

# Titus 1:7-8 Commentary

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ADORNING THE DOCTRINE OF GOD  
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Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission  
See [Summary Chart by Charles Swindoll](#)  
Chart below from [Michael J. Penfold](#)

Focus	Appoint Elders		Set Things in Order	
Divisions	Ordain Qualified Elders Titus 1:1-9+	Rebuke False Teachers Titus 1:10-16+	Speak Sound Doctrine Titus 2:1-15+	Maintain Good Works Titus 3:1-15+
Topics	Protection of Sound Doctrine		Practice of Sound Doctrine	
Topics	Organization	Offenders	Operation	Obedience
Place	Probably Written from either <a href="#">Corinth</a> or <a href="#">Nicopolis</a> (cf. Titus 3:12).			
Time	Circa 63 AD			
Modified from <a href="#">Talk Thru the Bible</a>				

Titus 1:7 For the [overseer must \(3SPA\)](#) [be \(PAN\)](#) [above reproach](#) as [God's steward](#), not [self-willed](#), not [quick-tempered](#), not [addicted](#) to [wine](#), not [pugnacious](#), not [fond](#) of [sordid gain](#), ([NASB: Lockman](#))

**Greek:** [dei \(3SPA\)](#) [gar ton episkopon anegkleton einai \(PAN\)](#) [os theou oikonomon, me authade, me orgilon, me paroinon, me plekten, me aischrokerde.](#)

**Barclay:** For he who oversees the Church of God must be beyond reproach, as befits a steward of God. He must not be obstinately self-willed; he must not be an angry man; he must not be given to drunken and outrageous conduct; he must not be a man ready to come to blows; he must not be a seeker of gain in

disgraceful ways. ([Westminster Press](#))

**KJV:** For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre;

**Phillips:** To exercise spiritual oversight a man must be of unimpeachable virtue, for he is God's agent in the affairs of his household. He must not be aggressive or hot-tempered or over-fond of wine; nor must he be violent or greedy for financial gain. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** for it is a necessity in the nature of the case that the overseer be such that no charge can be brought against him as God's superintendent; not self-willed, not irascible, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of dishonest gain

**Young's Literal:** for it behoveth the overseer to be blameless, as God's steward, not self-pleased, nor irascible, not given to wine, not a striker, not given to filthy lucre;

### FOR THE OVERSEER MUST BE ABOVE REPROACH AS GOD'S STEWARD: *dei (3SPA1) gar ton episkopon anegkleton einai (PAN) os theou oikonomon :*

- Titus 1:5; Php 1:1; 3:1; 3:2; 3:3; 3:4; 3:5; 3:6; 3:7; 3:8; 3:9; 3:10; 3:11; 3:12; 3:13
- Mt 24:45; Lk 12:42; 1Co 4:1,2; 1Pe 4:10)

for it is a necessity in the nature of the case that the overseer be such that no charge can be brought against him as God's superintendent (Wuest)

it behoveth the overseer to be blameless (Young's Literal)

must be free from all charge against him (Darby)

An elder has the job of taking care of God's work. So he must not be guilty of doing wrong. (ICB)

To exercise spiritual oversight a man must be of unimpeachable virtue, for he is God's agent in the affairs of his household (Phillips)

For since a church leader is in charge of God's work, he should be without fault (TEV)

**For (gar)** is an strategic **term of explanation**. What is Paul explaining?

The following traits are an easily applied practical list to guide selection of elders/overseers beginning with a list of "negatives" then moving on to a list of "positives".

**Overseer (1985)** (**episkopos [word study]** from **epi** = upon + **skopos** = distant mark or goal looked at & related words **sképtomai** = to look about = source of English "scope") is literally one who watches upon or over others.

Greeks used episkopos to describe their pagan gods supposedly watching over worshipers and over nations. In Athens epískopoi (plural) were magistrates sent to outlying cities to organize and govern them.

Episkopos was used to describe an overseer in any capacity, with examples in ancient writings describing the official in charge of the repairing of a temple or an officer in an army. Paul had warned the Ephesian elders to "be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers (episkopos), to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." (Acts 20:28).

Paul's addressed the Philippian epistle "to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers (episkopos) and deacons" (Php 1:1-note).

As alluded to earlier Paul equates elders with overseers writing to Timothy to note that "an overseer then must be above reproach (1Ti 3:2).

The last NT use of episkopos describes Jesus as "the Shepherd and Guardian (episkopos) of your souls. (1Pe 2:25note)

Although the word "overseer" is not used in the following verse, the writer of Hebrews aptly characterizes the critical role of leaders as those who "keep watch over your souls" and that they "will give an account (as all stewards must likewise do to their Master)." (see Hebrews 13:17-note)

The secular and Biblical uses of episkopos both emphasize the idea of men charged with exercising watchful care over others. In the NT the overseer watches over the spiritual life of the "sheep" in his flock. "**Elder**" (presbuteros) implies the maturity and dignity of the man, while "**overseer**" (episkopos) indicates his work as the "overseer" of God's flock. Someone has summarized elder and overseer with the statement that elder is the title, oversight is the function.

**Spurgeon** - Surely a steward must hold his office from the Master. He cannot be a steward merely because he chooses to be so, or is so regarded by others. If any of us should elect ourselves stewards to the Marquis of Westminster and proceed to deal with his property, we would have our mistake very speedily pointed out to us in the most convincing manner. There must evidently be authority before a man can legally become a bishop, "God's steward."

#### Related Resources:

- [What are the qualifications of elders and deacons? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are the responsibilities of deacons in the church?](#)

**Must be** (1163) (**dei** from **deō** = to bind or tie objects together, put in prison and also root of **doulos**, bond-servant) refers to what is not optional but needful (binding) out of intrinsic necessity or inevitability. **Dei** refers to inward constraint which is why it is often translated "**must**". **Dei** describes that which is under the necessity of happening or which must necessarily take place, and as stated above, conveys a sense of inevitability. To express the sense of necessity **dei** is translated "one ought", "one should", "one has to" or "one must".

In English dictionaries **must** means to be obliged and expresses both physical and moral necessity or insistence. **Must** speaks of something that should not be overlooked or missed. **Must** is used to indicate requirement by immediate or future need or purpose.

**Dei** is used 98x in the NT The NASB translates dei as follows: due(1), had(7), have(2), must(56), necessary(4), needed(1), ought(17), ought to(1), should(9). Mt 16:21; 17:10; 18:33; 23:23; 24:6; 25:27; 26:35, 54; Mk. 8:31; 9:11; 13:7, 10, 14; 14:31; Lk 2:49; 4:43; 9:22; 11:42; 12:12; 13:14, 16, 33; 15:32; 17:25; 18:1; 19:5; 21:9; 22:7, 37; 24:7, 26, 44; Jn. 3:7, 14, 30; 4:4, 20, 24; 9:4; 10:16; 12:34; 20:9; Acts 1:16, 21; 3:21; 4:12; 5:29; 9:6, 16; 14:22; 15:5; 16:30; 17:3; 19:21, 36; 20:35; 23:11; 24:19; 25:10, 24; 26:9; 27:21, 24, 26; Ro 1:27; 8:26; 12:3; 1Co 8:2; 11:19; 15:25, 53; 2Co 2:3; 5:10; 11:30; Ep 6:20; Col. 4:4, 6; 1Th 4:1; 2Th 3:7; 1Ti 3:2, 7, 15; 5:13; 2Ti 2:6, 24; Titus 1:7, 11; Heb 2:1; 9:26; 11:6; 1Pe 1:6; 2Pe 3:11; Re 1:1; 4:1; 10:11; 11:5; 17:10; 20:3; 22:6)

The **TDNT** comments that **dei** "expresses the character of necessity or compulsion in an event. The term itself does not denote the authority which imparts this character. It is thus given its precise significance when conjoined with this power. In most cases the word bears a weakened sense derived from everyday processes. It thus denotes that which in a given moment seems to be necessary or inevitable to a man or group of men... In the language of philosophy the term expresses logical and scientific necessities... Ethical or even religious obligations may also be denoted (as used here in Titus 1:7). ([Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Eerdmans](#))

In regard to **overseers** the verb "**must**" (**dei**) expresses the moral fitness (in the 15 or so characteristics that follow) that is absolutely **necessary** in order for one to qualify to lead the local church. In Paul's first epistle to Timothy, he used **dei** twice in his description of qualifications for an overseer, writing that

An overseer, then, **must be (dei)** above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, 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, lest he become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. 7 And he **must (dei)** have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. (1Ti 3:2-7)

In his second epistle **Paul** emphasized that "the Lord's bond-servant (of whom elders, overseers and deacons would surely classify) **must (dei)** not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged..." (see **note 2** Timothy 2:24)

Paul uses dei once more in Titus in reference to "rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, who **must (dei)** be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach, for the sake of sordid gain." (see **note** Titus 1:10; Titus 1:11)

Paul is clearly instructing Titus that it is a must and not an option that he silence these rebels!

**Dei** can refer to that which is divinely destined or decreed as illustrated by the following NT passages. Jesus declared that "the gospel **must** (dei) first be preached to all the nations." (Mk 13:10) Before the end of this age (and prior to the 1000 year reign of Messiah) there **must be** (because Jesus declared it so) a worldwide proclamation of the gospel which may refer to the supernatural proclamation of the gospel (Revelation 14:6 [\[note\]](#); [Revelation Lectures Pt 2, Pt 3, Pt 4](#); [Resources on Revelation](#); [Summary Charts of Revelation Chapters 4-22](#)) at the mid-point of the last 7 year period of Daniel's Seventieth Week (see [Chart of Daniel's 70th Week](#); Daniel Lectures), just before God pours out His final wrath on the kingdom of the Anti-Christ and rebellious mankind (referring especially to the "bowl judgments" as described in [Rev 16](#)).

In another use of **dei** we read "For as yet they (Jesus' disciples) did not understand the Scripture, that He **must** (dei) rise again from the dead. (Jn 20:9).

**Peter** declared "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we **must** (dei) be saved" (Acts 4:12) (**Comment:** Referring to the only way of salvation which is by faith in Jesus Christ)

For salvation one absolutely **MUST** enter the small gate and travel the narrow road, for it is the only path that leads to eternal life.

Finally, one more "**must**" that applies to all believers is found in Paul's declaration that "we (only addressing genuine believers) **must** (dei) all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2Cor 5:10-note)

**Dei** is also used in Scripture to refer to that which is right as prescribed by law, duty or custom. For example when the Jewish council (the "Sanhedrin") rebuked Peter (and the apostles) for teaching in the Name of Jesus, Peter replied "We **must** (dei) obey God rather than men. (Acts 5:29)

The point is that Christians **must** obey the government authority but only as long as the rules or decrees of the government are not contrary to God's Word. Then they **must** obey God. Peter informs his readers that "In this (the benefits of the salvation, living hope and future inheritance) you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if **necessary** (dei), you have been distressed by various trials." (1Pe 1:6-note)

The trials of this life are a "**must**" for they are God's training ground (His "school of affliction") for our life in the future in eternity.

The following passage presents an excellent sense of the "binding" nature of the verb **dei** and helps one understand how strong Paul feels about the qualifications for overseers! As Jesus' time to be offered as the sacrificial Lamb approached, He "began to show His disciples that He **must** go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day" (Mt 16:21)

**Dei** emphasizes the inevitableness of the Cross, because it was for this very purpose Jesus took the form of man and He was constrained to fulfill His purpose (cf Jn 4:34, 17:4). **Dei** in fact is often used by Jesus regarding His work and it's inevitable fulfillment on the Cross of Calvary. (eg, Mark 8:31; Luke 4:43; 9:22; 13:33; 24:7, 26; John 3:14; 12:34)

In summary, **dei** means 'it is necessary', 'one must,' or 'one ought,' and is used...

