

PASTOR = TEACHER

Name: Elder

Three names for the elder:

A. Presbuteros = πρεσβύτερος = elder (denotes age, i.e., over 30) Acts 20:17-28

B. Episkopos = ἐπίσκοπος = overseer, guardian, bishop, lit. one who visits (denotes authority)
Titus 1:5-7

C. Poimen = ποιμήν = shepherd, pastor (denotes activity) I Peter 5:1-4

Qualifications:

There are two lists of qualification for elders in the New Testament. The first list is found in I Timothy 3:2-7 and the second in Titus 1:5-9. From a cursory glance of Timothy, Paul lists 15 qualifications whereas in Titus 17. The view taken in this course is that there are but 15 total qualifications. Paul states these in both lists, although he does not use necessarily identical words, and some qualities he contrasts between positive and negative statements.

It is doubtful that the Churches in Ephesus and Crete had to get together to compare notes before they knew who was qualified to be an elder. The chart below demonstrates the equality of the commands in both lists. The Church must be sure that it does not add to these qualifications nor subtract from them.

I Timothy 3:1-7 It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?); and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:5-9 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, namely, if any man be above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

A	ανεπιλημπτον ειναι = <u>Anepalempton einai</u> : Irreproachable conduct; Cannot be taken hold of	ανεγκλητον ειναι = <u>Anegkleton einai</u> : Irreproachable; without indictment; unchargeable
B	μιας γυναικος ανδρα = <u>Mias gunaikos andra</u> : One woman man	μιας γυναικος ανηρ = <u>Mias gunaikos aner</u> : One woman man
C	φιλοξενον = <u>Philoxenon</u> : Hospitable; Lover of strangers	φιλοξενον = <u>Philoxenon</u> : Same as Left
D	διδασκτικον = <u>Didaktikon</u> : Able to Teach; Skillful in Teaching	παρακαλειν εν τη διδασκαλια τη υγαινουση και τους αντιλεγοντας ελεγχειν = <u>Parakalein en te didaskalia te ugainouse kai tous antilegontas</u> : Able to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict
E	μη παροινον = <u>Me paroinon</u> : Not addicted to wine	μη παροινον = <u>Me paroinon</u> : Same as Left
F	μη πληκτην = <u>Me plekten</u> : Not pugnacious; not a bully; not given to violence	μη πληκτην = <u>Me plekten</u> : Same as Left
G	του ιδιου οικου καλως προισταμενον = <u>Tou idiou oikou kalos proistamenon</u> : manages household well	τεκνα εχων πιστα = <u>Tekna echon pista</u> : Having faithful children
H	σωφρονα = <u>Sophrona</u> : Prudent; thoughtful; self-controlled; decent; modest	σωφρονα = <u>Sophrona</u> : Same as Left
I	κοσμιαν = <u>Kosmian</u> : Respectable; well-ordered demeanor	μη εν κατηγορια ασωτιας η ανυποτακτα = <u>Me en kategoria asotias e anupotakta</u> : Not accused of dissipation; one who wastes money often on pleasures thus bringing himself to ruin.
J	επιεικη = <u>Epieike</u> : Gentle; yielding; kind; equity; lenient; reasonable	μη αυθαδη = <u>Me authade</u> : Not self-willed; arrogant; refuses to listen to others
K	αμαχον = <u>Amachon</u> : Uncontentious; peaceable; not a fighter	μη οργιλον = <u>Me orgilon</u> : Not quick tempered; inclined to anger
L	αφιλαργυρον = <u>Aphilarguron</u> : Free from the love of money	μη αισχροκερδη = <u>Me aischrokerde</u> : Not fond of sordid gain; not greedy of shameful gain
M	μη αεοφυτον = <u>Me aeophuton</u> : Not a new Convert	οσιον = <u>Osion</u> : Devout; holy δικαιον = <u>Dikaion</u> : Just
N	νηφαλιον = <u>Nephalion</u> : Temperate; sober; clear-headed; self-controlled	εγκρατη = <u>Egkrate</u> : Self-controlled; complete self-mastery
O	μαρτυριαν καλην = <u>Marturian kalen</u> : Good reputation; quality witness	φιλαγαθον = <u>Philagathon</u> : Loving what is good

Are these qualities a must or are they guidelines? Paul says in I Tim 3:2 that “an overseer, then, **must be** above reproach...” The Greek word δει (dei) literally means “of necessity.” These qualities cannot simply be guidelines. The office of elder is not to be taken lightly.

A. Above Reproach. This is a man who has “no handles.” He is to have nothing in his life in which someone else could control him, i.e., no vices, secrets, or other “handles” that someone could use against him. The word used is Titus means “above reproach” but in a way that he is unchargeable. Even if someone wanted to bring a charge against him they would be unable to do

so because his very nature would demonstrate that the charge is obviously false.

