

Elder Training Series

Session 07 - More Qualifications Listed in Titus 1:8

(Repeating) NOTE: As we examine each of the requirements in these next verses, again perhaps it would be prudent and wise for you to mark with a colored highlight marker or pen the items that you need to work on or improve in order to meet God's qualification requirements.

READ: **an overseer... "must be... upright"** (Titus 1:8)

SECTION POINT: To be qualified, God requires that an overseer must genuinely possess and exhibit comprehensive moral "uprightness", which necessitates that it stems from his personality.

- - In the Greek, being "upright" contains the meaning of being "equitable", in other words "being impartial, fair, fair-minded, objective" ("uninfluenced by emotions or prejudice"), and not biased. (Strong's #1342; *AHD* - 'equitable', 'objective')

- - In order to be "upright", in a practical sense the overseer "must" genuinely be: "honorable, fair, and ethical in his dealings and actions; adhering to and maintaining consistency with what is morally right"; preserving justice, "nondiscrimination, and evenhandedness" in his determinations and decisions; and exhibiting a personal character distinguished by "goodness, decency, honesty, and wholesomeness". (*AHD* - 'just' and 'upright', from Strong's #1342)

- - Even though these qualities of being non-biased, fair, nondiscriminatory, and etcetera are implying a mindset and position of distinct and pure neutrality, of course nevertheless the overseer is certainly to be influenced and guided by such qualities as defined and directed by God and His version or code of meaning and conduct for these qualities, rather than influenced and guided by what the world says for these qualities.

- - And likewise, even though these qualities of "uprightness" seem to tend to emphasize, be established upon, and pertain to moral uprightness in a generic or non-religious sense, nevertheless there is a significant implication here of the presence of an ingredient of holiness and innocence of sin, which of course stem from an "uprightness" that is characteristically spiritual and religious.

- - Overall though, this "uprightness" is to be solely and comprehensively dominant in all of the overseer's thinking, his beliefs, his value system, his speaking, his behaviors, his relationships, and his activities - wherever he is, and within whatever situation or predicament he is in.

- - Because this "uprightness" necessarily must be so thoroughly comprehensive, then a logical conclusion is that this "uprightness" must be resident and securely established as a main ingredient of the personality of the overseer - inwardly who and what he is, and not merely outwardly what he does.

READ: **an overseer... "must be... disciplined"** (Titus 1:8)

SECTION POINT: To be qualified, God requires that an overseer must genuinely possess and maintain "discipline" or mastery over all sinfulness and inappropriateness in his life, which necessitates extensive self-training and compelling motivation.

-- In the Greek, being "disciplined" contains the distinct meaning of being "strong in or over a thing - masterful, in other words being temperate and self-controlled", which manifests as "exercising moderation and self-restraint". (Strong's #1468; *AHD* - 'temperate')

-- The overseer must possess the quality of always being in control over all of his thinking, speaking, and behaviors.

-- He never gets out-of-control, for examples:

--- never harboring "anger" or erupting into a "rage"; (Ephesians 4:31)

--- never speaking in a manner that is hurtful or potentially harmful to others; (v.4:29)

--- never "letting any unwholesome talk come out of [his] mouth"; (v.4:29)

--- never possessing or harboring "bitterness"; (v.4:31)

--- never engaging in "slander [or any] form of malice"; (v.4:31)

--- never speaking any "falsehoods" or involving himself in deception. (v.4:25)

-- An overseer must be consistently successful in refraining from all kinds of sinfulness and inappropriateness, which obviously requires him to exert much control upon himself through maintaining self-discipline.

-- In the same way that soldiers need to go through extensive training in order to attain a level of discipline that is necessary in the military, so too the overseer needs to have extensively trained himself to attain this level of discipline that is necessary to be qualified by God as an overseer in a church or ministry.

-- Furthermore and logically then, the overseer needs to possess an unfading and compelling desire to establish mastery over and "get rid of all" of the sinfulness and inappropriateness in his own personal life. (v.4:31)

-- And he has learned and values the benefits of successfully mastering over his own sinfulness and inappropriateness, with part of the benefits being that he cherishes and enjoys "...holding on to... a good conscience" before God. (1 Timothy 1:19)

-- The same as with his establishing and maintaining "uprightness", the qualified overseer has made comprehensive "disciplined" to be an unshakeable part of his character - his personality - who he is and what he is.

READ: an overseer... "must be... holy" (Titus 1:8)

SECTION POINT: To be qualified, God requires that an overseer must be living at a genuinely high degree of not sinning, which necessitates that he also must be genuinely free from all of his strongholds of sin.

