

The Imperative of Qualified Overseers

Titus 1:5-9

It is essential for the health of the church to appoint qualified men who serve as examples that are shaped by the Word and shepherds who shape others by the Word.

1. The office of elder
 - a. Established with standing authority (vs 5)
 - b. Established as overseers (vs 7)

The New Testament teaches that the title of “elder” is in reference to an official office held only by qualified men who are charged with the responsibility to oversee and shepherd the church through the faithful ministry of the word and through their godly example.

2. The qualifications of elder
 - a. Above reproach with respect to his own family
 - b. Above reproach with respect to his own character

Because the office of elder is intended to function as an example to be followed and an authority to be obeyed, every elder must be living in accordance with sound doctrine and without any legitimate charge against his shepherding of his own household or against his own character.

3. The central focus of the elder
 - a. To minister the word by having a firm grasp on it and giving instruction in sound doctrine
 - b. To minister the Word by refuting false teaching and false teachers

The elder is installed to be a care-taker and minister of the word of God. His primary responsibility is to be mastered by the word, so that his life is shaped by it and his ministry is anchored in it. He is to shepherd the church through the faithful ministry of the word and through his godly example.