



'Commit to the Bride!' Sermon Series

Sermon #2:

'Committed to the Proper Qualifications of Elders!'

Titus 1:5-9

Sunday, January 21st, 2024

Last week in **'Commit to the Bride!'** Series:

- Last week we kicked off our sermon series on the book of Titus as we looked at *Titus 1:1-4*, with a sermon entitled *'Committed to Serving!'*.
 - Last Sunday I asked the question: *How does the apostle Paul show us in his greeting to Titus that we should be Committed to Serving in the local Church?*
 - **Point 1: Recognizes his Servant Status. (V. 1)**
 - **Point 2: Realizes his Sacred Role. (V. 2-3)**

- **Point 3: Responds to his Special Friend. (V. 4)**

- Based on last Sunday's message, how committed are you to serving the Lord?
- Have you recognized your servant status before Him and the sacred role that you play in God's Kingdom as a servant?

'Committed to the Proper Qualifications of Elders!'

Titus 1:5-9

Sermon in a Sentence:

A Biblical Pastor in a Bible believing New Testament Church will be Properly Dedicated to his Family, Purposefully Distant from the Flesh, Positively Demonstrate Fruit, and Provide Doctrine that is Found in the Bible.

Intro:

- *When the Lord laid on my heart that we needed to go through the book of Titus as a Church family, there were two passages that I knew I'd have to preach, that I was already nervous about.*
 - One of those is the passage we arrive at today.
- *In just a moment we will look at the qualifications that Paul gives Titus in regards to who should be selected to be Pastors.*
 - *In verse 5 of our text this morning, we find that the spiritual status of the Churches on the island of Crete was not ideal.*
- '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—' Titus 1:5

shortcomings. But I'm just seeking to be faithful to my God and King, although I fall short daily.

- *Join me in turning to Titus as we look at how the NT Church should be committed to Proper Qualifications of Pastors/Elders/Overseers.*

Read Titus 1:5-9

Question to Ask:

What does the Apostle Paul tell Titus the qualifications are for a man to be able serve as an elder in a NT Church in Crete?

Point 1: *Properly Dedicated to his Family. (V. 6)*

- *I've heard it said before and I still believe it to be true. A Pastor's #1 ministry responsibility is his own soul, and his family.*
 - Don't expect your Pastor to be effective in the pulpit or ministry if his leadership and relationships are not effective in the home.
 - *Those who are to be Pastors, should be properly dedicated to His family.*
 - I believe there are two ways that the Apostle Paul demonstrates how a Pastor is to be dedicated to his family.
- *One Woman Man. (V. 6a)*
 - 'if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife,'
 - *Before we dive deeply into what this verse means and does not mean, I find it important to point out that Paul is referring to a Man*

holding the office of Pastor due to what he says 'the HUSBAND of one wife'

- *In Church cultures today there has become much 'controversy', especially in other denominations, on whether a woman can be a Pastor.*

■ *Scripture speaks to this clearly and plainly.*

- 1st Timothy 2:12 shows us that a woman is not to hold the office of elder.
- *Now, notice the phrase 'above reproach', some translations say 'blameless', but the same phrase is repeated at the beginning of verse 7.*
 - **Word Study**
 - This phrase for 'above reproach' comes from the greek word '*Anekletos*' which occurs 5 times in the NT and literally means to be completely blameless.
 - *W.E. Vine notes 'implies not merely acquittal, but the absence of even a charge or accusation against a person.'*
 - It's obvious important to Paul that the Pastors Titus selects be blameless because the same greek phrase is mentioned in verse 7.

- ***I don't believe that this phrase means that a Pastor and his wife have to have children, but if they do, they should be raised in accordance with Ephesians 6:1-4, Colossians 3:20-21.***
- ***I believe Bryan Chappel described it well when he said 'A person is not ready for the responsibilities of others' spiritual welfare if he is not willing and able to take responsibility for those in his own household.'***
 - ***In verse 6 it seems clear that Paul believes the family is the proving ground for how well a Pastor will lead and be responsible for the flock.***
- ***I believe that this verse is implying that the children in the house will be believers and followers of Christ (when they are old enough to make that decision for themselves).***
 - The home as a whole should be considered because there are times (teenagers), when children can have rebellious times that demand more of the parent's attention.
- ***My personal interpretation on this verse is that it does not include children when they are grown and out of the house, but while they are living in the house is when the Father and Mother are responsible for them.***

- Dr. Daniel Aiken said 'A godly leader, a godly dad, will do whatever is necessary in terms of time and attention to nurture his children in the training and instruction of the Lord.' (You should give your Pastor the adequate time to do this...

