

**1<sup>st</sup> Timothy**  
**Chapter 3:1-7**  
**“The Stuff of Leadership”**

**\*All scripture references are from the NASU unless otherwise noted\***

Calvary Chapel Fellowship of Enid  
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June 2, 2019

**First and Second Timothy along with Titus**, remember are known as the “Pastoral Epistle” because they’re written as a primer on the art of pastoring and church leadership.

And as I’ve mentioned before ... please don’t dismiss any portion of these letters just because you don’t think you’re a part of church leadership. And here’s why ...

Calvary Chapel isn’t the first or only to govern a church the way we do, but it’s still rather unique. But it’s also based on these Pastoral Epistles.

There are generally two forms of church government used today:

1. One is known as Congregational Church Government and in that form of government, most of the “important” decisions are made by a church vote where everyone who’s considered a “member” of that church, votes on the issues at hand.
2. The second is the Board or Presbytery form of Church Government. That’s where a Board of Directors calls the shots by voting amongst themselves.

And then there are churches that use any of combinations of those two styles.

But Calvary Chapel doesn’t use either of them. For us, church government consists of a senior pastor and a board of leaders (made up of assistant pastors, elders and deacons). But our board functions more in an advisory and accountability role than in a ruling role.

In a nutshell, as the senior pastor, I do my level best to seek God and to follow His lead with regard to the ministry of Calvary Chapel of Enid. And I regularly seek input from other leaders and those serving in the various ministries. And I submit myself to the scrutiny and accountability of everyone, but at the end of the day ... I make the decisions ... right or wrong ... good or bad ... popular or detested.

And based on these “Pastoral Epistles”, I strongly believe that that’s the biblically prescribed form of church government.

But the reality is ... on a human level ... this form of church government is also the scariest and riskiest.

I mean, if the whole church votes on important issues, there's some built-in, group consensus protection. That's why we have a national government built on that same principle. This Congregational form of church government may be slow, and you may have the sheep leading the shepherd, but it feels safe to the sheep.

And if you have a church that's run by a Board of Directors ... again you have the safety of numbers. If it's not unanimous, then nothing happens ... nothing changes. And it's almost never unanimous so it almost never changes ... look around. But it is safe.

But for any one person to have control ... that's scary ... that's dangerous, but that's also how God designed it. Again, I have a solid board of advisors and I have strong accountability and to some extent, I have Calvary Chapel Outreach Fellowship looking over my shoulder, but still ... it wouldn't be hard to slip the accountability and build myself a board of "Yes Men" ... then do it anyway that will benefit me.

And I really think I could get away with it for quite a while ... except for one thing ... YOU!

**Q. So what's the mechanism or procedure within Calvary Chapel when a Pastor goes bad? –**

Obviously, it starts with **Matthew 18 (verses 15-17)**. Biblical attempts need to be made to bring them to repentance, but if that fails ... then you leave the church. Because if enough people do that ... the church will die a natural death and God's Kingdom is purified and protected.

Not over issues of personal preference or petty disagreements ... I'm talking about heresy. The misuse of scripture or deviation from the truth of the Bible and/or the actions that stem from that.

And in that we're once again reminded just how important each person is in this form of church government.

And not just important, but responsible! You have to be involved and you have to know the scripture. It's a serious responsibility because you really are the keeper of the church in so many ways.

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Okay ... so **chapter 3 of first Timothy** ... dealing with "leadership", but not just leadership in general ... leadership with titles ... church leadership with an office.

Specifically, Pastors, Elders, a board known as a presbytery and Deacons.

So, let's make sure we all understand what these leaders do and what their offices are responsible for:

- 1.** Pastors: Pastors are responsible for shepherding the flock. They decide what

spiritual grass to feed the flock and what watering hole to lead them to. The Shepherd decides on the general direction the flock, as a whole, will migrate.

**2.** Elders: Elders provide spiritual guidance within the flock. These are men with spiritual maturity and wisdom who share what stems from that. They're to be available and to share their God-given wisdom with the members of the flock generally in small groups or one on one.

