

Qualifications for Church Leadership

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-13 (23)

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 3:3 (NASB)

³Not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money.

The Moral Character of a Godly Leader (continuation)

9. The minister or bishop must not be a “striker” (*mē plēktēn*): **not combative or violent, not contentious or quarrelsome, not a person who strikes out and contends with another person.**

The minister must not be a person who strikes other people or who becomes easily *upset, irritated*, or *aggravated* with others. He uses neither hand nor tongue against anyone. On the contrary he is *kind, gentle*, and *longsuffering* with others.

A leader in the church must not be one who reacts to difficulty with physical violence. He must not settle disputes with blows. He must react to situations calmly, coolly, and gently (cf. [2 Timothy 2:24-25](#)).

[2 Timothy 2:24-25 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁴ The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,
²⁵ with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,

Instead of being **pugnacious**, a leader must be **gentle**. *Epieikēs* (gentle) describes the person who is considerate, genial, forbearing, and gracious, who easily pardons human failure. Such a person remembers good, not evil. He does not keep a list of all the wrongs done to him, or hold a grudge. Many men leave the ministry because they can't accept criticism. A leader, when wronged, must have no thought of retaliation.

Uncontentious translates *amachos*, which means “peaceful,” or “reluctant to fight.” It refers not so much to physical violence as to a quarrelsome person. To have a contentious person in leadership will result in *disunity* and *disharmony*, seriously hindering the effectiveness of that leadership team.

Thought 1. Note: the tongue can be used to strike out at a person as easily as the hand or fist. Many a person has been hurt and damaged by the poisonous venom of a striking tongue.

[Philippians 2:3-4 \(NASB\)](#)

³ Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;
⁴ do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

[2 Timothy 2:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴ Remind *them* of these things, and solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless *and leads to the ruin of the hearers*.

[Proverbs 3:30 \(NASB\)](#)

³⁰ Do not contend with a man without cause, If he has done you no harm.

[Proverbs 17:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴ The beginning of strife is *like* letting out water, So abandon the quarrel before it breaks out.

[Proverbs 20:3 \(NASB\)](#)

³ Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.