

1 This is a faithful saying:

This is the same proverbial statement that Paul made in 1:15 (please see for word definitions), and will use several more times in the epistles to Timothy and Titus. He uses it when he is making a statement of special importance that he wants to stand out in Timothy's mind. This statement above all the others being made in the letter is worthy of being viewed as a trustworthy and reliable one.

If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

The term "if" is defined:

"ei, is first a conditional particle, if...; secondly, an interrogative particle, whether... I EI CONDITIONAL... is connected, according to the variety of conditions, with various tenses and moods; viz. 1. with the Indicative of all tenses, when anything is simply and generally assumed to be, or to be done, or to have been done, or to be about to be... (Thayer, , p. 169-172; 1487).

The faithful statement then is based on the condition that a man desire the office of a bishop. If he fulfills that condition of desiring that work, then he is desiring a good one. By translating two different Greek words with "desire" and "desire," The NKJV leaves the impression that they are the same English word. Other translations correct this.

*If anyone **aspires** to the office of overseer, he **desires** a noble task. ESV*
*If a man **seeketh** the office of a bishop, he **desireth** a good work. ASV*

Although not generally considered as part of the qualifications, these two "desires" are important qualities. They are the foundation of zeal, commitment, enthusiasm and competence. As Peter later told all the elders, the foundation of the work is a personal desire to do it well. If men seek and desire, they will do it willingly, eagerly and without compulsion.

*The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, **not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 1Pet. 5:1-2***

"Seek" and "desire" are the very opposite of "constraint" and the very heart of "willingness" and "a ready mind." For these reasons, any man would be disqualified if he didn't seek and desire it. Those who hate their job and only go through the motions each day would not be able to do the work. Elders need to love what they are doing and look forward to any extra work as a challenge and opportunity. An elder who doesn't zealously desire to do all that is required of an elder is not going to be able to do an effective job. He must "seek" it.

Seek:

"orego... from Homer down; to stretch forth... to stretch one's self out in order to touch or to grasp something, to reach after or desire something... 1Tim. 3:1; Heb. 11:16; 1Tim. 6:10..." (Thayer, p. 452)

"orego, to reach or stretch out, is used only in the Middle Voice, signifying the mental effort of stretching oneself out for a thing, of longing after it, with stress upon the object desired..." (Vine, Vol 1 p. 298)

Think of the following picture as an illustration of someone who is seeking. Someone drops something precious onto a ledge or into a corner and they can't quite reach it. They begin to stretch themselves out further and further to reach it. Finally they are fully stretched, but are still prepared to force it further to reach what they are striving for.

This is the essential idea behind the attitude of the man who seeks the office of a bishop. His desire for the work causes him to make "the mental effort of stretching oneself out for a thing, longing after it." It is this mental effort and longing that will be so tangible to the rest of the congregation. Note the other two uses of this term in the New Testament. This was the "desire" of the patriarchs (Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, etc.) that led them say they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.

*These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. . . . But now they **desire** a better country, that is, a heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city. Heb. 11:13,16*

The stretching they were doing toward the heavenly country was seen in their acts of sacrifice. None of them felt that they belonged any longer in this world. For that reason, service to God was their highest priority that they longed for and stretched after every day of their lives.

It's second use reveals how this same reaching and stretching can be used when directed toward something evil. Those who are seeking for money ("reaching after" ASV; "coveted after" KJV) make it such a high priority that even their faith is left behind.

*For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil: which some **reaching after** have been led astray from the faith, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 1Tim. 6:10*

Again, this stretching out after money so compelling that it forced them to make decisions that led them away from the faith. Not even the many sorrows as piercing them moved them from this stretching once they had committed to it.

Both these uses help us to see the full extent of the desire a man can have for the eldership. There must be a strong and fervent reaching for it that is causing them to make decisions and sacrifices that lead them ever closer to it. They must want it badly enough to put forth the great mental effort and exertion necessary to reach it. This qualification will be seen in the effort and zeal with which they seek it. Any man who must be asked by the congregation, or begged and pleaded with to take it would not fulfill this qualification. The job cannot be done properly unless it has been sought and reached after in the manner described above. Parents, teachers, and preachers should instill this desire in the hearts of young men and women. Only in this way will the extra work and effort required of an elder and his wife be joyfully embraced and faithfully accomplished in the manner described above.

Another obvious sign of this qualification will be found in the work they are doing even before they are appointed to the office. A young man who longs to fly is going to have planes in his room, visit the airport, watch the planes and do everything he can to be flying, long before he becomes a pilot. A man who desires the office of a bishop is going to be doing all that he can even before he is appointed to the office. It ought to be evident from the way they work in the church, studying, teaching and standing for the truth, visiting the brethren to get to know them are things they are stretching themselves and reaching for.

Desire:

Not only does he "seek" the office by reaching for it, but he also "desires" it. This is one of the strongest terms in the Scripture often translated "lust" or "covet."

"epithumeo...to keep the thumos turned upon a thing, hence [cf. our to set one's heart upon] to have a desire for, long for, absol. to desire [A. V.] to lust after, covet, of those who seek things forbidden ..." (Thayer, p. 238)

"thumos,...2. glow, ardor..." (Thayer, p. 293)

While "seek" is only used three times in the New Testament "desire" is found 18 times. It also is used both for good and evil things. For evil or good, it's intensity is clear.

But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman **to lust** for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. Mt. 5:28

I **have coveted** no one's silver or gold or apparel. Acts 20:33

The same craving and desire some direct toward women and drives others after possessions, God asks for in the heart of a man for the office of a bishop. "Stretch after" and "strongly desire" lead us to a better understanding of God's concern for those who want to take this office. It is a difficult job requiring their best. Only the most motivated need apply. They must hunger and thirst after it, want it with all their heart, think and meditate upon its great duties and stretch forth for it with all the intense

ardor and drive of their being. These and these alone are qualified.

How can a man gain such intense desire? Where is the source of desire for responsibility? The answer lies in gratitude. Paul spent his life for the Lord in grave and difficult situations. He was beaten, he was maligned and mistreated nearly everywhere he went, but he was thrilled to do it! Every day for an entire life and the desire, longing and stretching after never ended for him.

Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, 14 I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. 15 Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; Phil. 3:13-15

This desire is the heart of

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might; for there is no work or device or knowledge or wisdom in the grave where you are going. Eccl. 9:10

Serving God as an elder is one the highest realms of service a man and his wife can offer. Those who look upon themselves as living sacrifices presented to the Lord and who serve Him out of gratitude and appreciation for all He has done will strongly desire the office. Only they are qualified.

By using both these terms, Paul speaks of the two sides of desire. The second term stresses the lust and strong desire that makes one long for something, the first is the mental and physical effort put forth to reach it. Both of these desires are to be focused on the position of a bishop. This term is defined:

“episkope... inspection, visitation, ... b. In biblical Grk., after the Hebr. ... that ac by which god looks into and searches out the ways, deeds, character, of men, in order to adjudge them their lot accordingly, whether joyous or sad; inspection, investigation, visitation ... c. after the analogy of the HEBR. ... oversight, i.e. overseership, office, charge; ... spec. the office of a bishop (the overseer or presiding officer of a Christian church) ... (Thayer, p. 242-243; 1984)

Blending together the definition of the term, it refers to an office in which the individual who possesses it is responsible for the overseeing, inspection, investigating, and visiting of the other members of the congregation. This term is closely aligned with two others.

