

Elder Training Series

Session 08 - Qualifications Listed in Titus 1:9

(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: Titus 1:9

SECTION POINT: To be qualified, God requires that an overseer must be extensively trained and firmly establish in the Scriptures and in "sound doctrines".

"He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught,"

- - The "message" is the "word" that has come from God, which has been preserved in written form known as the 'Scriptures'. (Strong's #3056)
- - The "message" or Scriptures from God, in their original languages, are absolutely "perfect" and "flawless", making them absolutely "trustworthy". (2 Samuel 22:31; Psalms 19:7)
- - Typically, the Scriptures need to be "taught" by someone who himself has gone through training in the Scriptures, in order to both arrive at and pass on its true meaning to the next learner and the next generation. (Titus 1:9)
- - Therefore, in his past, the overseer must have gone through sufficient teaching and instruction in the Scriptures, "having been taught" the correct interpretation, the correct meaning, the correct formulation of doctrines, the appropriate application of the Scriptures, and etcetera.
- - And of course, this extensive training in the Scriptures needs to come from credible scripturally-mature sources who themselves hold "sound doctrines", so that the overseer is now essentially mature in the Scriptures and mature in "sound doctrines" of the Scriptures.
- - And now equipped with this maturity in the Scriptures and "sound doctrines" that he has thoroughly studied, learned, and cemented into his beliefs of the faith, the qualified overseer is well-established in and "firmly holding" to the "teaching" he has received in the Scriptures and "sound doctrines".
- - So when questions, and controversies, and turmoil arise in his church or ministry as to what is "sound doctrine" and what is false doctrine, the qualified overseer is steadfastly "clinging to, adhering to", and defending "sound doctrines", without personal doubts or insufficiencies that would foster him into letting any "sound doctrine" drift away or fall away from his own possession. (Strong's #0472)
- - An overall obvious conclusion, then, is that being a beginner or novice in the Scriptures is not acceptable to be qualified as an overseer, elder, pastor, or ministry leader.

READ: **"so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine"** (Titus 1:9)

SECTION POINT: God wants overseers to use their acquired extensive training in the Scriptures to present, encourage, and exhort people with "sound doctrine", which serves as a preventative to false doctrine.

- - One main and important reason why the overseer must be extensively trained and firmly establish in the Scriptures and in "sound doctrines" is because God has assigned overseers a duty to "encourage", "exhort, and implore" other people with and by means of "sound doctrine", "teaching, and instruction" in the Scriptures. (Strong's #3870, #1319)
 - - God wants the overseer to put to work and good use the extensive training in the Scriptures and "sound doctrines" that the overseer has acquired.
 - - Presenting the Scriptures, and "sound doctrines" from the Scriptures, is a primary, powerful, and impact-ful way in which God convicts and changes the minds of people and what guides their life.
 - - As verified and clearly stated in 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness..."
 - - Teaching the Scriptures and the sound doctrines of the Scriptures serves to set people on the right path before God, which consequently is very beneficial and therein "encouraging" for those people who respond agreeably to that teaching. (Psalms 119:102-105)
 - - So, there is a distinct need for this teaching, "encouraging", exhorting, and imploring through the Scriptures, which God wants overseers to perform - readily, and as a priority method to use first and thoroughly as a preventative of false doctrine.
 - - To be qualified, the overseer must be equipped and "capable" in this regard - "so that he can" do this function of his job well. (Titus 1:9, Strong's #1415)
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READ: "**so that he can... refute those who oppose it.**" (Titus 1:9)

SECTION POINT: God also wants overseers to use their acquired extensive training in the Scriptures to fearlessly confront, "refute", and terminate the teaching or promoting of false doctrine in their church or ministry.

- - God wants and even requires that overseers be prepared to and then actively engage in refuting false doctrines in the flock and the teaching of false doctrines in their flock.
- - A motivating implication here is that overseers need to readily realize, highly value, and "hold firmly to" the reality that sound doctrine and the teaching of it are vital to the health and spiritual growth that are to be occurring in a church or ministry, and to the Lord blessing and actively working within a church or ministry, wherein false doctrine and the teaching of it are directly destructive to these dynamics.
- - Overseers also need to readily realize, highly value, and "hold firmly to" the reality that every person who is teaching or promoting false doctrine is in direct "opposition" to God and to the doctrines that He has established and recorded in the Scriptures - the "trustworthy message".
- - Technically, every person, who persists in their teaching or promoting of false doctrine, is "contradicting" and/or "disputing" what God says, and is "refusing" to submit to His will and His authority. (Strong's #0483)

-- Of course careful consideration and knowledgeable discernment need to be used to determine whether the doctrine at issue is in fact a false doctrine or instead is merely a "disputable matter" - (see Romans 14:1ff for examples). (ff = 'and following verses')

-- "Refuting" involves confronting every person who is doing this, holding each of them accountable, and not letting slide or continue the teaching or promoting of false doctrine.