(a) of a necessity lying in the nature of the case. (Jn 3:30-note; 2Ti 2:6-note) A familiar OT use of **dei** in this sense (one of 23 uses in the Septuagint) is Boaz's declaration to the nearest kinsman redeemer that

On the day you buy the field from the hand of Naomi, you **must** (dei) also acquire Ruth the Moabitess, the widow of the deceased, in order to raise up the name of the deceased on his inheritance." (Ru 4:5-note)

**Comment:** The nearest kinsman knew that was a necessity, not an option, and therefore he gave up his right to Ruth!

(b) of necessity brought about by circumstances, (John 4:4) and regarding Christ speaking of a necessity brought about by reason of the Father's will (Luke 2:49)

(c) of necessity as to what is required that something may be brought about, (Acts 9:6); In Hebrews we read

And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God **must** (dei) believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him." (He 11:6-note)

(d) of a necessity of law, duty, equity, custom (Acts 25:10, Acts 15:5, Ro 12:3<sup>[note]</sup>, Lk 22:7)

(e) of necessity arising from the sovereign will of God, (Mt 16:21; Mt 24:6; 1Cor 15:53) One of the most famous illustrations is John record of

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him (Jesus) to show to His bond-servants, the things which

**must** shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John." (see Rev 1:1-[note](#), see also see Re 4:1, 20:6, 22:6 [notes](#) [Re 4:1](#), [20:6](#), [22:6](#))

**Comment:** These things (the incredible events in the Revelation of Jesus Christ) **must** happen because the sovereign God decreed them to happen. (cp God's declaration's that speak of His sovereign control of history in Isaiah - Is 42:9, 46:9, 10, 11, Isa 48:3)

Note that **dei** conveys a slightly different meaning than does the closely related verb **opheilo** ([3784](#)) which means "to owe, to be a debtor, to be under obligation or bound by duty".

**Opheilo** speaks of a moral obligation in contrast to a binding necessity as brought out with **dei**. For example, Paul uses **opheilo** writing to the Romans: I am under **obligation** (noun form of **opheilo**) both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish." (Ro 1:14-note)

The apostle saw himself as a debtor to those who spoke Greek and to those who did not. The word **opheilo** refers to a special, personal or moral obligation to do something, in contrast to the basic meaning of **dei**, which speaks of a necessity, something that must be accomplished.

From this overview of **dei** and **above reproach** one can better understand that the candidate for **overseer must** possesses these traits in the following list and if he does not he must not be appointed an overseer. Spiritual leaders not only **must** teach truth but also **must** live out the truth in their life as examples of godliness to their flock. Damage to the leader's reputation is damage to God's reputation.

In short, the verb **dei** speaks of what is necessary, not optional -- once you understand that **dei** has no "option clauses", Peter's solemn pronouncement is even more sobering:

Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people **ought (dei)** you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!" (2Pe 3:11, 12-note)

Peter's exclamation means "How astoundingly excellent you **ought** to be!" which is a no nonsense, straightforward challenge regarding the necessity for Christians to conform their lives to God's standards in light of the coming judgment and relative brevity of this world compared that which is to come. If you really understand the NT implications of **dei**, you will agree that holy conduct and godliness are a **necessity** not an **option**!

**Above reproach** ([410](#))(**anegkletos** or **anenketos** from **a** = without, negative particle + **egkaleo/enkaleo** {en = in + kaleo = call} = to call in {as a debt or demand}, to bring to account, to accuse in court, call into account, bring a charge against - in Ro 8:33 [note] "who will bring a charge [**egkaleo**] against God's elect?... " The answer "no one") means not arraigned (as in a court), that which cannot be called to account, unblamable, blameless, irreproachable, free from accusation or reproach, not accused of having done anything wrong.

**Anegkletos** - 5x in 5v - 1Co 1:8; Col 1:22; 1Ti 3:10; Titus 1:6, 7. **NAS** = above reproach(2), beyond reproach(2), blameless(1).

1 Corinthians 1:8 who shall also confirm you to the end, **blameless** in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Comment:** This speaks of our walk of faith, our daily or progressive sanctification, pursuing holiness (Heb 12:14), growing in grace (2Pe 3:18), walking blamelessly (of Noah - Ge 6:9, of Abraham - Ge 17:1, Ps 101:6, Ps 119:1, Pr 11:20, 28:18, Lk 1:6) before our Master and King.

Colossians 1:22-note yet He has now reconciled (**apokatallasso**) you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and **beyond reproach**—

**Comment:** Beloved, do we really understand what this means? That forever we might stand in the presence of the Perfect One, the Holy One and be blameless and beyond reproach! I think that most of the time I simply read over these wonderful statements and while they evoke a sense of wonder, it is only passing. May the Father grant us by His Spirit of Truth to deeply ponder the cost that allows us to be forever "**blameless and beyond reproach**" in Christ Jesus, the Holy One of Israel. Amen What a "so great a salvation" (Heb 2:3-note) He has bestowed upon us (James 1:17-note) formerly in Adam (Ro 5:12-note, 1Cor 15:22), now forever in Christ! Amen

1 Timothy 3:10 And let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are **beyond reproach**.

Using a modern colloquialism such a person has "*no skeletons in the closet!*"

Too often in American churches the leaders (and elders) are selected because of money, influence or availability, with little regard to whether they have walked blamelessly before the Lord. Better to select a leader **above reproach** than a popular one!

**Anegkletos** signifies that which cannot be called to account. It means having no blot on one's life for which one could be accused, arraigned, and disqualified. It means there is nothing laid to one's charge (as the result of public investigation). It is not simply an acquittal but the absence of even a valid accusation.

**Steven Cole** - The term "**above reproach**" is used in Titus 1:6 and Titus 1:7, first to sum up a man's home life and again to sum up his personal character. The Greek word in Titus is different than the word in 1Ti 3:2, although the meaning is essentially the same. It means that there is nothing in the man's life for which a charge or accusation could be brought against him (see R. C. Trench, Synonyms of the New Testament [Eerdmans], p. 381). He is a man of integrity. He doesn't live one way at church and another way at home. His wife and children would affirm that he displays the fruit of the Spirit at home. If he sins, he is quick to confess it and ask forgiveness. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**Philip Towner** explained it best (IVP NT Commentary Series) - **blameless** (KJV translation) is more a measure of wholeness and balance than of perfection. The code examines all dimensions of life for evidence of the Spirit's influence in each part. This kind of balanced "reading" means development toward maturity is under way. And Paul felt that "whole" believers were best suited for church leadership.

**Albert Barnes** (1798-1870) says that believers **must** live "In holy conduct and piety. That is, this fact ought to be allowed to exert a deep and abiding influence on us, to induce us to lead holy lives. We should feel that there is nothing permanent on the earth that this is not our abiding home; and that our great interests are in another world. We should be serious, humble, and prayerful; and should make it our great object to be prepared for the solemn scenes through which we are soon to pass. An habitual contemplation of the truth, that all that we see is soon to pass away, would produce a most salutary effect on the mind. It would make us serious. It would repress ambition. It would lead us not to desire to accumulate what must so soon be destroyed. It would prompt us to lay up our treasures in heaven. It would cause us to ask with deep earnestness whether we are prepared for these amazing scenes, should they suddenly burst upon us." (Barnes' Notes on the Bible)

## IMPACT OF A LIFE ABOVE REPROACH

**Illustration of a life that was "above reproach"** - The Christian walk of Will Houghton, a preacher who became the president of Moody Bible Institute during the 1940s, played a large role in the conversion of an agnostic who was contemplating suicide. The skeptic was desperate, but he decided that if he could find a minister who lived his faith he would listen to him. So he hired a private detective to watch Houghton. When the investigator's report came back, it revealed that this preacher's life was **above reproach**; he was for real. The agnostic went to Houghton's church, accepted Christ, and later sent his daughter to Moody Bible Institute.

**Adoniram Judson's: Another man who exuded a "Sweet Aroma of Christ"** = "The sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him (Jesus) in every place." (2Cor 2:14) Many years ago when the great missionary Adoniram Judson was home on furlough, he passed through the city of Stonington, Connecticut. A young boy playing about the wharves at the time of Judson's arrival was struck by the man's appearance. Never before had he seen such a light on any human face. He ran up the street to a minister to ask if he knew who the stranger was. The minister hurried back with him, but became so absorbed in conversation with Judson that he forgot all about the impatient youngster standing near him. Many years afterward that boy—who could never get away from the influence of that wonderful face—became the famous preacher [Henry Clay Trumbull](#) (Read [The life story of Henry Clay Trumbull, missionary, army chaplain, editor, author - 1905](#)) (See also his fascinating book **The Blood Covenant**). In a book of memoirs he penned a chapter entitled: "What a Boy Saw in the Face of Adoniram Judson." (As Trumbull listened to his pastor interview Judson he wrote "All the while his [Adoniram's] face glowed with the light of his theme. The sight of that countenance was an inspiration and a blessing to me. I have never forgotten it. I never can forget it.") That lighted countenance had changed his life. Even as flowers thrive when they bend to the light, so shining, radiant faces come to those who constantly turn toward Christ! ([Read the original story in context of H C Trumbull's life story](#))

**Steward** ([3623](#)) (**oikonomos** from **oikos** = house + **nemo** = manage, distribute, dispense) (see study of related word **oikonomia**) is literally the manager or superintendent of a household or estate. BDAG - one who is entrusted with management in connection with transcendent matters (1 Cor 4:1, Titus 1:7, 1 Pe 4:10)

**Vine** - "it is used metaphorically, in the wider sense, of a "steward" in general, (a) of preachers of the Gospel and teachers of the Word of God, 1 Cor. 4:1; (b) of elders or bishops in churches, Titus 1:7; (c) of believers generally, 1 Pet. 4:10."

**Oikonomos** - 10x in 10v - manager(3), managers(1), steward(2), stewards(3), treasurer(1).

Luke 12:42-note And the Lord said, "Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time?"

**Comment:** An outstanding slave (Lk 12:43) was sometimes left in charge of an estate. The owner was free from the burden of administration and the manager had considerable authority.

Luke 16:1-note Now He was also saying to the disciples, "There was a rich man who had **amanager**, and this manager was reported to him as squandering his possessions.

Luke 16:3-note "The **manager** said to himself, 'What shall I do, since my master is taking the management away from me? I am not strong enough to dig; I am ashamed to beg.

Luke 16:8-note "And his master praised the unrighteous **manager** because he had acted shrewdly; for the sons of this age are more shrewd in relation to their own kind than the sons of light.

Romans 16:23-note Gaius, host to me and to the whole church, greets you. Erastus, the city**treasurer** greets you, and Quartus, the brother.

1 Corinthians 4:1 Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and **stewards** of the mysteries of God.

1 Corinthians 4:2 In this case, moreover, it is required of **stewards** that one be found trustworthy.

Galatians 4:2-note but he is under guardians and **managers** until the date set by the father.

**MacArthur** - "**Guardians**" were slaves entrusted with the care of underage boys, while "**managers**" managed their property for them until they came of age. Along with the **tutor** (Gal 3:24-note), they had almost complete charge of the child—so that, for all practical purposes, a child under their care did not differ from a slave. (MacArthur Study Bible)

Titus 1:7 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,

1 Peter 4:10-note As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good **stewards** of the manifold grace of God.

**Comment:** Compare "**stewardship** of God's grace which was given to" Paul; cp Ephesians 3:2-note).

**Oikonomos** -12x in 12v in **Septuagint (LXX)** - 1Ki 4:6; 16:9; 18:3; 2Ki 18:18, 37; 19:2; 1Chr. 29:6; Esther 1:8; 8:9; Is 36:3, 22; 37:2.

**Vincent** adds that in the Greek culture the **steward** was the one who "assigns to the members of the household their several duties, and pays to each his wages. The paymaster. He kept the household stores under lock and seal, giving out what was required; and for this purpose received a signet-ring from his master."

