

Conditions and Explanations for Leaders

1 Timothy 3:4-7 / Titus 1:6b, 9

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Christians should know what God values in an elder/overseer and why.

I. It is important that a potential leader's home life be exemplary. (3:4/1:6)

A. His children must not be out of control.

B. He should have demonstrated the ability to train up his children.

Gr: Asotia: wild (NIV), riot (KJV), dissipation (NET, NAS)

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation... (Ephesians 5:18 NAS) (leads to debauchery – NIV)

They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. (2 Peter 4:4)

C. Because caring for the family of God is an even greater responsibility than for one's own family.

II. It is important that men not be placed into leadership too quickly. (v. 6)

A. A potential leader must have had time to learn and grow in the faith.

I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that the gospel I preached is not of human origin. I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ. (Galatians 1:11-12)

B. Because pride is the great danger for those promoted too soon.

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. (Proverbs 11:2)

The word of the LORD came to me: "Son of man, take up a lament concerning the king of Tyre and say to him: 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says:

“You were the seal of perfection,
full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

You were in Eden,
the garden of God;

every precious stone adorned you:
carnelian, chrysolite and emerald,

topaz, onyx and jasper,
lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl.
Your settings and mountings were made of gold;
on the day you were created they were prepared.
You were anointed as a guardian cherub,
for so I ordained you.
You were on the holy mount of God;
you walked among the fiery stones.
You were blameless in your ways
from the day you were created
till wickedness was found in you.
Through your widespread trade
you were filled with violence,
and you sinned.
So I drove you in disgrace from the mount of God,
and I expelled you, guardian cherub,
from among the fiery stones.
Your heart became proud
on account of your beauty,
and you corrupted your wisdom
because of your splendor. (Ezekiel 28:11-17)

Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall. (Proverbs 16:18)

III. It is important that the potential leader not be likely to discredit God and the Church.

(v. 7)

A. The opinion of unbelievers regarding the leader is important.

...so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky as you hold firmly to the word of life. (Philippians 2:15-16a)

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Colossians 4:5-6)

...so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders... (1 Thessalonians 4:12a)

B. Because the devil loves to damage the work of God by causing leaders to fail and fall.

“Two things I ask of you, LORD;
do not refuse me before I die:
Keep falsehood and lies far from me;
give me neither poverty nor riches,
but give me only my daily bread.
Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you
and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’
Or I may become poor and steal,
and so dishonor the name of my God. (Proverbs 30:7-9)

If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. (1 Peter 4:14-16)

IV. It is important that a potential elder/overseer be a strong guardian of the faith. (Titus 1:9)

A. He must be fully committed to the Word of God.

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:11-14)

Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. (Mark 8:34)

B. He must teach accurately and be willing and able to counter error.