

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. Tonight we have the privilege of looking once again at Paul's letter to Titus.
2. If you have your Bible, and I trust that you do, please turn with me to Titus chapter 1 as we look this evening at verses 6-9.
3. In our last time together we looked at verse 5 and the first part of verse 6.
4. Let's begin reading at verse 5 again so that we have the entire context.
5. Read Titus 1:5-9.
6. After hundreds of years, a model preacher has been found to suit everyone. He preaches exactly 20 minutes and then sits down. He condemns sin, but never hurts anyone's feelings.

He works from 8 a. m. to 10 p. m. in every type of work from preaching to custodial service. He gives \$60 a week to the church. He also stands ready to contribute to every good work that comes along.

He is 26-years-old and has been preaching for 30 years. He is tall and short, thin, heavysset, and handsome. He has one brown eye and one blue, hair parted down the middle, left side dark and straight, the right brown and wavy.

He has a burning desire to work with teenagers, and spends all his time with older folks. He smiles all the time with a

straight face because he has a sense of humor that keeps him seriously dedicated to his work.

He makes 15 calls a day on church members, spends all his time evangelizing the unchurched, and is never out of his office.<sup>1</sup>

7. Everyone has in their mind what a pastor is to be.
8. But Paul defines for us what God expects.
9. As we saw last time in Titus' appointment of elders, they are to be men whose public reputation is above reproach and whose sexual morality is a fidelity to one woman who is his wife.
10. Tonight we are looking at two of the last 3 qualifications Paul gives of elders that occur in verses 6-7.
11. If you will notice the end of verse 6, Paul now gives the qualification of *family leadership*.
12. He says, "Having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion."

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Lee Tan, *Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations : A Treasury of Illustrations, Anecdotes, Facts and Quotations for Pastors, Teachers and Christian Workers* (Garland TX: Bible Communications, 1996, c1979).

**I. The Appointment of Elders (v.5)**  
**II. The Qualifications of Elders (vv.6-9)**

- A. Public Reputation (v.6a)
- B. Sexual Morality (v.6b)
- C. Family Leadership (v.6c)

An elder is to have his home in order. A man who cannot spiritually and morally lead his own family is not qualified to lead an entire congregation.<sup>2</sup>

As we look at the second half of verse 6, we learn that elders must have *tekna pista*, which means either “children who believe” (NASB) or “faithful children” (NKJV), depending on how it is translated.

The disagreement concerns the adjective *pistos* and whether it should be rendered “believing” or “faithful.” In the end, the bottom line is this: Is the requirement of Titus 1:6b that the children *possess saving faith* (“believing”) or that they are *obedient to their father* (“faithful”)?

The word translated “believing” (*pistos*) “in the active sense means believing, trusting; in the passive sense, trusty, faithful, trustworthy.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 28.

<sup>3</sup>W.E. Vine and F.F. Bruce, *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (Old Tappan NJ: Revell, 1981; Published in electronic form by Logos Research Systems, 1996). 2:117.

The AV translates it in the passive as “faithful” while the NASB, NIV and ESV translates it in the active as “believing.”

I looked at 32 commentaries to see how they translated this word in verse 6 and all 32 translated it in the active voice as “believing.”

John MacArthur says, “Some commentators believe that Paul is using only the passive sense here and is simply referring to **children** who are well behaved, who can be trusted to do what is right and are faithful to their parents.

In the New Testament *pistos* is used passively of God’s faithfulness (see, e.g., 1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18), of Christ’s faithfulness (see, e.g., 2 Thess. 3:3; Heb. 2:17; 3:2), of the faithfulness, or trustworthiness, of God’s words (see, e.g., Acts 13:34; 1 Tim. 1:15; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 1:9; 3:8). It is also used passively many times of people in general. But it is significant that, except for this sometimes disputed text (Titus 1:6), it always is used of people whom the context clearly identifies as believers (see, e.g., Matt. 25:21, 23; Acts 16:15; 1 Cor. 4:2, 17; Eph. 6:21; Col. 1:7; 4:7; Rev. 2:10, 13; 17:14). Unbelievers are never referred to as faithful. That fact alone argues strongly for the rendering here of **children who believe**, that is, who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 29.

Just as there were 32 commentators who took the view of believing children, there are also many who take the view of faithful children.

