

A MODEL OF INTEGRITY

Titus 1:7-8; 1 Timothy 3:2-7

Twisted popular sayings:

“Do as I say, not as I do!”

“Why pray when you can worry?!!”

“Do unto others before they do unto you!”

I learned much from parents and grandparents that *still* affects life.

One saying I heard frequently, I doubt I’ll ever erase from mind:

“What you do speaks so loud I can’t hear what you say!”

People pay more attention to our *lifestyle*,
than our *sermons*!

If we’re going to speak to a world with lots of religion that makes
little impact on life, we have to model a lifestyle

that demonstrates the impact sound doctrine makes!

We’re considering Paul’s instructions to Timothy
about ***building the church according to code***.

INSTRUCTION CONCERNING LEADERSHIP 3:1-13

Requirements for Elders 3:1-7 Structure from Tit. 1

SOUND DOCTRINE MUST BE ADORNED BY LIFESTYLE

Paul tells Titus to **straighten out what’s still crooked**,
by appointing blameless leaders

Leaders people can model lives after.

TESTIMONY REQUIRED OF TRUE LEADERS 1:6-9

It’s good to *want* to be a leader among God’s people 1 Tim. 3:1

It’s not enough just to *want* to be a leader.

God has established prerequisites.

Prerequisite is NOT a spiritual gift, nor even leadership skills

Prerequisite for leader—non-negotiable, indispensable requirement: **CHARACTER—elder must have good reputation.**

Leaders must be blameless;

Not perfect but "without a stain"—no basis for someone who opposes truth to take hold of and reject message.

* ***Blameless with respect to home and family life 1:6***

* ***Blameless with respect to personal character 1:7-8***

* ***Blameless with respect to use of God's Word 1:9***

Comment heard many times: "No one perfectly fulfills what's required, so how DO we apply this passage?!"

I want to set the record straight. I'm convinced every Elder at PVBC fulfills every one of these requirements.

Either our leaders will be the kind of people God requires, or we won't have leaders.

I'm committed to be such a leader, or get out of ministry.

Requirement isn't perfection. It's blamelessness.

Requirement for leader, summarized in a word: **INTEGRITY**

God's people (leaders) should be above reproach in our home and family life 1:6 An elder must be blameless, a one-woman man, whose children are trustworthy, not open to charge of being wild and disobedient.

If people are to follow leaders' into godly lifestyle,

they must see fruit of that lifestyle in our home and family.

GOD'S PEOPLE SHOULD BE ABOVE REPROACH IN OUR PERSONAL ATTITUDES 1:7-8

Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.⁸ Rather he

must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.

3 DESCRIPTIONS of elders in Titus 1:

"Elder"—respected leader due to maturity & experience.

"Overseer"—role of watching over and protecting flock.

"Steward"—*"entrusted with God's work"* (NIV)

Elder isn't OWNER of flock. Flock belongs to God.

He's accountable to Owner for how he tends the flock.

Primary basis of evaluation: **faithfulness**.

Owner entrusts flock, with resources to care for them, to trustworthy servants, responsible to use them wisely.

Steward works for *master's* benefit; NOT personal gain.

He must be **trustworthy** (blameless).

Personal character confirms or denies message we communicate.

"What you do speaks so loud I can't hear what you say!"

NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS WE SHOULD AVOID

1:7 *Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain*

Some people are unpleasant and disagreeable.

Negative traits harm our testimony in the neighborhood.

ALL God's people ought to avoid these; *especially leaders!*

1. **NOT ARROGANT**—*self-willed*; Lit., "pleasing himself"

Considers self better than others *"More spiritual"*

Self-willed person has to have his way.

Right way to do things is *HIS* way!

Can't stand for others to disagree with him

Leaders are tempted to seek to get their own way.

“Consider others better than ourselves and seek what is best for them”—NOT what we like best (Phil. 2:3-4)

2. **NOT ANGRY**—Quick-tempered—short fuse—blows up easily
Quickly loses self-control due to anger with others
Speaks and acts without thinking—hurting people

“Man’s anger doesn’t produce God’s righteousness” **Jas. 1:19-20**

We should be known as patient, self-controlled, forgiving

3. **NOT ADDICTED** to wine (given to drunkenness)
Not addicted to anything that controls our life (Eph. 5:18)
Godly leaders are *controlled by Spirit* (Acts 2:4; 4:31)

Warning isn’t against *ever* taking a drink

Lit., it’s a person known by the drink in his hand.

When a drink is more important than a brother who may be turned away from following us because of it.

4. **NOT ATTACKING**—pugnacious (violent)--prone to "strike"

Some strike with fists, others fight with words

(Jer. 18:18 (LXX) "Let's wound him with the tongue!")

Always fight about something—“beating up on” somebody.

Verbal attack can hurt worse than physical attack!

“Whoever said, ‘Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words can never hurt me!’ didn’t understand human nature.”

5. **NOT AFTER MONEY** *“Pursuing dishonest gain”*

It isn’t the *gain* that’s dishonest.

Lit., ***inappropriate desire for more*** for ME, not for God

Take advantage of people for money—Cretans known for this

Plutarch: *“Cretans stick to money like bees to honey.”*

Godly leaders don’t seek same materialistic goals.

Avoid desire to earn more for our own benefit!

God's Word isn't against wealth. *Desire* for wealth corrupts

Desire for money, things—even power and influence—
take a higher priority than desire to please God.

Godly leaders seek God's glory before *ANYTHING* else.

6. **NOT GREEDY** 1 Tim. 3:3 *"Not a lover of money."*

7. **NOT A RECENT CONVERT** 1 Tim. 3:6 *He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.*

A leader should not be a new Christian,

lest he fall into the devil's trap of vanity and pride.

