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**Thursday, October 27, 2022 ▫ Read 1Timothy 3:3**

*Questions from the Scripture text: What is the first thing that this verse says that an overseer must not be? What is the second thing he must not be? What is the third? What positive characteristic is set over-against these first three? What is the fourth thing that he must not be? What is the fifth?*

**What must an overseer not be?** 1Timothy 3:3 looks forward to the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In this verse of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **overseers must not be those who are controlled by wine, force, rapacity, antagonism, or avarice.**

Last week, we noted that for the "good work" to which a bishop is called in v1, he must be qualified by the set of characteristics in v2. Several of those characteristics (temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior) require a great deal of self-control. But if a man is to be controlled by the Spirit, controlled by good doctrine, controlled by a goldy heart, then there are a number of other things that he mustn't be controlled by. v3 now gives us a representative (not exhaustive) list: wine, force, rapacity, antagonism, and avarice.

**Not controlled by wine.** Our "greedy for wine" is translating just one word from the original. The same is true of "greedy for money," so that the original has an even more abrupt, staccato, rapid-fire feel. The first thing an overseer mustn't be is wine-controlled—the kind of man who always has the wine in his hand, and if he doesn't, he's thinking about it. Any desire for pleasure may have the same effect—particularly in our entertainment-saturated, play-saturated, luxury-saturated, self-indulgent society. How can a man be devoted to good works if he's obsessed with feeling good and enjoying himself?

**Not controlled by "force."** Our translation's "violence" describes a man who brute-forces things. He interacts with those over whom he has some controlling advantage, and he unhesitatingly uses it. It could be literal strength, in which he is physically violent. Or, it could be a position of authority or wealth. Such a man is a bully and unfit to do the work of shepherding. He probably thinks it's best for everyone if he is in charge. He may indeed desire to be an overseer, but the church must avoid having him as one.

**Not controlled by "rapacity."** There are two "greed" words in this list. The first is one that combines the word "shameless" with the word for "gain." This man is the ultimate pragmatist. He's so focused on the end result that he's willing to flex on how he gets there. What God sees or what God says to do isn't as important to him as the profit or advantage that can be obtained ("gain" here is not limited to money).

But an overseer is called to a work in which conscience before God is its own outcome, and he ought to be shepherding the flock to have that same mindset. This is expressed by the word "gentle" in our translation, which the text sets over-against the first three disqualifying characteristics. "Gentle" here expresses restraint of self in order to enable others. In Phil 4:5 it was facilitated by the knowledge that the Lord is near, and that outcomes belong to Him. The eldership is no place for a pragmatist.

**Not controlled by antagonism.** Literally, the word is "unpeaceable." We all know the type who just always has to raise an opposing point. The contrarian who will play devil's advocate, even if he is in agreement. He's not happy unless there's debate. He thinks it's his job in every situation to counterbalance what's being said or done. An overseer will have to dispute at times, but "a disputer" should not be an overseer.

**Not controlled by avarice.** The second "greed" word is a negative form of the word "silver-lover." The silver-lover is all about possessions. He might claim to be a lover of God and lover of people (what aspiring overseer doesn't?), but he is exposed by his reluctance to open his hand or wallet when it's time to help. An elder who rules well is worthy of double-honor (cf. 5:17-18. He's willing to give up lucrative time (or in the case of the preacher/teacher even a lucrative career) for the sake of the flock. He can't be a money-lover.

**What objects or desires threaten to control you instead of love of God and love of others?**

*Sample prayer: Lord, we praise You for the certainty that You both care for all our needs and work all things according to the counsel of Your will. Forgive us for being controlled by pleasure, or pragmatism, or possessions. Grant that the love of Christ would constrain us instead, we ask in His Name, AMEN!*

**Suggested songs: ARP1 "How Blessed the Man" or TPH1B "How Blest the Man"**

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First Timothy 3:3. These are the words of God, not given to wine. Not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle not quarrelsome, not covetous. So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent word. This continues the list of qualifications by which we recognize whom the Lord has called and gifted and graced to be an elder in his church.

Let's begin in verse 2, with a number of things, all of which such a man must be. And now, in verse 3, a list of things, none of which such a man may be just being one

of these things. Disqualifies a man from office in Christ's church. These things are things that are indicative of someone who is not mature in faith.

