

“Elders: The Qualifications”

PART 2

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If you have been with us over the past two weeks, then you know that we have been studying what the Bible teaches on the subject of elders. Two weeks ago, we looked at the three basic words that refer to the office of elder. We learned that an **ELDER** is a man who is respected because of his wisdom and experience in the church, we learned that an elder has the responsibility of **OVERSEEING** the souls in the congregation, and we also learned that he is a **SHEPHERD** [LATIN=PASTOR] who feeds and protects the flock, the local congregation. We learned that these three terms are used interchangeably.

And then last week, we continued by looking at the various qualifications for elders that are found in the Bible—primarily in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. At the beginning of last week’s lesson, we learned how important it is that we take the Bible as our only guide. In a time when many around us are dismissing the Scriptures, it is especially important that we as a congregation realize that the Scriptures are, in fact, relevant to our cultural situation today. And so as a congregation, we can say with confidence that elders must meet certain qualifications. We can say with confidence that Paul’s instructions in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 apply to all congregations, for all time, regardless of how the culture may change around us.

This morning, then, I would like for us to go back to the qualifications for what we might describe as “Part 2,” and I would like for us to focus in very specifically on the family qualifications. Again, as I emphasized last week, for the purpose of time, we have divided the qualifications into two lessons. Even with that emphasis, though, someone pulled my wife aside last Sunday and said, “Your husband skipped over the family stuff! He didn’t say anything about an elder being married or an elder having kids!” So, let me say it again: Today we are looking at the wife and kids; last Sunday we looked at everything else! And as I pointed out last week, sometimes when we talk about the qualifications of elders, someone will say, “Oh, this guy over here is married and has two Christian children; let’s make him an elder.” But no! There is so much more to it than that! Last week then, we focused in on everything else, but today we hope to study those qualifications that deal with an elder’s family.

And so that we can follow along a little bit better, I have asked two of the men of this congregation to make sure that everyone has a handout that goes along with the lesson. And as you will see, I have once again listed the two passages in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. I did that so that we can keep our study in context, so that we will

not forget how these qualifications fit together. So, as we begin, I would ask that we go back and look at the two main passages, keeping our focus on those qualifications that address the elder's family.

Let us begin with 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Paul's words to the young preacher Timothy, who was preaching in the city of Ephesus,

¹ It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. ² An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. ⁴ He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity ⁵ (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), ⁶ and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. ⁷ And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

We now consider the parallel passage in Titus 1:5-9, Paul's words to the preacher Titus, who was preaching on the island of Crete,

⁵ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, ⁶ namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. ⁷ For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, ⁸ but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, ⁹ holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

Again, this morning we will be focusing on the elder's family, and as opposed to last Sunday's 22-point lesson, this morning's lesson will only have two points! We will look, first of all, at the fact that an elder must be the husband of one wife. And then secondly, we will focus on the fact that an elder's children must be Christians. And as we begin, I would like for us to remember what we did last week with the idea that the qualifications for elders are very similar to those things that are required of all of us as Christians. Remember that? Just as an elder must be **"above reproach,"** so also the rest of us should be **"above reproach"** as well, and so on. The difference, though, is that an elder must have those qualities to the level that he can lead, to the extent that he can serve as an example. Again, perfection is not required. We will never have perfect elders here at this congregation. However, our elders must be qualified. In other words, they must have the qualifications to the level that they can lead the rest of us. And here at the beginning, I just want to point out that the same is also true of an elder's wife and children. If you are a man and are married, then you had better be the **"husband of one wife,"** whether you are an elder or not! And in the same way, for those of us who have children, we need to be raising those children as Christians. Right? That should be a priority for all of us. And yet as with the other qualifications, an elder needs to have those qualifications met in a way that he can lead the rest of us.

