

# “A MAN WITH NOBLE DESIRES”

## I TIMOTHY 3:1-7 [Part 2—vv. 3-7]

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### INTRODUCTION

Last week we noted that most men have far too little godly ambition. We tend to settle for the status quo, for the line of least resistance, for life circumstances that are enjoyable and self-fulfilling. What has happened to the desire to be all that God intends us to be, to have God’s best for our lives? Why not have the goal to be a servant of God and to do the will of God and one day to hear him say “well done, good and faithful servant”?

Are you really content with your life the way it is right now? Would you be ready if God took you home today and you had to stand and give an account for your life? If not, it is time that you get on track by the grace of God and begin living your life wholeheartedly for Jesus Christ!

*“This is a true saying, if a man desires the office of a bishop, he desires a good work.”*

### MEN YOU MUST ASPIRE TO SERVE GOD!

In part 1, we noticed that the work of the ministry is a noble work and a desirable work to which all men should aspire if it is the will of God for them. However, it is a work that requires specific qualifications; these qualifications, although having specific application to the pastor/elder, should be the goal of every godly man who has been saved through the atoning work of Jesus Christ.

In verses 2-7 we note the next nine qualifications of the pastor/bishop/elder.

#### I. PERSONAL QUALIFICATIONS (3)

##### A. Not addicted to wine

This word is a compound form of the preposition “beside” and the noun “wine.” It describes one who is “at, beside, lingering at” wine; therefore, one who is “drunken, addicted to wine.” When combined with “temperate” in verse 2, the word strongly argues for total abstinence on behalf of a bishop – pastor. Compare the requirement for deacons in v. 8: “not paying attention to, devoted to, much wine.” Wiersbe is certainly correct to say that “a godly pastor would certainly want to give the best example and not be an excuse for sin in the life of some weaker brother” (p. 40; see Romans 14:21).

**In *Biblical Viewpoint* Stuart Custer states, “The only Christian position in regard to alcoholic beverages is total abstinence. The sin of alcoholism afflicts millions of people in our country. The preacher must be able to tell such unfortunate persons that they must trust Christ, forsake alcohol and never touch it again. He must be able to tell them that he does not drink it himself, and that their only hope is to seek the grace of the Lord Jesus for themselves” (27).**

##### B. Not Pugnacious

The term describes a “giver of blows, one given to violence.” Such a person is pugnacious and a bully. The fact that there have been so many pastors meeting such a description is a reproach upon the office! Churches do not need a “bully pulpit.”

##### C. Gentle

Its basic meaning is “kindly, yielding.” A leader who has this quality still will not compromise the truth of the gospel but he will yield when his own rights can be compromised for the benefit of others: “Why not rather suffer wrong?” (I Cor. 6:7). Hendrickson adds the following descriptive terms: “fairness, sweet reasonableness, gentleness, helpfulness, and generosity are combined in this *conciliatory, considerate, genial*... Individual”

D. Un-contentious

The person described by Paul is peaceable and not quarrelsome. This expression is not quite as strong as “pugnacious,” but the term goes deeper to the root of the problem – this person is averse to fighting.

E. Free from the Love of Money –Literally, “Not loving silver.”

See I Tim. 6:9-10.

II. FAMILY QUALIFICATIONS (4-5)

A. He must manage (rule over) his own household well.

B. He must “keep his children under control—in subjection.

C. He must do so with Dignity—not overly stern, the perfect blend of dignity and courtesy, independence and humility toward others.

D. If he cannot manage his own household, how will he lovingly care for the church of God?” [notice the switch of verbs to the other area from the one we would naturally expect it to be joined]

III. EXPERIENCE QUALIFICATION (6)

He must not be a Novice—new convert, neophyte.

Literally, a “new plant.” Age is not the factor; time in Christ is. A bishop needs both maturity and prestige

1. He might become conceited-- The definition “puffed up, conceited” assumes a derivation from the verb meaning “smoke, smolder.” The idea is “wrap in smoke, to puff up”, and in the passive sense “to be clouded with pride.”

2. He might fall into “the condemnation of the devil.” [The devil fell due to pride and rests under God’s condemnation.]

IV. TESTIMONY QUALIFICATION (7)

A. A good “testimony” with those who are “outside”—unbelievers.

B. Otherwise, he might “fall into reproach”—rightly due to character and behavior abnormalities.

C. He might fall into the devil’s snare. [Satan is never happier—and neither are his followers—than when he catches a spiritual leader in some inconsistency or moral indiscretion or shady area.]

CONCLUSION

Men, you must personally manifest godly character qualities.

You must be the godly spiritual leader of your family.

You must not be a spiritual novice; it is time for you to **grow up spiritually!**

You must maintain a good testimony with those outside the church.

It may be true that the Marines want a “Few Good Men”; but God more importantly wants Good Men who will surrender themselves to “Be all that they Can be”—not in the USA army, but in His Army, fighting a true spiritual warfare.

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