

A Portrait of the Pastor's Qualifications

I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9

God's goal for His church is maturity in Christ both in belief and behavior (Ephesians 4:11-16). To this end God provides ministers who will effectively preach and teach God's Word and whose lives well illustrate and model the Christlike life. God insists that those who shepherd His flock be men of evident strong Christian character and capable ministry skills. God's saving and sanctifying grace has transformed them to the glory of God. We will provide a brief outline and summary of the essence of the qualifications for the pastor as found in the two lists in the pastoral epistles. We encourage more in-depth study. This brief overview may assist in evaluating pastoral candidates.

I. General Qualifications

- A. Desire (3:1). He has holy desire with right motivation to serve in spiritual oversight of a congregation.
- B. Blameless (3:1; 1:6,7). He is beyond reproach and has no serious flaws in character or conduct.
- C. Holy (1:7). He is wholly devoted to the Lord in genuine inward purity of heart.
- D. Just (1:8). He has a keen sense of right and wrong which he applies first to his own personal choices and to his responsibilities toward others.
- E. Clear testimony (3:7). His integrity among those outside the church (unbelievers) is recognized, protecting him and the church from a devilish and reproachful snare.

II. Family Qualifications

- A. Husband of one wife (3:2; 1:6). His life exemplifies the biblical model of marital fidelity and singular affection for his wife.
- B. Rules well his own house (3:4,5). He first manages his own home and family well thus qualifying him for the broader management of the church.
- C. Has children in subjection with all dignity (3:4). His obedient children reflect well upon the spiritual and practical leadership of their father and loving guidance of their mother.
- D. Has faithful, unaccused children (1:6). His children show evidence of God's saving faith and a pattern of faithfulness to Christ rather than wayward living patterns.

III. Character Qualifications

- A. Vigilant (3:2). He thinks with clarity and alertness to spiritual dangers to himself and other believers, avoiding anything that would diminish his discernment.
- B. Sober (3:2; 1:8). He exercises thoughtful self-control and good judgment as a prudent leader.
- C. Of good behavior (3:2). He is orderly in his lifestyle and ministry practices, working toward the accomplishment of goals.
- D. Hospitable (3:2; 1:8). He is a people person who meets needs in genuine love.
- E. Not given to wine (3:3; 1:7). He avoids intoxicating influences that would blur his judgment and harm his testimony.
- F. Not soon angry (1:6). He controls impulses toward sinful anger and strife.
- G. No striker (3:3) He does not lash out in carnal lack of self-control.
- H. Not a brawler (3:3). He does not seek or engage in either verbal or physical conflicts with others; he is not argumentative or violent.
- I. Patient (3:3). He is mild-mannered, kind, gentle, and reasonable.
- J. Not greedy of filthy lucre (3:3; 1:7). He is not motivated by selfish and inappropriate gain.
- K. Not covetous (3:3). He does not love money or live to serve himself with things.
- L. Not self-willed (1:7). He is not arrogant, thinking his way is always best, and he is not selfish in his dealings with others
- M. Lover of good (1:8). He loves the good and wholesome in people and life.
- N. Temperate (1:8). He lives under the control of spiritual values.

IV. Developmental Qualifications

- A. Not a novice (3:6). He is not a new or immature believer but rather is proven.
- B. Apt to teach (3:2). He is capable of understanding, explaining, and applying God's Word.
- C. Capable in the Word (1:9ff)

1. Holding fast (1:9). He is tenacious in his defense of God's truth.
2. Able to convince and exhort (1:9). He is skilled in his ability to defend God's truth against its enemies.