- I. **Let us then start with what the Bible teaches about an elder's marriage situation. As I understand it, in both passages, Paul tells both congregations that a man being considered for the office of elder must be a ONE-WOMAN MAN. As far as the spouse goes, that's it—an elder must be a **"one-woman man."****

- A. Well, we did not discuss this last week, and I hope you will forgive me for stating the obvious here, but with this one very short and simple statement, we discover that an elder must be a **MAN**. Specifically, he must be a **“one-woman man,”** but the most basic part of that tells us that an elder must be a **MAN**.

We will not take the time to get into a full discussion of this, we can save it for another time, but the New Testament teaches that the men of the congregation have been given the responsibility, the burden, of leadership. Of course, as I alluded to last week, some congregations have dismissed large chunks of the New Testament as being “cultural.” Their reasoning is: The New Testament was written to address specific cultural situations, the cultures of the world have changed over the past 2,000 years; therefore, those parts of the Bible that might offend our culture, can simply be dismissed. For many years, I have received the bulletin for a rather large congregation down in Texas, and back in 2007 their bulletin reported on the appointment of several women who were appointed to the position of “Counselors.” The article said, “[On this particular date], five women were ordained to the position of Counselors [at this congregation].” And see whether this doesn’t sound familiar to some of you. The article went on to say, “After two years of study by the Elders, Ministers and consultation with brotherhood scholars, [our church family] decided to choose an undetermined number of women to work in a pastoral role.” Remember: The word “pastor” is simply the Latinized version of the word “shepherd,” which is interchangeably in the Bible with “elder” and “overseer.” They have basically, then, appointed women to serve as elders. The article went on to say, “This role is a part of the restructuring and reorganization of [our church family]. The Counselors and Elders will make up the Pastoral Team, and together they will tend to the spiritual and emotional needs of the church.” We see, then, that after a long period of study, the words of Paul have been dismissed. No longer must elders be the **“husband of one wife,”** but because our culture has changed, women are now serving in a “pastoral” role at this particular congregation. So, first of all, then, I do need to point out that to be a **“one-woman man,”** an elder does, in fact, need to be a **“man.”**

- B. But secondly, we also discover in this little phrase that a man must, in fact, be **MARRIED**.

How interesting! God so values women that He will not allow a man to help lead a congregation unless that man is married! So, contrary to what the Catholic Church teaches, the Lord’s church was never intended to be led by single men. Single men can certainly be preachers. Single men can certainly serve as missionaries. Single men can certainly be of great service to the church—just ask the apostle Paul! However, when it comes to leading the church, when it comes to shepherding souls, when it comes to overseeing a congregation, God says: You cannot lead my church without a good woman by your side! Let us thank God for faithful women!

Unfortunately, due to the wording in various translations, some have taken this phrase to mean that a man must be in his first marriage. Literally, though, the requirement is that the elder must be a **“one-woman man.”** You will notice that the verse says nothing about being in a first marriage. In fact, we can look to other places in the New Testament, and we see that nowhere is anyone looked down upon for being married more than once, provided that the marriage is allowed by God.

Just to illustrate, consider the situation with the widows in 1 Timothy 5. You might remember that Paul commanded the younger widows to get remarried. Then, just a few verses later, Paul said that an older woman should not be supported by the church unless she had been (among other things), a **“one-man woman”** (very much parallel to the statement here in 1 Timothy 3). It hardly makes sense that Paul would command the younger women to do something (remarrying after the death of a spouse) that would disqualify them from being helped by the church later in life. Our conclusion must be, then, that being a **“one-woman**

man” or a **“one-man woman”** is the same as we might think about it in normal conversation today. If a guy is getting hit on, and he says, “Oh, well, I can’t do that...I’m a one-woman man,” he is not making a statement about the number of times he’s been married; but rather, he’s saying, “No! I am faithful to my wife! I am a one-woman man.”

- C. And bringing this back to the qualifications for elders, then, my understanding is that this is what Paul is saying: An elder must be a man who is known for being **faithful to his wife**.

