

# DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE

## QUALIFICATIONS FOR SPIRITUAL LEADERS

Today's Passage: Titus 1:1-16

For the week of April 28th

### MAIN POINT

Because of the great responsibility of spiritual leadership, we must take seriously the qualifications for leaders.

### COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

*Use these questions to learn more about others in your Life Group.*

**When was the last time you hired someone to do something? How did you find that person?**

**Have you ever had a bad experience when you hired someone? What did you learn from that experience?**

Qualifications matter. Whether someone is fixing a hole in your roof or becoming your doctor, you want to know they're qualified for the task at hand. How much more so should we not only be aware of but care deeply about the qualifications we find in Scripture for those who lead the people of God? Because of the great responsibility of spiritual leadership we must take seriously the qualifications for those leaders.

SCAN HERE FOR ADDITIONAL  
COMMENTARY ON TODAY'S LESSON



## GROW TOGETHER

**Read Titus 1:1-4 (ESV).**

**1:1** *“Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, 2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began 3 and at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior;*

**4** *To Titus, my true child in a common faith:*

*Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.”*

**How did Paul describe himself in the introduction to his letter to Titus? What did Paul say was his goal as a servant of God and apostle of Jesus Christ?**

**How can a knowledge of the truth lead God's people to godliness (v. 1)?**

**What assertion did Paul make in verse 2 about the character of God? Why was this crucial to his own ministry as entrusted to Him by God?**

**Why is it significant that Paul based his hope of eternal life on the character of God and on promises God made before time began?**

God's age-old plan and purpose to save His people has been revealed in Christ. Our faith in Him carries with it the promise of eternal life and the call to godly living. In every generation God calls some to serve Him by proclaiming the truth and building up believers.

**Read Titus 1:5-9 (ESV).**

*1:5 "This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— 6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it."*

Titus was given the task of appointing "elders in every town" on the island of Crete (v. 5). This term elder was also used in the Jewish synagogues, and described the wisdom and maturity of the leaders. In verse 7, Paul referred to these elders as overseers, a word meaning supervisor or guardian. These men were responsible for the oversight of the teaching and work of the local congregations. Paul also said an elder was God's administrator. This word describes Joseph's responsibilities in Egypt when Potiphar "put him in charge of his household and placed all that he owned under his authority" (Gen. 39:4).

**What qualities does the world look for in the people chosen to be leaders in business and government? How does this compare with the characteristics God wants to see in church leaders?**

**Why would Paul make the appointing of elders a priority task for Titus to accomplish? How would you respond to someone who said, "The only leader we need is the Holy Spirit"?**

**In putting together the qualifications for elders, why did Paul focus on character qualities instead of specific skills or responsibilities?**

## Why should a man's family life be taken into consideration in choosing church leaders?

God's plan for the church is that men of good reputation and character should be responsible to oversee the people and the work of a local church. A good elder will be an effective overseer at home as well as in the church. He must teach and defend the truth.

### Read Titus 1:6-10 (ESV).

**1:10** *"For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. **11** They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach. **12** One of the Cretans, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." **13** This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, **14** not devoting themselves to Jewish myths and the commands of people who turn away from the truth. **15** To the pure, all things are pure, but to the defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure; but both their minds and their consciences are defiled. **16** They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work."*

**What did Paul say was the result of the deceptive words of the false teachers? How did he characterize their motives for spreading unsound teaching?**

**How was Titus to respond to the deceptive, dishonest teachers? According to verse 13, what goal was he hoping to accomplish by rebuking them?**

**Why did Paul quote the Cretan proverb in verse 12? How did these words apply to the false teachers Titus and the elders would need to confront?**

**What did Paul mean in verse 16 that a person's profession to know God can be denied by his or her works?**

Those who teach about God and faith must demonstrate submission to the Lord both in their doctrine and in their conduct. They are to be confronted if their teaching is deceptive or their lifestyle is impure. Church leaders must protect their people from false teaching.

We should thank the Lord for the spiritual leaders that help build up our faith in Christ. We should affirm, support, and follow such leaders. When we have the opportunity to select church leaders, we should look for people of godly character as well as relevant abilities. We should expect our pastors and other leaders to teach the truth and to boldly confront and correct false teachings, encouraging all to purity in teaching and lifestyle.

## **MAKE AN IMPACT**

*Discover how you can apply today's lesson to your life so you can impact the world.*

**What is one way you can encourage someone this week God has placed in a position of spiritual leadership?**

**What about you? Are you in a position of leadership? Are you taking seriously enough the calling on your life to be so?**

**Are you on guard right now against false teaching? What's one way you can help protect your family and church from this kind of teaching?**