

A photograph of four men of diverse backgrounds sitting outdoors in front of a green hedge. They are all smiling and holding open Bibles, suggesting a church study or Bible reading session. The men are dressed in casual to semi-formal attire. The text 'How to Choose The Elders' is overlaid on the image in yellow and white. The Bible reference '1 Timothy 3:1-7' is in the bottom right corner.

How to Choose The Elders

1 Timothy 3:1-7

The Holy Spirit Prepares a Man

- **According to Acts 20:28, how does a man become an elder? What is the role of the Holy Spirit?**
- **How does a man or woman become spiritually mature (1 Corinthians 12:11, 28; Galatians 5:16-23; Philippians 1:6; 2:12-13)?**
- **What is the meaning of the statement, “An elder is an elder, because he is an elder”?**

How Can a Church Identify Elders?

- **How does 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:5-9 help a church identify the men whom the Holy Spirit has prepared to be elders?**
- **The qualifications given in 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:5-9 cover what three areas?**
- **What is the meaning of “above reproach” in 1 Timothy 3:2? How should we apply this statement?**

Qualifications Related to an Elder's Personal Life

- 1. The first qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he must be a "husband of one wife" (1 Timothy 3:2). What is the correct?**
 - **Does this mean he was not a polygamist?**
 - **Polygamy was not practiced in Roman or Jewish societies.**
 - **Does this mean he is not a widower?**
 - **Even widows were described as one-man-women (1 Timothy 5:9).**
 - **1 Corinthians 7:39 permitted marriage after death of a spouse.**
 - **Does this mean he is not single?**
 - **Apostle Paul was single.**

Qualifications Related to an Elder's Personal Life

- **Does this mean he was never divorced?**
 - This could allow a man who is an adulterer or given to pornography or bestiality to be an elder.
 - No Greek words for divorce were used here.
 - God allowed remarriage due to adultery and when an unbelieving spouse divorces.
- **What does “husband of one wife” mean?**
 - The literal Greek is a “one-woman-man,” which functions as an adjective, which means the man is completely devoted to his wife.
 - Appears to prohibit and sexual sins such as polygamy, adultery, pornography, bestiality, and etc.
 - Clearly this is about a high standard related to sexual behavior.
 - Since there is not way to objectively measure this qualification, divorce is an acceptable standard.

Qualifications Related to an Elder's Personal Life

2. The second qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he is **“temperate”** (1 Timothy 3:2). Explain the meaning.
3. The third qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he is **“prudent”** (1 Timothy 3:2). What does this mean?
4. The fourth qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he is **“respectable”** (1 Timothy 3:2). What does this mean?

Qualifications Related to an Elder's Personal Life

5. The fifth qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he is **“hospitable”** (1 Timothy 3:2). Explain the meaning.
6. The sixth qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he is **“not addicted to wine”** (1 Timothy 3:3). What does this mean?
7. The seventh qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he is **“free from the love of money”** (1 Timothy 3:3). What does this mean?

Qualifications Related to an Elder's Personal Life

8. The fifth qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he is **“not a new convert”** (1 Timothy 3:6). Explain the meaning.

9. The sixth qualification related to an elder's personal life is that he has a **“good reputation with those outside the church”** (1 Timothy 3:7). What does this mean?

Qualifications Related to an Elder's Oversight Responsibilities

- 1. The first qualification related to an elder's oversight responsibilities is that he **“manages his household well”** (1 Timothy 3:4-5; Titus 1:6). Explain the meaning.**

- 2. The second qualification related to an elder's oversight responsibilities is that his **“children are under control”** (1 Timothy 3:5). What does this mean?**

Qualifications Related to an Elder's Shepherding Responsibilities

1. The primary qualification related to an elder's shepherding responsibilities is that he is **“able to teach”** (1 Timothy 3:2). Explain the meaning.
 - How does this qualification and the requirement to manage his household well help us understand 1 Timothy 5:17?
 - Why is this requirement essential for decision making?

“Able To Teach” – Meaning of the Greek

Apt to Teach - διδακτιχος:

“skillful in teaching”¹ - Leading Greek Lexicons , J. Calvin

“highly skilled teacher”² - J. MacArthur

“one qualified to teach”³ - A. T. Robertson

“not merely given to teaching, but . . . skilled in it”⁴ - K. Wuest

“’Apt to teach’ includes both the willingness and the skill and ability to teach.⁵ - D. Heibert

1 Arndt, W. F. A Greek-English Lexicon, University of Chicago Press., 1973. p. 190.

Brown, Colin. Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Regency, Grand Rapids, MI., 1971, Vol. 3 p. 759.

Calvin, John. 1 Timothy, Calvin’s Commentaries, Baker Book House, 1996, Vol. 22, p. 79.

Thayer, J. H. The New Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, Christian Copyrights, Inc., 1981, p. 144.

2 MacArthur, John, The MacArthur New Testament Commentary 1 Timothy, Moody, Chicago, 1995, p. 108 .

3 Balz, Horst, Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI., 1991, Vol 1., p. 316.

Robertson, A. T., Word Pictures in the New Testament, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, MI., 1931, Vol. 4, pp. 572.

4 Wuest, K. S., Word Studies in the Greek New Testament, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1995, p. 55.

5 Hiebert, D. Edmond, First Timothy, Moody Press, Chicago, IL, 1957. p. 66.

Qualifications Related to an Elder's Relationship With the Team

1. The first qualification related to an elder's relationship with the team is that he is **“not pugnacious”** (1 Timothy 3:3; Titus 1:7). Explain the meaning.
2. The second qualification related to an elder's relationship with the team is that he is **“gentle”** (1 Timothy 3:3). What does this mean?
3. The third qualification related to an elder's relationship with the team is that he is **“peaceable”** (1 Timothy 3:3). What does this mean?

Conclusion

- **Since the spiritual qualifications of an elder help us to understand the characteristics of a godly man, how godly are you?**
- **If you are a man, are you spiritually qualified to be an elder?**