

A. Background on Titus

Here is what we know about Titus: He was an uncircumcised Greek (Gal. 2:3) who traveled with Paul to Jerusalem (2:1) and to/from Corinth (2 Cor. 2:13, 7:6, 13, 14, 8:6, 16, 12:18). He was a partner and helper to Paul (2 Cor 8:23) and toward the end of Paul's life, he went to Dalmatia (2 Tim. 4:10) which is east of the Adriatic sea in the area known as Illyricum (Rom. 15:19) around the present day Bosnia area.

B. Background on the Terms Elders, Bishops, Pastors

- When you approach this subject, you need to disabuse your thoughts of the craft that has built up over the years in various church government systems. This includes avoiding the trap of thinking that "bishop" in the KJV is the same as "bishop" in modern parlance (i.e. in the Catholic church) or even in 17th century England (i.e. in the Church of England). Similarly, the term "elder" is not to be confused with the modern 18-20 year old "elders" of the Mormon church.
- We believe that the Bible uses three main terms to describe the one office of pastor in the church. These terms are:
 - presbiteros πρεσβύτερος = elder. This describes the person of the pastor: one who is spiritually mature. Certainly a pastor is not to be a new convert (1 Tim. 3:6). But this does not preclude young men from the office, since Timothy was a young man (1 Tim. 4:12).
 - poimen ποιμήν = shepherd or pastor. This describes the function of the pastor to feed, lead, and guard the flock of God's people.
 - episkopos ἐπίσκοπος = bishop or overseer. This describes another of the functions of the pastor. He is to oversee or administrate the work of the local church. This function is called "ruling" in passages such as 1 Tim. 3:4-5 and Heb. 13:7, 17, 24.
- The passages which use these terms to refer to pastors: Acts 11:30, 14:23, 15:2-6, 22-23, 16:4, **20:17, 28**, 21:18, **Eph. 4:11**, Php. 1:1, **1 Tim. 3:1-2, 5:17-19, Titus 1:5-7**, James 5:14, **1 Peter 5:1-2**. Those in boldface print are particularly helpful in our understanding of what the terms mean.
- The major functions of the pastor include teaching and oversight. There are not two kinds of elders, *ruling* and *teaching*. For instance:
 - 1 Thess. 5:12 pastors are "over you" and "admonish."
 - 1 Tim. 3:2 the bishop must be able to teach.
 - 1 Tim. 3:4-5 the bishop must be able to rule.
 - Titus 1:9 the bishop must grasp sound doctrine so he can exhort, etc.
- The proof of the single nature of the office, that is, that all these terms refer to the same person, is not complicated. For instance, we can see by examining the following passages that this is the case:

Acts 17, 28	elder (v. 17)	= overseer (v. 28)	= shepherd (v. 28)
Titus 1:5, 7	elder (v. 5)	= bishop (v. 7)	
1 Peter 5:1-2	elder (v. 1)	= shepherd (v. 2)	= overseer (v. 2)

Introduction

The majority of the first chapter is given to the qualifications of elders. These can be outlined in three major sections: family qualifications, personal qualifications, and doctrinal qualifications. The last part of the chapter supports the need for solid doctrinal qualifications. These notes will examine the first two: family and personal. But first the actual injunction Paul gives to Titus must be examined.

A. The Directions to Titus (v. 5)

- Set in order. This means to straighten, to correct, or set right. This coupled with the term "the things which are lacking" obviously indicates that there are some

deficiencies in the local assemblies on the island. In fact, in Titus 3:13, one possible deficiency mentioned is the lack of maintenance of good works.

- Appoint. One of the obvious deficiencies in the churches was that they needed pastors! In fact, they were hardly yet churches if they did not have a pastor. This was to be done in every city.

B. Family Qualifications of Pastors (v. 6)

- Blameless. This can also mean irreproachable. That is, no accusation can be laid against him. This is a very general quality and would include that which follows.
- Husband of one wife. Obviously polygamy is ruled out. From a positive perspective, this requirement is for a history of marital faithfulness. I believe that it prohibits divorced men since they have not had a such a history. It does not prohibit remarried widowers nor does it exclude unmarried men from the ministry.
- Faithful children, not riotous or unruly. The point is that if the pastor is not able to manage his own house, then he will not be able to manage the church properly either (1 Tim. 3:4-5). The children should not be dissipated, debauched, incorrigible, insubordinate, undisciplined, disobedient, or rebellious.

C. Personal Qualifications of Pastors (v. 7-8)

- Blameless. The same term is used again. Though quite general, it is obviously important, particularly since the pastor is a "steward of God," meaning that he not only a servant of God but also a manager in his household (Gal. 6:10, Eph. 2:19). This is the only way God's steward should be!
- Not self-willed. This means that the pastor/candidate is not obstinate in one's opinions, arrogant, refusing to listen to others.
- Not quick-tempered. He cannot be inclined to anger as a habit. See James 1:19.
- Not given to wine. Certainly not addicted to wine, but this does not open the door for moderate drinking! The man should not be a drinker. Period.
- Not violent. Not pugnacious, nor one who throws punches. This would go along with being quick-tempered.
- Not greedy for money. Certainly no embezzling. No adapting the teaching to get money. This would come out of a greedy attitude that wants more and more money, even if gained in shady ways. There is no room for shadiness in God's work.
- Hospitable. Caring for those in the church and those outside. This includes lodging, meals, fellowship. Again, the attitude must be proper—one who loves these things and is not burdened by them. The pastor's wife has a major role to play here as well.
- Lover of what is good. I take this term in the neuter sense instead of the masculine. In other words, it is more broad than just loving good men, but the pastor is to be one who devoted to all that is best or excellent (Php. 1:10).
- Sober-minded. This means one who is sane, of sound mind, serious, earnest.
- Just. Upright, righteous. His standing before God is certainly that way, and his practice should match.
- Holy. This means devout, pious, pure.
- Self-controlled. The pastor is one who has mastered his appetites. It, like the term blameless, wraps up a lot of these ideas into one word.

Conclusion

Do you think, "How is this relevant to me? I mean, I am not Titus. I am not a pastor. I am not even called to the pastorate!" I'm glad you asked. Here's how it is relevant: In Titus 2:7 as well as in 1 Tim. 4:12, Titus and Timothy are exhorted to be examples or patterns for the believers. So, if the pastor is an example, then the believers should follow his example. Simply put, the pastor should be a mature Christian. We should all desire to move in *that* direction. Check yourself out and see how you are doing.