“episkopos... “an overseer, a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian, or superintendent; The word has the same comprehensive sense in Grk. writ. fr. Homer Odys. ... down; hence in the N. T. episk. ton psuchon guardian of souls, one who watches over their welfare: 1 Pet. 2:25 ... Spec. the superintendent, head or overseer of any Christian church;” (Thayer, , p 243; 1985)

“episkopeo... to look upon, inspect, oversee, look after, care for: spoken of the care of the church which rested upon the presbyters... “ (Thayer, p. 242; 1983)

From the above terms it is clear that this office took in the responsibility of the qualified individual to look after the other members of the congregation to be certain that the things that are doing are being done rightly. To inspect their lives and oversee their efforts to be sure that the things they are doing for the Lord are the things the Lord wants done. Two passages in the New Testament clearly outline this work.

*28 “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you **overseers**, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. (Acts 20:28).*

*1 The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: 2 Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, **servicing as overseers**, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. (1 Pet. 5:1-4).*

I have bolded the same terms in the verses above as are used above. This office is a good work. The term “good” is defined:

“kalos... Sept for ... beautiful, but much oftener for ... good; beautiful, applied by the Greeks to everything so distinguished in form, excellence, goodness, usefulness, as to be pleasing; hence (acc. to the context) i.q. beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, admirable;... a. beautiful

to look at, shapely, magnificent:... b. good, excellent in its nature and characteristics, and therefore well-adapted to its ends: ... c. beautiful by reason of purity of heart and life, and hence praiseworthy; morally good, noble... d. honorable, conferring honor:..." (Thayer, p. 322).

Hence in Paul's mind, when done rightly with the proper qualification, this office is a good work. It is beautiful, it is pleasing, it is excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing and precious. It is useful, suitable, commendable and admirable. There is something very special about a man who takes time and effort to help his brethren in the way that an overseer is qualified and capable of doing. The term "work" is defined:

"ergon... 1. business, employment, that with which anyone is occupied... 2. any product whatever, any thing accomplished by hand, art, industry, mind... 3. an act, deed, thing done: ..." (Thayer, p. 248; 2041)

This office is therefore something with which the bishop will be occupied, it will be his business and employment. It is a good one in every way, and something all men ought to aspire to.

For those who wish to have a more in depth study of the office of a bishop, I would direct you to my book on the eldership.

What now follows is a list of qualifications which a man who lusts after with strong desire and stretches after with his mind and might will carefully sift his own character to find and if lacking work to either put it on or off depending on its nature.

2 A bishop then must be blameless,

Perhaps the most important term in this context is the term "must be." It's definition will outline just how critical these qualifications are to the proper working of this office.

"dei... It is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper; ... a. necessity lying in the nature of the case:... necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us... c. necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end... d. a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity... i. e. necessity established by the counsel and decree of God..." (Thayer, , p. 126: 1163).

It is necessary that the bishop be the following things. There is need of it, it is right and proper, and necessity lies in it. I believe the last idea is the one we ought to attach to it here. It is necessary by the decree and counsel of God that the bishop be all of the qualifications which follow.

There is an important consideration, which is critical to consider, and that is the subject of how each of these qualities are relative to the individual who possesses them. No two men when placed side by side will have all of these qualities to the same degree. No one person can have all of these qualities to the highest degree that it is possible for man to have them nor could anyone have them to the degree to which it is capable of imagining that someone could have them. It is not possible for anyone to have all these qualifications to the same degree that Jesus had them. How then are these qualifications to be interpreted?

There are two basic dangers which must be avoided. The first is the danger of lowering them to the point where an unqualified man takes the office because the congregation lowered these qualities lower than God intended for them to be. The second danger is that a congregation could raise these qualifications to a degree where no one can reach them. No one is completely blameless to the degree of sinlessness. No one who has been in a congregation for 30 years with the same brethren will not be able to remember something somewhere that was done that they did not like or may even have been sinful. Perhaps a lost temper, or an improper manner of dealing with a problem. The question which must be posed though is simply this. Does this individual who is being considered for the office now have the same flaws that were once manifested? Are they to the best of their ability seeking to live the Christian life and succeeding much of the time. Do they have all these qualities to some degree and most of them to a high degree? These questions can only be answered by each local congregation who must assess the character of their would be elders.

One thing is abundantly clear. If a man fails any of these qualities completely, he is unfit for the office.

He must be blameless. This term is defined:

"anepileptos,...prop. not apprehended, that cannot be laid hold of; hence that cannot be reprehended, not open to censure, iraproachable,..." (Thayer, , op. cit. p 44; 423)

anepileptos, lit. that cannot be laid hold of, hence, not open to censure, irreproachable (from A, negative, N, euphonic, and *epilambano*, to lay hold of), is used in I Tim 3:2; 5:7; 6:14 (in all three places the R. V. has “without reproach;” in the first two, A. V., “blameless,” in the last, “unrebukeable;” an alternative rendering would be ‘irreprehensible’).” (Vine, W. E. Volume 1, p 131)

Though the two qualities above are different Greek words and found in different books (Timothy and Titus), the concepts they represent are so close as to be nearly identical. For this reason, they can be considered together. The subtle differences in their definitions will be considered, but the general comments will be the same for both. A man is “*without reproach*” when there is no valid charge of sin that can be leveled against them.

anepileptos, lit. that cannot be laid hold of, hence, not open to censure, irreproachable (from A, negative, N, euphonic, and *epilambano*, to lay hold of), is used in 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:7; 6:14 (in all three places the R. V. has “without reproach;” in the first two, A. V., “blameless,” in the last, “unrebukeable;” an alternative rendering would be ‘irreprehensible’).” (Vine, Volume 1, p 131)

When a man’s character is assessed by the Scriptures, there is nothing to lay hold of, nothing to censure or reproach. His life morally, spiritually and doctrinally is all that can be expected of a man. This qualification must be very carefully studied. It can very easily be made so stringent that no one could ever attain it. There are no sinless men, and God isn’t asking for sinlessness.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us. 1Jn. 1:8-10

But within that which is attainable through the gospel as understood by the members, the man cannot have a charge successfully laid against him and that charge be proven at the mouth of two or three witnesses to be true. If any charge of evil can be made and successfully proven, then the man is no longer qualified. The term “blameless” follows along the same line.

“*an-enkletos*,...that cannot be called to account, unreproachable, unaccused, blameless...” (Thayer, , p 44)

“*anekletos*, signifies that which cannot be called to account (from *a*, negative, *n*, euphonic, and *enkaleo*, to call in), i.e., with nothing laid to one’s charge (as a result of public investigation) ... It implies not merely acquittal, but the absence of even a charge or accusation against a person. This is to be the case with elders.” (Vine, Vol 1, p 131)

Though different words, the definitions are very close. He must be unaccused and blameless because there is nothing in his life that can be brought up and a valid charge set forth. The life of the man can be placed under the truth of God’s word and all are satisfied. With all the qualifications listed in Timothy and Titus, along with all the other areas of growth found in the New Testament, the members of a congregation can find no one to accuse them of fault.

anekletos which, like *anepileptos* is in the N. T. exclusively a word of St. Paul’s, occurring five times in his Epistles, and nowhere else, is rendered ‘unreprovable’ (Col 1:22), ‘blameless’ (1 Cor 1:8), 1 Tim 3:10; Titus 1:6, 7). It is justly explained by Chrysostom as implying **not acquittal merely, but absence so much as of a charge or accusation brought against him of whom it is affirmed. It moves, like *amomos* not in the subjective world of the thoughts and estimates of men, but in the objective world of facts. ... *anepileptos* of somewhat rare use in classical Greek, occurring once in Thucydides (v. 17) and once in Plato (Phileb. 43 c), never in the Septuagint or the Apocrypha, ... **affording nothing which an adversary could take hold of, on which he might ground a charge:...**” (Trench’s Synonyms of the NT)**

It is here, that we must take a few moments to ponder some very important principles that apply not only to this qualification, but to all the qualifications.

