

Shepherdology 101 Outline

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- II. **Fundamental 2: Jesus' Word, Our Effective Guide**
- III. **Fundamental 3: Jesus, Our Model Shepherd**
- IV. **The Need for Shepherds**
- V. **The Development of Elders**
- VI. **Ten Key Passages**
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 - A. Applicability – How do we use them?
 - B. Specific Qualifications – 26 Keys in 7 groups
 - C. Key Questions – What about?
 - D. Basis – How realistic is this list?

Remember: Numerous biblical lists provide clear and objective moral standards for those who have been saved. These are not intended to provide guidance in how to merit salvation. They are designed to show those who have been saved by grace through faith how to live holy lives from gratitude toward the One who saved them. The qualifications of an elder constitute one such list.

IX. **Qualifications of an Elder / Shepherd**

In 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, we are presented with two lists of qualifications for elders. Taken together, these lists identify twenty-six different criteria by which to evaluate a man's suitability to serve as a shepherd.

These qualities also represent ongoing growth targets for elders.

- A. Applicability – How do we use them?
 - 1. View One: These qualifications are out of date with the needs of the modern church and represent what was important in the first century.

There is nothing intrinsically wrong with seeking someone who brings some “unlisted characteristics” to a particular ministry context, but the character profile in our two passages is

2. View Two: These qualifications represent perfect ideals and thus noble goals toward which men should strive (but will never attain TSOH).
3. View Three: These qualifications can be meaningfully and profitably used as “progress markers.”
 - a. Support One: “Must be” is not the same as “must have been.”

An overseer, then, must be above reproach... (1 Timothy 3:2).

For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward... (Titus 1:7).

Let’s talk Greek verbs! All Greek tenses include a time and manner element (in the indicative mood).

Present tense

Imperfect

Aorist

“Should you not also have had mercy on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy on you?” (Matthew 18:33).

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others”
(Matthew 23:23).

- b. Support Two: Transformation can change a man’s label.

Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were (imperfect of eimi) some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (1 Corinthians 6:9–11).

B. Specific Qualifications – 26 Keys in 7 groups

The man whom God commends to a flock (1) clearly demonstrates general godliness and maturity (above reproach).

Specifically, he must be exemplary (2) in his marriage and home, (3) his personal walk, (4) his relationships with others, (5) his devotion to the word, (6) his time in the Lord, and (7) his reputation with those in the community.

1. Above Reproach

An overseer, then, must be above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2); If any man is above reproach (Titus 1:6); For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward (Titus 1:7).

In 1 Timothy, Paul used the term *anepilēptos* (ἀνεπίλημτος). In Titus, he used *anegklētos* (ἀνέγκλητος). These two words are different in emphasis even though they are both translated “above reproach” by the NASB.

In Titus 1:7, the phrase “as God’s steward” accompanies “above reproach.”

A “steward” (*oikonomos*, οἰκονόμος) is the one in charge of a master’s household (cf. Luke 12:42).

God’s assessment of who is “above reproach” is the only opinion that matters.

Paul adds: *It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do* (1 Timothy 3:1).

But a shepherd is not just a growing Christian; he **helps others** grow. He is not just an effective servant; he **helps others** serve.

2. Exemplary Husband and Father

Paul instructed both Timothy and Titus to look for a man who is “the husband of one wife” (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6). To Timothy, he added that such a man must be *one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)* (1 Timothy 3:4–5).

Paul also directed Titus to find men who have *children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion* (Titus 1:6).

Q: Does “one-woman man” disqualify someone who is single?

Q: What about someone who has been divorced and married someone else?

He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?) (1 Timothy 3:4–5); Having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion (Titus 1:6).

From these two passages, we can extract two pairs of home-life benchmarks. The first pair of qualities describes how a man functions as the head of his home; the second pair looks at the spiritual state of his children.

The term translated “manage” (proistēmi, προϊστημι) denotes

The phrase “keeping his children under control” is literally “having his children in submission.”

While the domestic qualifications of an elder in 1 Timothy 3:4–5 focus on a father, the related qualifications in Titus 1:6 focus on his children.

Such a man has “children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion” (Titus 1:6). The term “children” (teknon, τέκνον) denotes offspring without reference to age.

They are children, literally, “of faith.”

Because he trusts God, a true believer should be someone whom you can trust.

Paul names Timothy as “my beloved and faithful child in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 4:17)

The expression “faithful child” represents the same two Greek terms found in Titus 1:6.

So when Paul calls for elders to have “children of faith,” he is thinking of sons and daughters who are to their fathers what Timothy is to himself.

Q: What about the man without children? This qualification would not apply to such a man.

Q: What about the man with young children? It may be too soon to tell about whether such a man's children will make their faith their own.

Q: What about a man who has a son or daughter who has turned away from God?

Paul then identifies two specific virtues that must be evident in a prospective elder's children that are the outgrowth of their (the children's) faith.

Certainly godly children would demonstrate a full range of virtues. But an elder's children are "not accused of dissipation or rebellion" (Titus 1:6).

"Dissipation" involves

"Rebellion" involves

The ministry of a father in the home is a key window through which to discern a man's suitability as a shepherd.

Note how his proven character as a home manager is essential to his function as a church manager. He is a catalyst and coach who brings out the best in his children and thereby confirms his ability to do likewise outside the home.

Summary: Look for the following. If he is single, his relationship with the opposite sex is exemplary. If married, he is singularly devoted to His wife. His home life reflects order and purpose. He has encouraged his children to follow Jesus and their character vouches for the fact that their faith is their own.

Discussion Guide

Discussion Question: Look at the table (on pages 29-32 of the Shepherdology Practice booklet). Have someone read the 26 summaries out loud. As you listen to this list, what strikes you as an unexpected requirement for church leadership? What quality stands out as one that churches often overlook? Which of these 26 qualities would you put on your list of personally challenging targets?

Discussion Question: How should we be using these qualifications in our search for Pastor Next? How should these qualifications relate to the process of recognizing elders / shepherds?

Discussion Question: Have you ever been part of a men's group that used these 26 qualifications as the basis for a Bible Study, discussion, prayer, and mutual encouragement? Describe the experience. If not, why not? In what ways could men's ministries at our church be raised up that focus on developing these qualities in men?

Discussion Question: In His word, God has identified these 26 qualities as elder essentials. Explain how each one is mission-critical. In other words, pick a quality and contrast how someone would shepherd who possesses this quality versus someone who lacks it.

Discussion Question: Evaluate what Jim presented as it concerns the phrase "an elder must be." Do you think his view is correct? Why or why not?

Discussion Question: Summarize in your own words what it means to be an exemplary husband and father in the terms described in 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6. What is one specific way you could do better as a husband or father based on what the Bible says?