For example, John Gill, who translates this in the passive says, “By faithful children cannot be meant converted ones, or true believers in Christ; for it is not in the power of men to make their children such; and their not being so can never be an objection to their being elders, if otherwise qualified; at most the phrase can only intend, that they should be brought up in the faith, in the principles, doctrines, and ways of Christianity, or in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”<sup>5</sup>

Others who also reject the idea of this being translated in the active as “believing children” say, “Only God can lead a person to salvation. Godly parents cannot force their children into the faith.”<sup>6</sup>

George Knight says, “An overseer, both here and in 1 Tim. 3, is evaluated on the basis of his control of his children and their conduct (not their salvation).”<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> John Gill, John Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible.

<sup>6</sup> William MacDonald, *The Letter to Titus*. Kansas City, KS: Walterick Publishers, 1974.

<sup>7</sup> George Knight III, *The New International Greek Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.

Justin Taylor, in his article *Unbelief in an Elder's Children*, gives four arguments for interpreting this adjective as “faithful” rather than “believing” children.

He says, “First, the grounding question of 1 Timothy 3:5 explicitly connects the elder’s qualifications with his managerial skills in verse 4. Generally obedient behavior does not require miraculous intervention; even a good lab technician can make a rat follow a certain path if enough planning and forethought is invested. Salvific faith, however, cannot be produced as a result of good housekeeping. While a godly home is often conducive to belief, it does not produce it. If we insist that a child’s salvation is fundamentally connected to the managerial skills of the father, we have inadvertently assigned an unbiblical role to human action. This is clearly the case with an application drawn by Stott: “An extension of the same principle may be that presbyter-bishops can hardly be expected to win strangers to Christ if they have failed to win those who are most exposed to their influence, their own children.”[8] What would this mean? If you are a good manager at your home, then unbelievers can be “expected” to come to the Lord through your ministry?

Second, even the best pastoral managers have unbelievers within their church or under their sphere of influence (cf. Gal. 1:6!). The logical consequent of this would mean that one can manage the larger household (his church) well, even though not everyone in it is a believer. If this is so, then it seems that one can manage the smaller household (his family) well, even though not all within it believe.

Third, insisting that having believing children is a prerequisite to eldership leads to some uncomfortable questions. What do we make of an elder who has a number of believing children—but one who is not? If most of his children *are* believers, is he not a good manager of his household? Or, does the one unbelieving child call into question his overall managerial ability? If it does, then why did any of his children turn out to be believers? Wilson writes: ". . . a man might decide (and, I think, should decide) to step down if one of his six children denies the faith. But if another pastor in his presbytery in the same situation does not decide to do so, and his other five children are saintly, only a crank would express his disagreement through a big church fight." [9] Yet this seems inconsistent; for if Paul truly teaches that unbelieving children automatically disqualify a man for eldership, then the purity of the elder board *is* worth fighting over.

Fourth, all of the requirements for eldership that are listed in this passage (being married once, being temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, a good teacher, not a drunkard, not a lover of money, and not a recent convert) are actions of personal responsibility. We would expect the requirement regarding his children to be in the same category. Requiring that his children have genuine saving faith is to require personal responsibility for the salvation of another, something I don't see taught in Scripture."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Justin Taylor, *Unbelief in An Elder's Children – Exegesis* (Article posted by 9Marks ministry at

I think these are strong arguments for consideration.

For years I have interpreted this as “believing children.” Having reexamined this, I believe Paul is referring to the general submission and behavior of the elder’s children not their salvation.

Alexander Strauss says, “What is at stake is the children’s behavior, not their eternal state.

To say this passage means believing Christian children places an impossible standard upon a father. Salvation is a supernatural act of God. God, not good parents (although they are used of God), ultimately brings salvation (John 1:12, 13).

While the characterization of a prospective elder’s children as faithful does not mean they must be believers, it implies that they must be responsible and faithful family members. This requirement is similar to that of 1 Timothy 3:4,5, where an elder’s children are expected to be submissive and under his control. Here, though, the qualification is stated in a more positive way—the elder must have children who are loyal and dutiful, good citizens, or—as we might say today—responsible children.”<sup>9</sup>

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[http://www.9marks.org/partner/Article\\_Display\\_Page/0,,PTID314526%7CCHID598014%7CCID2301462,00.html](http://www.9marks.org/partner/Article_Display_Page/0,,PTID314526%7CCHID598014%7CCID2301462,00.html)

<sup>9</sup>Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*, revised & expanded (Littleton, Col.: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 1995), 229, 174.



Paul, therefore, is requiring Titus to look at his *family leadership* BEFORE he appoints him as an elder.

So Paul is saying...