This is an individual who has so worked and labored with the teachings of the Scriptures, who has labored hard and long with his character flaws, who has studied the moral and ethical standards of the people around him to the point where he does nothing which is open to public censure. This is not saying that someone may have something they do not like about the person, it is saying that there is nothing that they can charge against that person’s character after speaking to them about it still feel that there is wrong doing in the matter. Everyone does things to hurt another’s feelings sometimes, but after talking it out, it should never be found the man

desiring to office was guilty of something which can be taken hold of and held forth as being contrary to the laws of God and man.

the husband of one wife,

2. Husband of One Wife.

Although these words appear to be simple and straightforward, they are among the most controversial of all the qualifications. More has been written on them than all the rest combined. The reason for this was discussed in a prophecy given in the next chapter of Timothy. Even before the close of the first century, Paul had revealed that marriage was going to become a very controversial subject in the church.

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. 1 Tim 4:1-3

The Holy Spirit stated this “*expressly*,” so it was distinct, clear and exact. At some point in the future two things God had given to be received with thanksgiving by all who had accepted and believed the truth would be forbidden by religious leaders or teachers. While the truth in Scripture teaches that marriage is a wonderful gift from God for all, later preachers and teachers would arise who would teach the opposite.

The history of celibacy in the Roman Catholic church reveals that within four hundred years after the writing of this letter, the Catholic church was already teaching that the “clergy” should not be married. Taking a few passages out of their context, those influenced by the pagan philosophy of Gnosticism gradually came to the conclusion that the comforts and joys of marriage were incompatible with devout service to God. According to them, since pleasure is evil, and marriage brings great pleasure, marriage should be forbidden.

They sought to make Jesus and Paul agree with them. They used Jesus’ words regarding divorce (Mt. 19:10-12) and Paul’s words regarding the present distress (1 Cor. 7:32-35) to compel all who wanted to preach or serve as leaders in the church to remain unmarried. Obviously those teaching these things must go to great lengths to obscure this qualification and nullify it with human wisdom and sophistry. These teachings have continued from the fourth century up to the present, and we still see an unmarried pope, bishops, cardinals, priests, and nuns. The scholarship of all who have been influenced by this teaching will obviously be tainted with prejudice and error.

Yet the Holy Spirit expressly revealed that this teaching is false and part of an apostasy from the true church. Any teaching that leads to the conclusion that elders and others in the church should be forbidden to marry is made by those who do not “*believe and know the truth.*”

Yet this qualification is still assailed and twisted. A large segment of commentaries and other scholarship we can consult on this verse will still hold error. The comments of denominational writers shows a hopeless perversion of Scripture to justify what was inherited from Catholicism. This qualification stands in the way of this false doctrine, making it certain that it would run aground against the wisdom of men. In spite of the prophecy, the clear teaching of the Bible on the honorable estate of marriage, it is still viewed by many as an inferior state.

But the Holy Spirit who gave this qualification in chapter three, stated expressly that it would be nullified in chapter four. Since the Spirit knew this apostasy was coming, He obviously worded it so any attempt to twist or pervert it would become obvious to those who “*believe and know the truth.*”

Since we know understand that there is great error on the subject, we must keep our minds clear of the prejudice that has been created by the false scholarship and only look at the words in the qualification itself.

“*The husband of one wife*” translates the Greek phrase “*mias gunaikos andra*” in Timothy, and “*mias gunaikos aner*” in Titus.

“*mias*... a cardinal numeral, one...” (Thayer, p 186-187)

...is used to signify (l) (a) one in contrast to many... (b) metaphorically, union and concord...(2) emphatically, (a) a single (one), to the exclusion of others,... (b) one, alone... © one and the same...” (Vine, Vol. 3 p 137)

“*gunaikos*...1. univ. a woman of any age, whether a virgin, or married, or a widow... 2. a wife...” (Thayer, p 123)

“*aner, andros*... a man,... 1. With a reference to sex, and so to distinguish a man from a woman; either a. as a male... or b. as a husband... 3. univ. any male person, a man...” (Thayer, p 45)

After carefully considering these definitions, along with the grammar in the sentence makes it evident there are only two possible translations. The elder must be a “*one woman man / man of one woman*”, or a “*one wife husband / husband of one wife*.” The only ambiguity in the quality is whether to translate man and woman or husband and wife.

The fact that Paul used the term man/husband and joined it with woman/wife proves conclusively to anyone not seeking to justify a previous notion that the man was expected to be married. A careful consideration of the facts offers one clear and obvious conclusion. With the coming apostasy the Holy Spirit chose precise language that could not be twisted.

If He had only used the word “*aner*,” some would have argued that Paul did not mean husband, but man since the Greek word is somewhat ambiguous and thereby would have set easily it aside. But because God was already aware that the apostasy would lead in that direction, He wanted this qualification set forth clearly (1Tim. 4:1-4).

Hence the Spirit joined the ambiguous “man/husband” to the other ambiguous “woman/wife.” By placing woman in the genitive, there is no way to separate the two. An understanding of the purpose of the genitive case proves this conclusively. Carefully consider the description of how a noun used in the genitive (*woman*) limits the other noun in the sentence (*man*).

“The genitive is the case of definition or description. It “is in function adjectival.” and usually limits a substantive... the genitive is “employed to qualify the meaning of a preceding noun and to show in what more definite sense it is to be taken.” ... Thus the basal function of the genitive is to define. In this it quite clearly carries with it an idea of limitation,...” The genitive reduces the range of reference possible to an idea, and confines its application within specific limits.” (Dana and Mantey, “A Manual Grammar of the Greek NT,” p. 72-73)

Thus the noun “*man/husband*” is “**limited**” by the noun “*woman/wife*.” The “*one wife*” “**reduces the range of reference possible to the idea**” of man and “**confines it within specific limits.**” If the “*man*” does not have “*one wife*” he does not fit the “**specific limits**” placed by the Holy Spirit by placing “*one woman/wife*” in the genitive.

There is no way to set this aside. Let those in apostasy argue that the term is “*man*” and not “*husband*.” Still that “*man*” must have a “*woman!*” There is no logical argument to remove this. The man must be joined to a woman. He must have a woman who belongs to him. Since marriage is the only honorable way for a man to have such a woman, he must be the husband of a wife. He must be a married man!

Why does Paul use the term “one?” Doesn’t everything he needed to express regarding the man being a husband find its fulfillment in the term “*husband of a wife*”? Why does he emphasize this? This is the heart and soul of the controversy. The term “*one*” is a specific term for the number one. It refers to something less than two and more than none. It makes it so specific that it is amazing that there could be any disagreement. The man must have one wife. Not two, three, four, five, six, etc. wives and not none! He must have **ONE wife!**

The term “Husband” is defined:

“*aner, andros*... a man,... The meanings of this word in the N. T. differ in no way from classic usage; for it is employed 1. With a reference to sex, and so to distinguish a man from a woman; either a. as a male... or b. as a husband... 2. with a reference to age, and to distinguish an adult man from a boy... 3. univ. any male person, a man...” (Thayer, , p 45; 435)

The Greeks used the same term for husband as they used for man. Only the context of the sentence will tell one

whether it means the one or the other. One thing should be stressed here. The term completely removes any possibility that God desires women to function as bishops. This qualification requires a man exclusive of women. No woman could fit this qualification. The context now must be taken into consideration. Does Paul mean a man or a husband here? The term “wife” is defined:

