



# 1 Timothy

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**...not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 1 Timothy 3:3**

Paul's list of qualifications for those in a leadership position within the church continues now. He says that they are not to be "given to wine." The single Greek word so translated is used just twice – in 1 Timothy 3:3 and Titus 1:7. It signifies one addicted to wine; a drunk. It comes from two words indicating "near" and "wine." Thus it is someone who is always consumed with drinking wine.

Next he says a leader should be "not violent." This is again used only in 1 Timothy 3:3 and Titus 1:7. It signifies a brawler or a contentious person. This person would be quarrelsome, and one who prefers using his fists to settle a disagreement. It would be wholly unsuited to the position of an overseer to come out of the pulpit and beat up everyone in the church who disagrees on doctrinal matters.

After this, Paul says he shouldn't be "greedy for money." These words are left out of many manuscripts, but whether it is an erroneous insert or mistakenly left out, it is something which is important for leaders in the church to be aware of and stay away from. Those greedy for money have their priorities in the wrong place from the start. Paul's example of working with his hands is an important lesson for all, especially those who are called to lead in the church. There is to be more, not less, output from leaders. And the output should be because of a love of Christ, and a love of those who are pursuing Christ. If money is the objective, then this will never be the case. As Christ said, "You cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24).

Instead of these things, Paul next says, “but.” A contrast is now made to those things. First in his contrasts is that the overseer is to be “gentle.” The word properly means “*equitable*.” It signifies “‘gentle’ in the sense of truly fair by relaxing *overly strict standards* in order to keep *the ‘spirit of the law’*” (HELPS Word Studies).

Along with that, he is to be “not quarrelsome.” It is a single word in the Greek which is again used only here and in Titus. It gives the sense of “peaceable.” He is to abstain from fighting and not be contentious.

Paul’s list for this verse finishes with “not covetous.” This is another single compound word with signifies “not fond of silver.” Silver is used in the sense of financial gain. Thus, the leader is to not be one who is materialistic or dominated by the thought of getting rich. If an overseer understands the heavenly rewards of his work, then earthly gain will have far less importance to him. The word is used just one more time in the Bible, in Hebrews 13:5. There it is applied to all believers, not just leaders. How much more then should leaders display this attitude.

Life application: Look at those who are in church leadership positions, and evaluate them based on the words of Paul. If you see a defect in the conduct of such a leader, it should be addressed and corrected. If the disobedient behavior continues, either he will have to go, or you should find a new place to worship.

**...one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission with all reverence...**

1 Timothy 3:4

An overseer’s requirements continue from Paul’s hand here, beginning with the note that he shall be “one who rules his own house well.” Albert Barnes states, “This implies that a minister of the gospel would be, and ought to be, a married man.” That is a giant leap. Some obvious inferences can be made, such as an overseer being a male because it says that he is to be the husband of one wife. However, a single man can have a household as much as a married man. The word *oikos* means “a house” and is speaking of the material building. That extends to the idea of family which lives in such a building, if applicable. However, it does not necessarily do so.

A single overseer could have a house which is a pig-sty. Thus he would set a poor example of cleanliness and order. He could live with his aged parents, whom he neglects. That would set a poor example. Etc. There is no reason, except as a kick-back against the Roman Catholic policy of single priests, to make such an assumption. Despite this, whether married or single, he is to be one who rules his own house well. The idea of the household of verse 3:2 is returned to and further defined. If an overseer is incapable of guiding his own house well, he is certainly not going to make an acceptable example for others in the church.

Also, the word “rule” tends to make one think of issuing orders and the like. The Greek is a compound word which gives the idea of “standing before,” or better “pre-standing.” It signifies a “pre-set (well-established) character which *provides the need model to direct others*, i.e. to positively impact them *by example*” (HELPS Word Studies). For this reason, a word like “maintain” or “manage” may be more suited to what Paul is relaying.

Next, Paul says, “having *his* children in submission with all reverence.” Using the logic of Albert Barnes (above), this would imply that an overseer would be unqualified if he had no children. Rather, this is a statement of “if,” not “as.” In other words, “If he has children they should...,” not “As he has children, they should...” This is not something hinted at elsewhere in Scripture. As Paul was single, and as he said, “For I wish that all men were even as I myself” (1 Corinthians 7:7), it must mean that he is giving directions for “if” one is married or has children. If this is the case, then the overseer is to ensure he has them “in submission with all reverence.”

If an overseer has unruly children, or those which are irreverent, then how can he be expected to instill in others these same qualities. They will see the behavior of his family and think, “Well, it’s OK for Pastor Peter, he can’t say anything about our own defecto kid.” Eventually, the whole congregation will look at the children of others and realize that there is only dysfunction and a bad end for each of them when their own old age arrives. And as the church is to be the epitome of those in society, how much more will the greater society lean to accept a world full of spoiled miscreants from the example of those in the church.