-- In terms of practical steps of action, the implication is that this "refuting" involves:

--- presenting Scriptures that are applicable to the false doctrine and appropriate interpretation of those Scriptures;

--- "refuting" the false doctrine, by: "proving or showing it to be false, wrong, or erroneous; effectively denying its accuracy or truth; and overthrowing its supposed validity by utilizing and applying the Scriptures through argument or proof"; (AHD - 'refute' and 'confute', from Strong's #1651 - "refute")

--- "admonishing" the violating person, by: voicing or conveying disapproval of his/her false doctrine; counseling him/her to correct or abandon his/her false doctrine; and reminding him/her of his/her accountability before God for teaching, promoting, and spreading this false doctrine that is in direct opposition to God; (AHD - 'admonish', from Strong's #1651)

--- issuing a stern ultimatum and then promptly enforcing it if it is not complied to - which is: "Either stop teaching or promoting this false doctrine immediately, or else lose your teaching position and be banished from this church or ministry!!". [Notice that this giving and enforcing of this ultimatum is similar to in the Old Testament when the Lord mandated that people engaged in some particular sins (of great destructive potential to easily and quickly lead many people in the camp astray) be forcibly purged from the camp of the Lord's people. (e.g. Deuteronomy 13:1-11)]

-- To personally be actively involved in this "refuting" necessitates that each of the overseers must:

--- not be afraid of losing the attendance of some people in his congregation / ministry;

--- not be afraid to confront, refute, admonish;

--- not be afraid that consequently a doctrinal conflict will arise;

--- not be afraid of causing and being totally immersed in this conflict;

--- not be afraid of dealing with this conflict until the teaching of false doctrine has entirely ceased;

--- not be afraid to persevere in this conflict and stand his ground;

--- realize and maintain confidence that the Lord does not want this violator to be part of his church or ministry if the violator refuses to repent and cease teaching or promoting his/her false doctrine.

-- In order to be qualified, every overseer must be able and willing to do all that is involved with this "refuting", which therein:

--- requires each overseer to personally possess sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures, the sound interpretation of the Scriptures, and familiarity with the sound doctrines that are basic for the faith;

--- requires each overseer to exert ongoing watchfulness, alertness, observing, and discerning to detect false doctrine;

- - - requires each overseer to not be wishy-washy, nor weak-willed, nor timid, nor acquiescent, nor succumbing in regard to when false doctrine is being taught or promoted in his church or ministry.

- - A final observation for Titus 1:9 is that in the Greek, the word "both" links the two directives together that follow the phrase "so that he can" - in other words, overseers are directed to do "both" the "encourage others by sound doctrine" "and" the "refute those who oppose it". (two instances of the use of Strong's #2532 in v.1:9)

- - Both of these directives are duties that God has assigned for each overseer to "be able to" do and to outright do in preventing and in removing the teaching and promoting of false doctrines within their church or ministry.

BIG IDEA: God requires each overseer to be extensively trained in the Scriptures, so that they effectively implement and maintain sound doctrines in their church or ministry.

APPLICATIONS:

- - Are you extensively trained and firmly establish in the Scriptures and in "sound doctrines"? If not, what are you doing to correct this disqualifying deficiency?

- - Do you prioritize the importance that every one of the doctrines that you hold is correct and true according to appropriate interpretation of the relating Scriptures?

- - Within the preaching, teaching, and/or training that you conduct in your church or ministry, do you prioritize content that distinctly and clearly presents sound doctrines? Or instead, do you tend to essentially present very little in regard to sound doctrines?

- - Within the Scripture verses that you use in your preaching or teaching, do you take time to focus, highlight, thoroughly explain, and exhortative-ly apply sound doctrine when it is embedded in those verses? Or instead, do you essentially fail to recognize, or ignore, and jump over that sound doctrine and immediately proceed onward in your sermon or lesson?

- - When you observe other people preaching or teaching in your church or ministry, do you naturally mentally monitor and critique all of their statements for scriptural accuracy and doctrinal correctness? Or instead, do you merely half-listen to what is being stated while giving no thought to its scriptural accuracy or doctrinal correctness?

- - If you are or will become an overseer or elder in a church, do you think you would raise a concern with the pastor if you think that a doctrine he preached or taught is not sound or correct?

- - If you are of the personality that you are unwilling to confront someone who is teaching or promoting false doctrine in your church or ministry, what does God say in this verse of Titus 1:9 about your qualification as an overseer, elder, pastor, or ministry leader?

- - Do you realize and accept that you as an overseer or elder have a direct obligation before God to confront the teaching or promoting of false doctrine in your church or ministry, and to fail to perform this obligation is to rebel against God and to commit a serious dereliction of duty?

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