**3.** Deacons and deaconesses: Are spiritually mature men and women called on to exercise that maturity, not so much in a counseling or guidance role, but in hands on, practical ways. Maybe serving Communion or organizing events or ministering to the physical needs of the body.

**a.** The Presbytery: Is a group composed of pastors, elders and other similarly gifted men and women ... with or without a formal title or office. Depending on the form of church government, a presbytery may rule or they may advise.

Take it back to the graphic picture of sheep for a minute ... the shepherd is the one who leads the sheep that choose to follow him ... that's the job of the Pastor.

The Assistant Pastors and Elders would flank the flock to assist and guide. As much as anything else ... they're hearers. They do what they can to help the sheep stay on the right path.

The Deacons then, are the faithful people who clear the brush ahead and pick up the messes behind. Servants ... start to finish!

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**Verse 1:** Not a fine position or a fine salary or a good retirement plan, but a fine work.

In **verse 1**, the Greek is episkope (ep-is-kop-ay') which means a Christian office of care, inspection and oversight, but in **verse 2** the word is episkopos (ep-is'-kop-os) which refers to the person who fills that office.

And in translation, it describes both pastors and elders.

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**Verses 2-7:** The qualifications for the overseer. But don't confuse the term "qualifications" with "giftings" or "callings" or "equipping". These are the prerequisites ... the minimums. God's saying to Timothy, "Don't even consider appointing someone to the post of Overseer unless they meet these minimum requirements."

And He's saying to us, "If you want Me to consider calling and gifting you for the fine office of Overseer ... here are the minimum requirements that you must choose to meet before I'll consider you."

Seventeen ... seventeen separate requirements that we're going to look at, quickly, but

individually:

- 1.** An Overseer must be above reproach (**verse 2**): In the Greek it means to have nothing in your life upon which an adversary could base a charge.

It doesn't mean perfect ... it means that past sins have been confessed and if civil or criminal penalties are due ... they've been paid. It means that all active trespasses have been turned away from. To have nothing in your life upon which an adversary could base a charge.

- 2.** An Overseer must be the husband of one wife (**verse 2**): Now this one has been the cause of many debates. Some say that it's saying ...

An Overseer can only have one wife at the time he takes and holds office.

Others say it means ... that he can only have had one wife during his lifetime. That widowers and divorcés are excluded.

While others contend that it means ... an Overseer must be married to hold office.

For what it's worth ... I cast my lot with the first ... that an Overseer can only have one wife at the time he takes and holds office.

To say that widowers and divorcés are excluded, I think nullifies the power of the blood of Christ. Keep in mind that the Apostle who penned this letter, was forgiven of blasphemy and murder before he was appointed to office (**1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 1:13 & Acts 9:1**).

**Q. So, are we gonna claim that divorce is a bigger sin?**

And to say that an Overseer must be married, would again exclude the man writing this text ... the Apostle Paul was single (**1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7:8**).

So, I believe that the qualification is that an Overseer can only have one wife at the time he takes and holds office.

- 3.** An Overseer must be temperate (**verse 2**): Meaning that he must exercise strong self-control when it comes to all forms of intoxication. The idea is that an overseer must always be ready to exercise sober judgment and to do that he must avoid all forms of intoxication ... and since intoxication from substances is addressed in the **next verse**, I suspect that this is more of a reference to emotional and lustful intoxications. To be temperate means that you can't be moody or prejudice or hold biases.

- 4.** An Overseer must be prudent (**verse 2**): This relates to decision making and

specifically means to make decisions of opinion ... in moderation.

That is ... don't be too passionate on matters of opinion. Be sober enough to realize that on matters of opinion ... you could be wrong.

**5.** An Overseer must be respectable (**verse 2**): The Old King James just says that he must be of good behavior. He must live an orderly life.

**6.** An Overseer must be hospitable (**verse 2**): Meaning that he must be fond of guests. Not an overly private person, but one who's willing to open up and let people into his life and his home.