There's not. No, is not mature in faith and perhaps has no faith at all. So the first thing that he must not be and so the first thing that he must not be is given to wine. And this actually an adjective from the word for wine, We actually have an English word that is like this.

It might just be a slang word, but he must not be a wino, a Weinsten that's not a common English saying, but you get the idea of how the Greek word is formed from that. This is a guy who, Enjoys.

Letting go of all his inhibitions doesn't like to be controlled by his mind doesn't like caring. Just wants to descend into the glass to send into the cup. He's always either drinking wine or has had so much that he can't drink anymore or I can't wait till the next time that he gets to drink wine or whatever other sort of alcohol.

So this is a man who's life is shaped by alcohol. Any sort of desire for pleasure or self-indulgence may have the same effect. You know, there are people who live for quote unquote, the weekend, not because the weekend is when they may do other sorts of chores, perhaps on a Saturday and get to worship God all day on the Lord's day.

But the weekend is when they get to just indulge themselves and play and hang out or whatever it is and so they're always either on the weekend or recovering from the weekend or can't wait until the next time they get to have a weekend. There are people who treat video games, like this.

Any, any sort of mindless self-indulgence, or living for pleasure? Any sort of mindless self-indulgence or living for pleasure?

Been quite, no, any sort of mindless self-indulgence, or living for pleasure, may violate this qualification, especially since we live in an entertainment saturated play saturated luxury saturated. Self-indulgent society that has not learned to get its dopamine and other happy hormones from living, well, serving enjoying in proper proportion. Those good things that the Lord has given us that are helpful for us but have learned to just blast away at the receptors in their brain, with whatever it is.

Shuts down thinking shuts, down living and just gives them one hit after another of that self-indulgent. Pleasure. Even scrolling Facebook anyway. So some guy is not controlled by why he's not controlled by pleasure with the outline in the booklet. I have put the next one that is translated temperate down as one is not controlled by force.

This means like he's not, not that he's not controlled by someone else's force, but he's not controlled by his own. Sorry. Not it's not the word for temperate. It's the word for not violent in verse 3, that he's not a man who whenever he has opportunity for advantage. He takes it the sort of man that he must not be as the man.

He has not learned how to appeal to others, how to allow room for growth. How to appeal to others by wisdom, by grace by that. Which is good by the love of Christ. No. This is one who if he has some authority, if he has some advantage, if he has some influence, he is going to use it to force or control.

Whoever is under his influence to do what he wants. He's like the Jews in Isaiah. 58 to think that God is a hard master that manipulates and forces us into doing what he wants rather than appealing to us by delight in him. The way that the Sabbath is designed to train our hearts to delight in him.

And so not only do they view God as a hard master as you find out at the beginning of Isaiah 58. But they themselves become hard masters to others. They act like the false. God of their imaginations. It's a troubling thing when a man is violent, and this doesn't just mean, like given to blows.

But when a man feels like, he must control everyone else, because it doesn't understand how God produces real service and real obedience in himself. He doesn't know the goodness of God and the appeal of God. And therefore he has not learned to appeal to others in a way that helps them grow.

So neither does he know God and if he does not know God, then how can he be an overseer? How can he be a bishop? How can he be a pastor, an elder? How is he going to make God known to others of? He himself does not know God.

Well, the next word which is translated with this entire big phrase, not greedy for money is similar. Except for, in this case it's not a man who takes every opportunity that he can to control. It's a man who takes every opportunity that he can to acquire. It takes the word for gain and the word for shamelessness and it mashes those two together to make one word out of the two, some translations, Therefore say,

Actually, I don't remember what the what the other translation say you can James says, not greedy for money, but this is a man who The only thing that ever stops him from serving his own interests. If this is, if he is somehow prevented by an outside force, he's never prevented by conscience.

He has no sense of shame. If you know, if he feels like he'll lose face then in order not to lose face, He might might forgo some game that that you might otherwise obtain. And so it's not just money, the word for gain as a word for acquiring into obtaining other things.