“*gune*... 1. univ. a woman of any age, whether a virgin or married, or a widow... 2. a wife... of a betrothed woman...” (Thayer, p. 123; 1135)

It too depends on the context. It can mean woman or wife. Which one then does Paul mean? Literally the terms could be translated in one of four ways”

1. “A one woman man.” (a man with one woman)
2. “A one woman husband.” (a husband with one woman)
3. “A one wife man.” (a man with one wife)
4. “A one wife husband.” (a husband with one wife)

Even a casual look tells us that they all mean exactly the same things but for English speaking people # 4 makes the most sense. A one woman man if he is to be above reproach must be married to her, a husband if he has one woman must of necessity have her as his wife. A man who has a wife is a husband, but the most logical and clear way to put it is that he must be a husband with one wife. Though ambiguous in the Greek, Paul has put together this sentence in such a way that it cannot be misinterpreted. It must mean a man with one wife. Why did Paul put “one” into the sentence? The term is defined:

“*heis, mia, hen* ... a cardinal numeral, *one*... 1. univ. a. in opp. to many... be in opp. to a division into parts... 2. emphatically, so that others are excluded... a. a single ... b. alone... c. one and the same...” (Thayer, , p 186-187; 1520)

“*heis*, the first cardinal numeral, masculine (feminine and neuter nominative forms are *mia* and *hen* respectively), is used to signify (I) (a) one in contrast to many... (b) metaphorically, union and concord...(2) emphatically, (a) a single (one), to the exclusion of others,... (b) one, alone... (c) one and the same...” (Vine, W. E. Volume 3 p 137)

It means more than none and less than two. Thus at the same time it forbids a man from being a bishop unless he has one wife, and also forbids a man from the office of a bishop if he is practicing polygamy. A man with two or three wives is just as unacceptable as a man who has no wife.

In short Paul wanted the bishop to be married to a single woman. He cannot be divorced, he cannot be single, he cannot be a polygamist, he cannot have divorced for unscriptural reasons and have another wife. He must be married to only one woman.

The reasons for this will be obvious as the qualifications unfold. He is to have children who believe in order that he might learn how to rule over his own household. If he has no wife, or if he has multiple wives, he would be unfit to have gained the proper experiences necessary to give him the necessary insight to do his work.

temperate,

1. Temperate

The Holy Spirit has demanded that the mind and life of a man qualified to be an elder is temperate, sober minded, self-controlled, and orderly. Each of these has some similarities that overlap in meaning. But they were chosen not for their similarities, but their differences. Hence synonyms create the challenge to seek for reasons why the Holy Spirit chose it and what fine distinctions He wanted us to understand.

The real distinction of “*temperance*” is clearer to a Greek speaking person than it can be for us.

“*nephaleos* ...sober, temperate; abstaining from wine, either entirely, or at least from its immoderate use:...(in prof. auth., esp. Aeschyl. and Plut. of things free from all infusion or addition of wine, as vessels, offerings, etc.)” (Thayer, p 425 NT:3524)

“*nephaleos* ...sober, temperate, abstinent in respect to wine, etc.; in N.T. met. vigilant, circumspect, 1Tim.

3:2, 11; Titus 2:2" (Harpers Analytical Concordance op. cit., p 277 NT:3524)

"*nephaleos* ... to be sober. Sober, temperate, self-controlled, especially in respect to wine. Used metaphorically, meaning sober-minded, watchful, circumspect (1 Tim. 3:2)" (Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT NT:3524)

In the definition we are given the etymology or origin and growth of the word. The original meaning had to do with being completely free from wine. Since wine is a substance that clouds both the mind and judgment, those who completely abstain are temperate and thus always sober, vigilant and circumspect. Through the passing of time the word gradually lost the focus of wine as the sole reason for clouded judgment. It then came to refer to those who refuse to allow anything to cloud their judgment. Just as a mind free from the effects of alcohol is sober and capable of seeing things clearly, so also is the mind that is free from all lusts of the flesh and eyes and all illusions the pride of life can create.

A sentry charged with the duty of watching over something might be told to be temperate. This meant he needed a clear mind. Clouding it with alcohol would not be temperate, neither would the drowsiness from too little sleep or the cares of the world leading to the choking of the word. A temperate man has removed anything keeping him from being vigilant and circumspect. While the adjective "*nephaleos*" is only used in Timothy and Titus, the verb "*nepho*" is used far more extensively and has the same basic meaning.

*You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be **sober**. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day be **sober**, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. 1Th. 5:5-8*

*But you **be watchful** in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 2Tim. 4:5*

*Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be **sober**, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 1Pet. 1:13-16*

*Be **sober**, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. 9 Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. 1Pet. 5:8*

In all these contexts, the key to being sober is not allowing anything to obscure our view. Sleeping drinking, keeping the mind active, aware of dangers and issues are all part of being sober and temperate. Anything that keeps us from seeing what truly is and no longer allowing us to see clearly fails this quality. The church must be able to rely on its elders to watch out for them and not have their attention diverted to the things of this world. They are charged to watch in behalf of all the souls in the church(Heb 13:17). The church must ascertain that they are capable of doing it with a clear mind.

Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Heb. 13:17

This term is defined:

"*nephaleos* ...sober, temperate, abstinent in respect to wine, etc.; in N.T. met. vigilant, circumspect,..." (Harpers Analytical Concordance p 277)

"*nephaleos* ... (fr. *nepho*), *sober, temperate; abstaining from wine, either entirely... or at least from its immoderate use:...*(in prof. auth., esp. Aeschyl. and Plut. of things free from all infusion or addition of wine, as vessels, offerings, etc.)" (Thayer, , p 425: 3524)

From the definitions above it is evident that the term had two meanings, one of which had receded into the background by the time of the writing of the New Testament. It's meanings carried the idea of one who abstained from the use of wine in such a way that it never hindered their ability to think clearly. It also meant all that was involved in thinking clearly. Nothing that would hinder clear thinking could be in the mind of one who held this virtue. He was capable of thinking clearly at all times. His mind was not clouded by alcohol, or by any other

thing. The root from which the term comes is the tern NEPHO. Note it's meaning:

nepho... to be sober; in the N. T. everywh. trop. to be calm and collected in spirit; to be temperate, dispassionate, circumspect ..." (Thayer, , p 425: 3525)

It's use in the New Testament is more extensive than the other term. Consider carefully the following verses with this term highlighted.

*5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. 6 Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and **be sober**. 7 For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night. 8 But let us who are of the day **be sober**, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation. (1 Th. 5:5-8).*

In this verse the central thought is that of clear thinking in contrast to sleeping, being drowsy or being drunken. The man who desires to be a bishop must have the ability to keep his mind clear and his eyes open. If he becomes so involved in other matters that his mind begins to stop seeing things clearly as they really are then he is simply not qualified to be an elder. The last thing a congregation would need is a man who is appointed to the office of a bishop who can have his mind led off into other matters and lose sight of all that is important. Those who are temperate are cautious never to allow this to happen.

sober-minded,

2. Sober Minded.

"sophron ...a. of sound mind, sane, in one's senses, ...b. curbing one's desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate, [R. V. sober minded]..." (Thayer, p.613)

"sophron ...to behave in a sensible manner,' 88.93) pertaining to being sensible and moderate in one's behavior - 'sensible, sensibly, moderate, moderately.' (Greek-English Lexicon NT:4998)

sophron sophroneo sophrosune It denotes a. "the rational" in the sense of what is intellectually sound (opp. *mania*) b. "rational" without illusion", ... It can also mean c. "rational" in the sense of purposeful, ... 2. Another sense is d. "discretion" in the sense of moderation and self-control, ... e. "discretion" as prudent reserve, ... Another sense is f. "modesty" and decorum, Then there is g. "discretion" as discipline and order politically, ..." (TDWNT Kittel 4998)

While "*self-control*" describes our ability to remove and control things in our mind and "*temperance*" how to keep things from hindering our ability to see things clearly, this quality centers on the mind itself. If nothing is clouding his mind and he is completely self-controlled, can he *sensibly, moderately*, think *rationally* and *without illusion*? When nothing cloud his mind is he a wise man or a fool? Can we trust him to make Scripturally sensible and rational assessments and decisions?