**Gilbrant** - In **classical Greek** oikonomos is used like oikodespotēs for a "steward." The word can also mean a "housekeeper" or "housewife." Oikonomos can be the one in charge of separate branches of a household such as the inspector of goods, chief cook, porter, accountant, etc. In Philo oikonomos is used with politikos, "statesman," referring to a statesman and a ruler of the house (cf. Bauer). The wise man merits praise because he manages the household well and acts like a statesman outside the house which benefits society (Michel, "oikonomos," Kittel, 5:151). In the **Septuagint** Eliakim is the most often mentioned of Old Testament stewards. This manager for King Hezekiah is found in 2 Kings 18:18,37; 19:2; Isaiah 36:3,22; 37:2. Other named stewards are: Ahishar (1 Kings 4:6); Arza, who had his own house (1 Kings 16:9); and Obadiah, a righteous man who "feared the Lord greatly" and who was steward for Ahab (1 Kings 18:3). In 1 Chronicles 29:6 oikonomos is used of the various foremen of King David whom he referred to Solomon for building the temple. The word can also mean officials, nobles or governors, etc., which would entail the same basic job description (Esther 1:8; 8:9; 1 Esdras 4:49). Other uses in 1 Esdras include the stewards of Darius in 4:47 and the treasurers of the king in 8:67. **Used only 10 times in the New Testament**, oikonomos signifies the manager of a household or of household affairs (i.e., a steward), a position most often held by a slave, though sometimes by a freedman. He would be one who was entrusted with the management of a house, the control of its cash receipts and expenditures (Luke 16:1-8-note), and the administration and appropriate care of servants (Luke 12:42-note). Such managers even assumed responsibility for the children of the household who were not yet come of age (Galatians 4:2). The use of oikonomos in Luke 16:1,3,8 seems to designate an employee. But the parallel use of doulos in Matthew 24:45 with oikonomos in Luke 12:42-note shows that oikonomos in Luke 12:42-note indicates a slave. Since an oikonomos had a great deal of control over the financial matters of the household, the term took on the connotation of "treasurer." Accordingly, in Romans 16:23, Erastus is called "chamberlain (oikonomos) of the city," i.e., the city treasurer of Corinth. In 1 Corinthians 4:1,2 Paul used the term ("stewards," KJV) metaphorically to describe those who have been committed to the preaching of the gospel ("the mysteries of God"), and who, as stewards, are required to be faithful. Likewise, in Titus 1:7 the overseer ("bishop") must be a man of virtue and integrity, of model deportment, for he is one entrusted with the work

of God. In 1 Peter 4:10-note the apostle used the word to speak of believers generally as those who are responsible to use what they have received in the service of others. Believers are stewards of the gifts of the Spirit and salvation which God has provided for them. (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

Although **stewards** usually were slaves or freedmen (former slaves), as Vincent notes many had considerable responsibility and authority. In addition to caring for all the needs of family members, they could be responsible and accountable for household finances and for making sure, for example, that crops were properly planted, cultivated, and harvested. They often had oversight of all other household servants, to provide for them and to assign and supervise their work. They would make sure that those who were sick or wounded were cared for and even dispensed discipline when necessary.

The overseer as "**God's steward**" does not own the church or the people of the church. But he is in charge of their spiritual nourishment, growth and behavior. **God's steward** must see that the household of God is cared for and looked after and that their energies and lives are directed to the will of the Master. The steward must do the will of the Master, carrying out His Word without any deviation whatsoever.

The **steward** was appointed by (cf Acts 20:28 = "the Holy Spirit has made you overseers", Acts 13:2 = "for the work to which I have called them") and accountable to the owner, the Owner in Titus 1:7 being God and the "house" being His "sheep", the local body of believers who probably did meet in houses rather than formal church structures. Because the "**overseer**" is "**God's steward**", he is directly accountable to Him and thus he must conform to the highest moral and spiritual standards. Other uses of "**steward**" (or "stewardship") give us a good picture of what God expects from the overseer. Thus, a **steward** must not squander what has been entrusted to him (Lk 16:1,16:2), which in the Titus 1:7 would refer to the care of God's "sheep". Paul described himself, Apollo and Cephas as "servants of Christ and **stewards** of the mysteries of God" adding that "moreover it is required of **stewards** that one be found trustworthy ([pistos](#) = dependable, reliable, faithful)." (1 Cor 4:1, 4.2) So one of the most important characteristic of a steward is **faithfulness**. (cf Mt 24:45) He must use what his master gives him for the good and glory of his master, and not for himself personally. The idea is that he take scrupulous care of that which was entrusted to him, and give it out to others faithfully and as directed by his master Jesus Christ.

**Wiersbe** - let's examine our own lives to see how faithful we have been as **stewards** of what God has given to us.

To begin with, **we are stewards of the material wealth** that we have, whether much or little; and we will one day have to answer to God for the way we have acquired it and used it. Christian stewardship goes beyond paying God a tithe of our income and then using the remainder as we please. True stewardship means that we thank God for all that we have (Dt. 8:11-18) and use it as He directs. Giving God 10 percent of our income is a good way to begin our faithful stewardship, but we must remember that God should control what we do with the remaining 90 percent as well.

We are also **stewards of our time** (Eph. 5:15-17). The phrase "redeeming the time" (see in depth study of redeeming the time) comes from the business world and means "buying up the opportunity ([exagorazo](#))." Time is eternity, minted into precious minutes and handed to us to use- either wisely or carelessly. The main lesson of this narrative is that the steward (Lk 16:1-note), as dishonest as he was (read Lk 16:1-8), used his opportunity wisely (shrewdly) and prepared for the future. Life ceased to be "enjoyment" and became "investment." (**Ed**: This was Jesus "take home" message in Luke 16:9-note).

Christians are **stewards of the gifts and abilities** God has given them (1 Peter 4:10), and we must use those gifts and abilities to serve others. The thief says, "What's yours is mine—I'll take it!" The selfish man says, "What's mine is mine—I'll keep it!" But the Christian must say, "What's mine is a gift from God—I'll share it!" We are stewards and we must use our abilities to win the lost, encourage the saints, and meet the needs of hurting people.

Finally, God's people are **stewards of the Gospel** (1 Th. 2:4-note). God has committed the treasure of His truth to us (2 Cor. 4:7), and we must guard this treasure (1 Ti 6:20) and invest it in the lives of others (2 Ti 2:2-note). The enemy wants to rob the church of this treasure (Jude 1:3-4), and we must be alert and courageous.

Like this steward (in Luke 16:1), **we will one day have to give an account of our stewardship** (Ro 14:10-12-note; 2 Cor. 5:10ff-note). If we have been faithful, the Lord will give us His commendation and reward (Matt. 25:21; 1 Cor. 4:5); but if we have not been faithful, we will lose those blessings, even though we will be saved and enter heaven (1 Cor. 3:13-15). **Vance Havner** often said, "God called us to play the game, not keep the score." If we are faithful stewards, God will reward us generously, and that reward will bring glory to His name. ([Wiersbe, W: Bible Exposition Commentary, 1989, Victor](#))

**Bengel** - The greater the master is, the greater the virtues required in His servant.

## NOT SELF-WILLED: me authade:

- Ge 49:6; 2Pe 2:10

not self-pleased (YLT)

not overbearing (NIV)

not be arrogant (NLT)

not headstrong (Darby)

must not be bossy (CEV)

not pushing himself forward (BBE)

must not be aggressive (Phillips)

must not be obstinately self-willed (Barclay)

not over-fond of having his own way (Weymouth)

not self-willed or arrogant or presumptuous (Amp)

he must not be presumptuous (Moffatt)

Each of the following **negative traits** is preceded by “**not**” (Gk = me) and should be considered explanatory of Paul’s fundamental qualification of “above reproach.”

**Self willed** (829) (**authades** from **autós** = self + **hedomai** = to delight in, take pleasure, English word = "hedonist") is literally delighting one's self and describes a man who has a self loving, self seeking spirit, who is so pleased with himself that nothing else pleases him and he cares to please nobody. He is preoccupation with his own interests. He is so dominated by self-interest and lack of consideration of others, that he arrogantly asserts his own will He is self-satisfied, self-centered, self-complacent, arrogant, proud, haughty, stubborn, willful, inflexible, presumptuous, unaccommodating, harsh, despising others, dictatorial, dogmatic, impatient of contradiction, and unyielding. In his self-loving spirit, he seeks only to gratify self and is regardless of others. (cf 2Ti 3:1; 2-note; 2Ti 3:3; 4; 5-note)

**Steven Cole** - The word literally means, “self-pleasing.” It refers to a man who obstinately maintains his own opinion or asserts his own rights and does not care about the rights, feelings, and interests of others (Trench, Synonyms, p. 349). The self-willed man often takes the contrary view because he loves to assert himself and wield power over others. He never admits that he was wrong. He is not a team player. If he acts in such self-willed ways in the church or with other elders, you can assume that he runs his family like a drill sergeant. Don’t make him an elder! ([Read the full sermon](#))

Barclay says that **authades** literally means "pleasing himself" and "The man who is **authades** has been described as the man who is so pleased with himself that nothing else pleases him and he cares to please nobody... The Greek ethical writers had much to say about this fault of **authadeia**. Aristotle set on the one extreme the man who pleases everybody (areskos), and on the other extreme the man who pleases nobody (authades), and between them the man who had in his life a proper dignity (semnos). He said of the **authades** that he was the man who would not converse or associate with any man. Eudemus said that the **authades** was the man who “regulates his life with no respect to others, but who is contemptuous.” Euripides said of him that he was “harsh to his fellow citizens through want of culture.” Philodemus said that his character was compounded in equal parts of conceit, arrogance and contemptuousness. His conceit made him think too highly of himself; his contemptuousness made him think too meanly of others; and his arrogance made him act on his estimate of himself and others. Clearly the man who is authades is an unpleasant character. He is intolerant, condemning everything that he cannot understand and thinking that there is no way of doing anything except his. Such a quality, as Lock said, “is fatal to the rule of free men.” No man of contemptuous and arrogant intolerance is fit to be an office-bearer of the Church. ([Daily Study Bible Series](#))

**R. C. Trench** said of such a man that "he obstinately maintains his own opinion, or asserts his own rights, while he is reckless of the rights, opinions and interests of others... (he so far overvalues) any determination at which he has himself (has) once arrived, that he will not be removed from it"... In some sinful men their **authadeia** (related noun form), the ungracious bearing towards others, the

self-pleasing which is best pleased when it displeases others, is the leading feature of their character. (Trench, R. C. Synonyms of the New Testament. Hendrickson Publishers. 2000)

**Trench** goes on to liken "the selfish man to the hedgehog, which, rolling itself up in a ball, presents only sharp spines to those without, keeping at the same time all the soft and warm wool for itself within."! (Ibid)

The **authades** man is overbearing (NIV) and always seeking to "have his own way" (Weymouth).

**Vine** says that **authades** "denotes one who, dominated by self-interest and inconsiderate of others, arrogantly asserts his own will, one who persists in his own determination. It is the opposite of "gentle". ([Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#) )

The **overseer** should

not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment (see [note Romans 12:3](#))

Further the overseer should be like **Christ** Who said

not My will, but Thine be done (Lk 22:42, cf Php 2:3; 4-note; Php 2:5; 6; 7-note ;1Pe 5:1, 2; 3-note; 1Pe 5:4; 5:5 - note)

**Overseers** are to be benevolent leaders not brutal dictators.

**Hiebert** says the overseer should not have "a self-loving spirit which seeks to gratify self in arrogant disregard of others."

The overseer should be one who does not insist on having his own way. He should be flexible in his opinions, considerate of other viewpoints and sensitive to use authority in ways that truly promote God's work and not his selfish, personal agenda.

**Self-willed** overseers (and pastors) are overbearing, arrogant, and refuse to take people's suggestions and criticisms, acting more like dictators than spiritually mature leaders, refusing to take other's suggestions and criticisms.

**Peter** ascribes this trait to false teachers as

"those who indulge the flesh in its corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, **self-willed**, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties." (2Pe 2:10-note).

**Albert Barnes** says **authades** "means, properly, self-complacent; and then, assuming, arrogant, imperious; Robinson, Lexicon - The gist of the offence - the very "head and front" - is that of being self-complacent; a trait of character which, of necessity, makes a man imperious (marked by arrogant assurance), dogmatical, impatient of contradiction, and unyielding. Such a man, evidently, is not fit for the office of a minister of the gospel."

**Matthew Henry** - A great honour it is to a minister not to be thus affected, to be ready to ask and to take advice, to be ready to defer as much as reasonably may be to the mind and will of others, becoming all things to all men, that they may gain some.

**Do your spiritual leaders accept constructive (emphasis on constructive) criticism? Or better yet if you are a leader reading this - How do you receive criticism? Like Christ?** (cp 1Pe 2:21 - note)

**MacArthur** - Authades is an unusually strong adjective denoting an arrogant self-interest that asserts its own will with utter disregard for how others might be affected. Proud self-interest is, in one way or another, the root of all sin, because it not only disregards the interests and welfare of other people but, even more important, disregards God's will and replaces His purpose and glory with man's... The world usually looks to the aggressive, self-assertive person for leadership. But those characteristics disqualify a man for leadership in the church, where a self-willed man has no place. Every believer, and certainly every church leader, must continually fight the battle against fleshly self-will, self-fulfillment, and self-glory. ([MacArthur. Titus: Moody Press](#))

**MacDonald** - If a man is headstrong, obstinately right with no possibility that those who differ might be, if he is unyielding and impatient of contradiction, then he is unsuited to be a spiritual leader. An elder is a moderator, not a dogmatic autocrat. ([MacDonald, W., & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

**Clarke** - Not one who is determined to have his own way in every thing; setting up his own judgment to that of all others; expecting all to pay homage to his understanding. Such a governor in the Church of God can do little good, and may do much mischief.