The phrase does not condemn being married more than once, but it prohibits a philanderer from being appointed to the office of elder. One commentator has said, “If a man is viewed as having a scriptural marriage by the church before he is nominated to be an elder, then he should not be shunned from leadership because of a past divorce,” or for that matter, the death of a spouse that is followed by a second marriage. I would agree with that. As long as the marriage is approved by God in the first place, the Bible does not look down on a second marriage. Please remember: In Matthew 19:9, Jesus gave permission for a divorce and the subsequent remarriage of the innocent party if the marriage was dissolved due to sexual immorality. So, a man who divorced his wife because she was guilty of sexual sin, and who then married another woman is still the husband of one wife. He is not the husband of two wives; but rather, he continues to be a **“one-woman man.”** In the sight of God, he is no longer married to the first wife, but instead, just as if his first wife had died, he is free to remarry. In the same way, if a man remarries after the death of a spouse, he is not considered a “two-woman man.” But rather, if he is faithful to his wife, he continues to be a **“one-woman man.”** And so again, the Bible does not look down on those who have been remarried, as long as the marriage is acceptable in the sight of God.

Before we leave this concept, I would like to point out that outside of this qualification, Paul never specifically mentions sexual purity. So often, the Bible tells us to flee from sexual sin. And so to me, it is interesting to look at this qualification in its context: An elder must be **“above reproach, a one-woman man, temperate, prudent, respectable,”** and so on. Paul is saying that the man must have the reputation of being faithful to his wife, a **“one-woman man.”**

II. At this time, let us move on to the **CHILDREN**.

And truly, out of all of the qualifications that we have studied so far, the statements about an elder’s children lead to some of the greatest controversy, and most of the confusion comes from Paul’s statement to Titus that an elder must have **“children who believe.”** So, as we study this little phrase, I would like to divide the remainder of our study this morning into several questions:

- A. First of all, let us ask ourselves: **Why did God give us qualifications for an elder’s children?**

And thankfully, the text answers the question. In 1 Timothy 3:4-5, Paul says that, **“He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)...”** In other words, we might say that raising a family could be described as “boot camp for elders.” Certainly, those of you who have raised children (and those of us in the process right now) can understand something about that statement. However, not only could raising a family be considered TRAINING for the eldership, but it could also be considered a TEST for a number of qualities that an elder may or may not have. Paul makes it very clear that there are some definite parallels between managing a family and managing a congregation of God’s people.

Just as a father needs to love, and feed, and care for, and discipline his children, so also an elder will need to demonstrate those qualities in the Lord's church.

And so if we look at a man whose children have all grown up to be criminals, we would seriously question his ability to lead and manage a congregation. In fact, try to imagine an elder with children who have all left the faith, with children who are all in prison for various crimes. I might compare that to a plumber who lives in a house full of leaky pipes, or maybe a roofer who lives in a house with a leaky roof. Something is wrong. We might even compare it to a drunken sheriff going out and chasing a drunk driver. Many years ago, there was a fatal car crash down in Janesville that ended just a few blocks from our house. The sheriff, who was off-duty at the time, was cut off in traffic and chased the young man, who ended up dying in the accident. In the course of the investigation, it was discovered that the sheriff himself had been drinking. And although he was not legally drunk, the sheriff's credibility was severely damaged, he lost his ability to lead, and he was not reelected. In a similar way, it will be extremely difficult for a man to lead the church who has failed to lead his own family. That is what Paul is warning about here.

We can think back to the Old Testament, and we see an illustration of this in the life of Eli and his two sons. Eli was a righteous man, he was a God-fearing man, he did a lot of things right, and yet his failure as a father eventually led to his own failure as a leader among God's people. So, first of all, we see the reason for the requirement that an elder's children be faithful. Raising those children in the faith serves as training, and it also serves as a test, as a demonstration of his leadership ability. And one other little comment here: A man who has been successful at raising children will be able to empathize with the struggles that parents in the congregation may be facing. How strange when we look at the priest system in the Catholic Church: Single men with no children end up giving marriage and child-rearing advice to members of their churches who may be struggling! That is not God's plan! As most of us know, those who give the most advice on raising children are usually those who have no children! So, there are some good reasons why elders must have children.

