

FBCW Bible Study
 “Titus”
 Lesson 2 – “Elders” – Ch. 1:5-9

Titus 1:5-9

1. Read through the book of Titus (its only three chapters!). It’s recommended that as you go through this study you re-read it as often as possible.
2. V. 5. It seems Titus accompanied Paul to the isle of Crete (in the Mediterranean) with the understanding that after they planted the church, Titus would remain there as it’s pastor. Paul then tells Titus to “set in order what remains.” What do you think Paul means? Hint: read vv. 10-16. **Titus was to correct wrong doctrine and practices in the Cretan churches, a task that Paul had been unable to complete. This ministry is mentioned nowhere else.¹**
3. V. 5. What is the second thing Paul directs Titus to do? **“Appoint elders in every city.” Elder in the Greek is *presbyteros* and means older man, ambassador which points to wisdom and experience.**
4. V. 5 – “elders” What do you know about elders and write down verse references for any other places you know of in Scripture that speak about elders. **Synonymous with overseer and pastor/shepherd. 1 Timothy 3:1-7, 5:17-22; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; Titus 1:5-9, 2:1; Acts 20:28-35; 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13; Hebrews 13:17; James 5:14 and I Peter 5:1-3.**
5. Vv. 7-9. Qualifications of an elder. Write down what you think each qualification means. Use cross references when given.
 - V. 6 - “above reproach” – (1 Tim. 3:2, 10) **This qualification appears first in both lists, indicating its importance. Not “sinless,” for that would eliminate everyone, but rather, not subject to any legitimate blame, accusation or criticism, particularly in the matters that follow.**
 - V. 6 - “the husband of one wife” – (1 Tim. 3:2; Prov. 6:32-33; Mt. 5:27-28) **Literally, a “onewoman man,” “a one-wife husband.” Not that an Elder must be married, but that, if married, he must be loyal and faithful to the woman God has given him, living with her in a pure marriage relationship, avoiding both adulterous acts and thoughts.**

1 MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2006). [*The MacArthur study Bible: New American Standard Bible*](#). (Tt 1:5). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

- V. 6 - “having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion” – Question: does Paul mean a man can’t be an elder unless his children are true believers (Christians)? Why or why not? (1 Tim. 3:4-5) 1 Tim. 3:4 says “*Keeping his children under control with all dignity.*” Titus 1:6 adds, “*having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.*” Provides firm, but loving leadership in the home. Children living at home are characterized as being obedient, submissive, self-controlled and in subjection to their parents. Also, we know that we as people can’t save anyone, only God can.
- V. 7 - What is the other word Paul uses for this same office of “elder?” (1 Tim. 3:2) *Overseer – Greek: episkopos. Also bishop; superintendent.*
- V. 7 – “above reproach as God’s steward” What does the addition of God’s steward mean? “*The term refers to one who manages someone else’s properties for the well-being of those his master cares for. In this context, one who manages spiritual truths, lives on God’s behalf, and is wholly accountable to Him. The church is God’s (Ac 20:28; 1Ti 3:15; 1Pe 5:2–4) and elders or overseers are accountable to Him for the way they lead it (Heb 13:17) (J. Mac Study Bible).*”
- V. 7 – “not self-willed” – *Literally, not pleasing one’s self. Not arrogantly disrespectful of other people’s rights or opinions, not stubbornly insistent on having one’s own way. Willing to consider others and willing to yield one’s own rights; able to take criticism, to admit wrong and to apologize.*
- V. 7 – “not quick tempered” – *Not inclined to fits of rage, nor easily angered. Not given to outbursts of anger.*
- V. 7 – “not addicted to wine” (1 Tim. 3:3) - *Literally, not sitting long beside wine. Not given over to or addicted to much wine. Not characterized as a heavy drinker or drunkard.*
- V. 7 – “not pugnacious” (1 Tim. 3:3) – *Not a striker, abrasive, or combative.*
- V. 7 – “not fond of sordid gain” (1 Tim. 3:3) – *A related quality is listed in, 1 Tim. 3:3 “Free from the love of money.” Not setting one’s heart on making money as a major goal in life. Not greedy for riches nor material possessions. Working for honest gain.*
- V. 8 – “hospitable” – (1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Pet. 4:9) - *Literally, “loving strangers.” A willingness to use one’s home and one’s resources to minister generously and compassionately to others.*
- V. 8 – “loving what is good” – *A fondness for and commitment to what is helpful, beneficial and worthwhile. A passion for God and the things of God’s Word.*

- V. 8 – “sensible” (1 Tim. 3:2 as “prudent”) – **Sound-minded, sensible and self-controlled. It means to think before speaking or acting, to speak or act discreetly and appropriately, maintaining self-control.**
- V. 8 – “just” – **Upright, honest, fair and impartial in decision-making. A good understanding of right and wrong and the ability to choose that which meets the approval of the Divine Judge.**
- V. 8 – “devout” – **Devotion to holiness of life, faithfulness in doing what God has asked, a commitment to becoming more like Christ in daily life and conduct, disciplined in actively pursuing godliness.**
- V. 8 – “self-controlled” – **Disciplined. Having one’s passions, appetites, impulses and desires in check. Having control over things such as eating, sexual habits, use of time, use of the tongue, attitudes, and every other facet of life.**
- V. 9 – “holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with sound teaching” (1 Tim. 3:2) – **They cling to God’s faithful Word which lines up with sound teaching. A man of the Word who has sound doctrine and is able to teach, reprove, rebuke, exhort, correct and refute those who misrepresent the truth.**
- V. 9 – What does Paul say is the purpose for this last qualification? **“so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.”**

What does Paul mean by this last statement? “Exhort” means “beseech, invoke, entreat, admonish” using “sound doctrine,” meaning the Word of God rightly interpreted. He must also be to “refute” (prove to be wrong) those who contradict sound doctrine or are teaching contrary to sound doctrine in an attempt to deceive God’s children.

Application (answers will vary!)

- Do these qualifications apply only to elders or do they apply to all Christians? **All these characteristics *must be* the normal pattern demonstrated in the life of every man appointed to the office of elder. Not to say he holds them perfectly for no one would be an elder. Re other believers, most yes, but maybe in different degrees. Ie., while everyone is obligated to share the gospel with others (a kind of teaching), not every believer is called to be able to teach, especially in the same settings as elders. Just about every other qualification can fall under the admonition to love God and love others, but again, it may look differently how an elder lives this out in the context of leading the local church.**
- Why do you think these qualifications are so stringent and precise? **Elders are the means God has chosen for His church to be led here on earth. Elders represent God and His Son to the world in leading the church.**

- What problems could arise if a church doesn't take great care to make sure their elders are Biblically qualified? **The holiness of the church is at stake.**

- Do you believe your church takes these qualifications for eldership seriously?

Hope so!

- Do you see these qualifications in your elders at FBCW?

Hope so!

- What do you know about the process your church uses for choosing elders?
 - Current elders are always looking for qualified men to lead or men who they believe can become qualified and who may desire the work of an elder.
 - A potential candidate is talked to, to see if he has this desire.
 - They are given an elder packet which is the process for them and us to evaluate if they are qualified.
 - We lead them through a study of what it means to be an elder.
 - A candidate is encouraged to attend elder mtgs.
 - Elders bring candidate before the church body to share their testimony including their desire to be an elder.
 - Congregation given a couple of weeks to come forward privately to elders with any reason the candidate is NOT Biblically qualified.
 - Candidate is affirmed by the congregation.
 - Elders serve for an indefinite period of time, as long as they remain qualified and desire the work.