



The Eldership

Qualifications:

Not a New Convert

Loving what is Good, Devout

Good Reputation Without

Faithful Wife

Not a New Convert

1 Tim. 3:6

- **1 Timothy 3:6** – “and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil”
- **Translations:**
 - NASB, ESV, NET, NIV – Not a new/recent convert
 - NKJV – Not a novice
- **Defined:** (*neóphutos*) **Thayer/Vine** – lit., newly-planted, (figuratively) denotes a new convert, (“neophyte”) novice; **Strong** – a young convert; **BDAG** – newly converted
- Time and effort are needed before taking on this position – Heb. 5:12-14

Not a New Convert

- Application

- One **new to the faith** is not be appointed as an elder no matter how old he might be.
- He is subject to blinding pride and falling into the condemnation faced by the devil.
 - One tends to become arrogant when given responsibility or power beyond one's maturity.
 - This pride will lead him away from the Lord – 1 Jn. 2:16

Loving what is Good, Devout

Titus 1:8

- **Titus 1:8** – “...hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, **devout**, self-controlled”
- **Translations:**
 - ESV – lover of good...holy
 - NET – devoted to what is good...devout
 - NIV, HCSB – loves [ing] what is good...holy
 - NKJV – lover of what is good...holy
- **Defined:**
 - Loving what is good – (*philagothos*) **Strong** – fond of good, that is, a promoter of virtue; **Vine, BDAG, Thayer** – loving that which is good[ness]
 - Devout – (*hosios*) **BDAG** – right, to be devout, pious, pleasing to God, holy; **Thayer** – undefiled by sin, free from wickedness; **Strong** – right; **Vine** – religiously right, holy

Loving what is Good, Devout

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Application

- He must have not only his **outer** but also his **inner** life in line with God's will – Matt. 23:25-28
- Lack of these qualities will hinder his dealings with moral issues.
- Holiness and righteousness is required of shepherds because without it the flock will not be holy and righteous.

Good Reputation with those Outside

1 Timothy 3:7

- **1 Timothy 3:7** – “And he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”
- **Translations:**
 - ESV - must be **well thought of** by outsiders
 - HCSB – must have a **good reputation** among outsiders
 - NET – must be **well thought of** by those **outside the faith**
 - NIV – must also have a **good reputation** with outsiders
 - NKJV – must have a **good testimony** among those who are **outside**
- **Defined:**
 - Reputation (*marturian*) what one testifies, testimony in court, attestation of character or behavior, testimony concerning one’s character – ***BDAG, Thayer***
 - Good (*kalēn*) virtuous, honest, worthy; (2) morally good, noble, praiseworthy, excellent, beautiful – ***Vine; Strong; Thayer; BDAG***

Good Reputation with those Outside - Application

- Must have lived (for a notable time) a morally good, noble, honest live before all – 1 Pet. 2:11-12
 - Important because local church has a public presence with the community established by its members and leaders.
 - The world tends to judge a church by its leaders. So, elders must not give Satan and the world “ammunition.”
- This is important so that “he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”
 - An elder with a bad reputation offers the chance for reproach to surface against him and, therefore, the church.
 - Such a man will like become a tool in the hands of Satan to use against Christ and his people.

Must have Faithful Wives

1 Tim. 3:1

- **1 Timothy 3:11** – “Their wives likewise must be dignified, not slanderers, but sober-minded, faithful in all things.”
- Why apply this when it is found among deacon qualifications?
 - Given parenthetically in the context of qualification of both elders and deacons
 - There is no qualification imposed on deacons that is not required of elders
 - Why would deacons’ wives’ character be specified but not that of the elders?

Elders' Wives

1 Tim. 3:1

- Must be dignified, not malicious gossips, temperate, faithful in all things
 - Dignified: (*semnos*) **Thayer** – venerable, honorable, grave, honest; **BDAG** – worthy of respect or honor, noble, dignified
 - She must be serious about life and character, seeking to live honorably and respectably.
- Application:
 - An elder cannot be effective with a wife who is a constant distraction and source of criticism
 - Ladies/wives, you need to be preparing your life
 - Men need to be wise in choosing a wife

Closing Thoughts

- Though we might be tempted to believe no one could meet these qualifications, that would be wrong – Acts 14:23
- To appoint elders is to appoint overseers, shepherds, rulers, leaders – Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-3
 - Elders are given authority over God's sheep to direct and protect them – Heb. 13:17
 - We are to submit to the eldership's decisions.
 - Elders cannot lead a flock that will not follow!