- B. At this time, let us move along a little bit, and let us now consider what Paul meant when he said that an elder must have ***"children who believe."*** What is the definition of "believing"?

And as we start to answer this question, I would ask that we turn it around and simply ask: What does the Bible mean when it refers to ***"unbelievers"***? I could list a dozen verses that talk about ***"unbelievers,"*** but I think when we turn it around, it becomes more clear that a believer is a Christian and an unbeliever is not a Christian. In fact, in Acts 5:14, we find that ***"...all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number..."*** The ***"believers"*** were added to the church. We could also look at Acts 8:12, ***"But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike."*** Again, as soon as these people believed, they were baptized. One of the clearest illustrations of what it means to be a true believer is found with reference to the Philippian Jailer in Acts 16. Paul and Silas said, ***"Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..."*** ***And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household."*** A believer, then, is someone who has obeyed the Lord by being baptized.

- C. At this time, let us move on and at least briefly consider the question: What if an elder only has one child: Is he qualified (if that one child is a Christian)?

And here our discussion focuses in on the word **“children.”** Some have said that since the word **“children”** is plural, that an elder must have more than one child in order to even have a chance at being qualified. However, the word translated here as **“children”** is defined in this way, “a child, in relation to father and mother; in a more general sense the plural is used for descendants, or posterity.” Even in the definition, then, we start to see that the plural can sometimes refer to a single child.

A modern example of a similar principle would be in the wording of IRS Form 1040 on line 6(c), where the form asks you to list your **“children.”** I have a feeling that people with only one child are somehow able to figure out that line 6(c) applies to them! Nobody says, “Oh no! It says ‘children,’ and I only have one; therefore, this part of the form does not apply to me!” But instead, we understand that people with only one child still fall into the category of people having **“children.”**

We could consider the wording on our traffic signs. In school zones, we often see the signs that say, “Speed Limit 15: When Children are Present.” Try explaining to the officer, “Sir, there was only one child playing out there in the middle of the street; therefore, that sign does not apply to me at this time.” No! Certainly, then, we understand that even in modern times, sometimes we use the plural to refer to a single child.

These are merely illustrations, but let’s look at the Bible to see whether our modern understanding matches up with how the Bible uses the word. First of all, we could consider Genesis 3:16. In the curse that was given to women after Eve had shared the forbidden fruit with Adam, God said, **“I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children....”** Maybe we should ask: Is the birth of only one child painless? Certainly our women know the answer to that question. God used the plural form of the word to refer to one or more.

We could also consider Genesis 21:7. Most of us know how many children were born to Sarah. With that in mind, we come to Genesis 21:7, where Sarah said, **“Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have born him a son in his old age.”** Here we see a very direct illustration: Sarah very clearly nursed **“children,”** and yet that word (which is plural) very clearly refers to the **“son”** (singular). Isaac, then, even as an only child, was clearly referred to by the plural **“children.”**

Over in the New Testament, the parallels continue. In Matthew 19:29, Jesus said, **“And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.”** What about someone who for some reason has to leave an only child for the sake of God’s kingdom? Will that person not be blessed when this life is over? Although the word is plural, we understand that the word **“children”** can refer to one or more.

We could also consider Ephesians 6, where Paul says, **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord.... Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger...”** and so on. Would an only child be exempt from obedience to his or her father? Are fathers allowed to provoke their only children to anger?

We could look at 1 Timothy 5:4, just two chapters away from the qualifications for elders. Paul was giving instructions concerning how the church should take care of the widows in the congregation. Paul says, **“...but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God.”** Would an only child be exempt from this responsibility?

Certainly we understand, then, that Biblically speaking, the word **“children”** can be used in the generic sense to refer to one or more children. My understanding, then, is that one believing child will satisfy the qualification.