A careful review of the definitions moves one toward the above conclusion. The word deals with someone who has a "*sound mind*," and is thus "*sensible*," and "*rational*." But beneath these abilities are some important safeguards, limitations and awareness. He thinks and assesses to be certain his conclusions are "*intellectually sound*" and "*without illusion*." Yet in order to be certain, he needs an objective standard outside of himself, keeping himself within the limits of the modesty and decorum one finds in the Scriptures. One is "sober minded" when God is directing their paths, all their thoughts are in obedience to Christ, and they refuse to lean on their own understanding.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; 6 In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. 7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the Lord and depart from evil. Pr. 3:5-7

For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 2Cor. 10:4-6

The mind and heart must be carefully guarded(*keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life. Pr. 4:23*). Even the most basic things can lead to folly. When anything coming from ignorance or a hard heart, judgment is not sound.

This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles

walk, in **the futility of their mind**, 18 having **their understanding darkened**, being alienated from the life of God, **because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart**; Eph 4:17-19

Those who can make a joke out of everything, who only see the negative, or want to be so positive that they overlook or exaggerate, are not sober-minded. Paul charged Timothy to watch out for prejudice and partiality.

I charge you in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing by partiality. 1Tim. 5:21

A man must be able to evaluate each situation on its own merits with only what God demands in his mind. No one can allow other considerations to influence their thinking. A man seeking the law and testimony before making decisions is sober-minded. A man who listens to both sides of the argument or discussion before making a decision is sober-minded. It takes great effort to keep a mind clear of emotion. Such a man can be depended on for a fair minded sober evaluation of the facts.

Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. 8 This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. Josh 1:7-8

“Sober-minded” is define:

“sophron ...a. of sound mind, sane, in one’s senses, ...b. curbing one’s desires and impulses, self-controlled, temperate, [R. V. soberminded]...” (Thayer, , p 613: 4998)

“sophron denotes of sound mind (sozo, to save, phren, the mind.); hence self-controlled, soberminded, ...” (Vine, W. E., Volume 4, p 44)

The basic idea behind the term sober minded is the saving of one’s mind by not allowing lusts or other strong desires, emotions or concerns to cause it to become unbalanced. The fanatic or the prejudiced man is not soberminded, the depressed person or the one who worries incessantly about things is not sober-minded, the person whose lusts compel them to do what they do not want to do is not sober minded. They have not saved their minds from the ravages of their emotions and thoughts. They have not kept their senses clear in order that they might always see things clearly and react properly to circumstances and situations that arise around them.

Anything that hinders clear thinking, a temperate lifestyle or the ability to curb one’s desires and impulses runs aground here. If one has such things in their life, they must be removed if one is to be qualified and capable of being a bishop.

of good behavior,

3. Orderly.

“kosmios ... well-arranged, seemly, modest... of a man living with decorum, a well-ordered life...” (Thayer, , p 356)

“kosmios, orderly, well-arranged, decent, modest (akin to kosmos, in its primary sense as harmonious arrangement, adornment;...) is used in 1Tim. 2:9 of the apparel with which Christian women are to adorn themselves; in 3:2 (R.V., “orderly;” A.V., “of good behavior”), of one of the qualifications essential for a bishop or overseer....” (Vine, Vol. 3, p. 145)

“...It is a very favorite word with Plato, and is by him and others constantly applied to the citizen who is quiet in the land, who duly fulfills in his place and order the duties which are incumbent on him as such... keeping company as kosmios does with epithets such as these, it must be admitted that an explanation of it like the following ‘of well ordered demeanor, decorous, courteous’ (Webster), dwells too much on the outside of things; ...no doubt the kosmios is all of this, but he is much more than this. The well ordering is not of dress and demeanor only, but of the inner life; uttering indeed and expressing itself in the outward conversation...” (Trench, p 344-345)

An orderly man has a well arranged life, a well arranged mind, and a well arranged tongue. As husband, father, citizen, friend, worker, and Christian brother, all is what it ought to be. Plato speaks of it in the realm of government. He is a model citizen and never causing the authorities any trouble. He obeys the laws of the land, votes and takes an active role in helping the country run the best it possibly can. That which Plato applied to government Paul applied to his responsibilities in the

kingdom of God. It is an inward attitude that impacts every realm of responsibility that God has given.

An orderly Christian finds the way to pray without ceasing, to attend all services, and to visit the fatherless and afflicted. He has ordered and arranged his life to find time to fulfill all his Christian duties. He is a good husband and father. He finds time to play with his children and time to love and cherish his wife. He makes time to study the Bible and do all that is necessary. He gets to work on time and is a hard, dependable worker. He dresses properly for the occasion, and looks orderly. Orderly people are dependable. They get things done because they have ordered their life in such a way that they can always find time to do one more important thing. This quality will make one a great elder. He will find the time to admonish the erring and support the weak. He will be able to watch in behalf of the souls under his direction. He has learned to do the best he can with his time. There is always enough time in the day to do all the responsibilities which the Lord has given. One simply needs to order their life so that the top priorities come first.

This term is complex enough to need several definitions and some well thought out digestion of them to comprehend.

“kosmios ... well-arranged, seemly, modest... of a man living with decorum, a well-ordered life...” (Thayer, , p 356; 2889)

“kosmios, orderly, well-arranged, decent, modest (akin to kosmos, in its primary sense as harmonious arrangement, adornment;...) is used in I Tim 2:9 of the apparel with which Christian women are to adorn themselves; in 3:2 (R.V., “orderly;” A.V., “of good behavior”), of one of the qualifications essential for a bishop or overseer....” (Vine, W. E., Volume 3, p. 145)

“...It is a very favorite word with Plato, and is by him and others constantly applied to the citizen who is quiet in the land, who duly fulfills in his place and order the duties which are incumbent on him as such... keeping company as KOSMIOS does with epithets such as these, it must be admitted that an explanation of it like the following ‘of well ordered demeanor, decorous, courteous’ (Webster), dwells too much on the outside of things; ...no doubt the KOSMIOS is all of this, but he is much more than this. The well ordering is not of dress and demeanor only, but of the inner life; uttering indeed and expressing itself in the outward conversation...” (Trench, Richard Chenevix, “Synonyms of the New Testament”, Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids Michigan, 1973, p 344-345)

What can be gleaned from the definitions above? Paul wants a man to be of good behavior according to the English translations, but this is obviously a vague term with many different ideas associated with it. The first definition from Thayer’s Greek Lexicon tells us that he is well-arranged, and has a well-ordered life. This help us take the right path of what his good behavior consists of. He is to see to it that his life is so ordered and arranged that he has time to do the things that are necessary. The definition that Richard Trench gives in his synonyms of the NT helps a great deal in helping keep the proper course. He states that Plato liked to use this term to speak of a citizen who is quiet in the land and duly fulfills the duties which are incumbent upon him. Here we find the key that gives full understanding to this qualification. If we now broaden this from a citizen in the land of Greece to a citizen in the kingdom of God, we are prepared to speak intelligently on this qualification. This is a man who takes his duties as a Christian seriously. He makes certain that things that are not important do not creep in and remove from him the precious time necessary to do the things that are important. Whether it be projects around the house, the television set, the job, or a hobby, men have found themselves to busy to do the things that God wants them to do.

