January Bible Study: Biblical Eldership

January 2023

**REVIEW from last week: The Role of Eldership**

* Defining eldership
* Elders are gifts Jesus gives to the church to *equip God’s people for works of service*
* Biblical principal: the spiritually qualified should lead
* A plurality of elders provides strength and stability to the church

**The Qualifications of Eldership**

The qualifications for elders given in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9

Paul established new churches with elders. He told Timothy tell choose church leaders and to ensure each is a *certain* kind of man. He went beyond generalizations to specific characteristics.

Above reproach Husband of one wife Sober-minded

Self-controlled Respectable Hospitable

Able to teach Not a drunkard Not violent

Not quarrelsome Not a lover of money Upright

Holy Disciplined Gentle

Loves what is good Just Not a new convert

Manages his own household well

Good reputation with those outside the church

Several observations:

* Becoming a man of God is a *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*of spiritual growth that happens over a period of time.
* There is no reference to *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* . . . Paul did not say look for men with the gift of …
* Of 20 qualifications, 19 have to do with reputation, ethics, morality, temperament, habits, and spiritual and *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* maturity.
* Only one reference to ability or a skill.

The Bible teaches that spiritual leadership must begin by first becoming a man of God.

A man who has the qualities set forth by the Apostle Paul can develop the *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* needed to oversee the church and use them for the glory of God.

WHY USE THESE CRITERIA IN 1 TIMOTHY AND TITUS?

* They establish the *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* for spiritual leaders today.
* They are qualities every Christian – male or female -should strive for.
* Some men will possess these qualities, but will not necessarily feel called or have time to serve in this spiritual capacity.
* These characteristics form a picture of maturity that is *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*.
* Paul brings together in these passages many characteristics of spiritual maturity that are scattered throughout the New Testament.

*ABOVE REPROACH* – (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:6, 7)

* Paul was using this characteristic as an *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.*
* This is not a new idea.
  + When the church faced its first organizational problem in Jerusalem, the apostles recommended that seven men “of good reputation” be selected to help solve the problem of food distribution (Acts 6:3).
  + Paul came to Lystra on his 2nd missionary journey and heard about young Timothy.(Acts 16:1-3)Notice several things.

1. People *were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* – there was positive feedback

2. *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_* people are talking.

3. It takes time to build a good reputation.

4. Timothy’s reputation was good at home and abroad.

5. A good reputation will develop naturally when a person is growing in his Christian life.

The other nineteen characteristics provide us words that describe a Christian man with a good reputation.

By-Law Review **SECTION 3. Congregational Elders**

3.3(1) New Congregational Elders are selected by the existing Elder Board and appointed by the church in conference. In order to qualify to serve in this role, men must have been members of Faithbridge for at least three years.

3.3(2) The names of new candidates for the Elder Board will be shared with the congregation at least one month prior to joining the Elder Board. If any member of the congregation has cause to believe the candidate is unqualified to serve, they should bring this concern to the attention of the Elder Board during this 30-day period.

3.3(3) Congregational Elders on the Elder Board shall serve terms of three years, at the end of which they may be reappointed for a second term. A Congregational Elder shall be allowed to serve two consecutive terms, after which a lapse of one year must occur before they may be considered for reappointment. Terms shall be staggered such that no more than two Congregational Elder terms end in any one year.

3.3(4) In the event of a vacancy among the Congregational Elders, the Elder Board shall appoint a qualified individual to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term. If the term to be filled is less than 18 months, the Elder shall be eligible to serve up to two additional consecutive terms.

3.3(5) Under extenuating circumstances, such as a large number of board vacancies, a Congregational Elder shall be permitted to serve beyond the prescribed term limits if requested by the Elder Board and affirmed by the church in conference.

**SECTION 4. Staff Elders**

3.4(1) The Staff Elders on the Elder Board are selected by the Senior Pastor, with the consent of the current Elder Board, and appointed by the church in conference. In order to qualify to serve in this role, men must have served on staff at Faithbridge for at least three years.

3.4(2) There is no limitation on the length of service for Staff Elders on the Elder Board; however, Staff Elders may elect to rotate off the Elder Board at the end of a given term. These Elders may only be considered for reappointment after a lapse of one year has occurred.

3.4(3) Staff Elders not serving on the active Elder Board retain their status as Elders unless they resign their staff position or are removed by the church in conference.

3.4(4) Given the nature of their roles, Staff Elders will take primary responsibility for the day-to-day operations of the church, including managing the work of the church staff alongside the Senior Pastor.

**SECTION 5. OTHER PASTORAL STAFF MEMBERS**

3.5(1) In addition to those Pastors serving as Staff Elders, other men may serve as Pastors at Faithbridge Church. Every Pastor shall meet the biblical standards found in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and adhere to the Articles of Faith of the church.

3.5(2) Pastoral Staff members shall assist the Senior Pastor and Elder Board in overseeing the ministries and programs of the church. They shall serve at the discretion of the Senior Pastor and Elder Board within the guidelines and job description created for their position. Members of the Pastoral Staff are accountable to God, the Senior Pastor, their immediate supervisor, and the church.

The esteem that is to be offered elders:

*Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. …**Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.* Hebrews 13:7, 17

* What are the key words used to describe the relationship we should have with elders in the church? What do they mean?
* What is it necessary for this to take place?

*Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.****18****For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.”****19****Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses.****20****As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear.* 1 Timothy 5:17-20

* What might “double honor” look like? What would it exclude?
* Why is the standard for considering criticism or accusation against an elder higher than another church member?