal.2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Rom.6:6; 8:4; II Cor.4:10; 5:15; Gal.5:24; 6:14).

"Not soon angry" (1:7), He is not prone to anger or aroused to anger quickly. A leader who gets angry easily and gets hot at the slightest thing will be feared rather than loved. Despised rather than helped. (Prov.14:17; 15:18; 16:32; Ecc.7:9;). If a man cannot control his own self how can it be expected that he control good order in the local church? This does not exclude righteous anger for Paul writes: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil." (Eph.4:26-27). There is a type of anger that contains no sin, but it comes slow and goes quickly. James gives two helps to a slow anger: "be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:" (Jm.1:19-20).

"A lover of good men" (1:8), He is a lover of good men or good things. One of the great marks of a man is who does he keep company with; the type of men he gathers around him reveals much. Paul gathered men like Luke, Timothy, Titus and Silas. This is especially important for leaders. Also there are strict commands in Scripture of who we should not keep company with "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." (I Cor.5:11). But wider than this, we must be "lovers of good things", as it is in the Greek. We must have a heart to love all good things. "Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph." (Amos 5:15), If such Elders who sit in the gate establish judgment in the Church they are overseeing, then God may well be gracious unto His whole Remnant in the land and send revival.

"Just" (1:8), He is righteous or upright in all his dealings. He walks straight in all his affairs. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith." (Gal.3:11), This is a righteousness produced alone by faith in Christ's work upon the cross. What a blessing a righteous leader is for God will answer his prayer for the sheep, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jm.5:16).

"Holy" (1:8), they are hallowed, consecrated and sanctified. To qualify for ministry they must be separated from sin and consecrated to God. The word "consecrate" means to be set apart for a task or dedicated for a purpose. In the Old Testament if a man came to minister for God who was unholy, God would slay him. (Ex.40:13; Lev.20:7; Josh.3:5; Neh.13:2; Mal.3:3).

"Temperate" (1:8), This means 'to stand, or stand against, with vigour, might and strength.' This shows that he will have a strength to stand against compromise and to stand firm when circumstances, peoples opinions and even his own fears and thoughts rise up to try and move him off course. "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24). "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor.15:58).

"Being ensamples" (I Pet.5:3), In the Middle East the shepherds lead the flock whereas in the West we drive the flock accompanied by dogs. The Eastern picture of a shepherd is always to go ahead and to lead; the sheep hear his voice and follow his example. One of the great responsibilities of leaders is to set an example. This term "ensample" literally means 'a mark, scar, or resemblance.' As leaders follow Christ and become more like Him then they become marked with characteristics which other believers can follow. It also means 'example and pattern.' (Phil.3:17; 4:9; I Thess.1:5-6; 2:14; II Thess.3:7, 9; I Tim.4:12; Tit.2:7; Heb.6:12; 13:7; I Cor.4:16; 11:1). "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." This "lords over" means to 'exercise dominion over.' It speaks of the control of a leader and the subduing of Gods sheep. This was never God's way. Any leader who does this is wrong. No man has such power or right, yet we find them taking such. (Mt.20:25-26; Mk.10:42-43; II Cor.1:24). So a good leader will not abuse or lord it over others, but will be a meek example to the sheep of what it is to follow Christ.

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