

EXEMPLARY CHARACTER NON-NEGOTIABLE
Jon Crocker • GFA MAT Retreat 2024

I. MEANING

A. Exemplary

- **Philippians 3:17** *Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.*¹
- **Hebrews 13:7** *Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.*
- **1 Corinthians 11:1** *Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.*
- **1 Thessalonians 1:6** *You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit,*
- **1 Timothy 4:12** *Let no one look down on your youthfulness, but rather in speech, conduct, love, faith and purity, show yourself an example of those who believe.*
- **Titus 2:7–8** *7 in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified, 8 sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.*
- **1 Peter 5:1–4** *1 Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as your fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 2 shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; 3 nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.*
- **What does this mean for us as missionaries?**
 - It does NOT mean that only _____ people can be in ministry.
 - Our ministry is not simply the proclamation of truth. We are supposed to be a _____ of the _____ that the Spirit produces through the truth we impart.
 - _____ missionary ought to be able to say: *follow my example.*
 - This requires that you let people get _____ to you to observe your life.

B. Character

- Your character is the combination of your _____ qualities and the _____ conduct that flows from those inner qualities. It's both who you are and what you do.
- We need to work hard at keeping both in view, because it is possible to emphasize one and exclude the other. History has seen both extremes.
- Some have become fixated on certain issues in a merely external fashion to the total exclusion of heart transformation, love, purity, and humility.

¹ All Scripture references taken from NASB 1995.

Matthew 23:23 *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.*

- But others have fallen to the other extreme and have said things like: “God is not concerned with externals; He just wants your heart.” That is also false.

C. Non-negotiable

- 1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:7
 - **1 Timothy 3:2** *An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ...*
 - **Titus 1:7** *For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, ...*
- Both of these passages talk about what church leadership “must be.” *It is necessary.*
- So, in these two passages, what is non-negotiable? All but one of these qualifications have to do with character. The emphasis in these texts is not on what the minister can *do* but rather on who and what he *is*.

II. MOTIVES

A. The _____ of our commission (Matthew 28:19–20)

B. The _____ of our identity (Matthew 5:13–16, Philippians 2:14–16)

C. The _____ of Christ (1 Peter 2:21–23, Romans 8:29)

D. The _____ of testimony (1 Peter 2:11–12, 3:1–2)