Mature => *models* faith in God and consistent godly living.

GOD'S PEOPLE SHOULD AVOID NEGATIVE PERSONAL TRAITS THAT OFFEND OTHERS

Stott: Titus' 5 negatives => areas which show what happens when **flesh controls**: pride, temper, drink, power, money

Ask God to produce change needed in your life.

POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS WE SHOULD IMITATE

1:8 *Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.*

Positive traits show what we look like when the **Spirit controls**!

Godly living *doesn't* consist of rules to obey—NOT legalistic.

Character transformation conforms us to the image of God
—attitudes that please God.

Fruit of the Spirit vs. "fruit" of the flesh Gal. 5:22-23

1. **BE HOSPITABLE** *"love strangers, foreigners"*

Enjoys having guests in the house

NOT making guests *feel* at home when you wish they were!

NOT having company tonight that invites us next week.
Instead of seeking more for self; **seeks best for others.**

–opening home and heart to others

–willing to share what God has given with others.

Lit., "*lover of the foreigner*" or "*lover of strangers*"

"*Lover of ...*" Defines controlling desire –what we live for

–dominant mindset controls way of thinking

* Some are *lovers of money* 1 Tim. 3:3; 2 Tim. 3:2

* Some are *lovers of pleasure* 2 Tim 3:4

* Some are *lovers of self* 2 Tim. 3:2

* Some are *lovers of their spouse* Tit. 2:4

Leaders should be

* **Lovers of strangers** * **Lovers of what's good**

In contrast to people who live for self, pleasure, or money, we should live for others.

Focus on attitude, NOT action.

Godly people *desire* to help others. It comes from the heart.

What's my attitude about my things? Do I want to share?

2. **LOVE WHAT IS GOOD**

Another *attitude–desire* for what's right and pleasing to God

NOT legalistic obedience to rules

Opposite found in 2 Tim. 3:3: "*haters of what's good.*"

3. **BE SENSIBLE** "*self-controlled*"; "*live wisely*"

SEE THINGS FROM GOD'S PERSPECTIVE **Rom. 12:3**

Basic idea: ***discernment***.

Doesn't focus on circumstances, but on God's plan.

Doesn't evaluate people on external appearance,
but on heart condition—as God does.

For leaders there's **no more important characteristic than ability to understand God's perspective.**

4. **BE JUST (*Upright*)—Proper relationship with other people.**
Last 3 go together--describe *one who does what is right*.

First: Do what's right *regarding others*.

Just person obeys laws; treats others well. [Ex. **Daniel**]

5. **BE HOLY –devout—Proper relationship with God**

Does what's right *in relation to God*

Focuses on God's standards: “*You be holy; for I am holy.*”

6. **BE SELF-CONTROLLED—proper relationship with self**

Does what's right *in relation to self*.

Controls desires—uses them for God's glory.

Self-disciplined person.

Paul compares godly life to preparation for a race.

Those who run submit to training, strict control of life

They make their body their slave to win the prize.

7. **Be temperate 1 Tim. 3:2** Calm, careful, stable,
 Alert to temptations Satan leaves as traps in our path.

8. **Be respectable 1 Tim. 3:2**

Demonstrate moral excellence and orderly conduct.

Live in an attractive way before people watching.

9. **Be teachable “Able to teach” 1 Tim. 3:2**

Combines ideas of ability and teaching.

What it doesn't define is whether it's dealing with person who receives teaching, or who presents teaching.

Commentators suppose elder must communicate biblical truth to others—affirmed in Tit. 1:9.

*This trait is found in list of *character* traits; not abilities.*

Teachable; willing to listen and learn from others.

10. Be gentle 1 Tim. 3:3

Demonstrates kindness, friendliness, interest in others
Gentle, patient, flexible.

11. Be peaceful (not quarrelsome) 1 Tim. 3:3

More than not being quarrelsome yourself.

Knows how to calm conflict and quarrels of others.

Promotes peace, as opposed to stirring up trouble.

12. Have a good reputation with outsiders 1 Tim. 3:7

*He must also have a good reputation with outsiders,
so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.*

Others think well of him; even people who don't know Christ.

Is he respected in the community?

**GOD'S PEOPLE SHOULD IMITATE POSITIVE
CHARACTER TRAITS THAT ATTRACT OTHERS**

People in pews and on street struggle with these issues.

Godly example demonstrates not that we deserve God's grace,
but that He lives in us.

**GOD'S PEOPLE SHOULD BE KNOWN
FOR INTEGRITY AND GODLY LIVING**

How about asking God for His power to overcome weakness?

Bob Moeller: **3 KEYS** to reaching people today:

1. Preach and model unselfishness.

Modern neurosis: preoccupation with self.

When self is all you care about, self is all you're left with.

2. Preach and model commitment.

3. Preach and model holiness.

Moeller's counsel **sounds like Paul's counsel to Titus.**

I'm struck with two things about his analysis:

1. He *brings together our practice and our preaching.*

We have to model what we preach!

2. *2 keys straight out of Titus: unselfishness and holiness.*

The Message: *"It's important that a church leader, responsible for the affairs in God's house, be looked up to—not pushy, not short-tempered, not a drunk, not a bully, not money-hungry. He must welcome people, be helpful, wise, fair, reverent, have a good grip on himself. . . ."*

That's what godly people—leaders especially—ought to look like!

What do our neighbors see when they look at us?

What do our kids see?

If we're going to reach this generation

we have to PRACTICE WHAT WE PREACH!

we have to MODEL INTEGRITY!

"What you do speaks so loud I can't hear what you say!"