**NOT QUICK-TEMPERED: me orgilon:**

- Pr 14:17; 15:18; 16:32; Eccl 7:9; Jas 1:19, 20)

irritable (GWT)

not quickly moved to wrath or blows (BBE)

not... hot-tempered (Phillips)

must not be an angry man (Barclay)

not a man of a passionate temper (Weymouth)

not soon angry (KJV)

not "irascible" (marked by hot temper and easily provoked anger) (Vincent)

**Quick tempered** (3711) (**orgilos** from **orge** = anger, wrath) soon angry, prone to anger, easily "inflamed", inclined to anger, hotheaded, irascible (marked by hot temper and easily provoked to anger). This trait describes a man who does not have his passion of anger under control. The idea is not one who is prone to just occasional outbursts, but who has a continual propensity to anger.

Paul is saying that the overseer is one who should not be "touchy". The quick-tempered person is easily provoked because he has a "short fuse". This trait describes headstrong, obstinate individuals who always want to have their own way regardless of the consequences, and are contemptuous or look down on others.

**Orgilos** is translated "uncontentious" in (1Ti 3:3) Hotheaded individuals speak and act without thinking and end up hurting others, something the overseer must never do, but is also true for all believers. We must also manifest the fruit of the Spirit, exhibiting self-control, the opposite of quick tempered.

**Steven Cole** - A quick-tempered man is always a spark away from blowing up. He uses anger to intimidate or control others to get his own way. He is also usually a self-willed man. Jas 1:19, 20 commands, "But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger; for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God." Patience, kindness, and self-control are fruit of the Spirit that should govern a spiritually mature man. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**Barclay** - "There are two Greek words for **anger**. There is **thumos**, which is the anger that quickly blazes up and just as quickly subsides, like a fire in straw. There is **orgē**, the noun connected with **orgilos**, and it means inveterate (firmly established by long persistence) anger. It is not the anger of the sudden blaze, but the wrath which a man nurses to keep it warm. A blaze of anger is an unhappy thing; but this long-lived, purposely maintained anger is still worse. The man who nourishes his anger against any man is not fit to be an office-bearer of the Church." ([Daily Study Bible Series](#))

Aristotle wrote that the "**orgilos**" men are "quick-tempered persons (who) lose no time being angry, and do so with those they ought not, over things they ought not, and far more than they ought."

Someone has aptly said that temper is such a wonderful thing that it's a shame to lose it. That's Paul's advice for prospective elders and overseers. Do not be easily provoked. Keep your passion under control. Remember that one of the characteristics of love is that it is "not provoked" (see 1Co 13:5-note) but is willing to endure slights and insults. The overseer exhibits this love which is not irritable or touchy, but which absorbs offenses, insults, and inconveniences for the sake of others' welfare.

The overseer is to be mild, yielding and tender so that "no unwholesome (corrupt, putrefying, disgusting, "rotten") word" proceeds from his mouth but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. (Ep 4:29-note)

**Matthew Henry** - "How unfit are those to govern a church who cannot govern themselves, or their own turbulent and unruly passions! The minister must be meek and gentle, and patient towards all men."

As **Paul** wrote to Timothy (who was probably overseeing" the Ephesian church) "the Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome. (see 2Ti 2:24 ; 25-note; Ep 4:26-note)

**James** reminds us all that "the anger of man does not accomplish the righteousness of God" (Jas 1:20note)

A righteous man ought to get angry when wrongs are done - get angry at the right time! On the other hand, as someone has counseled, "Temper is such a wonderful thing that it's a shame to lose it."

The **Septuagint (LXX)** has two instructive uses of **orgilos** in the book of **Proverbs** where we read that we are not to

associate with a man given to anger or go with a **hot-tempered** man (orgilos)" (Pr 22:24) because "an angry man stirs up strife, and a **hot-tempered** (orgilos) man abounds in transgression. (Pr 29:22)

If a man otherwise qualified as overseer is prone to a volatile temperament, he has learned to bridle it. If he has a hot temper, he never lets it show. In sum, long-lived, purposely maintained, even nourished anger makes a man unfit to be an overseer. A man who cannot control his emotions will have difficulty leading others and exercising proper judgment over church matters, especially those associated with strong feelings. This qualification does not mean the overseer cannot have strong personal feelings on certain issues but does prohibit an impulsive or divisive reaction that would do more to complicate the problem than to solve it.

The overseer should be "quick to hear, slow to speak and **slow to anger**" (James 1:19-note) for this shows him to be a man of understanding and fit to teach others, which an angry man is not.

A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression (Pr 19:11)

The **Jewish Rabbi Hillel** taught that "neither one that is ashamed (to ask questions) learns well, nor one that is "angry" teaches well."

**Keathley** - This issue here is not the presence of anger for there are times when we ought to be angry (Ep 4:26note). Rather, this is describing the man who has a "short fuse" and it is a condition that is certainly related to being also self-willed. When is anger sinful? It is sinful when it occurs for the wrong reasons, when it rises too quickly, and when it explodes in uncontrollable behavior. We are not simply to count to ten and then let it fly. A man who is prone to anger is a walking time bomb just waiting to explode.

**Solomon** adds these words of wisdom concerning anger...

He who is slow to anger has great understanding, but he who is quick-tempered exalts folly." (Pr 14:29)

A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but the slow to anger pacifies contention." (Pr 15:18)

A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook a transgression." (Pr 19:11)

The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so abandon the quarrel before it breaks out." (Pr 17:14).

## NOT ADDICTED TO WINE: *me paroinon*:

- Titus 2:3; Lv 10:9; Pr 31:4,5; Is 28:7; 56:12; Ezek 44:21; Ep 5:18; 1Ti 3:3)

must not drink too much (GWT)

must not be a heavy drinker (NLT)

not... over fond of wine (Phillips)

must not be given to drunken and outrageous conduct (Barclay)

nor a hard drinker (Weymouth)

not present at wine (Hiebert)

**Addicted to wine** (3943) (*paroinos* from *para* = beside, near + *oinos* = wine) is literally "tarrying at wine" (Vine), one who stays near, continually alongside or in the presence of wine. The picture is of a man who always has a bottle (wineskin) on the table, which is an indication that he is not having a casual drink but that he is addicted.

The only other use in Scripture is in 1Ti 3:3 "**not addicted to wine** or pugnacious, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money."

**Paroinos** although literally referring to over-indulgence widened in meaning eventually describing all conduct which was outrageous. It was used to describe the one who tends to be quarrelsome because he habitually drinks too much.

To paraphrase **Marvin Vincent**, this is the man one who behaves ill at wine or who treats others with drunken violence.

The Jews used it of the conduct of fellow Jews who married Midianite women. It describes the character of the man who, even in his sober moments, acts with the outrageousness of a drunken man!

The Christian leaders' behavior must not be confused with the drunken worship of Dionysus (Greek mythological god of wine and

fruitfulness worshipped with orgiastic rites) which was practiced by Cretans. Those "given to wine" were also often pugnacious, abusive and given to fighting as well.

**Barclay** - He must not be given to drunken and outrageous conduct. The word is *parinos*, which literally means given to over-indulgence in wine. But the word widened its meaning until it came to describe all conduct which is outrageous. The Jews, for instance, used it of the conduct of Jews who married Midianite women; the Christians used it of the conduct of those who crucified Christ. It describes the character of the man who, even in his sober moments, acts with the outrageousness of a drunken man. ([Titus 1 Commentary - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Steven Cole** - "Wine" includes all alcoholic beverages. The Bible does not prohibit drinking alcoholic beverages, but it does warn about the dangers of wine and strong drink, especially for leaders (Pr 20:1; 23:29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35; 31:4, 5). Drunkenness and addiction to alcohol are always sinful (Ep 5:18; Ro 13:13; 1Pe 4:3; 1Co 6:12). Church leaders must be especially careful so that they do not cause younger believers to stumble. If a younger believer, who formerly had a problem with drinking, sees me drinking, and my example causes him to fall back into his former ways, I am to some extent responsible. Thus if an elder chooses to drink at all, he must be careful and keep in mind his position as an example to the flock. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**MacDonald** - While total abstinence is not demanded in the Word, there is one situation in which refraining is called for, namely, when drinking wine would offend a weaker brother or cause him to stumble (see Romans 14:21-note). This is the overriding consideration which causes great numbers of Christians in North America to abstain from alcohol entirely. With the elder, the question is not the total prohibition of wine, but rather the excessive use of wine, which leads to brawling." ([MacDonald, W., & Farstad, A. Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

**Proverbs** adds these wise words for those who would seek to oversee others

It is not for kings... to drink wine or for rulers to desire strong drink, lest they drink and forget what is decreed, and pervert the rights of all the afflicted." (Pr 31:4,5)

**Matthew Henry** writes that there "is no greater reproach on a minister than to be a wine-bibber, one who loves it, and gives himself undue liberty this way who continues at the wine or strong drink till it inflames him."

The **overseer** should "not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be (continually) filled with the Spirit" so that he be able to speak to others "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. (Ep 5:18, 19-see notes Ep 5:18; 19)

## NOT PUGNACIOUS: *me plekten*:

be a violent person (GWT)

a striker (YLT)

bullies (CEV)

he must not be a man ready to come to blows (Barclay)

**Pugnacious** (4131) (*plektes* from *plesso* = to strike) is literally a striker (one who hits another with force), a fist fighter and figuratively one who is a violent, contentious and quarrelsome.

[http://www.preceptaustin.org/titus\\_17-8#pugnacious](http://www.preceptaustin.org/titus_17-8#pugnacious)

In the only other Biblical use of *plektes* Paul says that overseers are not to be "addicted to wine **or pugnacious**, but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money." 1Timothy 3:3

The Greeks widened the meaning to include not only physical violence, but also "violence" in speech so that *plektes* came to mean one who "browbeats" others -- isn't it true that words often strike harder than fists! It is possible to hurt a person more deeply and permanently with cruel words than with a fist. So true!

The man who abandons love and resorts to violence of action or of speech is not fit to be an overseer. The overseer is to be a man who avoids retaliation, no matter how cruelly provoked, instead seeking to settle all conflicts peacefully, reasonably, and without animosity. Paul's instruction is to be his byword so that "if possible, so far as it depends on" the overseer, he is to "**be at peace** with all men" (Ro 12:18-note).

One would think that this prohibition to retaliate would be unnecessary but apparently it was not uncommon in NT times for grown

men to settle disputes with their fist fights. As **Barclay** says "He must not be a man ready to come to blows. The word is **isplektes**, which literally means a striker. It would seem that in the early Church there were over-zealous bishops who chastised erring members of their flock with physical violence, for the Apostolic Canons lay it down: "We order that the bishop who strikes an erring believer should be deposed." Pelagius says: "He cannot strike anyone who is the disciple of that Christ who, being struck, returned no answering blow." The Greeks themselves widened the meaning of this word to include, not only violence in action, but also violence in speech. The word came to mean one who browbeats his fellow-men, and it may well be that it should be so translated here. The man who abandons love and resorts to violence of action or of speech is not fit to be an office-bearer of the Christian Church. ([Titus 1 Commentary - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Pelagius** says: He cannot strike anyone who is the disciple of that Christ who, being struck, returned no answering blow." (Adapted from Barclay)

Christian leaders "**must** (here is that verb dei again -- this is not an option beloved!) not be quarrelsome, but be **kind to all**, able to teach, **patient when wronged** (putting up with evil, forbearing), **with gentleness** correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth" (2Ti 2:24, 25-note).

**Steven Cole** - Being pugnacious means physically hitting others. But it may legitimately be expanded to refer to a man who is verbally combative. It should be needless to say that an elder should never strike anyone, especially his wife or children. If he must spank his child, he exercises control and does not abuse the child. I think that it is always wrong to strike a child in the face or to spank when you're angry. The older the child, the more you use reason and the less you use spanking. The point is, an elder should not be a man who solves conflict by hitting others or being an aggressive bully. ([Read the full sermon](#))

#### NOT FOND OF SORDID GAIN: me aischrokerde:

- Is 56:10;11 1Ti 3:3, 3:8;1Pe 5:2)

must not use shameful ways to make money (GWT)

not given to filthy lucre (YLT)

not pursuing dishonest gain (NIV)

not greedy for money (NKJV)

not greedy of filthy lucre (KJV)

he must not be a person who always tries to get rich by cheating people (ICB)

dishonest in business (CEV)

he must not be a seeker of gain in disgraceful ways (Barclay)

he must not be grasping and greedy for filthy lucre (financial gain) (Amp)

not eager for shameful gain (Hiebert)

not greedy of shameful gain (Robertson)

**Fond of sordid gain** ([146](#)) (**aischrokerdes** from **aischros** = filthy, shameful, indecent, dishonorable + **kerdos** = gain, profit) is shamelessly greedy, avaricious (excessively acquisitive especially in seeking to hoard riches), a seeker of gain in disgraceful ways. It describes a man who does not care how he makes money so long as he makes it.

