



QUALITIES REQUIRED IN CHURCH LEADERS

People do not usually rise above their leaders! The character and effectiveness of any church is directly related to the quality of its leadership. Failure to adhere to biblical standards for leadership has caused many of the problems in the church today.

Paul is writing to Timothy, a young pastor at the church of Ephesus because men who were unqualified had found their way into church leadership (1:3, 4:1-3). Some were women (2:12) others were guilty of sin and needed public rebuke (5:20). (Acts 20:29-30)

The qualifications for church leadership deal with character, not gifts and abilities. Someone has said that “Character is what you are when no one is looking.”

God does not have a double standard; He requires all disciples to live blameless lives. For a pastor or deacon to fail to live blameless means he is not qualified to serve in the office.

In our previous study in First Timothy chapter three we have seen that:

CHURCH LEADERS MUST HAVE BLAMELESS CHARACTER (2-3, I Co. 9:27)

You can read the eleven character qualities mentioned in verses 2 to 3. Today we want to begin with verse four:

CHURCH LEADERS MUST HAVE A BLAMELESS FAMILY LIFE (4-5,11-12)

His leadership in the family (4)

He is to manage his home. “Rule” means to preside over, rule, manage. There are shared responsibilities in the home, but the man is the leader. (Eph. 5:25)

He is to manage his home WELL! He is to manage his home excellently, beautifully; “well” means something that is appealing to the eye. There are men who rule their home, but they don't rule it very well - they don't achieve the desired result.

He is a good ruler of his family (Eph. 6:4). His children are submissive = military term, to line up in rank under order. His children are respectful - they are reverent, controlled, and disciplined.

Father's we must not provoke our children to wrath!

- Bring them up - speaks of tender involvement of the Father in the life of his children.
- Discipline or training. *Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it. Prov 22:6 He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly. Prov. 13:24*
- Instruction - to verbally instruct our children. One way we train our children in the things of God is to lead our family in family devotions. There are many good resources that you can use to share the Word with your family.

His wife is a godly example (11, Eph. 5:22-24)

It is possible that a man who is qualified for spiritual leadership can be disqualified on the family level.

His leadership in the church (5)

The sphere of his rule - “church of God;” the local assembly. The nature of his rule - “care” - sacrificial giving on behalf of others (Good Samaritan, Lk. 10:30-34).

CHURCH LEADERS MUST BE BLAMELESS IN SPIRITUAL MATURITY (6,10)

Those who are placed into church leadership must now be new converts; “Not a novice.”

He must be humble. Humility is to be ranked below others who are honored or rewarded. To have a modest opinion of oneself. He would never campaign for the position, and is filled with holy fear the thought of serving as leader in the church.

He must not be a new convert but rather he must be spiritually mature.

The reasons is to avoid pride. Pride is to be puffed up and is deadly.

To avoid condemnation. Lucifer was disqualified from service and cast out because of pride. (Ezk. 28:14-17; Is. 14:12-14) See: Diotrophes (3 Jn. 9)

CHURCH LEADERS MUST HAVE A BLAMELESS PUBLIC REPUTATION (7.10,11)

The quality of his reputation - Good

A leaders must have good internal character and good external reputation. Testimony is the report, the testimony of other people.

Evaluation of his reputation - Outside

This is the reputation he has out in the community, not among those in the church. He has a reputation for integrity, love, kindness, generosity and goodness among those in the community who know him.

He is seen as a man of character. Does not take or offer bribes. Does not lie or misrepresent the truth to get what he wants or to escape unpleasant consequences.

Consequence of his reputation - Reproach

Disgrace (Ro. 2:24; Phil. 2:15). A spiritual leader should not be embarrassed at what might be found if someone were to interview his associates. Failure to have a blameless public reputation leaves the leader with potential for entrapment, Paul refers to this as the snare of the devil” (I Pt. 5:8).

So there we have it...

The Ephesian church needed to examine her leaders in the light of biblical qualifications. We too must examine our leaders in the light of these same qualifications. Church leadership is not a popularity contest, it is not for those who have physical and mental giftedness but who lack Christian character.

God has identified the moral character, family life, maturity, and reputation He requires of church leaders. The future of any church depends upon the quality of its leaders. Everything rises and falls on leadership!

God does not have a double standard - one for leaders and one for other believers. These qualifications apply to EVERY believer. However in leaders it is crucial.

The congregation will learn only what they see modeled in their leadership. IT MUST BEGIN WITH THE LEADERS!