

Shepherdology 101 Outline

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- IX. **Qualifications of an Elder / Shepherd (continued)**
 - B. Specific Qualifications – 26 Keys in 7 groups
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 - 3. Healthy Inner Man (7-14)
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Paul instructs Timothy and Titus (and us) to find men who are *able to teach* (1 Timothy 3:2); *holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict* (Titus 1:9).

“Apt to teach” is derived from a single adjective, *didaktikos* (διδακτικός), only elsewhere used in 2 Timothy 2:24-25.

Although the adjective *didaktikos* is rare, the cognate verb *didaskō* (διδάσκω) appears often in the New Testament.

This verb links truth to transformation: “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” (Matthew 28:20).

Didaskō involves helping others reshape how they live to align with a standard.

Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored (Titus 2:3–5).

The goal (*hina*) of the older women’s teaching is to “encourage” (present, active, subjunctive) the younger women “to be” (present, active, infinitive of εἶμι, *eimi*) certain things.

“Teaching” aims at transformation but transformation that is truth-driven.

As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines (heterodidaskaleō) (1 Timothy 1:3).

Wanting to be teachers of the Law (nomodidaskaloi), even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions (1 Timothy 1:7).

If anyone advocates a different doctrine (heterodidaskaleō) and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine (didaskalia) conforming to godliness, he is conceited and understands nothing (1 Timothy 6:3-4).

The man who is “able to teach” explains what the word actually says.

The phrase “holding fast (*antechō*, ἀντέχω) the faithful word” identifies the core commitment that fuels a shepherd’s ability to exhort and refute well.

Antechō is only used four times in the New Testament

Jesus said, *No servant can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth* (Luke 16:13).

Paul uses *antechō* in Titus 1:9 to denote an overseer as one who loves the word.

In Proverbs 3, the writer personifies wisdom and lists the benefits of devotion to her: *She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, / And happy are all who hold her fast* (Proverbs 3:18).

“Take hold” denotes a tenacious commitment to wisdom as if she is life itself; Similarly, the man who holds fast the faithful word clings to the word as his lifeline.

One more thing:

Regardless of the size of the group to which a shepherd speaks, when he speaks, you hear what God says on the matter. When facing a challenging ministry situation, he searches the word. When trying to understand how to help someone, he looks for relevant Scripture. When he prays, you hear the overflow of a man who abides in His word.

The word to which this man clings is “faithful.”

It also conforms to “the teaching.”

He is not interested in innovation, but preservation. He is not trying to come up with something new, some “insight” that no one has ever seen. He wants to faithfully pass on to others exactly what he is taught from the text.

Incline your ear and hear the words of the wise, / And apply your mind to my knowledge; / For it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, / That they may be ready on your lips (Proverbs 22:17–18).

Summary:

God wants men to serve as shepherds whose devotion to His word fuels an ability to bring God’s perspective to every conversation. In short, they use God’s word as a catalyst to make those around them better.

6. Seasoned (25)

Look for a man to serve as a shepherd who is *not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil (1 Timothy 3:6).*

A man who has recently come to Christ and is in the early stages of growth is not qualified to serve as an elder.

A recent convert who is recognized as an elder is highly susceptible to becoming puffed up.

For a new believer, spiritual growth is neither automatic nor immediate.

For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is an infant. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil (Hebrews 5:12–14).

Enough time has passed for these believers to have become “teachers,” but they remain “infants.”

According to Hebrews, a new convert should devote his energies to learning the basics and doing the spiritual exercises necessary to become mature. This will take time. But it will be time well spent.

The word translated “teachers” is *didaskalos* (διδάσκαλος), which is another cognate from *didaskō* (διδάσκω).

Hebrews 5:12–14 describes those who, by right of the amount of time that has passed, should have acquired the ability to teach.

Paul wants men to serve as elders who have spent sufficient time disciplining themselves to temper the ministry killer that is pride.

The shepherd who will be of greatest help to his flock knows from personal experience what the journey toward maturity in Christ looks like and what is required to on his part to become mature.

7. Respected (26)

He must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil (1 Timothy 3:7).

The word translated “reputation” is *marturia* (μαρτυρία). Our English word “martyr” comes from *marturia*.

Of the thirty-seven appearances of the word *marturia* in the New Testament, thirty of them are in John’s works. This appearance of *marturia* in 1 Timothy 3:7 is Paul’s only use of the word.

Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and they were not finding

any. For many were giving false testimony (pseudo + martureō) against Him, but their testimony was not consistent (Mark 14:55–56).

In 1 Timothy 3:7, Paul is advocating for men to be recognized as elders based on positive testimony (*kalos marturia*) from witnesses.

This testimony is to be sought are specifically identified as “those outside.”