Point 2: *Purposefully Distant from the Flesh. (V. 7)*

- ***In verses 7-8, we find several things that Paul says that Pastors should Purposefully Distance themselves from, as well as in verse 8, several things that should be Positively visible in their life.***
 - 'For an overseer, [c] 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,' Titus 1:7
 - ****Word Study****
 - ***The word 'Overseer' is found in verse 7 and comes from the greek word 'Episkopos' and literally means overseer.***
 - Pastors are to be overseers of the Church God has placed them in.
- ***Like I opened up this morning, Presbuteros & Epsikopos (as well as Poimen), are all interchangeable in referring to the same NT office of Pastor/Elder.***
 - ***Before we look at the things Paul wants the potential Pastors to stay away from***

& to demonstrate, we need to remember verse 5, where these new elders would 'put into order' situations that were occurring on the island of Crete.

- Very quickly, let me share with you 4 things that I believe pastors need to Purposefully Distant themselves from in regards to the flesh.
- **Stay away from Arrogance. (V. 7a)**
 - 'He must not be arrogant'
 - The word for arrogant in the greek text literally means **'Pleasing Himself.'**
 - **Pastors are to seek to please and praise God with their work.**
 - **This word in the greek gives the implication of one who is only concerned about his own rights and does not care about others.**
 - That's what the air of arrogance often puts out.
- **Stay away from Anger. (V. 7b)**
 - 'or quick-tempered'
 - The kind of 'quick-tempered' person that this verse is referring to is not a reference to occasional outburst, but one who is angry all or most of the time.
 - **With a short fuse that can easily be set off with the wrong word.**
 - **Pastors have to deal with a lot of stuff in the day-to-day responsibilities of the ministry, so it**

is not good for a Pastor to be quick tempered, because in the ministry there are a variety of things that could 'set one off' on a daily basis.

■ **Robert Yarbarough said 'A hothead is unlikely to prosper in the Christian care of souls.'**

- Titus was not to select known hot heads as Elders in the Churches at Crete.
- **Stay away from Alcohol. (V. 7c)**
 - 'or a drunkard'
 - Dr. Daniel Aiken defines this as **'someone who is given to drink causing him to lose his mental sharpness and sound judgment.'**
 - The island of Crete was known for being an island that is similar to a 'resort destination' in our own culture.
 - Many rich people in the ancient world would travel to Crete to vacation.
 - **Paul does not want any of the elders not being as sharp as they would usually be due to alcohol.**
 - **This word in the greek also implies any kind of uncensored for-others conduct.**
 - Like if someone was 'high' or taking something that did not allow them to be as sharp or prepared as they would need to be.
 - These things a Minister should stay away from.

- **Stay away from Accounts. (V. 7d)**
 - ‘or violent or greedy for gain,’
 - **According to a greek historian by the name of Polybius, the island of Crete was known for their greed and their love and high honor of money.**
 - **The Minister of God is not to be one who is concerned with personal accounts, but with souls.**
 - **A Pastor or potential Pastor should not be addicted to gambling or the love of money.**
 - **While the Pastor needs to provide for his family, he should not do things in ministry in order to weasel people out of money.**
 - An elder in a NT Church should not be known for taking advantage of people or situations for the sake of money.