-- In the Greek, being "holy" contains the meaning of living in a "right" state before God - in other words, being and maintaining "consecration and purity from defilement" and "living in conformity to God and His standards", which of course are clearly stated in the Scriptures. (Strong's # 3741; *AHD* - 'right', 'holy')

-- Being "holy" is living without sinning, wherein a believer (or in this case the overseer) is intentionally striving every moment of every day not to sin.

-- Of course, living without ever sinning is technically impossible to do throughout the remainder of a believer's life on the earth (1 John 1:8), but it can be achieved to a very high degree of success daily - particularly if all of the strongholds of sin have been

genuinely removed from the believer (or overseer). For a description of how to get strongholds removed, see the document titled "Session 03 - Identifying, Exposing, And Treating Ungodly Or Sinful Habits, Behavior Patterns, Thinking, Speaking, Etc." on the 'Counseling' web-page of this website, www.believerassist.com

- - An important implication here in Titus 1:8 that **an overseer... "must be... holy"** is that an overseer is held to a higher and much more strict degree of "be holy", wherein common ordinary believers are in struggle and process to gain victory over sins, while overseers must already have both gained and established consistent victory over sins and genuine removal of all strongholds of sin.
- - With this "must... be holy" requirement of qualification to be an overseer, elder, pastor, or ministry leader, there is no room for, no allowance for, no tolerance of, no excuse for that leader to be living in a manner that is less than the required higher degree of "must... be holy".
- - The overseer's living in holiness must be exemplary, setting an excellent example for the flock, particularly because the flock is watching his life - closely - with binoculars!!! (1 Peter 5:3; 1 Timothy 4:12)
- - The continuousness and the unfailing success of "being holy" are necessities of being an overseer because not only that the flock is ever-watching him, but also because his ministry functioning is severely damaged and crippled when he has a sin incident or sin event.
- - Clearly here in Titus 1:8, God does not approve of His overseer committing a significant sin failure, and thereby God will not fully bless the corresponding ministry work that this overseer is doing.
- - So, for the overseer, his pursuit of personal holiness must be an unfading high priority.
- - Therein, he must diligently "keep [himself] pure", and "does not share in the sins of others". (1 Timothy 5:22; see 1 John 1:9)
- - He does not approve of, nor go along with, nor participate in, nor minimize, nor make excuses for sins that other people are engaging in or are promoting. (Psalm 1:1-2)
- - He is willing to silently accept and suffer consequences for taking a stand against "the sins of others", even to the extent of being unjustly accused, abused, and losing his ministry position (railroaded). (1 Timothy 5:22; 1 Peter 2:19-23)

BIG IDEA: God requires that overseers must be genuinely and consistently living in comprehensive moral "uprightness", "disciplined" mastery over all sinfulness, and "holiness" at a high degree of not sinning.

APPLICATIONS:

- - Does your life, both outwardly and inwardly, align with all of the various characteristics of "being upright", as drawn from Scriptures and described above in this document?
- - Would your spouse and co-workers agree with your self-assessment in this regard?
- - Have you made comprehensive "uprightness" a securely-established and permanent part of your personality? If not, why not?

- - Have you attained "discipline" or mastery over all sinfulness and inappropriateness in your life?
- - Or instead, do you at times lose control, flying or diving into some kind of escalation of sinfulness that in reality exerts some mastery over you?
- - Have you taken the time and effort to extensively train yourself to be "disciplined"? If not, why not?
- - Do you possess a sufficiently-compelling desire and motivation to achieve a "disciplined" life that maintains control over you succumbing to engaging in sinfulness or inappropriateness? If not, why not?

- - Are you in fact living at a genuinely high degree of "being holy" - not sinning? If not, why not?
- - Do you value genuinely making it through hours during the day without committing any sins?
- - Or instead, do you tend to minimize your own sinning, or overlook it, or ignore it, or deny it?
- - Have you or are you committing some sin that most definitely would or should result in your immediate disqualification and removal as an overseer, elder, pastor, or ministry leader if other people found out about it? If so, what do you suppose God thinks about what you are doing regarding this matter?

[Additional Lesson Questions to ponder (optional, if time allows):

- - Theorize about how much of the objectives (described in this document) can be achieved by means solely of the person, and how much can only be achieved by means of distinct empowering by the Holy Spirit. In other words, how far can a believer's own willpower and abilities take him or her in achieving and maintaining the objectives described in this document? Does God need to be involved in this process in order to achieve these objectives, and if so, in what way(s) and to what extent?]
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