1. He is to have faithful children

Matt Waymeyer, in his blog *Expository Thoughts*, makes this observation when he says, “The translation “faithful” seems to be more consistent with the context, for every other qualification in Titus 1:5-9 involves an issue of the elder’s personal responsibility before God.

According to this passage, an elder has a responsibility to be a one-woman man, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, and self controlled. But is he responsible before God to make sure his children are regenerate? Put another way, it makes good sense that an elder is to be “above reproach” in these other areas of life, but how exactly is he to be above reproach in the area of making sure his children possess saving faith?”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Matt Waymeyer, “Children who Believe” in Titus 1:6 (Part 2). Posted February 28, 2007 at <http://expositorythoughts.wordpress.com/2007/02/28/children-who-believe-in-titus-16-part-2>.

The word “children” (teknon) refers to “a child, male or female, son or daughter”<sup>11</sup> “without reference to age.”<sup>12</sup> Paul just used this word in verse 4 to refer to Titus who was a grown man.

It is obvious that he is referring to children who are still under the authority of their parents.

Verse 6 continues by also saying...

2. He is to have submissive children

In contrast to faithful children, an elder must not have children who are “accused of dissipation or rebellion.”

a) They are not to be “accused of dissipation”

The word “dissipation” (asotia) refers to “riot” (AV), “excess” (Eph.5:18), “debauchery” (Kittel). It refers to “an abandoned, dissolute life” (Wuest) “riotous living” (Vine) or “wild, immoral living” (Strauss).

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<sup>11</sup>Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000, c1992, c1993). G5043.

<sup>12</sup>Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains*, electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York: United Bible societies, 1996, c1989). 1:115.

Nigel Turner describes dissipation this way:  
“It is more than wastefulness, worse than prodigality, and nothing short of immoral debauchery and excessive lewdness.”

In other words, his children are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.<sup>13</sup>

- 1) Peter uses this word in **1 Peter 4:3-4 (NASB)** and describes dissipation as sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. He says,<sup>3</sup> For the time already past is sufficient *for you* to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. <sup>4</sup> In *all* this, they are surprised that you do not run with *them* into the same excesses of **dissipation** (asotia), and they malign *you*.
  - 2) Jesus uses this word to describe the prodigal son in Luke 15:13 (NASB) who “went on a journey into a distant country, and there he squandered his estate with **loose** (asotia) living.”
- b) They are not accused of “rebellion”

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<sup>13</sup>John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary : An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-c1985). 2:762.

This is “insubordination” (anupotaktos), that is, “not subject to rule” (Vine), “disobedient, rebellious” (BADG) or “personal unruliness, refusal to recognize or submit to proper authority, of parents or of society.”<sup>14</sup>

Alexander Strauss says, “Such children not only bring disgrace and shame upon their father, as Eli’s children did (1 Samuel 2-3), but bring disqualification from leadership upon him. An elder must be a model father. Wild and disobedient children are a bad reflection on the home, especially on the father’s lack of discipline and inability to guide others. If one who aspires to eldership lacks such ability, he will never be able to manage God’s family.”<sup>15</sup>

Inability to train and govern a family creates a presumption of inability to train and govern the church (Harvey, quoted by D. Edmond Hiebert, Titus, 32).

#### D. General Character (vv.7-8)

Paul continues in verse 7-8 with general character qualifications: 5 negative and 6 positive.

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<sup>14</sup>John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 30.

<sup>15</sup> Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*, revised & expanded (Littleton, Col.: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 1995), 174.

“For the overseer” (episkopos), sometimes translated “bishop” but “refers literally to one who sees, or watches, over others” (MacArthur).

In ancient Greek culture the word was often used of pagan gods, who supposedly watched over worshippers and over their nations. It also was used of human priests who represented a deity. Paul uses the term to emphasize the leadership responsibilities that pastors are to fulfill.<sup>16</sup>

“Above reproach” same as verse 6 refers to being “irreproachable” (BADG), “without indictment, unchargeable” (Rienecker).

“As God’s steward” (oikonomos). The word refers to “a manager of a household, a superintendent” (Wuest).

Craig Keener says, “‘Stewards’ were household managers, often slaves or freedmen, accountable to the master for how they handled his property; this term fits particularly well the image of leaders of household churches.”<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>John MacArthur, *Titus* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996). 33.

freedmen **Freedperson.** A former slave who had been manumitted, legally freed.

<sup>17</sup>Craig S. Keener and InterVarsity Press, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary : New Testament* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993). Tit 1:7.