Some men never find the time to pray without ceasing, the time to read their Bibles daily. The time to train their children up in the way they should go in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They have difficulty having time to love their wives, to be given to hospitality, to bear one another’s burdens. They find it difficult to find the time to develop rapport with the lost in order to have an opportunity to teach them. Those who do not have time for such things do not have a well-ordered and well-arranged life. They have done exactly the opposite of what the Lord told Martha about Mary.

38 Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. 39 And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. 40 But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, “Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.” 41 And Jesus answered and said to her, “Martha, Martha,

you are worried and troubled about many things. 42 "But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her." (Lk. 10:38-42).

Men must learn what the good part is and do it first. Then if there is time left over for the other things let them take it.

hospitable,

4. Given to Hospitality. 1Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8

The term "Hospitality" is defined:

"philoxenos, (philos and xenos), ...hospitable, generous to guests, [given to hospitality]: 1Tim. 3:2; ; Titus 1:8; I Pet. 4:9" (Thayer, , p 654)

"xenos,... guest-friend...[of parties bound by ties of hospitality] ... 1. a foreigner, stranger... 2. one who receives and entertains another hospitably; with whom he stays or lodges, a host..." (Thayer, , p 432)

The dual meaning of *xenos* has led to some confusion. The root meaning can be either "foreigner/stranger" or "guest."

*xenos, xenia, xenizo, zenodocheo, philozenia, philomelos, ... 1. Words from the stem zen- bear on the one side the concept of "foreign," "alien"(also "appearing strange" or "creating distaste") and on the other side that of "guest" ... The virtue of hospitality (*philozenia*)... in the NT, cf. Rom 12:13; Heb 13:2) makes the one who exercises it, (the host *zenos* Rom 16:23), the *philomelos* (1 Tim 3:2; Titus 1:8; 1 Peter 4:9), who practices it by *zenodocheo* (1 Tim 5:10) or "to receive as a guest"(Kittel Vol. 5, p. 1; 5381)*

Hence this man must be "given" both to entertaining guests who are in his acquaintance and strangers who are not. He must enjoy having guests and strangers in his home. This is mentioned elsewhere in the Scripture:

Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels. Heb 13:1-2

The story of both Abraham(Gen. 18:1-15) and Lot(Gen. 19:1-11) come to mind. They both entertained strangers, and in both cases they were entertaining angelic beings. The term translated "*entertain strangers*" is the same term as that defined above. The only difference is it being an adjective for the elder, and a noun in the book Hebrews.

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. Gal 6:10

The man's home should be open to those of the household of faith and others as there is need. Evangelism, edification and benevolence can all be enhanced in a man's home. No one refusing to open his home to such things is qualified to be an elder.

*Above all things being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins: **Using hospitality** one to another without murmuring: according as each hath received a gift, ministering it among yourselves, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God; I Pet 4:8-10*

*Communicating to the necessities of the saints, **given to hospitality.** Rom 12:13*

From the two scriptures above it is clear that the primary idea behind this qualification is entertaining saints. Since stranger is strongly implied in the term, it should not be limited to the saints in a local church. Obviously the conditions of culture have some bearing on its fulfillment. In the first century, nice motels and RV's did not exist. Though places could be found in which to stay while on a journey, they were not nearly as nice as someone's home would be. The best means for traveling Christians to be cared for would be in the homes of members. This has changed considerably today. Most would rather not stay in the home of another Christian when on vacation or in travel. There are easier ways to care for such needs. But as opportunities arise, they open up the home.

"Hospitable" is defined:

"Philozenos, (philos and zenos), ...hospitable, generous to guests, [given to hospitality]: I Tim 3:2; ; Titus 1:8; I Pet 4:9" (Thayer, , p. 654; 5382)

“zenos,... a guest-friend... [of parties bound by ties of hospitality] ... 1. a foreigner, stranger... 2. one who receives and entertains another hospitably; with whom he stays or lodges, a host...” (Thayer, , p 432; 3581)

“zenos... philozenos... Words from the stem zen- bear on the one side the concept of “foreign,” “alien” (also “appearing strange” or “creating distaste”) and on the other side that of “guest.” ... The linguistic data reveal already a distinctive cleavage. IN the first instance the ZENOS is the “stranger.” Between the stranger and those around him there is reciprocal tension. He is a man from without, strange, hard to fathom, surprising, unsettling, sinister. But to the stranger his odd and different environment is also disturbing and threatening. There thus arises mutual fear... Eventually men found a new, better and surprising way to master the hostile alien, namely, the way of friendship. In fact, animistic fear seems in many cases to have provided the first impulse for the noble custom of hospitality found among many primitive peoples... All peoples knew the wretchedness of being in an alien country. Hence the stranger came to be granted the fellowship of table and protection, and instead of being an outlaw he became a ward of law and religion. ... “ (Kittel TDWNT Vol 5, p. 1-36)

From the above definitions two things must be granted. First, the Bishop must show hospitality. He must open up his home to those around him for the purpose of giving them food and shelter and for the purpose of showing himself a good host by being friendly. Secondly, that this hospitality must extend not only to those he knows, those he is close with and enjoys being with, not just to his friends and family, but to the stranger as well. How far to carry this concept of the stranger must be based on the Scriptures themselves.

10 Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Gal. 6:10).

Paul stresses doing good to all men and especially to the household of faith.

34 “Then the King will say to those on His right hand, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 “for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 “I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’ 37 “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, “Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 “When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 “Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 “And the King will answer and say to them, “Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’ Mt 25:34-40

In reading the bold type, it can be seen that strangers that are brethren should be taken in. When they are taken, it will be viewed as special as if one had taken Jesus himself in. All this because they are brethren. All brethren should see the inside of the home of a prospective bishop. His should be a home where all feel welcome because all are welcome.

12 Then He also said to him who invited Him, “When you give a dinner or a supper, do not ask your friends, your brothers, your relatives, nor rich neighbors, lest they also invite you back, and you be repaid. 13 “But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind. 14 “And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you; for you shall be repaid at the resurrection of the just.” (Lk. 14:12-13).

In this passage the broadest extent of this concept is brought out. If a man has an opportunity to invite people into his home in order to fulfill the benevolent responsibilities he has, then it is right and proper for him to do so. This would also take in the subject of evangelism as brought out in the following passages:

5 Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. 6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. (Col. 4:5-6).

One of the greatest means in evangelism is to open the home up to those who are lost in order to buy up the opportunity to speak with them.

The point of the above qualification is that the brethren should see that the men they select as bishops are men who open up their homes to one another and to the lost.

able to teach;

2. Apt to teach. 1Tim. 3:1

This qualification is summed up in a single Greek word. It is defined:

“*didaktikos*, ... apt and skillful in teaching.” (Thayer, p. 144)

“*didaktikos* (derivative of *didasko* ‘to teach,’) pertaining to being able to teach - ‘able to teach, can teach.’” (Greek-English Lexicon)

What does it mean to be “*apt* and *skillful*” “*able* and *can*” teach. Some see this qualification as simple as just imparting knowledge, while another sees the “college professor” of bible teaching. Skillful teachers have an attribute that allows them to teach their subject well.

They have mastered the subject. What does mastery mean. First, they know as much as possible at their current maturity level about what the Scriptures say. Second, they have so applied it to their life that they have a practical understanding. We have all heard people speak of something that they have read in a book, but have never done. They can teach the facts, but can’t help anyone apply it to their life since they haven’t. For example, a good mechanic, who is also a shop teacher can give his students greater insight into the workings of a car than a teacher who simply recites facts from a book. The former is apt to teach. He can answer their questions and can speak of practical applications that make the subject vibrant. Such a man is a valuable teacher.