- B. A One Woman Man. He is to be faithful to one wife. It was customary for a man to have the woman who was his wife and bore his children, but also have women in which he carried out his sexual desires. For much of pagan cultures, this concept was very prominent and still is in some parts of the world. This is not referring to divorce.
- C. Hospitable. This command is identical in both letters. The word literally means “a lover of strangers.” This would be particularly important since Christians in the first century were despised by the pagan world and would therefore not be friendly toward any Christian travelers. But the elder is happy to receive a traveling brother or sister and help them on their journey. Another reason hospitality is important is that an elder will never intimately know his people without showing them kindness in his own home. As a shepherd to the congregation, this command is a must.
- D. Able to Teach. There must be a certain level of teaching skill. The elder must be able to both expound sound doctrine as well as successfully refute those who would teach false doctrine. This does not say that the elders must be the only teachers in the congregation. Nor does it say that elders must teach at all in the congregation. It only states the elder must be able to teach.
- E. Not Addicted to Oinos. If a man cannot control his habits, how can maintain control in the Church? The condemnations in Scripture of drunkenness are too numerous to list here. The elder is to be in control of himself, and an example to all.
- F. Not Pugnacious. This command is identical in both letters. The elder does not use his position or power to get his way. He is not to be a bully nor an extortionist. He is not to have a belligerent nature. If he is a defender of the faith (letter D above) he must be able to do so without getting in a fight.
- G. Manages Household Well. The Titus list says “having faithful children.” He must have a family life that is in keeping with the teaching of Scripture. That means his wife and children are in submission and are believers themselves. If a man cannot be the spiritual leader of his family leading them to Christ, how can he be expected to be the spiritual leader of the Church?
- H. Humble. This command is identical in both letters. The word used here means someone who is prudent, thoughtful, self-controlled, decent, and modest. The elder must be a man who thinks things through and does not go to extremes in his thinking.
- I. An Organized Man. The word used in the Timothy list, kosmian, means to have an orderly nature. This word has at it’s root the word kosmos, which means *the world*, or more accurately, *creation*. Behind this word is the underlying meaning of design and order, which can be clearly seen in the created universe. The elder is to be a man of design and order. The Titus list contrasts this idea by using the negative expression “not accused of dissipation.” The word that is used is kategoria, from which comes the English word “category.” This man is to be one that is orderly, having things categorized, i.e., in good order.
- J. Reasonable. Paul contrasts this quality with a positive statement in Timothy and a negative statement in Titus as he does the following three qualifications. The elder must be gentle,

yielding, kind, lenient and reasonable. He is not to be self-willed, arrogant, and he should not refuse to listen to others. He is to be someone that others feel comfortable in coming to with their needs or problems – a shepherd of sheep.

- K. Peaceable. He is to be a person who seeks after harmony within the congregation. He is to be uncontentious. Conversely, he is not to be quick-tempered nor inclined to anger. He is to be clear-headed. Whereas letter F above dealt with a bully mentality, this quality has to do with temper and the ability to keep it.
- L. Free From the Love of Money. The elder should not let the dollar sign get in the way of his leadership and doing what is right. The elder must be a man who cannot be bought off.
- M. Devout, Holy and Just. The elder must not be a new convert. The elder must be an elder in the faith, not necessarily an elder in age.⁸ He must have demonstrated a high level of holiness and devotion in his service to God.
- N. Self-Control. Clear-headed with complete self-mastery. This may also be translated as sober and temperate.
- O. Lover of Good. Here the list of qualifications comes full-circle. The man who is above reproach must have a good reputation, be a quality witness both inside and outside the congregation and have a love for what is good and right. There are many outside the Church who refuse to come inside because of what they perceive of as hypocrites in the Church. The hypocrite must never become an elder. The elder is to have a good reputation and be above reproach, he is to be “unchargeable.”

Authority and Responsibility:

Job Description of Elder

- I. Shepherd the Flock. Acts 20:28,29
 - A. Oversee the Church. I Peter 5:2,3
 - B. Be on Guard for False Doctrine.
 - C. Pastor (shepherd) and Teach. Eph. 4:11
- II. Responsible for Receiving and Distributing Money. Acts 11:29, 30
- III. Teach. Acts 13:1; Eph. 4:11

The work of the Elder and the Evangelist are closely knit together and complimentary as were the offices of Apostle and Prophet.

Once the evangelist has set things in order, and elders are ordained, does the relationship remain the same between elders and evangelist?

⁸ In the ancient world, no man was taken seriously until he reached thirty years of age. This is one reason Jesus waited until he was thirty to begin His ministry.