

11. Learning to Qualify Men as Elders – Part 2

In our last topic, we saw that we are to help our physical and spiritual children learn how to show others by example how to become qualified for spiritual leadership. We saw that Titus was to help the churches on the island of Crete become fully developed. To be most effective, they needed to develop the things that were still lacking in their development. We also saw that Titus was to help men to become qualified for spiritual leadership so that they would be able to lead the churches after Titus left the area. In our topic today, we will look at the qualifications that we are to help men develop so that they can become qualified spiritual leaders in their churches.

As we look at this list of Biblical qualifications, we might give the following summary of the primary areas in which Titus was to help men develop:

Help potential leaders develop a respected life.

Help potential leaders develop a healthy marriage.

Help potential leaders develop a healthy family relationship.

Help potential leaders become Christ-centered and not self-centered.

Help potential leaders deal with former sinful habits.

Help potential leaders learn to use their homes for ministry.

Help potential leaders develop godly character.

Help potential leaders learn to teach the Word of God.

Help potential leaders learn to correct those who contradict.

We want to help our children become qualified in each of these areas. Then we want to show them how to help others become qualified.

Titus 1:6-8 talks about godly character that provides spiritual leadership by example while Titus 1:9 talks about the teaching ministry of a godly leader. Titus 1:6 says, “If a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.” Now, we will look at each individual qualification. First, we see that a man is to be blameless. This qualification really summarizes all of the qualifications as together they explain what it means to be blameless. The word translated “blameless” means *that which cannot be laid hold of*. This means that there is no obvious sin with which the person could be charged. The first area where we want to help a man become qualified for spiritual leadership is in his own home as he learns how to lead his family to become a godly family.

Ephesians 5:25 says, “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.” The husband of one wife means that a man demonstrates his love for his wife by his thoughts, attitudes, words and actions. He is faithful in all ways to his wife (or to the future wife that the Lord might give him if he is not yet married). We might call him a one-woman man.

We also want to show each man how to develop faithful children. Ephesians 6:4 says, “And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” If a father drives his children by his anger and their fear, his children often become rebellious. In contrast, if a father leads his children by love and example, they will learn to lead others by love and example. The word that is translated “dissipation” is also used in Ephesians

5:18 where we read, “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit.” The word that is translated “insubordination” speaks of those who reject authority over them. It is used in Titus 1:10 where we read, “For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision.” As fathers learn to lead their children by love and example, those children will develop and become faithful children.

Titus 1:7 says, “For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money.” Three words, elders, bishops and overseers, are used to describe the leaders of a local church in the New Testament. Here, we see that as a part of being blameless we want to help our children understand what it means to be a steward of God. The word translated “steward” was the word used to describe the person the head of a household chose to manage his affairs. Paul used the word twice in 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 where we read, “Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.” This verse tells the things that a person must avoid to become a faithful steward. Verse 8 will tell the positive things a person is to do to be a faithful steward.

In this verse, we see that we help a man to become a faithful steward by helping him learn to change one or more of five negative areas that might be in his life at the time he becomes a Christian. First, is a self-willed person. A self-willed person is one who is proud and wants his own way. We want to help such a person learn to seek the will of God for his life. Second, is a quick-tempered person. This is a person who gets angry quickly. We want to show such a person how to become a patient person. Third, is a person given to wine. Proverbs 31:4-5 says, “*It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes intoxicating drink; lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the justice of all the afflicted.*” Here, we see that godly leaders cannot lead effectively if they are given to wine.

Fourth, is a violent person. This speaks about a person that is ready to fight. Instead we want to help such a person learn to practice 2 Timothy 2:24-25 which says, “And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth.” Fifth, is a person greedy for money. This is common in most people before they become Christians. As a result, we want to help such a person learn to practice 1 Timothy 6:6-8 which says, “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into *this* world, *and it is* certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.” Here, we see that true spiritual growth will help individuals change negative habits from their former lives.

Titus 1:8 goes on to talk about the positive characteristics that we want to help our children and other potential spiritual leaders develop in their lives. That verse gives six positive characteristics when that verse says, “But hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled.” First, a hospitable person is one who makes guests feel at home. 1 Peter 4:8-9 says, “And above all things have fervent love for one another, for ‘love will cover a multitude of sins’. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.” Here, we see that we show our love by making people feel at home.

Second, the word that is translated “a lover of what is good” means *a person who has a great concern for what is good and beneficial for others*. Third, “sober-minded” means *one that has a seriousness of mind and purpose that causes him to exercise self-control in all areas of his life*. Titus 2:2 says, “That the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience.” Here, the word is translated “temperate.” Fourth, just (righteous) speaks of one whose thoughts, words and actions are pleasing to God. Fifth, the word translated “holy” means *a person that is undefiled by sin*. Sixth, the word translated “self-controlled” means *a person who has power over sinful desires because he is yielding his life to the Holy Spirit as a pattern of life*. Galatians 5:16 says, “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

Titus 1:9 says, “Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.” Here, we see three areas where we want to qualify our sons and other men so that they can provide godly teaching. First, the word that is translated “holding fast” is used four times in the New Testament. Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13 are almost exactly the same except Matthew begins “no one” while Luke begins “no servant”. Luke 16:13 says, “No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” Here the word is translated “be loyal to”. A godly leader must be totally committed to the Word of God in order to be an effective spiritual leader.

Second, a godly leader must be able to teach sound doctrine. The word that is translated “be able” means *to have strength or power*. Romans 15:1 says, “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.” To have the strength to teach sound doctrine requires that we learn to teach in the strength of the Lord instead of our own strength. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” The teaching of a godly leader will be effective when it is done in the strength that the Lord supplies. Third, a godly leader must be able to teach Christians sound doctrine and convict those who contradict. Here, we see that a godly leader is to learn to work with the Holy Spirit as he shares the Word of God with those who reject. John 16:8 says, “And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.”

We want to show our physical and spiritual sons how to become qualified for spiritual leadership in the church. As they grow in godly character and dependence on the Holy Spirit, the Lord will use their lives in a mighty way. May the Lord richly bless you as you learn to qualify men for spiritual leadership.