Note that the root is used in the following section describing rebellious men, et al "who must be silenced because they are upsetting whole families, teaching things they should not teach, for the sake of **sordid** (**aischrós** - shameful, indecent, dishonorable) gain." (Titus 1:11-note)

The overseer is not to be not given to improper gain for selfish purposes and specifically is not to use his office as a means of accumulating unjust gain. To be sure, the laborer is worthy of his hire, but church leadership is never to be used to make money. The overseer is not to be eager for gain, especially gain that degrades his moral character. He is not to be like those who, without honesty or integrity, seek wealth and financial prosperity at any cost.

**Barclay** - He must not be a seeker of gain in disgraceful ways. The word is **aischrokerdes**, and it describes a man who does not

care how he makes money so long as he makes it. It so happens that this was a fault for which the Cretans were notorious. Polybius said: "They are so given to making gain in disgraceful and acquisitive ways that among the Cretans alone of all men no gain is counted disgraceful." Plutarch said that they stuck to money like bees to honey. The Cretans counted material gain far above honesty and honour. They did not care how much their money cost them; but the Christian knows that there are some things which cost too much. The man whose only aim in life is to amass material things, irrespective of how he does so, is not fit to be an office-bearer of the Christian Church. ([Titus 1 Commentary - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Steven Cole** - In 1Ti 3:3, Paul states that he "must be free from the love of money." Money itself is not evil, but it is dangerous. It is like a loaded gun—it can be very useful if you use it properly, but it can hurt others or yourself if you use it carelessly. A greedy man is not qualified to be an elder, because greedy men are not godly. They will be tempted to take advantage of people financially or to embezzle church funds. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**Aischrokerdes** aptly described many Cretans who did not care how they made money so long as they made it.

**Polybius** adds that "They are so given to making gain in disgraceful and acquisitive ways that among the Cretans alone of all men no gain is counted disgraceful."

**Plutarch** said that Cretans stuck to money like bees to honey. The Cretans counted material gain far above honesty and honor. If an overseer's main aim in life is to amass material things, irrespective of how he does so, is not fit to be an office-bearer of the Christian Church. (Barclay)

Peter instructs leaders "shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to the will of God; and **not for sordid gain**, but with eagerness" (1Pe 5:2-note)

Paul warned Timothy of the arrival in the church of "men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, **who suppose that godliness is a means of gain.**" (1Ti 6:5)

**Peter** warned about false teachers who "**in their greed**... will exploit you with false words (NLT has "will make up clever lies to get hold of your money")" (see 2Pe 2:3-note) and who forsook "the right way... gone astray... (and) followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who **loved the wages** of unrighteousness." (see 2Pe 2:15-note).

Paul alludes again to this problem in Crete adding that "there are many rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision... teaching things they should not teach, **for the sake of sordid gain.**" (Titus 1:10, 11-note)

Ravenous wolves such as these are clearly not to be allowed to watch over God's flock.

**Ralph Earle** observes that "it is a sad commentary on those times that bishops would have to be warned against such conduct!

**Hiebert** adds that if a church leader's "mind is simply occupied with amassing of gold he will be too preoccupied to feed the flock.

Good point! This overseer's attitude toward material wealth ought to be one of healthy detachment, although not to the point of irresponsibility.

**Samuel Johnson** said, that "the lust of gold, unfeeling and remorseless, is the last corruption of degenerate man.

A worthy overseer must be able to say with Paul: I have coveted no one's silver or gold or clothes. (Acts 20:33, 34, 35).

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**Marching Into A Dead End** - Stuart Briscoe writes about a funeral for a war veteran in which the man's military buddies had a role in the memorial service. The friends requested that the minister lead them to the casket for a moment of silence. They would then follow the pastor out a side door.

The plan was carried out with military precision--until the minister marched them into a broom closet. The soldiers had to make a disorganized retreat.

That pastor made an honest mistake, but it illustrates that leaders must know where they are going. As go the leaders, so go the followers.

The apostle Paul left Titus on the island of Crete to establish a witness for Jesus Christ. Titus was to appoint leaders for the growing band of believers. Except for preaching the gospel, nothing Titus did for the Christians on Crete was more important than finding them the right leadership.

Church leaders are to meet the standards set forth in Titus 1:6-9 and to guide others to greater maturity in their relationship with Christ. And followers must lovingly hold their spiritual leaders accountable to those goals.

Whether you're leading or following, know where you're going. Don't march into a dead end. --H W Robinson (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Before you follow a leader,  
Check his beliefs, and pray;  
Be sure he's following Jesus,  
And that he knows the way. --Hess

The only leader worth following  
is the leader who is following Christ

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**Our Daily Bread** in a devotional entitled "Marching Into a Closet" writes...

Author and pastor Stuart Briscoe writes about a funeral for a war veteran in which the man's military buddies had a role in the service. The friends requested that the minister lead them to the casket for a moment of silence. They would then follow the pastor out a side door.

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Church leaders are to meet the standards set forth in Titus 1:6, 7, 8, 9 and guide others to greater maturity in their relationship with Christ. And followers must lovingly hold their spiritual leaders accountable to those goals.

Whether you're leading or following, know where you're going—or you may end up in a closet. —Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

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Check his beliefs, and pray;  
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**The only leader worth following is one who is following Christ.**

**Titus 1:8 but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, ([NASB: Lockman](#))**

**Greek:** [alla](#) philoxenon, [philagathon sophorona](#), [dikaion](#), [hosion egkrate](#).

**KJV:** But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate;

**Phillips:** On the contrary, he must be hospitable, a genuine lover of what is good, a man who is discreet, fair-minded, holy and self-controlled: ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** but fond of showing hospitality, fond of that which is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled ([Eerdmans](#))

**Young's Literal:** but a lover of strangers, a lover of good men, sober-minded, righteous, kind, self-controlled,

**BUT HOSPITABLE:** [alla philoxenon](#):(1Ti 3:2) (Torrey's Topic [Hospitality](#))

**Hospitable** in other translations - a lover of strangers (YLT), He must enjoy having guests in his home (NLT), An elder must be ready to help others by accepting them into his home (ICB), fond of showing hospitality (Wuest), opening his house freely to guests (BBE)

Five negatives in the preceding verse are now followed by six positive qualifications.

**Lenski** - First, "devoted to or a lover of hospitality" as explained in 1 Tim. 3:2, gladly opening house and home to travelling or to

persecuted Christians. This indicates that a man who could do this did not need congregational pay for his office. The companion virtue is: "devoted to or a lover of what is beneficial," γαθόν, good and helpful to others. This expands the idea contained in generous hospitality. One great motive in the minister's heart must be this love of doing good to others. Yet both of these "lover" virtues are to be sanely exercised, hence we have the addition "sober-minded" (1 Tim. 3:2), not extravagant and lacking balance in his opinions and judgments like some who want to be too hospitable, too good to others in a morbid way and thus spoil what good they would do and do no little harm. (ISPECTTTP)

**Hospitable** (5382)(**philoxenos** from **philos** = friend, to be friendly to one or to wish him well, beloved, dear + **xenos** = stranger, unknown, foreign or foreigner, alien, guest) is literally "stranger loving" or a friend of strangers, showing them care and kindness.

Practically **philoxenos** means fond of guests and so hospitable or given to (lover of) hospitality. It describes one who is given to generous, welcoming and cordial reception of visitors, guests or strangers. It means to give practical help to anyone who is in need (friend or stranger, believer or unbeliever) Hospitality was a highly valued Greek and Jewish virtue. It was absolutely necessary for the expansion of the gospel and necessary for the maintenance of the fellowship within the church as well as the image of the church from without.

**Hospitable** is from Medieval Latin hospitāre = to receive as a guest which in turn is from Latin hospes = guest.

The **hospitable** man gives practical help to anyone who is in need, friend or stranger, believer or unbeliever, freely offers his time, his resources, and his encouragement to meet the needs of others.

**Steven Cole** - The Greek word means, literally, "a lover of strangers." Again, this is a quality that every Christian must strive for (Ro 12:13; 1Pe 4:9), but it is especially incumbent on elders. If elders are not friendly and warm towards others, the entire church will reflect that indifference and selfishness. Hospitality means taking a genuine interest in others and making them feel welcomed and at ease. It should be begin here when the church gathers. If you're talking with someone you know and see a visitor all alone, don't keep talking to each other. Go to the visitor and make him feel welcome!. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**Philoxenos** is used 3 times in the NT (no uses in the Septuagint), in this verse and in...

**1Timothy 3:2** An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, **hospitable**, able to teach,

**1Peter 4:9** (see note) Be **hospitable** to one another without complaint.

**Wuest** says that **philoxenos** describes "one who is fond of offering hospitality. But the hospitality referred to here is not of the kind which says, "Come over for dinner and let us have a good time. Some day you will return the favor and I will enjoy your hospitality." The hospitality spoken of here found its occasion in the fact that in the days of the great Roman persecutions, Christians were banished and persecuted, and rendered homeless. Or, in the case of traveling preachers and teachers, ministering from church to church, these servants of God were to be received and cared for by the bishop. Or, because in the early centuries, the local churches had no church edifice in which to worship, the church met in the home of an individual. The bishop should be glad to thus open his home for this purpose." ([Wuest, K. S. Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament: Studies in the Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament: Grand Rapids: Eerdmans](#))

**Lydia** from Thyatira is an excellent example of this virtue, for when Lydia and her household

"had been baptized, she urged (Paul, et al), saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us... And they (Paul and Silas) went out of the prison and entered the house of Lydia, and when they saw the brethren, they encouraged them and departed." (Acts 16:15, 40)

Likewise, the overseer's home should always be open to strangers, to those with personal problems, to the disheartened and the oppressed. An elder should be a person who reaches out to strangers, the unsaved as well as believers, and makes them feel at home in his house. It should be a place of blessed Christian fellowship, where every guest is received as if he were the Lord Himself as in the example of Abraham below.

**Abraham** (Gen 18:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) and Lot (Gen 19:1, 2, 3) are notable examples of men who opened their homes to entertain strangers, Abraham probably entertaining the Lord Himself in a pre-incarnate Christophany and Lot certainly entertaining angels (see He 13:2- note). (See related studies on **Angel of the LORD** <> **Jehovah = Jesus**)

**Matthew Henry** makes a good point that this trait is "evidence that he is not given to filthy lucre, but is willing to use what he has to the best purposes, not laying up for himself, so as to hinder charitable laying out for the good of others.

**Jesus** spoke on hospitality, saying to

the one who had invited Him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return, and repayment come to you. But when you give a reception, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, since they do not have the means to repay you; for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. (Lk 14:12, 13, 14)

Jesus as alluded to above was warning against showing hospitality only to those who would return the favor.

**Hebrews** amplifies this idea instructing believers to

not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it. (He 13:2-note).

In Romans **Paul** wrote that believers should be

contributing to the needs of the saints, (present tense = continually) practicing (literally "pursuing") hospitality. (Ro 12:13-note)

This was a necessary injunction when so many Christians were banished and persecuted. "Pursuing" indicates not only that **hospitality** is to be furnished when sought, but that Christians were (and are still) to seek opportunities of exercising it!

Peter exhorts believers to

"be hospitable to one another without complaint." (1Pe 4:9-note)

The **Amplified** translates it

Practice hospitality to one another (those of the household of faith). [Be hospitable, be a lover of strangers, with brotherly affection for the unknown guests, the foreigners, the poor, and all others who come your way who are of Christ's body.] And [in each instance] do it ungrudgingly (cordially and graciously, without complaining but as representing Him)."

**John** commends Gaius' example of

acting faithfully" in what he was accomplishing "for the brethren... even though they are strangers... (3John 1:5).

In view of this NT emphasis on believers exhibiting hospitality, it would be especially important for the overseers and elders to lead by their example of concern for the welfare of others in need.

The conditions in the ancient world made hospitality on the part of Christians very important. Christian and Jewish travelers, normally carried letters of recommendation attesting that they could be trusted.

**Hiebert** adds that

Believers who were traveling could not resort to the homes of heathen or to the public inns without being exposed to insult and danger. It was important that fellow believers offer them hospitality on their. It was further necessary because Christians were often persecuted and rendered homeless."