**1 Timothy 3:15 (NASB)** <sup>15</sup> but in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

An elder is a manager of God's church which is "the household of God."

Now Paul gives 5 negative characteristics of...

1. What an elder must not be (v.7)

He says, "not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain."

- a) "Not self-willed" (authade) means, "self-pleasing" (Strong), "obstinate in one's own opinion, arrogant, refusing to listen to others" (Rienecker).

This is "an arrogant self-interest that asserts its own will with utter disregard for how others might be affected" (MacArthur).

Alexander Strauss says, "He is stubborn, arrogant, and inconsiderate of others' opinions, feelings, and desires. A self-willed man is headstrong, independent, self-assertive, and ungracious toward those of a different opinion. A self-willed person is not a team player, which in the shared leadership of the eldership will cause much contention and division. Furthermore, a self-willed man will

scatter the sheep because he is unyielding, overbearing, and blind to others' feelings and opinions. Such a man must not be permitted to be an elder."<sup>18</sup>

2 Peter 2:10 refers to false teachers as those who are "self-willed."

- b) "Not quick-tempered" (orgilos), "does not refer to occasional outbursts, but to a propensity to anger" (MacArthur).

This is one who is "easily flaring up in anger; not having his temper under control" (Hiebert).

1) **Proverbs 14:17 (NASB)** <sup>17</sup> A quick-tempered man acts foolishly, And a man of evil devices is hated.

2) **Proverbs 29:22 (NASB)** <sup>22</sup> An angry man stirs up strife, And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.

- c) "Not addicted to wine" (paroinos), refers to "one who drinks" (Rienecker) or literally "to be continually alongside, or in the presence of, wine" (MacArthur).

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<sup>18</sup> Alexander Strauch, *Biblical Eldership: An Urgent Call to Restore Biblical Church Leadership*, revised & expanded (Littleton, Col.: Lewis & Roth Publishers, 1995), 175-76.

The issue here is the man's reputation. An elder is not one who associates himself with the bars, taverns, and inns, nor is he at home in the noisy scenes associated with drinking.

Paul says in **1 Timothy 3:3 (NASB)**<sup>3</sup> not addicted to wine.

- d) "Not pugnacious" (Plektes). This is translated "not violent" in the AV and means "a giver of blows" or "a striker."

This word "can refer to verbal as well as physical fighting and quarreling" (MacArthur).

"Because a pugnacious man will strike the sheep rather than gently leading them, he cannot be one of Christ's undershepherds. God only allows those he knows will be gentle to lead His sheep through the stresses of congregational life" (Strauss).

- 1) Paul told Timothy in **2 Timothy 2:24-25 (NASB)**<sup>24</sup> The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,<sup>25</sup> with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth.
- 2) He told the Romans in Romans 12:18 to "be at peace with all men."



- e) “Not fond of sordid gain” or as the AV states it “Not greedy for money” (aphilapguros). It means, “lover of money” (MacArthur).

1 Timothy 3:3 says, “free from the love of money.”

William MacDonald says, “It is true, as Samuel Johnson said, that “the lust of gold, unfeeling and remorseless, is the last corruption of degenerate man.” A true elder can say with Paul: “I have coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel” (Acts 20:33).”<sup>19</sup>

Richard Greenham gives this sage advice regarding riches. He says, “Poverty hath slain a thousand, but riches have slain ten thousand. They are very uncertain, they promise that which they cannot perform, neither can they afford a contented mind.”<sup>20</sup>

## **CONCLUSION**

1. There are 6 positive character qualifications found in verse 8 that we will consider next time.

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<sup>19</sup>William MacDonald and Arthur Farstad, *Believer's Bible Commentary : Old and New Testaments* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1995). Tit 1:7.

<sup>20</sup>I.D.E. Thomas, *The Golden Treasury of Puritan Quotations*, electronic ed. (Simpsonville SC: Christian Classics Foundation, 1996).

2. As you listen to qualification for elders in the church, they should impact you in two ways.
3. First they should cause you to see the high standard given for those who lead Christ's church.
4. And second they should cause you to ask yourself, "Am I this kind of person."
5. Elders are to model their lives before the congregation.
6. Paul told Timothy in **1 Timothy 4:12 (NASB)** <sup>12</sup> Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but *rather* in speech, conduct, love, faith *and* purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.
7. You are to be what elders model before you.
8. Examine yourself tonight as we pray.
9. Let's pray.