

# Qualifications for Church Leadership

1 TIMOTHY 3:1-13 (29)

## 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).

### 3. (1 Timothy 3:4-5) **Minister— Bishop— Elder: the minister or bishop must meet one very significant family qualification.**

1 Timothy 3:4-5 (NASB)

<sup>4</sup>***He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all [gravity] dignity***  
<sup>5</sup>***(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?),***

In the home, as in the church, it is God's plan for men to assume the leadership role (cf. 1 Timothy 2:9-15).

1 Timothy 3:4 (NASB)

<sup>4</sup>***He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all [gravity] dignity***

**Well** is from *kalos*, a rich word that could also be translated “**excellently**.” Its meaning can be better understood by comparing it to *agathos*. *Agathos* means “**inherently**,” “**morally**,” or “**practically good**.” *Kalos* takes that a step further and adds the idea of aesthetically good, beautiful, and appealing to the eye. An elder must be one whose leadership in the home is **not only intrinsically good, but also visibly good**.

It is possible for a man to meet the moral qualifications for a pastor, yet be disqualified because of his evident lack of leadership in the home. A man who came to Christ later in life, after his wife and children had established patterns of behavior, and had a home in chaos, could serve the Lord, but not as an elder or a deacon ([1 Timothy 3:12](#)).

**1 Timothy 3:12 (NASB)**

<sup>12</sup> **Deacons must be husbands of *only one wife*, and good managers of *their children and their own households*.**

**Household** includes an elder's family and more, because it reaches to everything connected with the home.

**1 Timothy 3:4 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> ***He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all [gravity] dignity***

He must be a good steward of his house and his finances—all the people and resources over which he has responsibility. Someone, for example, who managed his family well, but mismanaged his money and possessions, would be disqualified.

The man who serves as a pastor must demonstrate that he can lead people to salvation and sanctification because he has done that in his own home—which is a model, a pattern for all homes to follow.

**1 Timothy 3:4 (NASB)**

<sup>4</sup> ***He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all [gravity] dignity*.**

Further, a leader in the church must keep **his children under control with all dignity**. That qualification is not meant to exclude men without children, but merely assumes they will be present. *Hupotagē* (**under control**) is a military term. It speaks of lining up in rank under one in authority.

An elder's children **are to be respectful, well-disciplined, and believers** ([Titus 1:6](#)).

**Titus 1:6 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup> ***Namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion*.**

**Dignity** includes courtesy, humility, and competence. It could be translated “**respect**,” or “**stateliness**.” An elder's children must bring honor to their parents. The obvious implication is that his family is ordered, disciplined, not rebellious, as Paul adds in [Titus 1:6](#), “**not accused of dissipation or rebellion**.” He also demands in that same verse that the elder have “**children who believe**.”

The point is that one given the task of leading men and women to justification, sanctification, and service in the church **must have shown *in the home that he is capable of such leadership***.