Some have made an argument in favor of having multiple children by saying that two or more children are required, because the elder needs experience in solving problems between brothers and sisters (a skill that an elder will need in the church). And I think we can see that there might be a value to that, and yet at the same time, where does that end? Three kids are better than two, and eight are better than four, and having twenty kids is certainly better than having ten, and on and on and on. In fact, using the same argument you could make the case that an elder needs to have children equal to the number of people in the congregation. Here at this congregation, we could require an elder to have 56 children. After all, he would be an expert in leading a group of this size! In reality, of course, I would need to question the wisdom of a man who chose to have 56 kids!

Let us, then, go back to the purpose that Paul gave for an elder having children: The man must demonstrate his ability to lead his own family. And I would suggest that a man can demonstrate that ability with one child. In fact, as we have learned, one believing child will allow the man to meet the qualification. I like what one of my college professors said about term papers. A lot of my papers had to be 30 pages. But this man only required a 10-page paper, and he explained by saying, “If you can write a good 10-page paper, then you can probably write a good 30-page paper, and if you cannot write a good 10-page paper, then you surely can’t write a good 30-page paper. So, just save me some time grading all this stuff, and write me a really good 10-page paper!” In the same way, an elder can demonstrate his family leadership ability by raising one child to be a faithful Christian. And sure, more might be more impressive, but let us not make a rule where the Bible has not made a rule.

D. Of course, this leads to another question that some have raised, and that is: **If an elder has multiple children, must 100% of those children be faithful?**

Some have suggested that if an elder has multiple children, that all of them must be Christians. And here again, I think we can see a benefit to this, but at the same time, we need to be very careful not to go beyond what the Bible actually says. For a little mental exercise, I would encourage you to think about a situation at the church where I grew up. We had a qualified man serving as an elder, and this man actually became a father for the third time while serving as an elder! So now what do we do? Some people might make the argument that 100% of his children were not Christians and that he would need to step down because of that newborn baby, and yet again, the Bible does not give this requirement.

Instead, going back to the actual requirement (and the reason Paul gives for it), we need to look at a man’s life and see if he has proven his ability to manage his household in such a way that at least one child is faithful. But let us also look at this in a balanced way. If a man has ten children, and nine of those ten children fall away the instant they leave home at the age of 18, we would certainly have some serious questions about his ability as a father. He might be technically qualified (in the sense that he has at least one believing child), but we would need to back up and say, “Something is not right in that family.” We would need to go back to the middle column on the chart on our handout, and we would need to ask, “Is he qualified to LEAD in this area?”

Some have used Proverbs 22:6 to prove that if any child ever falls away, that the parents are somehow to blame. The verse says, **“Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.”** The argument is, even if one child is always faithful, if another one of the elder’s kids ever **“departs,”** then

the man must not have trained the child properly, and he is no longer qualified to be an elder. We need to understand, however, the nature of a proverb. A proverb is not an iron-clad guarantee, but a proverb is a statement that is generally true. As an illustration here, consider Proverbs 15:1, ***“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”*** Generally, this is a true statement. But is it always true? Is this a guarantee? Generally speaking, a gentle answer will pacify an angry person, and yet at the same time, we also know that a gentle answer will not always keep us out of trouble.

The same is true of Proverbs 23:13, ***“Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.”*** As a proverb, Solomon is teaching the value of discipline, but again, it is obviously not an iron-clad guarantee. Sometimes, when struck with a rod, a child might actually die.

In the same way, a godly man who makes all of the right moves as a father, will sometimes have a child who leaves the faith later in life. As a minimum, then, a man must have at least one Christian child, but nowhere does the Bible require that 100% of his children remain faithful.

- E. I should point out though, that even though one faithful child will meet the minimum requirement, even the other children are covered by the rest of Titus 1:6. **None of an elder’s children can be *“accused of dissipation or rebellion.”***

We could check a wide variety of translations here, but I think we get the point: None of an elder’s children are to be wild and rebellious in their behavior. If 100% of the children were to be faithful Christians, then this last little phrase would not be needed—a faithful Christian would not be wild and rebellious; so, as I understand it, the elder needs to have at least one child who is faithful, and the others (if they are not Christians) are at least not to be known for being rebellious and out of control.