**Barclay** reminds us that "in the ancient world there were always many who were on the move. Inns were notoriously expensive, dirty and immoral; and it was essential that the wayfaring Christian should find an open door within the Christian community. To this day no one needs Christian fellowship more than the stranger in a strange place." Hospitality was essential in NT times because of absence of hotels or motels and the fact that the inns were notoriously evil, often in fact functioning as brothels and as places where travelers were robbed or beaten.

**Barclay** described the ancient inn as "notoriously bad. In one of Aristophane's plays Heracles asks his companion where they will lodge for the night; and the answer is: "Where the fleas are fewest." Plato speaks of the innkeeper being like a pirate who holds his guests to ransom. Inns tended to be dirty and expensive and, above all, immoral. The ancient world had a system of what were called Guest Friendships. Over generations families had arrangements to give each other accommodations and hospitality. Often the members of the families came in the end to be unknown to each other by sight and identified themselves by means of what were called tallies. The stranger seeking accommodation would produce one half of some object; the host would possess the other half of the tally; and when the two halves fitted each other the host knew that he had found his guest, and the guest knew that the host was indeed the ancestral friend of his household. In the Christian church there were wandering teachers and preachers who needed hospitality. There were also many slaves with no homes of their own to whom it was a great privilege to have the right of entry to a Christian home. It was of the greatest blessing that Christians should have Christian homes ever open to them in which they could

meet people like-minded to themselves." ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible](#))

**Life Application Bible** adds this practical note - A Christian leader must be known for entertaining even strangers. In the early days of Christianity, traveling evangelists and teachers were helped by Christians who housed and fed them. We would benefit from inviting people to eat with us—visitors, fellow church members, young people, those in need. Giving hospitality is very important today because there are so many people struggling with loneliness. In our self-centered society, we can show that we care by being hospitable. Christians were not to entertain false teachers (2Jn 1:10), but this prohibition did not apply to non-Christians in general. God wants us to be generous, courteous, and hospitable with non-Christians; through our friendship, some may be won to Christ.(cf 1Cor 9:22) ([Barton, B, et al: The NIV Life Application Commentary Series: Tyndale](#))

## LOVING WHAT IS GOOD: philagathon:

- Amos 5:15; 1Jn 3:14; 5:1, Phil 4:8)

must love all that is good (NLT)

[he must be] a lover of goodness [of good people and good things] (Amp)

a lover of all good things and all good people (Barclay)

**Loving what is good** (5358) (**philagathos** from **philos** = friend, loved + **agathos** [word study] = good, benevolent) means loving and practicing what is intrinsically good (cf Philippians 4:8- note).

**Philagathos** combines not only the liking to be kind but also the actual doing of good. This trait describes one who is tireless in activities prompted by love. Philagathos frequently appears in inscriptions to people of noble character, specifically as a title of honor in Greek societies. Aristotle uses this word in the sense of unselfish describing a lover of good actions. Aristotle uses philagathos in the sense of unselfish or a lover of good actions.

**Steven Cole** - Negatively, he doesn't fill his mind with all of the violent, sensual filth that is on TV or in movies. Positively, as Paul puts it in Philippians 4:8, "whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." ([Read the full sermon](#))

Spiritual leaders should be known as friends of the godly and virtuous. This man is good because he has a good heart and surrounds himself with good things. Overseers who are lovers of good things and good men give evidence of their piety, and likeness to God and their Master Jesus Christ. The overseer's speech, activities, and associations should reveal that he is separated from all that is disreputable, questionable, or overtly wrong.

**Barclay** - The Christian office-bearer must be a man whose heart answers to the good in whatever person, in whatever place and in whatever action he finds it. ([Titus 1 Commentary - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**Paul** wrote that "while we have opportunity, let us **do good** to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith. (Gal 6:10)

## SENSIBLE: sophorona:

use good judgment (GWT)

sober minded (YLT)

He must live wisely (NLT)

discreet (DNT)

prudent (NRSV)

a man who is discreet (Phillips)

serious minded (BBE)

sober in deportment (Hiebert)

**Sensible** (4998) (**sophron** from **sozo** = to save + **phren** = mind) is literally a "saved" mind and so describes the man whose thoughts are saving thoughts. He is sane, sober minded, cool-headed, discreet and always using good judgment, in control of self (curbing his desires and impulses), prudent (showing the ability to govern and discipline oneself by the use of reason), avoiding extremes and giving careful consideration to responsible actions.

The the **prudent** person is intent on the what, the how, and the when of doing what should be done. He is sensible person and in control of his mind, including what he thinks about and what he does. He is balanced in his opinions and actions. This man follows sound reason, and is not under the control of passion, his desires and passions being well regulated. This man has a sound or healthy mind and thus possesses the ability to curb desires and impulses so as to produce a measured and orderly life.

**Steven Cole** - For some reason, the NASB translates the same Greek word as prudent (in 1Ti 3:2). It means to be of sound mind, especially in the sense of not being impulsive. The sensible man is not swayed to extremes by his fluctuating emotions. He doesn't give in to impulses that would be sinful or harmful. He is level-headed. He lives in light of his priorities and commitments. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**Sophron** is used only in the NT and all 4 uses are in Paul's pastoral epistles: 1Ti 3:2; Titus 1:8; 2:2, 5 and is translated prudent(1), sensible(3).

**1 Timothy 3:2** An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, **prudent**, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,

**Titus 2:2** (note) Older men are to be temperate, dignified, **sensible**, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.

**Titus 2:5** (note) to be **sensible**, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.

**MacArthur** adds that this man "does not allow circumstances or the immorality or foolishness of the world to distract him and gain his attention and interest. He not only does not become involved in things that are outright immoral and unspiritual but also avoids things that are trivial, foolish, and unproductive. He knows his priorities and is devoted to them." ([MacArthur. Titus: Moody Press](#))

**Euripides** called **sophron** "the fairest gift the gods have given to men."

**Socrates** called it "the foundation stone of virtue."

**Xenophon** said that it was that spirit which shunned evil, not only when evil could be seen but even when no one would ever see it.

**Trench** defined **sophron** as "entire command over the passions and desires, so that they receive no further allowance than that which the law and right reason admit and approve. (Trench, R. C. Synonyms of the New Testament. Hendrickson Publishers. 2000)

The Christian office-bearer must be a man who wisely controls every instinct.

## JUST: dikaion :

Righteous (YLT)

upright (NIV)

He must live right (ICB)

fair minded (Phillips)

Just in all his dealings (Clarke)

upright in his dealings with men (Hiebert)

**Steven Cole** on **just** - This word sometimes means righteous, but in this context, it probably refers to a man who is fair and equitable in his dealings with others. He is not partial to the wealthy and he doesn't ignore or belittle the poor. He is able to weigh the facts of a matter and make impartial decisions based on the evidence.. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**John MacArthur** writes that since dikaios "could refer to general righteousness, which would make it seem out of place in this list of specifics, it may be best to see it as meaning "fairness," a commitment to and understanding of that which is just and equitable. That

quality is crucial to the credibility of a leader. (See [The MacArthur Commentary](#))

The overseer who is not just, fair minded and upright toward men in all of his dealings can do little good and potentially can accomplish great harm to the body of Christ. The overseer's conduct must conform to the standard of right (**dike**). He is a man of integrity who sticks by his word and practices what he preaches.

**Just** (1342) (**dikaios** from **dike** = right, just) defines that which is in accordance with high standards of **rectitude**. It is that which is in right relation to another and so in reference to persons defines the one who is morally and ethically righteous, upright or just. The meaning of the root word **dike** is based on the assumption that men expect a certain standard of behavior and if this is not attained judgment may result. It follows that the basic meaning of the adjective **dikaios** describes that which is proper, right, fitting, fair, righteous, just (acting or being in conformity with what is morally upright or good). From a forensic or legal viewpoint **dikaios** refers to one who is law-abiding (doing all that law or justice requires), honest and good in behavior and from a religious viewpoint one who is rightly related to God. Those who are truly **righteous** have God's verdict in their favor; they are acquitted and pronounced **just**. In simple terms this trait describes being in accordance with what God requires. The righteous man does what he ought. He is the person who conforms to the standard, will or character of God. For example, **Luke** describes **Zacharias** and **Elizabeth** (John the Baptist's parents) as "both **righteous** (**dikaios**) in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. (Lk 1:6+, see Luke 2:25+ "Simeon... was righteous") They were rightly related to God and because of that right relationship, they walked accordingly. Again we see **righteous character** is associated with **righteous conduct**. That's what Paul is calling for in those men who would lead God's church.

The Greek writers used **dikaios** in the context of social rule to refer to that which is well-ordered or civilized. Thus one Greek writer describes a "**dikaios**" citizen - a "good citizen" or a "civilized (**dikaios**) way of life."

**Dikaios** pertains to being in accordance with high standards of rectitude, and so describes one who is upright or fair. In the Greco-Roman a **dikaios** individual was one who upheld the customs and norms of behavior, including especially public service, and in so doing, created the environment that made for a well-ordered, civilized society. One can readily see how apropos **dikaios** would be for the overseer.

John gives us a Scriptural "definition" of **dikaios** writing "Little children, **let no one deceive** ([present imperative with a negative](#) see [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)) you; the one who practices (present tense= habitually, as a lifestyle) righteousness is **righteous** (**dikaios**), just as He is **righteous** (**dikaios**). (1Jn 3:7+)

The one who habitually (not perfectly) does what is right is **righteous** (**dikaios**). A **righteous** character expresses itself in **righteous** conduct. If a man knows God, he will obey God. A man cannot claim genuine salvation if he is habitually living in sin. On the other hand, a man can only practice genuine righteousness because he possesses the nature of the One Who is righteous. Notice that the practice of righteousness is not what makes the individual "righteous" (**dikaios**), but reveals the inner nature of the one who is practicing righteousness. One practices righteousness because of his righteous character and as Jesus said "You will know them by their fruits." (Mt 7:16+). The individual's conduct is certain evidence of his nature. The one who practices righteousness does so because he has been granted the righteousness of God. And ultimately the overseer who is "just" or "righteous" is a man who reflects the just and fair character of God Himself.

**Vine** comments that "**dikaios** was first used of persons observant of dikē, custom, rule, right, especially in the fulfillment of duties towards gods and men, and of things that were in accordance with right. The English word "righteous" was formerly spelt 'rightwise', i.e., (in a) straight way. In the N.T. it denotes righteous, a state of being right, or right conduct, judged whether by the Divine standard, or according to human standards, of what is right. Said of God, it designates the perfect agreement between His nature and His acts (in which He is the standard for all men). ([Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#))

**Matthew** in the first NT use of **dikaios** gives us a practical illustration of the meaning of this adjective in his description of Mary's husband, Joseph, recording that he was "a **righteous** (**dikaios**) man and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly." (Mt 1:19+)

So here we note that being "righteous" is associated doing "right" -- right conduct.

Phillips translates **dikaios** as "**fair minded**" which reflects one's commitment to and understanding of that which is just and equitable, at quality which is crucial to the credibility of the leader.

Jesus used **dikaios** to describe His Father as "O **righteous** [**dikaios**] Father" (Jn 17:25)

By analogy then the overseer who is just, upright and fair, is a man who reflects the character of God the Father.

**Barclay** adds that "The Greeks defined the **just** (**dikaios**) man as he who gives both to men and to the gods what is due to them. The Christian office-bearer must be such that he gives to man the respect and to God the reverence, which are their due. (Ibid)

**Dikaiois** is used 79 times in NT is translated as innocent(1), just(6), justice(1), right(6), righteous(45), righteous man(8), righteous Man(1), righteous man's(1), righteous men(2), righteous one(1), Righteous One(3), righteous persons(1), what is right(1), who is righteous(1). Mt. 1:19; 5:45; 9:13; 10:41; 13:17, 43, 49; 20:4; 23:28, 29, 35; 25:37, 46; 27:19; Mk. 2:17; 6:20; Luke 1:6, 17; 2:25; 5:32; 12:57; 14:14; 15:7; 18:9; 20:20; 23:47, 50; Jn 5:30; 7:24; 17:25; Acts 3:14; 4:19; 7:52; 10:22; 22:14; 24:15; Ro 1:17; 2:13; 3:10, 26; 5:7, 19; 7:12; Gal 3:11; Ep 6:1; Phil. 1:7; 4:8; Col 4:1; 2Th 1:5-6; 1Ti 1:9; 2Ti 4:8; Titus 1:8; Heb 10:38; 11:4; 12:23; James 5:6, 16; 1Pe 3:12, 18; 4:18 2Pe 1:13; 2:7, 8; 1Jn 1:9; 2:1, 29; 3:7, 12; Re 15:3; 16:5, 7; 19:2; 22:11.