In Mark 4:11, Jesus distinguishes between “his followers” and those who are outside (*exō, ἔξω*).

For what have I to do with judging outsiders (exō, ἔξω)? Do you not judge those who are within the church? (1 Corinthians 5:12).

In the same way, the “outsiders” in 1 Timothy 3:7 should be understood as nonbelievers. Paul is directing us to look for a man who represents Christ well in the community.

But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need (1 Thessalonians 4:10–12).

When Christians quietly go about the business of providing for their own and others, their conduct commends them to outsiders.

“If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you” (John 15:19).

When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained (Revelation 6:9).

These martyrs will not flinch from declaring their allegiance to Jesus, even though it will cost them their lives.

In the world's opinion, these benighted souls deserve to die. In God's eyes, the fact that they choose death over denial powerfully testifies to their true identity.

Regardless of what world a man lives in, public testimony should confirm his true identity.

In every case, look for someone who lives out his allegiance to Jesus in the public forum.

Summary

The man whom God commends to a flock (1) clearly demonstrates general godliness and maturity. Specifically, he is exemplary in (2) 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.

C. Key Questions – What about?

1. Young Men's Eligibility

There is no minimum age requirement listed in 1 Timothy 3 or Titus 1.

In which case, we would use what is explicit

2. Women's Eligibility

Clearly, women are both capable and explicitly called to demonstrate at least some of the qualifications of an elder.

Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored (Titus 2:3–5).

The term Paul uses to describe these women mentors is *presbutidas* (πρεσβύτιδας), which is a feminine noun that is a cognate to the masculine noun “elders” (πρεσβύτερος, *presbuteros*).

These “older women” are explicitly instructed to minister to younger women.

These are mission critical qualities for women who would serve as mentors and growth assets to younger women.

“Teaching what is good” translates a single word that combines the Greek verb “teach” with the adjective “good” (*didaskō + kalos*, διδάσκω + καλός).

As we have observed, *didaskō* (διδάσκω) is a key ministry tool used by elders.

Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God (Colossians 3:16).

A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression (1 Timothy 2:11–14).

Although women are explicitly called to the teaching of women, they are not to *didaskō* men.

Understandably, all of the qualifications for an elder appear in the masculine form. When “in common” qualities are elsewhere used of women, they appear in the feminine form.

In other words, Paul’s language in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 is describing men, not women.

Based on the complementarity of the Titus 2:3-5 description, there is something to be gained as shepherds partner with their wives who, in turn, mentor younger women. But there is no case where women who do so are specifically designated “shepherds” or “shepherdesses.”

D. Basis – How realistic is this list?

God is at work in all those who follow Jesus, giving them the willpower and ability to do the supernatural, to become like Jesus.

No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God (1 John 3:9).

We are still in process. But we know where this process is heading.

Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we will be. We know that when He appears, we will be like Him, because we will see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure (1 John 3:2–3).

A day is coming when we will someday look just like Him.

Summary

Core

Above Reproach: In general, such a man presents a positive and attractive example of what it means to be a servant of Jesus.

Exemplary Husband and Father: This man displays surpassing devotion to his wife and effectively coaches his family to follow the Lord.

Good Heart: He loves the Lord (and whatever God loves) with all his heart, mind, and strength.

Catalyst

Relational Asset: He winsomely cares for and helps others do what is right, regardless of personal cost, without power struggles, self-promotion, or angry outbursts.

Growth Agent: His deep personal devotion to God's word empowers him to promote the truth-driven transformation of others.

Credibility

Seasoned: This man has spent considerable time growing in humility and maturity.

Respected: He lives out his allegiance to Jesus in the public square both by his example and witness.

Discussion Guide

Discussion Question: We are in the process of looking for Pastor Next. How would you suggest the Pastoral Search Committee use the list on the previous page to guide their search? In what ways, practically, could we find out about a candidate's possession of these attributes?

Discussion Question: As you look at the qualifications table (pages 29-32 in Shepherdology Practice), are there any qualities that surprised you for their inclusion? Are there any qualities that seem at odds with what most churches look for in a pastor? Why is this?

Discussion Question: If you were to follow a man who is "holding fast the faithful word" for 24 hours, what would you expect to see? What kinds of spiritual disciplines would he be engaged in? Do you know someone like this? What would it mean for your daily routines if you were the kind of man who can be described as "holding fast the faithful word?"

Discussion Question: What will it probably look like in coming days in our culture for men who are, in biblical terms, of "good reputation with those outside?" In other words, as we move toward becoming a world that echoes Revelation 6:9, what will be required of God's men?

Discussion Question: If you had to pick one of the characteristics of an elder that you need to work on, which would it be? How would you evaluate yourself in this area? What do you think you could do to improve? What counsel would the other members of your group give you in your development of this quality?