

## Introduction: Household Stewards

- In both the ANE and the Greco-Roman world, larger households and estates tended to have a \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ who oversaw the domestic and business interests of their master.
  - (1) They were to be \_\_\_\_\_ in their tasks.
  - (2) They were to be \_\_\_\_\_ to carrying out the will of their master.
  - (3) The goal of their labor was that the estate would bear the desired \_\_\_\_\_ of the master.

**Key Point:** In order for the churches of Jesus Christ to bear the image of their Savior and function effectively as His witnesses, they must be \_\_\_\_\_ by His appointed stewards who reflect the character of their Master.

## The Character of an Elder—Titus 1:6-8

Titus 1:6-8—<sup>6</sup> if anyone [an elder] is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. <sup>7</sup> For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, <sup>8</sup> but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined.

- Paul uses two terms *synonymously* in reference to those who would lead the churches.

"elder" — πρεσβύτερος (*presbyteros*) — Can refer literally to one advanced in age. In the OT (LXX) it refers to those in positions of leadership (the Sanhedrin as well as local leaders within cities/towns/villages).

⇒ The use of this term is intended to set the leadership structure of the Church within the \_\_\_\_\_ of how God has led His people throughout the unfolding of Redemptive History.

"overseer" — ἐπίσκοπος (*episkopos*) — A man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly; a curator, guardian, or superintendent.

⇒ The use of this term is intended to convey the \_\_\_\_\_ role of the leaders of the churches within both the Greco-Roman cultural context as well as within the theological context of Scripture.

- Paul twice uses a key term to describe the *character* that is required of an elder.

"above reproach"—ἀνέγκλητος (*aneklētos*)—"unaccused" i.e. "blameless." One that cannot be called into to account.

⇒ This term is used here to refer to a man's \_\_\_\_\_ both within the Christian community as well as outside of it.

- The "blameless" character of an elder must first be demonstrated in how he *manages* his own household(1:6)

"the husband of one wife"

⇒ He must \_\_\_\_\_ his wife faithfully

"his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination"

⇒ His children should reflect biblical wisdom more than they do the traits of the surrounding \_\_\_\_\_.

- These character traits are required of an elder *because* he is God's steward(1:7)

"steward"—οἰκονόμος (*oikonomos*) — A steward, manager, superintendent (whether free-born or as was usually the case, a freed-man or a slave) to whom the head of the house or proprietor has entrusted the management of his affairs.

⇒ In order to serve as stewards of God's household, the leaders of the churches must \_\_\_\_\_ God's own character in both their private and public lives.

- Because he is God’s steward, an elder must *therefore* demonstrate his character in how he relates to others (1:8)

- He must not be:*
- (1) “arrogant”
  - (2) “quick-tempered”
  - (3) “a drunkard”
  - (4) “violent”
  - (5) “greedy for gain”

- He must be:*
- (1) “hospitable”
  - (2) “a lover of good”
  - (3) “self-controlled”
  - (4) “upright”
  - (5) “holy”
  - (6) “disciplined”

**Key Points:** (1) The truth of the \_\_\_\_\_ message should be demonstrated in the life and character of an elder.

(2) In order to properly serve as God’s steward, an elder must \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ God’s heart for His people.

## Concluding Thoughts

1. God designed us to take on the characteristics of those that we \_\_\_\_\_.

⇒ We must first be followers of \_\_\_\_\_!

Luke 6:40—A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.

⇒ We must be \_\_\_\_\_ in choosing our leaders.

1 Cor. 11:1—Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.

2. Although these qualities are specifically required of elders, they should characterize the lives of \_\_\_\_\_ believer in Jesus Christ.

Gal. 5:19-24—<sup>19</sup>Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, <sup>21</sup>envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. <sup>24</sup>And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

### Questions for Reflection:

1. Who are the people who primarily influence you? How well do you know the elders of the church?
2. What things has God entrusted to you? Are you serving the church so as to help train up leaders who can serve God’s people?