

qualifications for elders

Compiled from 1 Timothy 3:1-7 & Titus 1:5-9

Desire to serve: The desire to serve as an elder is an honorable one from God (see 1 Peter 5:1-3). The elder who serves without a God-given desire will not serve with his whole heart.

His life is above reproach, or blameless: This doesn't mean being perfect, but having a clean moral and spiritual reputation. There should be no current charge against his character that would disqualify him from service.

Faithful to his wife: Literally a *one-woman man*. This doesn't mean that an elder must be married. But if he is, he must be physically and mentally faithful to his wife. He is above reproach in his sexual and marital life.

Exercises self-control: One who isn't rash, hasty or excessive in his decisions or actions. Someone who can finish what they start.

Living wisely: This describes a person who is stable, clear-headed and exercises balanced judgment. Also one who isn't overly indulgent in his personal life.

Respectable: Presents himself well. Has an orderly, well-arranged life.

Just: One who is honest, law-abiding and upright. One who is fair and seeks justice for others.

Loves what is good: One who is attracted to what is good, wholesome and edifying rather than to what is perverse and corrupt.

Living a devout and disciplined life: One who is strongly committed to God and His Word and will not compromise biblical truth.

Enjoys having guests in his home: Hospitable. A welcoming person and one who welcomes people into his home.

Able to teach, has a strong belief in the trustworthy message of Scripture, encourages others with wholesome teaching and shows those who oppose it where they are wrong: This doesn't mean that elders must have the gift of teaching. However, elders must know the Word of God and be able to instruct others at some level: large groups, small groups or one-on-one.

Not a heavy drinker: This doesn't mean that an elder can never drink alcohol, but if he does drink he should do so in moderation. An elder must not have a drinking problem or practice drunkenness.

Not quick-tempered, and not violent, but gentle: Not easily provoked, irritable or ready to resort to force. Not a "hothead" or someone with a serious problem with anger. A person who is able to graciously yield, when appropriate, even though they're being wronged. One who doesn't insist on his rights.

Not quarrelsome: A peacemaker. One who doesn't start arguments and isn't eager to jump into them.

Not arrogant: Not overbearing, intimidating or hard to approach. Considerate of the opinions and feelings of others. Not headstrong or self-assertive.

Not loving money, and not dishonest with money: Not greedy or overly focused on financial gain. Not controlled by a desire for a better lifestyle, but is generally content. One who will not manipulate people or situations for personal gain.

Manages his own family well, having children who respect and obey him, they don't have a reputation for being wild or rebellious, and manages his family in a manner worthy of full respect: This doesn't mean that an elder must have children, but if he does, he must be a responsible husband, father and provider. He must be aware of the condition and behavior of his children. He must be able to provide proper discipline when necessary. He isn't required to have perfect children, but they should be well-behaved and responsive to the father's leadership.

Not a new believer: An experienced Christian. Not a person young in the faith, no matter how talented, zealous or knowledgeable.

People outside the church speak well of him: Should be well respected by non-Christians in the community. Living an honorable life before all: family life, business life and community life.