But he's he's a pragmatist whatever way that he can get whatever it is that he wants. He will So not given to wine. You must not be a man is controlled by pleasure. Not violent. Must not be a man who always controls and presses his advantage by force. Not a bully.

The third place. Not shamelessly. Gaining but gentle. Gentle of course is the opposite of the previous. Two things. It means someone who restrains himself in order to enable others. So he has the opportunity to control, but he restrains himself in order to enable others to love God and serve God, from the heart instead of, just because someone else said.

So he has the opportunity to gain whether that's gain, honor for his name, or influence with others, or as is often the case, some financially materially property or whatever, but he restrains himself out of out of care for others. So the word gentle here is referring to someone who restrains himself out of care for others in Philippians 4, verse 5.

Which is translated in many translations is let your gentleness be known to all translated in the same way here, or let your reasonableness be known to all or let yourself restraint to be known to all this particular word is used and the characteristic is facilitated by the fact that we know that the Lord is at hand.

So they're in Philippians 4, verse 5. It's let your gentleness be known to all for the Lord is at hand That does two things. First of all, it gives us the confidence that the Lord is the one who will do the work and the others. We don't have to press our advantage or whether it's giving us whatever we need or whether it's giving us whatever we need.

We trust the Lord to do that. The Lord is at hand and so we can restrain ourselves and serve him in in the way we wisely. And gently. No. And serve him. And the way we drop wisely and gently interact with others. And the other thing it does for us, is it reminds us that the Lord sees the heart.

It's the Gehazi factor from second Kings. 5 from yesterday, The Lord can see whether we are, you know, pragmatically obtaining whatever we can or pragmatically manipulating the situation. However, we can, We must operate as those who are before his face, we should have a tender conscience. So those things are all bound up in this idea of being gentle or self-restrained for the sake, of the service of others.

So not given to wine, not controlled by pleasure, do not think that if you live for play and entertainment as a child, that that will be easy to put away as an adult. Not given to wine. Not violent. Not someone who is always trying to gain an advantage and uses whatever advantage you have to control not shamelessly gaining.

You have a conscience before God, your prevented from always serving your own interests because you are and the gentle and restraining yourself out of the knowledge that you are before God, that he does you good. And that he sees you Then not quarrelsome. This is the first person who always has to make his own point in opposition to or contradiction of whatever anyone else says very easy to do.

If you live in a house with your seven siblings, You can practice having some improvement or correction or negation to make and not doing it, that it is. Okay, if someone does not say what you think, there's also every once in a while, someone will do it to you or perhaps you'll find your own heart, your own fleshliness leading you to do it to someone else.

Sometimes there's a particular person that you feel like it's your job always to counter what they say and the ministry, you get to be that person for a lot of people that they always have to say something against what you say, especially if you are the appointed mouth by which they repeatedly here, the word of God, the heart, or the remaining fleshliness of the heart.

Resists that. And for you, you may end up receiving that transitively. Someone who does not feel like they are able to to answer. Although that doesn't really stop a whole lot of people, what the minister says, they may decide that one of the ministers kids, they're always going to contradict what they say.

So, just know that if you run into something like this, in another, it may be something that that you're on the receiving end of for the sake, of the ministry of the gospel. And that's a privilege. Something that you get to share with in Christ, but don't let your own heart.

Be a contradictory heart. Don't spend all of the conversations that you're in or even dwell upon them later or think about them. And anticipation thinking about how to contradict, what one or another is saying. And especially if you find a particular person, is the one with whom you are tempted to be like that.

One of the best things you can do is to commit that to the Lord and you can use the kind of Alexander the copper-Smith rule and the second Timothy chapter 4 and pray Lord, if they are leading others astray then repay them according to their works and if they have been gullibly led astray, then do not hold it against them.

But the quarrelsome person, the person who always feels like they have to contradict, sometimes they'll run into someone says I really like to play devils advocate. He say okay. Well that's a well-named euphemism for being choralosome, You are on qualified to be an elder. And you don't have that aspect of Christian maturity that we should all be seeking to have, which is that we are not quarrelsome.

Liking to play devil's. Advocate is not a personality. It is a propensity to sin. It is not a conversational strategy. It is what the Bible calls quarrelsome. And in the last place, covetous, This is the second of the greed words. And it, it really, tackles the heart side of the guy who takes every opportunity to puff himself up or advance his name, or advance his position or advances property advances advance as well.

