



**TITUS:
THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE GRACE OF GOD
AND THE FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH**

**The Qualifications of an Elder (Part 2):
Private Ministry Characteristics
(Titus 1:6-9)**

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Definition of Elders/Overseers

Elders/Overseers are men who are given the responsibility for shepherding the Body of Christ. They have the functional, comprehensive oversight of God's people to manage according to God's will/agenda. They are responsible for:

1. Teaching the body Biblical truth
2. Leading the Church in a direction that fulfills the Kingdom agenda
3. Watching over (shepherding) those in the local church
4. Warning those in the local church against impending dangers
5. Maintaining order, unity, and holiness within the body
6. Overseeing all aspects of the church

(Ephesians 4:11-17, Acts 20:28, Hebrews 13:17, Romans 16:17-20, 1 Peter 5:1-4, Titus 1:5-9)

16 Characteristics of Elders/Overseers

Titus 1:6-9 mentions 16 characteristics that should be found in an Elder/Overseer of the local church of God. In order to better understand these characteristics, they will be divided into three categories:

1. Personal Character Characteristics
2. Private Ministry Characteristics
3. Public Ministry Characteristics

Being Above Reproach

From the beginning of the section in Titus 1:6-9, Paul mentions the overall attribute of being above reproach. "Above reproach" is tied to one's personal character, one's private ministry, and one's public ministry. In relation to ***private ministry***, being above reproach can be understood as a life that is not left open to criticism, to attack, or to be called into account for wrongdoing. He carries himself in a God-honoring manner in relation to his family. If he is criticized it is because he is carrying himself according to God's design with his family and others are dealing with their personal perceptions or preferences above biblical precepts in regard to the person. He is not perfect but he is consistent. This person seeks to operate in such

a way that his private ministry does not ruin the reputation of the church. This person does not have a reputation of wrongdoing in relation to his family because he is seeking to address his character flaws and grow in Christ-like character on a regular basis in relation to his family.

Private Ministry Characteristics to Be Found in Elders/Overseers

An Elder must be the Husband of one Wife – If he is married, he is to be one who is faithful to God's covenant in relationship to his wife. There is loyalty, support and commitment to upholding God's comprehensive plan for marriage with one's wife. There are no other women in his life. He is faithful to his wife only.

- A. A husband is to self-sacrifice for the benefit, provision, and welfare of his wife in all aspects of her life as Christ loved the church, to his own death if necessary, as Christ did for the church (Ephesians 5:25-31). For example:
 - 1. A husband is to consider his wife's interest, concerns, needs, and desires, and make sure that they are taken care of in the way that Christ would do for the Church.
 - 2. A husband is to relate with his wife socially, spiritually, emotionally, and sexually in a manner that benefits her and reflects the character of Christ.
 - 3. A husband is to compensate for his wife's weaknesses in ways that Christ would do for the Church; leading and guiding her into spiritual maturity; helping her to be all of what God designed her to be in the way that Christ would do for the Church; leading his wife as Christ would lead the Church in all aspects of the marriage (1 Peter 3:7, 1 Corinthians 7:33).

- B. A husband is to help his wife become Holy/Blameless, so that she may function according to God's design in all aspect of life (Ephesians 5:25-31). For example:
 - 1. A husband is to lead and guide his wife into spiritual maturity.
 - 2. A husband is to help his wife become all of what God designed her to be in her character, conduct, conversations, and commitments in the way that Christ would do for the Church.
 - 3. A husband is to help his wife function according to her spiritual gifts and calling to ministry in the way Christ would do for the Church.

- C. A husband should be co-laboring with his wife to accomplish kingdom agenda issues (Genesis 2:15-18).

- D. A husband should seek to honor, praise, and show appreciation to his wife on a consistent basis (Proverbs 31:28, 1 Peter 3:7).
- E. A husband should seek to constantly understand who his wife is and live with her in an understanding way (1 Peter 3:7).
- F. A husband must stay sexually faithful to his own wife (Proverbs 5:15-23).
- G. A husband must pursue oneness with his wife (Genesis 2:15-24).
- H. A husband must pursue a relationship where he and his wife can be naked and not ashamed in each other's presence (Genesis 2:25).

Since these men are to be a model for the congregation, they reflect what we all should be demonstrating to the glory of God, for the blessing of others, and for our spiritual health. We all should be seeking to operate in such a way that our private ministry does not ruin the reputation of the church. We all should be seeking to address our character flaws and grow in Christ-like character on a regular basis. Therefore, let us evaluate ourselves in light of the chart below:

AREAS OF MY LIFE I NEED TO EVALUATE ACCORDING TO TITUS 1:6-9	SELDOM	OCCASIONALLY	FREQUENTLY	ALL THE TIME
I respect the institute of marriage and seek to play my part according to God's agenda				
As a single person, I do not treat others as if they are my husband or wife				
As a single person, I do not do anything with the opposite sex that I would have to stop doing if we decided to marry other people				
As a single person, I develop friendships with the opposite sex that lead into evangelism and discipleship as I treat them as a father, mother, sister, brother, or child in reference to their age in relation to mine				
As a husband, I make sure that my wife is nurtured, discipled, guided and taken care of according to God's standards				
As a wife, I am submissive to the nurturing, guiding, and provision of my husband according to God's standards				