**7.** An Overseer must be able to teach (**verse 2**): It doesn't say that he must be an exceptionally gifted teacher, but that he is able to teach. Meaning that he must be someone who's invested enough time in the Word and internalized enough of it to be able to teach.

**8.** An Overseer must not be addicted to wine (**verse 3**): It literally means that an overseer cannot sit long at the wine barrel. It's not that all forms of alcohol are forbidden, but as scripture makes clear ... the wise thing for a man of God is to abstain.

**9.** An Overseer must not be pugnacious (**verse 3**): That is ... not quarrelsome or abusive. Not that an overseer needs to be overly passive, but he should not be one who provokes fights for fun.

**10.** An Overseer must be gentle (**verse 3**): Not gentle in a feminine sort of way ... Jesus certainly wasn't ... but one who's not prone to violence.

**11.** An Overseer must be peaceable (**verse 3**): One who's a peacemaker. Who pursues reconciliation in his own relationships and encourages others to do the same.

**12.** An Overseer must free from the love of money (**verse 3**): He can have money, but it must be held in proper perspective and priority. An overseer must be one who's service to the Lord is never influenced by money nor a desire for it.

**13.** An Overseer must manage his household well (**verse 4**): From finances to upkeep ... an overseer is to prove himself in his own home first ... and ...

**14.** An Overseer must keep his children under control with dignity (**verse 4**): Now this doesn't mean that your kids always do what's right ... it means that you do what's right.

And it's more than just getting your children to do what you want them to do ... it's doing it without flipping out and blowing up ... it's doing it with dignity.

**15.** An Overseer must not be a new convert (**verse 6**): Not a spiritual child or even a spiritual adolescent.

There was an interesting article published a few years back that looked at a series of tests that were administered to the ten most industrialized nations in the world; Japan, Canada, several European countries as well as the USA. What they did is they took high school graduates from each of these nations and tested them on several subjects:

- 1.** When it came to math ... the USA came in 10<sup>th</sup> ... dead last among these industrialized nations.
- 2.** In Geography ... our kids came in 10<sup>th</sup>.
- 3.** In literature ... 10<sup>th</sup> again.
- 4.** In foreign language skills ... 10<sup>th</sup>.

But we did finish first in one category ... self-esteem!

The dumbest kids of the bunch were the most arrogant. But that's what America specializes in ... making people who should feel convicted to put forth a little more effort ... feel good about their poor achievements.

So, an Overseer is not to be a new convert, but I love that fact that there's no legalistic number attached to this. It's a matter of asking God ... situation by situation and person by person.

**16.** An Overseer must not be conceited (**verse 6**): The word is tuphoo (toof-o'-o) and it means to be high-minded or puffed up. It includes having a high opinion of yourself as well as allowing others to have an overly inflated opinion of you.

So that only leaves us with God's opinion of us. So stick with that.

**17.** And finally ... an Overseer must have a good reputation within the community (**verse 7**): There will always be critics and opponents, but the idea is that an Overseer must be a man who doesn't give his critics any ammunition. Simple things like driving courteously and paying your bills and treating your neighbors with respect.

So ... seventeen qualifications to be an overseer in the church of God but notice that not a single one of these prerequisites says anything about a college degree or graduating from some seminary. None of them deal with your birth family or your IQ or your stature or station in life.

All seventeen of them deal only with the choices we make. We get to choose whether or not make ourselves available to God.

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**Conclusion:** We often use the cliché, “God doesn’t call the equipped, He equips the called” and I stand by that truth.

God really does use the foolish things of this world to confound the wise (**1st Corinthians 1:27**), but here we’re talking about the qualifications ... the prerequisites ... the things that must be true before a man steps into the office or dons the title.

It is a fine work to aspire to ... but aspiring to it doesn’t mean that you merely hope and wish for it ... it means you make the choices and take the actions necessary to be qualified.

If you want to truly be available for whatever God has ... here are the seventeen ingredients for that recipe.

Godliness leads to eternal usefulness and eternal usefulness leads to eternal happiness. But without Godliness the whole cascade breaks down.