

HOW TO RECOGNIZE A MAN OF GOD.

The Apostle Paul Writing to Timothy in Ephesus, and To Titus in Crete, said that those who aspired to the Work of of a Bishop must truly be a recognizable MAN OF GOD.

God's Man Must Have A Definite Profile In That Pagan World.
A composite list of characteristics for a Bishop in the church is found in I Tim. 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-10.

1. Above Reproach
2. Husband of one wife
3. Father of believing children
4. Temperate
5. Prudent - *Wise · GOOD JUDGMENT*
6. Respectable
7. Hospitable
8. Apt to teach
9. Not self-willed
10. Not given to wine
11. Not quick-tempered
12. Not pugnacious
13. Uncontentious *CONSTANT DRIPPING*
14. Gentle
15. Free from the love of money
16. A good reputation with those outside the church.
17. Lover of what is good
18. Just
19. One who manages his own househole well
20. Not a new convert.

Note: Eighteen of these qualities have to do with the Man of God in dealing with his:

Reputation,

Ethics

Morality

Temperament

Habits

Spiritual and Psychological maturity

Quote ?
"Paul got beyond generalizations to those specific characteristics that are marks of a man of God. Here is a person who has become a man of God through a process of spiritual growth and development over a period of time. He has learned to reflect Jesus Christ in his total life-style."

THE WORK OF A BISHOP

- I Timothy 3:1: "It is a trustworthy statement; if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do." (New American Standard Bible)
- "Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." (F.F. Bruce)
- "There is a popular saying; 'To aspire to leadership is an honourable ambition.'" (New English Bible)
- "Trustworthy is the saying, 'Whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires to do a splendid work.'" (Berkeley)
- "Faithful is the saying, If a man seeketh the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." (American Standard)
- "This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." ^{ἑργον} (King James)

I. There Are Three Greek Words Dealing With The Work Of Bishop.

- A. ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΣ Elder - Older, Mature Man
presbuteros
- B. ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΣ Bishop - Overseer, Superintends
episkopos
- C. ΠΟΙΜΕΝΟΣ Shepherd - Tend the flock.
poimaine

II. A BISHOP'S WORK IS ONE OF SERVICE TO MAN AND TO GOD.

- A. I Peter 5:1-5 "So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is to be revealed. Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not for shameful gain but eagerly, not as domineering over those in your charge but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd is manifested you will obtain the the unfading crown of glory. Likewise you that are younger be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
- B. Acts 20:28- "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock in which you, the Holy Spirit placed, ~~the~~ ΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥΣ you as shepherds ΠΟΙΜΑΙΝΕΤΕ the church of God, which he acquired through the blood of his own(son)."
- C. Acts 20:29- "I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease to admonish every one with tears."
- (1) Both Peter and Paul liken the church to a flock,
- a. The Bishop's Work Is To Care For The Flock.
- They are to take heed to themselves, and then to the flock.
 - "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt save thyself, and them that hear thee."
(To the preacher as well as the bishops.") I Tim. 4:16

III. THE BISHOP MUST BE A TEACHER, AND A DEFENDER OF THE FAITH.

1. The Bishops Of The Early Church Defended The Faith.

2. It Is A FALSE PREMISE TO TRAIN PREACHERS, and not to TRAIN MEN TO BE BISHOPS. We surely have the cart before the horse.

3. Titus 1:9 "He must hold firm to the sure word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it."

A. This passage teaches that the Bishop must -

- (1) Give instruction in sound doctrine, and
- (2) Confute those who contradict it.

B. Verse 11 says:

"for they must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching^{base} gain what they have no right to teach."

C. verse 13 says:

"This testimony is true. Therefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith, instead of giving heed to Jewish myths or to commands of men who reject the truth."

IV. The Elders Were To Be Called For Prayer When Members Were Sick.

1. James 5:14 "Is any sick, let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him..."

A. Today, the PREACHER, is called in the modern church.

B. The OLDER MEN and the OLDER WOMEN ought to be the Marriage Counselors in the 20th Century Church.

(1) Titus 2:-4 (Older is to teach the younger.....)

SOME PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS ON BISHOPS

1. There Was A Plurality of Bishops-Elders In The N.T. Church (Acts 14:23)

- A. Suggest that there be 3, 5, 7, 9, etc.
- B. If two, one may die, move away, resign. The elders are dissolved.
 - (1) This means that the Deacons would have to resign.
- C. A Good Group Of Elders Are: 35, 40, 50, 60, 70
 - (1) That way, one gets on the job training.

2. The Evangelist Should NOT Be Appointed As A Bishop.

- A. Eph. 4:11-16 Seems To Set Both Works As Separate
 - (1) The purpose of these positions is stated:
 - a. For equipping of the Saints
 - b. For the work of service
 - c. No longer be children tossed back and forth by the wind.
 - d. Knit together in love.
- B. One could join the work of the Elder, Evangelist, Deacon.
 - (1) John was an apostle - and elder
 - (2) Philip was a deacon - and an evangelist.
 - a. By this logic, just appoint two men, and they can serve as elder, evangelist and deacon.
- C. With The Preacher As An Elder Too Much Domination Takes Place.

3. Elders Must Be The Fathers of Believing Children.

- A. The Greek is Teckna ΤΕΧΝΑ Two or more. *πλοτα faithful*
 - (1) Regardless of the arguments, the text still says two or more.
 - (2) The idea is transfer of experience of dealing with the rearing of one's own household and the growth of God's household growing into maturity.

4. The Idea Of A Chief Elder - Or A Lessor Elder.

- A. It Is Not Christlike for ONE elder to run the church.

5. Elders-Bishops Work In The Area of Judgment - Expedience.

- A. In Faith They Are Bound By The Word of God.
- B. In matter of expedience they have authority to act.
 - (1) In real important decisions, the Elders-Bishops will seek the thinking of the whole church.

6. Elders-Bishops In Cliques.

- A. Must realize that they represent the entire church and cannot be a part of cliques and special groups.

7. Elders Wives.

- A. Does not specifically say she is a Christian. But We Can Infer.
 - (1) Elders Wives Can Make or Break Them.

8. Rebuking An Elder: (I Tim. 5:19-20)

A. If an accusation of wrong doing is to be made against a bishop=elder, it must be made in the presence of two or more witnesses.

(1) This is to protect the man and his work from destructive criticism.

B. Those that have sinned are to be rebuked publicly.

(1) This would equally apply to other Christians who have sinned, and will not repent.

9. The Qualifications Of Deacons Are Stated - Their Work Is Not.

10. Elders-Bishops Who Have Served Well Are Worthy Of Double-Honor.

A. I Tim. 5:17.

B. Paul wrote the Philippian letter"to the Saints with the Bishops and deacons"

Conclusion:

1. The work of the Elder-Bishop Is Tremendously Important.

A. Normally, where Godly elders exist the church is active, strong, and sound.

2. It is not Christlike to constantly criticize the elders and never go to them and thank them work they work, most of the time without pay. *^ Love them ^*

a. It is right and proper that the elders be loved and told to, "lay some of the weight on my shoulders".

3. The mission of the church is to save the world through preaching and living the gospel.

4. The goal of the church is to reach Heaven.