Life application: Be sure to know how your church leaders live, what type of family members they are responsible for, etc., and then determine if they are meeting the qualifications which are set down here or not. If their homes resemble Animal House on Apostasy Avenue, then what kind of an example will they be to those who see them on a daily basis – both from within and without the church?

**(for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 1 Timothy 3:5**

Paul asks an obvious question. How could a church, of whatever number of people, and who are outside of the regular workings of a man’s household, be guided by that person if he can’t even run the operations of his own household? It is true that a man could have a very large household, including a wife, many children, and others who – by law – are considered as a part of that house. That household could be even larger than the church he has been selected to oversee.

However, regardless of its size, he is the one in charge. If that house is dysfunctional, and all in it are under him and aware of his character and traits, it would be unimaginable that he could be a proper steward of a church setting of people wholly unfamiliar with his character, idiosyncrasies, etc. Only dysfunction could be expected. This is especially true because people come and go in towns and cities, and between churches within those local areas, all the time. The constant change of a church is expected to be quite unlike the greater stability of a regular household, and so the demands are much higher.

And so the words, "...for if a man does not know how to rule his own house," are to be a set standard of consideration for the leader of any congregation, regardless of its size. The reason is because it then begs the question, "How will he take care of the church of God?" The phrase, "will he take care of" is from a single compound word in the Greek. It means "to care for (physically or otherwise)" (HELPS Word Studies).

The responsibility of the pastor is the full care of those under him. If he is unable to tend to his own household in this way, then it is certain that he will be ineffective in doing so for those under his care, but not of his own household.

Life application: In modern churches, one person in charge may have a large staff under him. Therefore, they may take care of personal issues that the main pastor is unable to address. But this should not be the case. If the pastor cannot fill each pastoral role in the church, because he can't do it in his own house, then he is not to be placed in such a position of authority. Full adherence to the word first, then the position can be filled.

**...not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil.** 1 Timothy 3:6

Paul continues on with his requirements for an overseer. He says that such a person is not to be "a novice. The Greek word is *neophutos*. It is only used here in the New Testament, and it is where we get our modern word neophyte from. It is a compound word signifying "newly planted." In other words, it is a recent convert to the faith. A young plant is unable to endure the full effects of the elements. Full sun, strong wind, fierce cold, etc., would easily destroy it. Until a plant has roots deep enough to reach down and hold it fast, it is always in danger of lacking water and withering up. A plant without enough leaves and branches is easily destroyed, it having nothing to spare when it is trampled upon.

Each of these is figurative of a new convert. They don't have a grounding in the word, they are unable to withstand attacks which come at them, etc. But Paul focuses next on one particular aspect of being young in the faith as an excluding factor for being an overseer. He is not to hold such an office, "lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the

devil.” The Greek words translated as “puffed up” is one which properly means, “to blow smoke,” or “to cloud up the air.” It would then be one which has a cloudy mindset, “meaning a moral blindness resulting from poor judgment which brings further loss of spiritual perception” (HELPS Word Studies).

In the end, the word looks to the sin of pride. A new convert will easily become conceited or arrogant. Here is this little plant with no roots wielding spiritual authority over those which have deep roots and are set in proper doctrine. This can only lead to disaster. This disaster is to fall under “condemnation.” The word “same” is not in the Greek, but is supplied – not wisely – by the translators. The word translated as “condemnation” is not signifying a loss of salvation. Salvation is not the question here. What is being relayed is condemnation in the passive sense. It is, according to the scholar Bengel, “the internal condition of the soul: *reproach* is opposed to ‘a good report from those that are without,’ and the devil may bring a *reproach* upon men, he cannot bring them into *condemnation*; for he does not judge, but is judged.”

In other words, it is the devil’s accusing judgment, and not the judgment which was rendered upon the devil. There is a world of difference between the two. The first is speaking of the devil standing and accusing the person, as he did towards Job. The second would be speaking of the end result of the devil, meaning being cast into the Lake of Fire. It is the former, not the latter, which is being brought to mind here. For the devil to bring accusation against such a person is to then bring disgrace upon the position. In this case, it then brings disgrace upon the Christian faith which stems from Christ. In order to not have this occur, new converts should never be ordained.

Life application: Let us ensure that those ordained within the church are well grounded in Scripture. A thorough examination of overseers must be made, and they must demonstrate that they not only know the principle tenets of the faith, but that they actually adhere to them. Head knowledge does not always signify life-application.