

Qualifications for Church Leadership

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-13

(18)

1 TIMOTHY: DUTIES AND ORDER IN THE CHURCH, 1 Timothy 2:1-3:13

The Overseers of the Church, 1 Timothy 3:1-7

(1 Timothy 3:1-7) **Introduction:** the office of *bishop* is probably the same office as elder or presbyter or minister in the New Testament. All three words refer to the same person, to the minister of the gospel and of the church.

- 1) What are the qualifications of the minister?
- 2) Who should be preaching the gospel and filling the pulpits of the Lord's church?
- 3) Who should be considering the ministry—what kind of person?

Before discussing the individual qualifications against which all pastors are to be measured, however, Paul gives some helpful insight into the call to spiritual leadership.

1. The office of minister or bishop (v.1).
2. Personal qualifications (v.2-3).
3. Family qualifications: the minister or bishop must rule his own home (v.4-5).
4. Spiritual qualifications (v.6).
5. Community qualifications (v.7).

2. (1 Timothy 3:2-3) Minister— Bishop— Elder: the minister or bishop of God must be qualified; he must meet some personal qualifications; he must be a person of great Christian character.

1 Timothy 3:2-3 (NASB)

²An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

The Moral Character of a Godly Leader (continuation)

4. The minister or bishop must be “sober” (*sōphrona*): be sober-minded, that is, to have a mind that is sound, sensible, controlled, disciplined, and chaste—a mind that has complete control over all sensual desires.

1 Timothy 3:2 (NASB)

²An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

Fourth, an overseer must be **respectable**. *Kosmios* (**respectable**) carries the idea of “**orderly**.” A man **prudent** in mind will have a **respectable**, or orderly life. His well-disciplined mind leads to a well-disciplined life.

“The ministry is no place for the man whose life is a continual confusion of unaccomplished plans and unorganized activities” (Homer A. Kent, Jr., *The Pastoral Epistles* [Winona Lake, Ind.: BMH Books, 1982], 127).

Please note, the word *kosmos*, from which *kosmios* derives, is the opposite of “**chaos**.” A spiritual leader must not have a chaotic, but an orderly lifestyle. If he cannot order his own life, how can he bring order to the church (v. 5)?

1 Timothy 3:5 (NASB)

⁵ (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?),

Note: if the mind is controlled, a person’s whole life—his body and behavior—is controlled. He lives a sober life. (1 Thessalonians 5:6-8; 1 Timothy 3:2; 1 Timothy 3:11; Titus 1:8; Titus 2:2; Titus 2:5; Titus 2:11-13; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 4:7)

5. The minister or bishop must be of “**good behavior**” (*kosmion*): well-behaved, orderly, composed, solid, and honest.

1 Timothy 3:2 (NASB)

² An overseer (bishop), then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate (sober, self-controlled), prudent, respectable (of good behavior), hospitable, able to teach,

It is a person who has good conduct, whose character and behavior stands as the ideal and pattern for others.

1 Corinthians 13:5 (NASB)

⁵ [Love] does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong *suffered*,

Philippians 1:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ So that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;

2 Thessalonians 3:6-7 (NASB)

⁶ Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.

⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you,

Titus 2:3 (NASB)

³ Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,