There are 277 uses of **dikaiois** in the Septuagint (LXX) (Gen. 6:9; 7:1; 18:23, 24, 25, 26, 28; 20:4; Ex 9:27; 18:21; 23:7, 8; Lev 19:36; Nu 23:10; Deut. 4:8; 16:18, 19, 20; 25:1, 15; 32:4; 1Sa 2:2, 9; 24:17; 2Sa 4:11; 1 Ki. 2:32; 8:32; 2Ki. 10:9; 2Chr 6:23; 12:6; Ezr 9:15; Neh 9:8, 33; Esther 1:1; 4:17; 8:12; Job 1:1; 5:5; 6:29; 8:3; 9:2, 15, 20, 23; 10:15; 11:2; 12:4; 13:18; 15:14; 17:8; 22:19; 24:4, 11; 25:4; 27:5, 17; 28:4; 31:6; 32:1, 2; 33:12; 34:5, 10, 17; 35:2, 7; 36:3, 7, 10, 17; 37:23; 40:8; Ps. 1:5, 6; 2:12; 5:12; 7:9, 11; 11:3, 5, 7; 14:5; 31:18; 32:11; 33:1; 34:15, 17, 19, 21; 37:12, 16, 17, 21, 25, 29, 30, 32, 39; 52:6; 55:22; 58:10, 11; 64:10; 68:3; 69:28; 75:10; 92:12; 94:21; 97:11, 12; 112:4, 6; 116:5; 118:15, 20; 119:137; 125:3; 129:4; 140:13; 141:5; 142:7; 145:17; 146:8; Pr 1:11; 2:16; 3:9, 32, 33; 4:18, 25; 6:17; 9:9; 10:3, 6, 7, 11, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32; 11:1, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 18, 19, 23, 28, 31; 12:3, 5, 7, 10, 13, 17, 21, 25, 26; 13:5, 9, 11, 21, 22, 23, 25; 14:9, 19, 32; 15:6, 28, 29; 16:7, 11, 13, 33; 17:4, 7, 15, 26; 18:5, 10, 17; 19:22; 20:8; 21:2, 3, 7, 12, 15, 18, 26; 23:24, 31; 24:15, 16, 24; 25:26; 28:1, 12, 21, 28; 29:2, 4, 6, 7, 16, 26, 27; 30:12; Eccl. 3:16, 17; 7:15, 16, 20; 8:14; 9:1, 2; Is 3:10; 5:23; 29:21; 32:1; 41:10; 45:21; 47:3; 51:1; 53:11; 54:17; 57:1; 58:2; 59:4; 60:21; 61:8; 64:5; Je 11:20; 12:1; 20:12; 23:5; 31:23; 42:5; Lam 1:18; 4:13; Ezek 3:20, 21; 13:22; 18:5, 8, 9, 11, 20, 24, 26; 23:45; 33:12, 13, 18; 45:10; Da 9:14; 12:3; Ho 14:9; Joel 3:19; Amos 2:6; 5:12; Jon 1:14; Hab. 1:4, 13; 2:4; Zeph. 3:5; Zech. 7:9; 9:9; Mal. 3:18).

Here are a few representative uses of **dikaiois** from the Septuagint, describing the character of God, the coming Messiah and godly men ...

**Genesis 6:9** These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois) man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. (Note that righteous conduct {walk} is associated with the one who is truly righteous).

**Genesis 7:1** Then the LORD said to Noah, "Enter the ark, you and all your household; for you alone I have seen to be **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois) before Me in this time.

**Genesis 18:23** And Abraham came near and said, "Wilt Thou indeed sweep away the **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois) with the wicked?"

**Exodus 9:27** Then Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "I have sinned this time; the LORD is the **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois) one, and I and my people are the wicked ones.

**Deuteronomy 32:4** The Rock! His work is perfect, for all His ways are just. A God of faithfulness and without injustice, **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois) and upright is He.

**Job 1:1** There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was blameless, **upright** (Lxx = dikaiois), fearing God, and turning away from evil. (Note that righteous conduct {turning away from evil} is associated with the one who is truly righteous).

**Psalms 1:5** Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois).

**Proverbs 10:3** The LORD will not allow the **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois) to hunger, But He will thrust aside the craving of the wicked.

**Ecclesiastes 7:20** Indeed, there is not a **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois) man on earth who continually does good and who never sins.

**Habakkuk 2:4** "Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the **righteous** (Lxx = dikaiois) will live by his faith. (Quoted in Ro 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38 )

**Zechariah 9:9** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your **King** (Messiah) is coming to you; **He** is **just** (Lxx = dikaiois) and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey. (Quoted in Mt 21:5)

**Related Resources:**

- [What is righteousness? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the difference between righteousness and holiness? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What are some Bible verses about righteousness? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why does Christ's righteousness need to be imputed to us? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean that the righteous will live by faith \(Habakkuk 2:4\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why are all of our righteous acts considered filthy rags? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is justification? What does it mean to be justified? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean to pursue righteousness? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does the Bible say about self-righteousness? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does it mean to live for righteousness \(1 Peter 2:24\)? | GotQuestions.org](#)

## DEVOUT: hosion:

moral (GWT)

holy (NIV)

pious (DNT)

saintly (Weymouth)

a devout man and religiously correct (Amp)

Holy in his heart (Clarke)

unstained (Wiersbe)

pure, unpolled, free from the stain of sin (Hiebert)

**Devout** (3741) (**hósios**) pertains to being without fault relative to deity, devout, pious, pleasing to God, holy. It describes a person who lives right before God and so is described as devout, dedicated or holy. It is thus quite fitting that **hosios** describes **Jesus** our Messiah as the prophesied **Holy One** (Acts 2:27, 13:35), the Great High Priest (Hebrews 7:26-note), our soon coming King ( Revelation 15:4-note) and the One Who reigns forever as the **Holy One** (Revelation 16:5-note) **Hosios** was used to refer to that which was true to divine direction and purpose, to genuine obedience to God's will. **Hosios** describes the man who reverences the fundamental decencies of life, the things which go back beyond any man-made law. The idea in this word includes personal piety, an inner attitude of conforming to what is felt to be pleasing to God and consistent with religious practices. This man keeps himself free of anything which would "stain" him in the eyes of God.

**Gilbrant** - In classical Greek the adjective **hosios** is not restricted to a religious connotation but can be used for any moral imperative. It corresponds "to what a man does by disposition in accordance with his inward attitude and the inner acceptance of what is felt to be binding" (Hauck, "hosios," Kittel, 5:489). Thus a man would be considered "devout" for following an ancient custom or a natural law (cf. Liddell-Scott). As a substantive the sense that hosios takes is often predicated upon its use with two similar terms: dikaios (1335B) and hieros (2388B). When hosios is coupled in antithesis to dikaios (a term which denotes that which is customary or allowed by man, often translated "just" or "righteous"), its meaning reflects that which is sanctioned by God. Thus God's decrees (hosios) are set over against man's decrees (dikaios) (Bauer). When hosios is coupled in antithesis to hieros (a term which denotes that which is hallowed or consecrated to God, often translated "holy"), its meaning refers to that which is permitted and right, but not sanctioned by God. Thus the sacred things (hieros) are set over against the permitted (hosios). This term is found over 50 times in the Septuagint, with 26 of these appearing in the Psalms. It is predominately used to translate the Hebrew chāsîdîh, "one who is faithful, devout," and consistently reflects a religious connotation. God is described as "just and right" (dikaios kai hosios) and "holy" (hosios) in all His works (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 145:17 [LXX 144:17]). The majority of the references to hosios are used substantively to indicate a group of "holy ones" or "saints" (Psalms 79:2 [LXX 78:2]; 149:1ff. [148:1ff.]). Psalm 50:5 (49:5) describes these "saints" (tous hosious) as those who are engaged in a covenant relationship, which therefore includes all of Israel. It was not until the time of the Maccabees that a distinct group of people within Judaism became known as the chāsîdîm (see 1 Maccabees 7:13 and 2 Maccabees 14:6). These were the spiritual ancestors of the New Testament Pharisees (ibid., 5:491). Although hosios developed into a specific title ("pious ones") in the Old Testament, none of the eight New Testament references use it in this sense. The Christians were referred to as the "chosen ones" (eklektoi [see 1575]) and the "saints" (hagioi [see 39]), but not the "pious ones." This may be due to the perception that the content of hosios "is more self-righteous than is in keeping with the New Testament community" (ibid., 5:491). Hosios appears three times in the Book of Acts, and each one is an Old Testament quotation

applied to Christ. Both Peter (Acts 2:27) and Paul (Acts 13:35) quoted Psalm 16:10 to support Christ's resurrection from the dead. Jesus is the "Holy One" (ton hosion) who would not "see corruption," because God raised Him up the third day. Both apostles pointed to David's own death and burial as a sure sign that he wrote concerning someone else (Acts 2:29; 13:36). Paul added that the promises God made to David have been validated for God's children by Christ's resurrection, in fulfillment of Isaiah 55:3 (Acts 13:34). Hebrews 7:26 applies hosios to Christ as the believers' High Priest: "Here the word is used absolutely in the way in which elsewhere it can be used only of God. As high priest (archiereus), Christ is completely hosios, utterly without sin and utterly pure, so that his offering is sufficient once for all" (Seebass, "Holy," Colin Brown, 2:238). In Revelation 15:4 God alone is said to be "holy" (monos hosios). He is described as "righteous" (dikaios) and "the Holy One" (ho hosios) in Revelation 16:5, a passage reminiscent of Deuteronomy 32:4. Two references to hosios are found in the Pastoral Epistles and are applied to Christians. Paul desired that men everywhere pray, lifting up "holy" hands (1 Timothy 2:8). These represent freedom from sinful thoughts and deeds and illustrate how a believer is to approach God's throne. Titus 1:8 lists hosios as one of the qualifications for the office of overseer, placing it beside dikaion, "just." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**Steven Cole - Hosios** refers to practical holiness, being separate from sin and evil behavior. It does not mean being separate from sinners, because the Lord Jesus was the friend of sinners. But the devout man does not carouse with sinners in their sin. Rather, he seeks to lead them to repentance. The devout man takes God and the Word of God seriously. He doesn't take the things of God as a joke. He lives in obedience to God's Word. ([Read the full sermon](#))

**Hosios** is used 8 times in the NT and is translated devout(1), holy(4), Holy(1), Holy One(3).

**Acts 2:27+** Because Thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, Nor allow Thy **Holy One** to undergo decay.  
(Quoting the Septuagint of Psalm 16:10)

**Acts 13:34+** "And as for the fact that He raised Him up from the dead, no more to return to decay, He has spoken in this way: 'I will give you the **holy** and sure blessings of David.' **35** "Therefore He also says in another Psalm, 'Thou wilt not allow Thy **Holy One** to undergo decay.'

**1 Timothy 2:8+** Therefore I want the men in every place to pray, lifting up **holy** hands, without wrath and dissension.

Titus 1:8+ but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, **devout**, self-controlled,

Hebrews 7:26+ For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, **holy**, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; (**Hosios** describes the inherent nature of God.)

Revelation 15:4+ "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? For Thou alone art **holy**; For all the nations will come and worship before Thee, For Thy righteous acts have been revealed."

Revelation 16:5+ And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous art Thou, who art and who wast, **O Holy One**, because Thou didst judge these things;

There are 41 uses of **hosios** in the **Septuagint (LXX)** (Deut. 29:19; 32:4; 33:8; 2 Sam. 22:26; Ps. 4:3; 12:1; 16:10; 18:25; 30:4; 31:23; 32:6; 37:28; 43:1; 50:5; 52:9; 79:2; 85:8; 86:2; 89:19; 97:10; 116:15; 132:9, 16; 145:10, 13, 17; 148:14; 149:1, 5, 9; Prov. 2:11, 21; 10:29; 17:26; 18:5; 20:11; 21:15; 22:11; 29:10; Is. 55:3; Amos 5:10)

And in amazing set of uses of **hosios** in the **Septuagint (Lxx)**, we see that it frequently is used to describe the character of men and women as "**godly ones**" (**Heb** = hasid; **Lxx** = hosios) (Ps 4:3, 12:1, 31:23, 32:6, 37:28, 50:5, 52:9, 79:2; 85:8; 86:2; 89:19; 97:10; 116:15; 132:9, 148:14; 149:1, 5, 9)! Sinners lost in Adam, redeemed in Christ, to live and look like Christ enabled by the Spirit of Christ! Amazing grace indeed! **For example** - "Precious in the sight of the LORD Is the death of His godly (LXX = hosios) ones." (Ps 116:15)

## SELF-CONTROLLED: egkrate :

- Acts 24:25, Gal 5:23, 2Pe 1:6

Disciplined (NIV)

temperate (DNT)

he must be able to control himself (ICB)

They must be... level headed (TLB)

temperate and keeping himself in hand (Amplified)

## SPIRIT ENABLED SELF CONTROL

**Self controlled** (1468) (**egkrates** or **enkrates** from **en** = in + **kratos** = power from the stem **krat-** denoting power or lordship) is literally one in control of strength and thus one having power to "hold oneself in" or to "master self". This virtue describes "lordship" or dominion over self. The self-controlled individual exercises restraint over his own impulses, emotions, appetites and desires. **Egkrates** is used only here in the Scriptures.