This is very important in the spiritual realm. Any teacher who teaches on themes he has personally applied in his own life is a joy to hear. He may or may not use good grammar, he may have few examples to liven things up, but he will teach well. This is what the Bible calls wisdom, and there is no replacement for it in one who is truly apt to teach. All of God’s children should have this wisdom. It is offered freely through prayer:

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him. James 1:5

Any Christian who has studied and gained knowledge, and through prayer and experience, has translated that knowledge into wisdom will be apt to teach. He will always have something worth listening to. He will always be able to get his point across in a clear, and understandable manner.

There is nothing in this word that implies his ability to always be easy to listen to, dynamic, eloquent or even enjoyable. Some take this qualification relating to information see entertainment. The ability to entertain or easy to hear is a wonderful quality, but no replacement for edification.

The ability to entertain has little to do with being apt to teach. It has more to do with personality and speaking ability. What should be assessed is what the man knows, and how much of what he knows he can get into the minds of others. Only the ability to put information across in a helpful way and true to the Scriptures is involved. It is unfair and unscriptural to make this qualification more rigid than God did.

Moses told God he was not eloquent and should be excused from being a leader(Ex. 4:10). But Moses didn’t need to be eloquent, he only needed to be able to express what God expected and His reasons for doing so. This Moses did many times. Therefore regardless of how eloquent he was, he was apt to teach. This is a subtle difference, but very necessary lest we appoint a man based on eloquence or deny a man who is apt to teach but not eloquent. McGarvey had an interesting point which is worthy of consideration:

The Greek for this expression is *didaktikos*, which I prefer to render “capable of teaching.” The Elder, then, must be capable of teaching; but this expression represents a variable quantity. One might be capable of teaching some persons, and utterly incapable of teaching others. It becomes a matter of necessity, then, that before we can form a judgment as to a man’s possession of this qualification in the requisite degree, we must know who it is that he is to teach. A person capable of teaching children might be incapable of teaching adults, as one capable of teaching an academy might be incapable of teaching the classes in a college. So an Elder might be capable of teaching a congregation in one community, and not in another nearby. What is the standard, then, by which each individual candidate for the Eldership is to be judged in this respect? Undoubtedly, it is to be found in the attainments of the congregation which he is to teach. He is to be their teacher, and theirs alone; consequently if he is capable of teaching them, he has the capability required by the Scriptures. From this it appears that properly qualified Elders may possess capability of teaching in a great variety of degrees as characterizes the intellectual and religious attainments of the various congregations. Furthermore, it must be evident that each individual

congregation is the best judge of the capability of an Elder to be its teacher. So long as they receive instruction from the Elder, and are satisfied with him, he is qualified according to the scriptures to teach that congregation, however much he may fall below some other Elder in the same congregation. (McGarvey, p. 62-63)

He has a good point. When a congregation selects elders it is unnecessary and even impossible for each to have the same abilities. One may be far below another in ease of listening or in teaching ability. Apt to teach is a relative qualification that must be approached with mercy. No two people will be alike. A congregation must decide with mercy and compassion how much of this ability is really necessary. They cannot be made so stringent that no one among them can reach it. They cannot be made so lax that the men are not qualified.

An elder must rule over the congregation he serves. The brethren must trust him to lead well and in the right direction. No man lacking the above qualities will be capable of doing the job to the degree God wants. Everyone who desires this office must labor and never pass up opportunities to preach and teach, fervently pray for wisdom, and appreciate the great opportunity of service to God and man which open to him by taking on this work. They must meditate upon these things until their heart burns with desire and they are stretching and reaching out for it. These are absolute necessities to qualify for the work.

“*didaktikos*, ... apt and skilful in teaching.” (Thayer, , p. 144; 1317)

This term stresses the ability of the teacher to impart knowledge to those who need to learn it. Teaching is the ability to give the necessary information to the students in order that they might learn it and then be able to use it themselves. This does not require that the teacher be interesting. It does not require that he be eloquent, it does not require that he be entertaining. It requires him to know the information well enough himself that he can explain it to others, and it requires that he have the ability to impart that information in a way that others can learn from it.

3 not given to wine,

2. Not Given to Much Wine.

Since none of our English translations have the same words to translate the two Greek words, it is important to take the time to become familiar with them. Literally, it is “*not*” and “*beside wine*.” There is no verb or action.

“*me*... a particle of negation...” (Thayer, p 408)

“*paroinos*,... *para* and *oinos*(...one who sits long at his wine) given to wine, drunken... 1 Tim 3:3; Titus 1:7 [others give it the secondary sense, ‘quarrelsome over wine’; hence, brawling, abusive].” (Thayer, , p 490; NT:3943)

paroinos an adjective, lit., “tarrying at wine” (*para*, “at,” *oinos*, “wine”), “given to wine,” 1 Tim 3:3 and Titus 1:7, ... probably has the secondary sense, of the effects of wine-bibbing, viz., abusive brawling. (Vine’s NT:3943)

The word “*beside wine*,” was evidently an idiom in that day that had a specific meaning. Today, “*beside wine*” can be understood in a variety of ways, as is evident from how it is translated:

beside wine = fighting: “**no brawler.**” (KJV)

beside wine = to: “**not given to much wine.**” (ASV)

beside wine = to a bad habit: “**not given to wine.**” (NKJV)

beside wine = an addiction: “**addicted to much wine.**” (NAS)

beside wine = becoming a “**drunkard**” (ESV)

beside wine = habitual misuse: “**not given to drunkenness**” (NIV)

Clearly the problem with “*beside wine*” centers on “*for too long*,” but in what way or to what degree is open to interpretation. It was like an idiom to them so they had a better understanding than we do. We have similar idioms: “*hold your horses*,” (slow down and think) “*no spring chicken*” (not young anymore), “*tie the knot*” (get married) or “*under the weather*” (not feeling well). Without living in our culture, it would be difficult for people to really understand the meaning. Although it makes it more challenging to the reader, it is better to allow the reader/teacher to work it out.

Since the translations do not agree, they lead a reader to different conclusions. If it is a *drunkard*(ESV, NIV), what about social drinking? If it is a *brawler*(KJV), what about any use of alcohol that doesn’t create brawling? If it is “*not given to much wine*,” (ASV) what about a little wine? If we leave it “*beside wine*,” then every consequence is under consideration. The Holy Spirit listed some of the things that occur if one “*linger long*” at the wine:

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. 34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: 35 “They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?” Prov 23:29-35

Those who “*linger long at the wine*,” have “*woe*,” “*sorrow*,” “*contentions*,” “*complaints*,” “*wounds without cause*,” “*redness of eyes*,” “*eye see strange things*,” “*heart utters perverse things*.” “*linger long*” allows the affects of alcohol to impair the body.

How long then is too long? How long can a man sit before wine(alcohol) and still be acceptable? How much alcohol can a man use and not be guilty of being “beside wine?” We don’t yet have the answer. Here are some more thoughts:

Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise. Prov 20:1

It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak. Rom. 14:21

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; Eph. 5:18

No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities. 1Tim. 5:23

With these passages, we can gain a scriptural understanding of the broad term “beside wine.” When wine leads to a brother stumbling or to drunkenness, they are clearly “beside wine” and would be disqualified. The safest answer is that any use of wine beyond the stomach’s sake and frequent infirmities(medicinal use) would violate this qualification.