Conclusion:

As we close, let us remember that we are talking about minimum requirements. At a minimum, an elder must have at least one child who is a faithful Christian, and any remaining children must not be known in the community as being wild and rebellious. Certainly it would be nice, it would be great, if elders would have a number of children and if all of them could be faithful. However, at the same time, we also need to remember that we should never require more than what the Scriptures require. Elders are not required to be perfect, but they are required to be faithful. They must be qualified.

I am so thankful for your kind attention and your good comments and questions over the past few weeks. As Christians, our job at this point is to look at our own lives and put the Bible into practice. When it says ***“be hospitable,”*** we are to ***“be hospitable.”*** When it says that we must not be ***“addicted to wine,”*** then we are not to be ***“addicted to wine,”*** and so on. As we studied last week, nearly all of the qualifications for elders are in some way required for all of us as Christians. Let us all work toward having qualified families standing behind qualified men serving as elders. Lord willing, next week I would like for us to study the question: Where do we go from here? And until such a time as elders can be appointed, how do we govern ourselves in the absence of elders?

At every service, it is our tradition to explain God’s plan of salvation so that we can give everyone here the opportunity to obey the good news. It is not necessary to become a Christian in front of a large group like this. It can happen at any time during the week. As soon as someone understands that Jesus paid the penalty for our sins, the Bible teaches that we must change our lives and be immersed in water for the forgiveness of our

sins. If you have any questions, please let us know, but if you are ready to obey the gospel right now, you can come to the front as we sing this next song. Let's stand and sing...

To comment on this lesson: fourlakeschurch@gmail.com

“Elders: The Qualifications”

PART 2

1 Timothy 3:1-7

¹ It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. ² An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. ⁴ He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity ⁵ (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), ⁶ and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. ⁷ And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:5-9

⁵ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, ⁶ namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. ⁷ For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, ⁸ but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, ⁹ holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict.

	ELDERS	QUALIFIED TO LEAD?	ALL CHRISTIANS
“the husband of one wife” literally, “a one woman man”	1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6		Marriage is not required, but for those who are married, their marriages must be according to God’s will, and they must be faithful, either a “one-woman man,” or a “one-man woman” (Matthew 19:9, Hebrews 13:4, etc.)
“manages his own household well”	1 Timothy 3:4		Ephesians 6:4 (with reference to fathers)
“keeping his children under control with all dignity”	1 Timothy 3:4		Ephesians 6:4 (with reference to fathers)
“having children who believe”	Titus 1:6		Ephesians 6:4 (with reference to fathers)
“children not accused of dissipation or rebellion”	Titus 1:6		Colossians 3:20 (with reference to children)

I. A ONE-WOMAN MAN

- _____
- _____
- _____

II. BELIEVING CHILDREN

- **Why standards for children?**

1 Timothy 3:4-5 *He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)*

1 Samuel 2:12-13, 17 *Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; they did not know the Lord and the custom of the priests with the people.... Thus the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for the men despised the offering of the Lord.*

- **Believing= _____**

Acts 5:14 *...all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly added to their number....*

Acts 8:12 *But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike.*

Acts 16:31, 33-34 *“Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...” And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.*

- **One child?**

Genesis 3:16 *I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you will bring forth children....*

Genesis 21:7 *Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have born him a son in his old age.*

Matthew 19:29 *And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or farms for My name’s sake, will receive many times as much, and will inherit eternal life.*

Ephesians 6:1, 4 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord.... Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger...*

1 Timothy 5:4 *...but if any widow has children or grandchildren, they must first learn to practice piety in regard to their own family and to make some return to their parents; for this is acceptable in the sight of God.*

- **Must 100% of the elder’s children be faithful?**

Proverbs 22:6 *Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Proverbs 15:1 *A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.*

Proverbs 23:13 *Do not hold back discipline from the child, although you strike him with the rod, he will not die.*

- **A qualification that applies to ALL of an elder’s children: _____**