

Qualifications of Elders (II)

- To train man to be a physical and intellectual giant while overlooking the spiritual side is like putting a high-powered gun in hands of a savage – West

- Acts 20:28
- Holy Spirit makes elders in same way He makes Christians: gives necessary qualifications: those who meet qualifications are made what they are by Holy Spirit

Misconceptions about qualifications

- a. Required of the group, not each man
 - 1 Tim.3:1, 'if a man...' demands individual qualifications. Cf. v.2
- b. These are suggestions, guidelines, not requirements
 - 'Must' – it is necessary
 - Jn.3:7 ... Jn.4:24 ... Ac.9:6

Misconceptions about qualifications

- c. Men may become elders without these qualifications, and gradually grow into them
 - 1 Tim.3:2, must **be** . . .
- d. We should appoint the best we have (ignore qualifications)
 - What if a man had only one...two...three?
 - Hire shepherd who knows NOTHING about sheep...?

Some qualifications are . . .

a. absolute, others are relative

- Husband of one wife versus able to teach

b. moral, others are practical

- Holy versus not a novice

c. special, others are general

- Wife, believing children versus holy...

Proper attitude is essential

- Do I possess every qualification?
- ...to a great degree?
- ...is there something that only I know that would disqualify me?
- With these questions in mind... 1 Tim.3; Tit.1

1. Man. 1 Tim.3:1

- Husband, 2. 1 Tim.2:12 (8)
- Excludes a boy; young man ('elder');
woman

2. Desire. 1 Tim.3:1

- Aspire to, strive for ... stresses object desired – Vine. 1 Tim.6:10
- Hb.11:16, But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country...
- Desires: long for, set one's heart on; stresses inward impulse – Vine
 - Without desire one could be appointed against his will
 - *'No one else was qualified, so I had to do it'*

3. Blameless. 1 Tim.3:2

- Irreproachable. Lit., not to be laid hold of, hence, not open to censure or attack – Vine
 - Daniel 6:3-5
 - Does not refer to enemies of truth who falsely accuse every Christian
 - Ac.16:20

3. Blameless. Tit.1:6-7

- Tit.1:6-7, not to be called to account, i.e., with nothing laid to one's charge (as the result of public investigation) – Vine
- 'Of such character that no one can rightfully take hold of the person with a charge of unfitness' – Lenski
 - Can an elder rebuke others for a fault that he has? (Mt.7:2-5)
 - If it requires absolute blamelessness, no one could be an elder. 1 Pt.5:1; Ga.2:11-14. 1 Jn.1:8-10

4. Husband of one wife, 1 Tim.3:2

- Forbids **concupinage** (as Abraham, Jacob...) and **polygamy** (as David) ... and **single** man (Paul).
- Lipscomb...
 1. Husband of one wife requires more than zero, less than two
 2. Elder must have children; impossible without a wife...
- **Family man**: *teach, patience, reasoning, discipline, people skills, humility, selfless*

5. Temperate, 1 Tim.3:2

- Sober-minded; able to keep watch – Vine
- Clear-headed good judgment
- Double meaning: 1) reject alcohol; 2) remain watchful. V.11.
- “Not a drunk” does not approve social drinking. Mt.5:21-22. 1 Pt.4:3. Est.1:8
- Watch 1) self; 2) congregation – Ac.20:28-30; Hb.13:17

6. Sober, 1 Tim.3:2

- Of sound mind...hence, self-controlled, soberminded – Vine. Tit.1:8; 2:2,5
- **Sensible**, CSB. **Sane**; curbing one's desires and impulses. Not easily swayed by error
- **Self-control** is vital in elders
 - Receive information in confidence
 - Lose temper on job; stomp away in huff...
 - How to control others if we can't control self?

7. Of good behavior, 1 Tim.3:2

- Orderly, modest. 2:9 –Vine
- Well-behaved. Sober is an inner attitude. Good behavior is (outer) action. Opposite of carelessness and laziness.
- Gn.39
- Greeks used word of one who was good citizen, did his duty, behaved himself.
 - Chief of police runs red lights...
 - Elder persuades others to buy equipment for church...

8. Given to hospitality, 1 Tim.3:2

- Hospitable –Vine. Tit.1:8. 1 Pt.4:9. Ro.12:13
- Lit., kind to (lover of) strangers.
- Includes more than sociability. Considerate of others' welfare.
 1. Lk.10:...30-37, Samaritan. Hospital.
 2. 3 Jn.5-8
 - Christians may be low on money
 - Inns were usually places of ill repute

9. Able to teach, 1 Tim.3:2

- Skilled in teaching – Vine. 2 Tim.2:24
- Requires –
 1. Knowledge of Word. 2 T.2:2. Disciples would die . . . 1 Tim.5:17
 2. Ability to edify church. 1 Co.14. Its destiny depends on sound teaching (healthy – our hygiene)

9. Able to teach, 1 Tim.3:2

3. Ability to refute false doctrines.

Tit.1:9-11

9: exhort those who contradict, speak against, oppose

9: to convict, expose. 2 Tim.4:2.

Tit.1:13; 2:15

11: to stop the mouth, to silence.

Tit.1:13; 3:10-11

No reference to leaders with spiritual gifts

We have the original apostles

- No need for successors – they finished their work; it remains with us – Jude 3
- Elders are needed in every church as long as churches continue

NT: *elders* and *bishops* are the same

- Ignatius, about AD 115: one bishop over each local church, together with several elders and deacons
- Ignatius shows the beginnings of the Episcopal hierarchy that flowered during the 2nd Century . . . BUT in the beginning it was not so