Point 3: Positively Demonstrate Fruit. (V. 8)

- **So we see that the Apostle Paul tells Titus what Pastors need to stay away from, now he transitions and tells Titus the qualities that he needs to be able to be demonstrated in the life of a potential elder.**
 - I believe there are 6 positive qualities that should be able to be demonstrated in a Pastor’s life, even though they are not perfect and will fail in these areas from time to time!
 - **Again, Bryan Chappel sheds some needed light on considering these 6**

positives after the 4 negatives we just looked at:

- **‘Our understanding of the purpose of these positives is enriched when we observe that they are stated in the context of the apostle’s concern for the influence of our conduct on others. Paul is not merely concerned for the personal implications of our conduct but requires that we examine all of our actions for their impact on others.’**
 - Let’s look at the 6 positive things that should be seen in the life of a Minister.
- **Be Hospitable. (V. 8a)**
 - ‘but hospitable,’
 - This means that a minister should be willing to open up their home and their heart to others.
 - **Notice how this is the opposite of the first negative in verse 7, instead of pleasing oneself, we should love others.**
- **Do Good. (V. 8b)**
 - ‘a lover of good,’
 - **A Pastor should seek to do good but also love what promotes good for others.**
 - This especially includes when a Pastor feels correction or discipline may be

what's 'good' for someone even if they don't think it is...

- **Be Self-controlled. (V. 8c)**
 - 'Self-controlled,'
 - **A Minister should be able to control his own desires and to seek to keep himself from impulsive or possibly damaging behaviors.**
- **Live Upright. (V. 8d)**
 - 'Upright,'
 - *The Pastor is to live upright in regard to God's laws and Word, not according to what the culture may or may not deem as upright.*
- **Be Holy. (V. 8e)**
 - 'Holy,'
 - **This use of holy is certainly not implying that the Pastor is by any means perfect, but that Christ holiness be seen in his life and that he seeks to be Godly.**
- **Desire Discipline. (V. 8f)**
 - 'and disciplined.'
 - *This term in the greek is often used in regards to athletic terms that are found elsewhere in the NT.*
 - A minister should be disciplined and rigors in his biblical training, health/eating habits, disciplined in sermon preparation and devotional time with God.

- **Let me reiterate, that this text is not expecting Pastors, or your Pastor, to be perfect.**

- Rather that the man of God seeks and strives to stay away from the 4 negatives we looked at and seek and strive to demonstrate positive fruits.
- **The Bible also says this of Pastors who are FAITHFUL not PERFECT in fulfilling their call.**
 - 'Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.' 1st Timothy 5:17

Point 4: Provide Doctrine that is Found in the Bible. (V. 9)

- Last, but most certainly not least, it's important for Pastors to Provide Doctrine to their congregations that is found in the Bible.
- **The main point of emphasis that verse 9 gives us, is that Elders/Pastors should have the ability to teach the Bible, and what they teach should come from God (the scriptures).**
 - **It should go without being said, but sadly we live in a world and society where MOST preachers no longer preach the Bible as the Word of God.**
 - One of the main tasks that God has given me as your undershepherd, is to provide solid doctrine to you that is found straight from God's Word.

- *A man would not qualify to be a Pastor if he just likes to serve his opinions, or his own personal fixes.*
 - Pastors must provide sound doctrine, and true doctrine is only found in the Bible. God's Word to us.
- ***Due to what Paul will share with Titus later on in this letter, we believe that the Cretan Church was struggling with false teachers.***
 - If a man is preaching a false doctrine, he's not a preacher of the Gospel, he's a false teacher.
- *I believe that there are three important things that we find in these verses that show the importance of Pastors providing doctrine that is found only in the Bible.*
- ***Believe the Inerrancy of the Bible. (V. 9a)***
 - 'He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught,'
 - The word '***inerrant***' literally means incapable of being wrong.
 - ***The man that God has called to preach His Word must believe that the Word of God is inerrant. That it is incapable of error.***
 - We need more preachers that believe the Word of God has no error and preach the Word unapologetically.
- Bryan Chappel said '***Our lives should express the power of the Gospel, but our lips should express the hope of the Gospel.***'
- *Tragically, there are times where preachers will let go of what they once held firmly to in order to attract crowds or want the people in their congregation to like them.*
 - But Paul is telling Titus that the job of the preacher is to hold firm to the word of God and not let go!
- ****Word Study****
 - In the english we find the phrase 'trustworthy word', in the Greek we find the phrase '***Pistou Logou***' which when literally translated means '***The Faithful Word.***'
- ***John McArthur said 'Pastors, therefore, are to love the faithful Word of God, respect it, study it, believe it, and obey it. It is their spiritual nourishment. That involves more than mere commitment to the inspiration and the inerrancy of Scripture, essential as that is. It is commitment to the authority and sufficiency of God's Word as the only source of moral and spiritual truth.'***
- God's Word is so faithful because of the God who inspired it.
- ***Believe the Bible is Inspired by God. (V. 9b)***

