

## Pastors: Shepherds Of The Flock

*Charles Carpenter*

“This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work” (1 Tim. 3:1).

1) **Scriptural Names.** Men so qualified and appointed could be called pastors or shepherds (poimen), bishops or overeers (episkopos), or elders (presbuteros). Members of a local congregation are referred to as “the flock” (Acts 20:28-29; 1 Pet. 5:2). The number of elders in a local congregation must be plural (Acts 14:23); they can shepherd only one flock (1 Pet. 5:1).

2) **Qualifications.** Basic qualifications for the office are found in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. The qualified person must be a man, desire the office and want to work. Qualifications include the following: blameless (above reproach), husband of one wife (one only), vigilant (temperate), sober (sensible), of good behavior (well-ordered), given to hospitality (hospitable), apt to teach (able at teaching), ruleth well his own house (Greek: having faithful children, not in accusation of loose behavior or insubordinate), having his children in subjection (not accused of riot or unruly), have a good report

of them which are without (a good witness from those without), a lover of good men (a lover of good), just (upright), holy (devout), temperate (self-controlled), holding fast the faithful word (Greek: clinging to the faithful word). The man is not to be: given to wine (not a drinker), a striker (not a contentious one), greedy of filthy lucre (not greedy of ill gain), a brawler (not quarrelsome), covetous (not loving money), a novice (not a new convert), self-willed (not self-pleasing), soon angry (not prone to anger). “Sometimes it is argued that no man can attain to the high standard as described by the Holy Spirit in giving the qualifications. The Holy Spirit has never required of man anything that man could not do. God encourages man to measure up to this high standard” (Boles, p. 23).

3) **An Example.** Elders must continue their work for the right purpose, in the right way and for the right reason. The power of love can never become the love of power. They must live lives in such a way that the flock knows what they say is what they mean. Elders stand related to the congregation as a father is to the home. Principles of cooperation

and teamwork must be followed.

“The good elder must be a pattern for the church to follow. Example is a part of his duty in ruling. A shepherd sets the example for the sheep to follow. The most effective way of leading people is to be an example to them. The bishops should be good examples of workers themselves” (Phillips, pp. 193-197).

“Elders are to be examples to the flock. They should realize that they are examples to other members in faith, in purity, in love, in word, and in all manner of living. They are watched closely by other members, and should set such examples as will lead others, when they follow those examples, closer to the Lord Jesus Christ” (Boles, p. 26).

“It is a joyous experience to have members of a congregation where qualified elders work in harmony, Scripturally serving Christians who respect them as fellow-saints and as overseers” (Wallace, p. 15).

References: Boles, H. Leo, *The Eldership of the Churches of Christ*; Phillips, H.E., *Scriptural Elders and Deacons*; Wallace, William E., *Outlined Lessons on the Eldership*.

# Eldership Musts

John Isaac Edwards

The qualifications of elders are musts!

“A bishop then **must** be...” (1 Tim. 3:1).  
“Moreover he **must** have...” (1 Tim. 3:7).  
“For a bishop **must** be...” (Titus 1:7).

## Positive

Blameless (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7).  
The husband of one wife (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6).  
Vigilant (1 Tim. 3:2).  
Sober (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8).  
Of good behavior (1 Tim. 3:2).  
Given to hospitality (1 Tim. 3:2).  
Apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:2).  
Patient (1 Tim. 3:3).  
Ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity (1 Tim. 3:4).  
Having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly (Titus 1:6).  
Have a good report of them which are without (1 Tim. 3:7).  
A lover of hospitality (Titus 1:8).  
A lover of good men (Titus 1:8).  
Just (Titus 1:8).  
Holy (Titus 1:8).  
Temperate (Titus 1:8).  
Holding fast the faithful word (Titus 1:9).  
Able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers (Titus 1:9).

## Negative

Not given to wine (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7).  
No striker (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7).  
Not greedy of filthy lucre (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7).  
Not a brawler (1 Tim. 3:3).  
Not covetous (1 Tim. 3:3).  
Not a novice (1 Tim. 3:6).  
Not selfwilled (Titus 1:7).  
Not soon angry (Titus 1:7).

## Their Wives

“Even so **must** their wives be...  
grave,  
not slanderers,  
sober,  
faithful in all things” (1 Tim. 3:11).

When considering men for the eldership, remember these musts.

“  
*This is a true saying, If a man desire the  
office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.*  
”

— 1 Timothy 3:1

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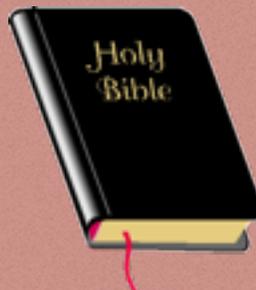
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