**Lenski** - the third: "self-controlled," literally, "in control of strength," goes with the two: always having strength enough to check anything that would be unjust or would contravene the ordinances (Trench illustrates by the case of Joseph, see 1 Tim. 2:8). (ISPECTTTP)

**Barclay** comments that the self-control "does not contemplate a situation in which a man is emasculated of all passion; it envisages a situation in which his passions remain, but are under perfect control and so become his servants, not his tyrants. ([Daily Study Bible](#))

**Steven Cole...**

Paul uses this word (1Co 9:25+) to refer to an athlete who exercises self-control in all things so that he may win the wreath. He doesn't do anything that would hinder him from his goal. An elder must have control over harmful desires or habits that would interfere with knowing Christ more deeply or with being an effective shepherd of God's flock. He will be disciplined about spending time alone with God in the Word and prayer. This word is the last of the fruits of the Spirit (Ga 5:23-note), which grow in us as we walk daily by means of the Spirit (Ga 5:16-note). (You may access my message from December 31, 2006, "[Learning to Control Yourself,](#)" which deals with this single topic.)

There has been terrible damage to the church of Jesus Christ because unqualified men have been put into leadership. The pastor of the church that I grew up in was a quick-tempered man who tried to control the deacons (that church did not have elders) through intimidation. My dad served on that board and often was the object of the pastor's anger, because he wouldn't go along with things that were not in line with Scripture. It all came to a head when it came to light that the pastor was using church facilities for his private counseling practice. He was illegally channeling the income he received through a fund labeled "Youth Camp Fund," to dodge the IRS. When my dad confronted him privately, he blew up. So, my dad confronted him at a church meeting. When the church would not correct the situation, we left the church. Within a few months, the pastor had left his wife and five children to run off with a counselee.

We then started attending another church. We hadn't been there very long until it came out that the pastor was carrying on wrongful relationships with several women in the church, including the wife of one of his staff members. That staff member and his wife subsequently divorced. The pastor left the church, but the denomination, rather than removing him from ministry, moved him to a large church in another state! He later moved back to California. A few years ago, I saw in a publication from that denomination that the governor of California had named a day to honor him! Somehow I think that God's view will be a bit different! Whenever these things happen, many people are wounded. Some, who were shaky in their faith, leave the church and sometimes leave the faith. Unbelievers mock God and the church and find justification to go on in their sins. So it is imperative that we, as a church, only put into leadership men who are spiritually mature, as seen in their home life and in their personal character.

### Application Questions

1. If you had to single out one of these qualifications for church leadership, which one would it be? Why?
2. What should a church member do who is aware of an elder who glaringly violates one or more of these qualifications?
3. Often churches choose pastors like Americans choose political leaders: personal charisma, good looks, dynamic vision, etc. How can we avoid this tendency to insure godly leadership?
4. Should a pastor with an unbelieving, rebellious child (or children) leave the ministry? Why/why not?

[\(Read the full sermon\)](#)

The self-controlled man is one who masters his emotions rather than himself being mastered by them. It has been well said that fallen...

Man can control almost everything except himself!

The "self-controlled" man is beyond fallen man's capacity and "self effort". The only genuinely "self-controlled" man is the God-controlled man, the Spirit enabled man (Eph 5:18+, Gal 5:23+). To gain self-control, surrender control to Christ's Spirit. And then you will be enabled to exercise watchful discipline which refuses to pander to the appetites of the body at the soul's expense.

**THOUGHT-** Considering the plethora of lurid images that come across our televisions and computer screens today, one sage advised that we use self-control with our remote control or our mouse! You exercise self-control when you control your desires rather than letting your desires control you. There is only one way to accomplish this and that is to obey the command to "Walk by the Spirit." (Gal 5:16+) And what is the supernatural result? "You (absolutely) will not fulfil the (strong, seductive, incessant) desires of your fallen flesh!" You have in effect killed sin at the head (strong lusts tempting us to sin) and done so by a choice, but a choice supernaturally enabled by the Holy Spirit. Paul exhorts us "to be killing (present tense) sin by the Spirit and you will live" (a joy filled, God glorifying live)! (see Ro 8:13+).

It is interesting to note that self-control is one virtue that does not apply to God for His perfect holiness possesses perfect control. Christ in His incarnation was the epitome of the self-controlled man. He was never tempted or tricked into doing or saying anything that was not consistent with His Father's will and His own divine nature. He was tempted but He had surrendered His will to the Spirit Who empowered Him to resist the temptations of the devil (see Lk 4:1+ and Mt 4:1+ for the role of the Holy Spirit and Mt 4:4+ for the role of the Holy Word in fighting off temptations.)

Secular Greek uses self-control of the virtue of an emperor who never lets his private interests influence the government of his people. It is the virtue which makes a man so master of himself that he is fit to be the servant of others.

**Self-control** was especially vital for the **overseer** who would lead the church of the first century for many of the early Christian heresies taught that since the body was evil (they claimed) it was not necessary to curb fleshly lusts, only to think correctly. Any teaching which claims that knowledge emancipates one from the obligations of morality is false.

A **self controlled** man is moderate in the enjoyment of what is lawful and refrains from all that is unlawful and harmful. This trait pictures the athlete who is self-restrained and self-disciplined but the distinction is that the athlete exerts self control in his own power. Synonyms include temperate, moderate, restrained, and an older probably less familiar term, continent (exercising self-restraint). The Greeks, especially the Stoics, placed great emphasis on personal discipline and self control but the Bible teaches that ultimately the only genuine control over and freedom from the bondage to man's selfish sin nature is the Spirit of God as discussed below. It is interesting but tragic that the first two leaders of the Stoic school committed suicide.

**Peter** teaches that this virtue is to actively sought for as believers we have

escaped (from the power which the moral decay and rottenness in the world has over him through his fallen, sinful nature) the corruption that is in the world by lust." (2Pe 1:4-note)

He goes on to explain that

Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love." (2Pe 1:5-note, 2Pe 1:6, 7-note)

Note that maturation in the Christian life calls for the strenuous involvement of the believer, not self effort but cooperative effort. Peter's point is that spirituality, which includes self-control, does not come automatically or inevitably but is a choice each of us must make every day.

**Louis Barbieri** - The Christian life is like power steering on a car. The engine provides the power for the steering, but the driver must actually turn the wheel. So the Lord provides the power to run our lives, but we must 'turn the wheel.' To a great extent the Christian determines the course of his life." (Barbieri, L: First and Second Peter)

**Chrysostom** says the **self-controlled** individual is "One having his passions, tongue, hand and eyes, at command"

**John Stott** - Every time... we take a risk that strains our self-control we are sowing, sowing, sowing, to the flesh (cf Gal 6:8)

**Self-control** means building the will to say "no" (cf Romans 8:13-note) when a powerful appetite inside you screams "yes". Self-control is a lifelong course (called sanctification) in learning attitudes and responses that do not come naturally and channeling natural appetites toward God's purposes.

The **overseer** who exhibits the power to curb his fleshly impulses, passions and appetites does so not by his own ability but by the power of God's Spirit. As discussed above, self-control was a highly prized virtue for the Greeks but their focus was entirely on self-effort. The problem is that self-effort always fails in the long run because it may control the body but does not affect inward desires. When one surrenders his will to the control of the Holy Spirit, and He is in charge, the overseer will have self-control. The one who walks ([click note below](#)) "by the Spirit... will not carry out the desire of the flesh." (Gal 5:16-note) and he or she will bring forth "the fruit of the Spirit" (those traits that characterize heaven, "[a foretaste of glory divine](#)") which includes "self-control" (Gal 5:22-note, Gal 5:23-note) When a person is filled with (controlled by) the Spirit, he has divinely empowered "self-control" and glorifies God. Such a person lives an exemplary life on the outside because they submit to the Holy Spirit's control on the inside. Any man who would serve over others, be he a candidate for overseer or a teacher of children's Sunday School, must first be master of himself or herself.

The short-tempered person speaks and acts impulsively and lacks **self-control**.

**Good Works** (from source unknown)...

1. Love what is Good (Titus 1:8 - note)
2. Teach what is Good (Titus 2:3 - note)
3. Do what is Good (see Titus 2:7-note, Titus 2:14-note; Titus 3:8-note; Titus 3:14-note)

**Good Watches** -Some people are like good watches. They're pure gold, open-faced, always on time, dependable, quietly busy, and full of good works. Source unknown

**Our Daily Bread** describes one "of the early church leaders (who) referred to his body as "Brother Donkey." Like that hardy animal with a reputation for being stubborn, his body served him well as long as he placed it under firm discipline."

Temptation's face is young and soft  
And smooth in its appeal;  
But when it's through it ruins lives  
With velvet fists of steel.  
--Gustafson

Solomon who paradoxically seemed not to follow his own wisdom when he took many foreign wives (corollary - knowing the truth is no guarantee we will obey the truth) wrote

He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty and he who **rules** his spirit, than he who captures a city." (Pr 16:32)

Like a city that is broken into and without walls is a man who has **nocontrol** over his spirit." (Pr 25:28)

Paul discusses self-control in his letter to the Corinthians writing

Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. And everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified." (1Co 9:24, 25, 26, 27-Notes = Running to Win)

**John MacArthur** comments that "Walking in the Spirit is allowing Him to pervade your thoughts. It is saying, when you get up in the morning, "Holy Spirit, it is Your day, not mine. Use it as You see fit." It is saying throughout the day, "Holy Spirit, continue to keep me from sin, direct my choices and my decisions, use me to glorify Jesus Christ." It is putting each decision, each opportunity, each temptation, each desire before Him, and asking for His direction and His power. Walking in the Spirit is dynamic and practical. It is not passive resignation but active obedience... the amazing thing about being under control of the Spirit is that you don't even have to ask questions, you just operate within the will of God. One way to get a practical handle on the Spirit-filled life is to see it as living every single moment in the conscious presence of Jesus Christ. One note of caution, however: To be Christ conscious does not mean walking around muttering, "I know you're there ... I know you're there ... I know you're there." That's the legalistic, fetish approach that was used by the Pharisees. They were sometimes called "the bruised and bleeding Pharisees," a name they picked up because they thought it was a sin to look upon a woman. Every time a woman came along, they closed their eyes, muttered

something about “I can’t look... I can’t look” and walked smack into a wall or a tree! No, being Spirit-filled is a matter of living every day, with your eyes wide open, saturated with the presence of Christ. And how do you get saturated? It’s by studying His Word. The more I focus on Christ in the Word of God, the more the thoughts of God saturate my mind; the more God’s thoughts saturate my mind, the more yielded I am to Him. It is the same as letting “the Word of Christ dwell in you richly” (see Colossians 3:16-note).” ([MacArthur, John: How To Get the Most From God's Word.. Dallas, TX: Word Pub](#))

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**Our Daily Bread** has the following devotional - An old adage says: “Next time you want a cupcake, eat a carrot.” The saying is good advice for dieters, but those who framed it may have had all of us in mind. By disciplining our desires when no moral principle is at stake, we prepare ourselves for those moments when we face a temptation to sin.

This kind of discipline is what Paul referred to when he used the term self-controlled in his list of qualifications for church leadership (Titus 1:8). We need this reminder today. Many people think they can live immorally now and suddenly stop when they want to. Because they do not consider the addictive power of sin, they find that living up to their good intentions is far more difficult than they had anticipated.

Proverbs 25:28 tells us that if we lack self-control we are as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls. Consistent self-discipline will build up our spiritual defense system against the forces of evil.

When we discipline ourselves to keep our ordinary desires under control, we make a habit of virtuous living and practice the reality of Paul’s words in Romans 6:18 (note), “Having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.” —Herbert Vander Lugt ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

For Further Study

Are you facing struggles in your walk with the Lord?

Read [How Do You Live The Christian Life?](#)

**To gain self-control, give Christ control.**