- ‘so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine’
 - ***It’s not enough that the Pastor believes the Bible is incapable of error, it’s also important that the Pastor can encourage/teach those the Bible and rebuke those who come against its teachings.***
 - ***Paul tells Titus here that this is an imperative quality in the Elders that will be chosen to lead these Churches.***
 - Thomas D. Lea in his commentary on Titus is quick to point out that the noun in the greek that is used with ‘instruction’ comes with the definite article that suggests that Christian doctrine was beginning to be formed in a recognized way of orthodoxy, meaning, it was probably beginning to be written.
 - ***Before this time, it was essentially oral. So, the preacher would be able to have the written word to share with others, but others would also come along (false teachers) and seek to distort the Word.***
 - ***Pastors must believe that the Bible is God’s Holy and Inspired Word.***
 - Not their own thoughts or opinions, but that it is God’s Word given to us.
 - ***But this verse also shows us that the Pastor must be gifted by God (spiritual gift), in the area of preaching and teaching God’s Word.***
- In order for the elders of the Church to be successful in doing this, Pastors #1 priority and commitment is found in Acts 6:4.
 - ‘devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’
 - ***That’s why the office of Deacon was added to the NT Church in Acts 6, so that the Deacons can serve and take care of the physical needs of the congregation, while the elders take care of the spiritual.***
 - Sadly in the American Church today we’ve often misconstrued what we want ‘Pastors to be’ or ‘what we expect them to be’, instead of looking at what God’s Word expects of them.
 - ***Be Ready to Defend the Faith. (V. 9c)***
 - ‘and also to rebuke those who contradict it.’
 - Not only should Pastors be able to teach/preach God’s Word, they should also be able to rebuke anyone who seeks to come against it and contradict it.
 - ****Word Study****
 - The word ‘Rebuke’ in the English comes from the Greek word ***‘Elencho’*** which literally means ***to put to proof, to test, and to convict.***

- Pastors need to be prepared to be able to rebuke false teachers and defend the faith at all costs and at all times.
 - *This does not include having ‘all the answers’ to the questions you may have, but it is speaking of when false teachers come around, being able to rebuke them with the Word of God.*
 - *How can someone rebuke the Word if they don’t first know the Word and the God who wrote it.*

Conclusion:

- ***This morning we’ve looked hard and in depth on the qualifications of Pastors from a Biblical perspective.***
 - For me, this is a hard pill to swallow and encourages me to try my best to be a better Pastor everyday. Because one day, I’ll have to report to my master, Jehovah.
- You may be here this morning and you think this message has no application to you, but when in reality, it affects us all because we as the Church are under the Pastoral leadership that God has put in place here.
- ***My daily prayer, is that God will raise up men, young and old, that meet these qualifications, to serve as Pastors. I also specifically pray that God would raise up men in our Church and CALL THEM to preach the Word and to Pastor.***
 - *Our world and our country is in desperate need of Godly men to serve as Pastors.*

- ***We live in a day right now where we are in desperate need of more:***
 - Billy Grahams.
 - W.A. Criswell’s.
 - Dr. Tim Clark’s.
 - Dr. Adrian Roger’s.
 - Larry Baldwins.
 - Wes Church’s.
 - Everette Talbert’s.
 - Tom Burn’s.
 - Bill Paullings.
 - R.G. Lee’s.
 - George Whitfields.
 - Lonnie Schulls.
 - Luke Beasley’s.

- ***We are in desperate need, for God to raise up men like these and others, who meet the God given qualifications and are not afraid to get up and preach the truth.***
 - Whether you like it or not.
 - Whether you are there or not.
 - Whether you give or not.
 - Whether you care or not.
 - ***We need more men in Pulpits across this country that are Preachers and not Puppets. Pastors and not Pacifiers.***
 - ***Oh God, raise up some men to serve the Bible Believing Churches in our land.***