

In our study of Paul's first letter to Timothy, we have reached chapter 3. Paul has started to look at the qualifications for an overseer or bishop. Last week we looked at verse one and learned this is a good thing for men to desire. I tried to show you that it is not a desire for leadership, but a burden to share the Word of the Lord. It is a burden for people to be saved and to live lives that glorify the Lord. To want the position to bear this load full time is a good thing. Paul now enters into the meat of this passage, detailing what qualities this man should possess. Join us as we look at the first two qualities of a bishop.

- **1 Timothy 3:2** "A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach:"
 - Blameless – The impossible quality; Why this and why first?
 - **Titus 1:5-6** ⁵ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders (in every city as I commanded you-- ⁶ if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination."
 - **4245 πρεσβύτερος** presbuteros {pres-boo'-ter-os} – Elder of age, advanced in life....
 - 1 Timothy 3:2 & 8
 - **1985 ἐπίσκοπος** episkopos {ep-is'-kop-os} – overseer, bishop, sometimes elder (NLT)
 - **1 Peter 2:24-25** ²⁴ who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness-- by whose stripes you were healed. ²⁵ For you were like sheep going astray, but have now returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls."
 - **1249 διάκονος** diakonos {dee-ak'-on-os} – One under authority that does.
 - So Titus groups these as elders, and Timothy shows them as separate with more detail. Both start with blameless. Is anyone blameless?
 - **Romans 3:23** "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,"
 - **1 John 1:8-10** ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us."
 - **1 John 1:6** "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth."
 - **1 John 2:4** "He who says, I know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."
 - Blameless – External report of behavior / no continuing sin in your life. No visible unrepentant sin that needs correcting. This is important because it gets into judging, evaluating, discerning, the spiritual life of another believer. There is a righteous judgment and an unrighteous judging (actions & teachings vs. motives). Rebukes must have clear scriptural support, clear teaching (Not opinion).
 - **Colossians 3:1-14** ¹ If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. ⁴ When Christ *who is* our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. ⁵ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. ⁶ Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, ⁷ in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. ⁸ But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. ⁹ Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, ¹⁰ and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who

created him,¹¹ where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcised nor uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave *nor* free, but Christ is all and in all.¹² Therefore, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering;¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also *must do*.¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection.”

- This qualification is showing the man has done this. There is a continually successful killing of external sin. (vs. 5-7) A continual successful putting off of the attitudes of the flesh (Vs. 8-9) and a successful putting on of Jesus Christ (Vs. 10-14) crowned with love.
 - God judges the heart. We are not to judge motives (Judgment implies consequences).
 - **Jeremiah 17:9** “The heart is deceitful above all *things*, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”
 - **Ezekiel 11:19-20** “¹⁹ Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh,²⁰ that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.” – We watch their direction of travel, their desires, and their love.
 - **1 Corinthians 11:31** “For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.”
 - We continue to: **Proverbs 4:23-27** “²³ Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it *spring* the issues of life.²⁴ Put away from you a deceitful mouth, And put perverse lips far from you.²⁵ Let your eyes look straight ahead, And your eyelids look right before you.²⁶ Ponder the path of your feet, and let all your ways be established.²⁷ Do not turn to the right or the left; Remove your foot from evil.”
 - It might be appropriate for a shepherd to warn, but usually done through the preaching of the word.
- **1 Timothy 3:2** A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife,...
 - We believe that this means a true biblical Overseer / Bishop is married to one and only one wife, with children who are under control, faithful, obedient... (next week).
 - Very controversial passage: literally a man of one woman. What does Paul mean? What verses did Paul say?
 - We want to understand scripture in its historical context, but we can’t read more into it than what the author says. This can be used to invent a problem that Paul was “addressing” that is no longer a problem, so that doesn’t apply to us.
 - Example: Women weren’t educated, so now it is okay to have women elders.
 - This flies in the face of the fact that we know there was a women’s lib movement. 1 Co. 11 – head coverings... Everyone needed training, men included.
 - Ignores the scriptural content and reasons. So it is here.
 - A man with one current wife:
 - Before salvation, divorce accepted as sin from ignorance.
 - **2 Corinthians 5:17** “Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”
 - Divorce is not the unforgivable sin!
 - Frustrating! No one that I know has ever said that divorce is unforgivable sin. You are creating a stray man argument. These are men who should know better.
 - Actions have consequences! Just as there are qualifications for a bishop and deacon, so there are disqualifications. That is the purpose of qualifications! Man / Woman.
 - Example: Thief on the cross. He was forgiven, but he still paid for his crimes.
 - A man who is promiscuous contracts AIDS and after salvation?

- David's sin with Bathsheba? Sword would not depart from his house...
- Leadership is not a right but a privilege (Moses, prophets, Levites, Aaron, high priests, even Abraham and Noah). God calls and gives grace.
 - **Romans 9:16** "So then *it is* not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy."
 - God's kingdom is not a democracy at any level, but a theocracy. God rules and is in control. He appoints His chosen leaders, In Israel, the Church, and in families.
 - **1 Co. 12:4-11** "⁴ There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶ And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills."
 - **Ephesians 4:11-13** "¹¹ And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;"
 - (added the word "Now") Dangerous ground.
- Even after salvation if the divorce is a 'biblical divorce' with the other party filing for the divorce and moving on to another relationship. This implies an ability to biblically remarry.
 - We will cover this later, but it is a broader NOW.
 - Those who would argue the first, must now explain why this view is wrong!!! What reason can they give?
 - **1 Co. 7:15** "¹⁵ But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases. But God has called us to peace."
 - Practical reason for this is that in a pagan culture like Corinth, there wouldn't be enough singularly married men to fulfill a narrow view of this verse so Paul couldn't have meant that.
 - He obviously was talking about tribesmen who added wives as a sign of status.
 - So if a man divorces he multiple wives, does that mean he is qualified?
 - We now add qualifications about the amount of time a man should step aside after sin. In the churches in Kenya it was considered normal to ask an immoral elder to confess, forsake and step down for 5 years. Then he could come back. He has shown consistency and God forgives us all.
 - Again, failure to see this as a qualification and viewing it as sin. **Is being a woman sin?**
- A broader classification is that if he is married. (names of men I might read)
 - Reasons to believe this view
 - This view adds a smaller word, the word "if" to the verse.
 - Paul and Jesus were not married and no one would say that they were unqualified!!

- There is a blessing in being able to serve the Church full time as it were.
- Singleness isn't a sin.
- All true, but
 - it was God who laid the qualifications down. Paul who wrote them, so don't bring Paul and Christ up! They were special, The Messiah and an apostle, appointed by God for the work they were called to do.
 - Blameless – externally observable righteousness... proved character.
 - **1Timothy 3:4-5** “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?);”
- Now that we have added the word 'if' let's change it just a little bit because it is mankind's word and so under the impulse of our deceitful hearts, let's change its place.
 - If a man, he is to be married to one woman (monogamous relationship).
 - It of course means a woman can be an elder to if she is in a monogamous relationship with a man. Being created a woman is not a sin, so God obviously didn't mean this to exclude women! (**1 Timothy 2:12** And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence).
 - A man married to one IF women / man (ordination of homosexual men).
 - Double if, ordination lesbian women.

2Co 13:14 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit *be* with you all. Amen.