The reason that he does. So in this case especially with respect to wealth is that he is a lover of silver. That's what the word covetous here is translating. It's another one of these compound words and it takes the word love and it takes the word sober and it matches them together.

He loves stuff. The reason he doesn't serve God in every circumstance is because in his heart of hearts, he really enjoys being wealthy more than he enjoys God himself. Such a person will easily find deeds of quote, unquote necessity on the Sabbath. If there will allow him to make a little bit more money and say, well this is my calling, this is my vocation and things will go badly with me in business.

If I don't do this. So, it's a deed of necessity in the Lord will understand. Well, He's a lover of money, not really a lover of the Lord. He's not saying I might lose a bunch of money but this is a day for delighting in the Lord. How could I do anything?

It's worth giving up the money. No. This one loves money more than the Lord and he loves if he loves money, more than the Lord than he will love money. More than others. He might love his own name or reputation and be tempered a little bit by that, but this is a lover of stuff, a lover of money, be beware.

Yeah. Silver here could be any sort of possession, you know, whatever. Your prized thing is at the moment, beware the way, your heart responds to being called away from it, for the worship of God, for instance, or the Beware, the way your heart, responds to your sibling, having an interest in it, or wanting to borrow it, or even in their sin.

The way, you know, if they touch it or use it without asking or even damage it, your desire should be for the good of the soul of your sibling, not for the self-defense of the property that you loved so much and you will be able to to discern or you.

Maybe not always the hardest deceitful but it will be a clue for you. If you find hostility towards it towards your sibling, towards someone else, rising very quickly in connection with one or another particular object that particular object has too much of your heart. If if that is the case, a a overseer, an elder must not be someone who loves his objects.

He needs to be a lover of God. And for the sake of God, a lover of the church willing to humiliate himself as Jesus had. Just done to wash the disciples' feet. When he gave the new commandment says, love one another. As I have loved you, When was about to go to the cross lover of God, lover of the church lover of neighbors, even as we heard last week, in the word that was translated, hospitable lover of strangers.

So not someone who lives for or loves pleasure. Not someone who is always kind of pragmatically manipulating or using his advantage or especially in control bullies by force. Not someone who will who has little conscience about how they advance themselves. Must be someone who restrains himself for the sake of the Lord.

And for the sake of others, not someone who's always contradicting, and not someone who loves stuff in the place of God, or in the place of other people. Any one of those things would disqualify a man from the eldership. And any one of those things if you find them in yourself or something, that must be fought by God's grace, as you seek to mature in Christ, as you seek to become more and more like your Savior, which has God's plan for every Christian.

Those whom he foreign you. He predestined not merely to be forgiven and to stay how they were. He progressed in them to be conformed, to the image of his son. That's what the scripture says. And Romans chapter 8, the Lord show his foreknowing and choosing and predestining each of you, by the way he graciously works in you to conform you to the image of His Son.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you that you have given us. Not just this portion of your word that describes a number of things that when you are making us like Christ, your turning us away from and getting rid of in our lives. But we thank you for the knowledge from your word that you really do this in people.

For those whom you have delivered from all of these things are the ones him. You call to be elders in your church and so we praise you that you will have been doing that work for 2,000 years, in various ones. And we ask you to do that work in our own hearts that we would be controlled by the love of Christ, by the knowledge of him at hand, by resting in him who works in us by your spirits.

Helping us to restrain ourselves so that we would serve you and serve your church and serve others. Pray for my children that you would deliver them from all of the different kinds of self-indulgence that are described by these words. In this verse and I do pray, Lord that you would be producing especially in the boys the character of Christ and these ways that in them your church and years to come might have men in whom you have done.

This gracious work who whom you may use and the ministry of Shepherding and teaching, and overseeing in your church. Oh, Lord. Give such men to our church. We pray that our own elders would be such men that you would keep growing them that you'd have mercy upon them for the sake of the church that is under them.

And we pray for all of your churches that the ministry that you have ordained would be conducted by the type of men that your word describes and authorizes. Grant it. We ask in Jesus' name, Amen.