Though over 100 years ago, McGarvey penned these words of wisdom:

“He must not be “given to much wine.” It is not merely drunkenness that is here prohibited; if it was, we would doubtless have the word which is appropriated to the expression of that idea. Neither is the idea of *much* in the original. The term is *paroinon*, by wine, and means simply, given to wine. It doubtless contemplates a man who is given to a freer use of wine than was customary among strictly sober people even though he might never become intoxicated.” (McGarvey, p 61)

The only safe conclusion, removing all objection, is that not “beside wine” is absolute. He is never “beside wine,” because he never uses it. Although some think this is too stringent, given our translations, it is no different than what God demanded of His ministering priests under the Old Covenant.

Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying: 9 “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, 10 that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, 11 and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.” Lev 10:8-11

The church has the right to expect their elders will always be sober and capable of distinguishing the clean from the unclean and the holy and unholy. Those who seek the office must be able to teach all the statutes at any time. For this reason, God did not want the men seeking the office to be “beside wine.” Instead of seeking a deeper meaning, just take it at face value. They are never “beside wine.”

“Not Beside Wine” - A Greek Idiom?

Introduction: An idiom is defined as: “a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words.” So we are not going to “beat around the bush” or “cut any corners” in today’s article, because we don’t want to “bark around the wrong tree.” We seek to “hit the nail on the head,” and might even “kill two birds with one stone.” So, “to make a long story short,” we want to give “the whole nine yards” and “let the cat out of the bag” about idioms. I hope you don’t think “I am off my rocker,” “not playing with a full deck,” or “missed the boat.” There is a “method to my madness,” and I think at the end of this article you will agree that I am “right on money.”

The problem with idioms is that no one defines them for us. We have to deduce or infer them. If you have never heard one of these idioms you will have no idea what I am talking about. “Pulling my leg” could be literal, but we understand it as someone trying to “pull the wool over our eyes.” We are always “under the weather,” but only use that term when we feel sick. As we finish our drumstick, we know “I have bone to pick with you” isn’t the drumstick. Even if we are chopping wood with a dull axe, we would understand “I have an axe to grind” isn’t that axe.

There are also idioms in Scripture. “The nations are as a *drop in a bucket*” (Isa. 40:15). Job was “*nothing but skin and bones*” (Job 19:19-20). Jesus return will be “*in the twinkling of an eye*” (1Cor. 15:52). “*The wicked reel to and fro and are at their wits’ end*” (Psalm 107:27). Peter wants every Christian to “*gird up the loins of your mind*” (1Pet. 1:13).

As I was working on the qualifications for elders this week, I came on the word “*beside wine*” (1Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7). The more I thought about it the more it became clear to me that this too could be an idiom. One they easily understood, but one which we must “*gird up the loins of our mind.*” I drew this conclusion after reading the diversity in the translations of two simple Greek words (“*mé pàroinos*” (“*me*” - *not*; “*para*” - *beside*; “*oinos*” - *wine*”) Why did the simple “*not beside wine*” become “*no brawler*” (KJV), “*not given to much wine*” (ASV), “*not given to wine*” (NKJV), “*addicted to much wine*” (NAS), “*drunkard*” (ESV), and “*not given to drunkenness*” (NIV).

Think about it. “*Not beside wine*” moved from fighting(*brawler*), to a bad habit(*not given to wine/much wine*) to an addiction(*addicted to much wine*), to becoming a *drunkard*, or to habitual misuse(*given to drunkenness*). It is obvious none took the phrase literally. We might sympathize with the translators, since taken literally, one would be guilty if they walked down the aisle of a grocery store “*beside wine.*” Even eating at a restaurant, if someone at the next table is drinking wine, we would be “*beside wine.*”

Enter the idiom(*a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from those of the individual words*). “*Not beside wine*” somehow inferred “*too long at,*” or “*inappropriately at*” “*wine.*” they easily deduced it, while we struggle. The extent of the “*too long*” or the exact problem created by being “*beside wine*” is now unknown to us.

Yet, seeking to give us a simple meaning has only created problems. If it is a “*drunkard*”(ESV, NIV), then it could allow social drinking. If it is a *brawler*(KJV), then any use of alcohol that didn’t lead to fighting might be fine. If it is “*not given to much wine,*” (ASV) then some will affirm that a little wine is not a problem. Only when we leave it “*beside wine,*” does anything from a single sip to drunkenness become the possible meaning.

The best solution is to “*let Scripture interpret Scripture,*” “*speak where the Bible speaks,*” “*be silent where the Bible is silent,*” and “*use Bible words to explain Bible things.*” We must learn, “*not to go beyond the things which are written*” (1Cor. 4:6) and allow God to explain what occurs when one “*linger long*” at the wine.”

Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long at the wine, Those who go in search of mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, When it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things, And your heart will utter perverse things. 34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, Or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: 35 “They have struck me, but I was not hurt; They have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, I will seek it yet again” Pr. 23:29-35

The problems of those who “*linger long*” are the same as those who are “*beside wine.*” When there is “*woe,*” “*sorrow,*” “*contentions,*” “*complaints,*” “*wounds without cause,*” “*redness of eyes,*” “*eyes seeing strange things,*” “*heart uttering perverse things*” one is both “*beside wine*” and does “*linger long at the wine.*” Since “*Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise*” (Pr. 20:1), one is “*beside wine*” whenever they are “*led astray by it*” or “*show lack of wisdom*” in its use. One is clearly “*beside wine*” when it causes “*a brother to stumble or be made weak*”(Rom. 14:21).

Leaders of God’s people can only be “*not beside wine*” when they drink no wine. “*It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted*” (Pr. 31:4).

With these verses, the simple solution is also the best. We remove all doubt, when we understand “*not beside wine*” in all these contexts. One is never “*beside wine*,” if they do not drink or associate with those who do. Although some might think this is too stringent a view, given what our translations say, it is exactly what God demanded of His ministering priests:

Then the Lord spoke to Aaron, saying: 9 “Do not drink wine or intoxicating drink, you, nor your sons with you, when you go into the tabernacle of meeting, lest you die. It shall be a statute forever throughout your generations, 10 that you may distinguish between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean, 11 and that you may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the Lord has spoken to them by the hand of Moses.” (Lev. 10:8-11).

No priest shall drink wine when he enters the inner court. 22 They shall not take as wife a widow or a divorced woman, but take virgins of the descendants of the house of Israel, or widows of priests. 23 “And they shall teach My people the difference between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. Ezek 44:21-23

All Christians are priests today ministering to the Lord in His tabernacle (1Pet. 2:4-6; Eph. 2:19-22). There is never a time we don’t need to distinguish between the clean and the unclean or the holy and unholy. Never a time we don’t need to teach all the statutes. What is true of all Christians is also true of the elders. For these reasons, God did not want a man seeking the office to be “*beside wine*.” The idiom “*not beside wine*” means not beside wine either to drink it or associate with those who do. No more, no less.

Conclusion: Maybe you feel like you have “*been through the mill*” and I only have a “*bee in my bonnet*.” I don’t think we need to go “*back to the drawing board*,” and I hope you think I “*hit the nail on the head*.” Now, “*the ball is in your court*,” so “*burn the midnight oil*.” Because if you “*search the scriptures daily*,” “*give diligence*” to “*rightly divide the word of truth*,” and “*abide in My words*,” “*you shall know the truth and the truth will make you free*.” (Acts 17:11, 2Tim. 2:15; Jn 8:31-32).

“*me... a particle of negation which differs from OU (which is always an adverb) in that OU denies the thing itself (or to speak technical, denies simply, absolutely, categorically, directly, objectively), but ME denies the thought of the thing, or the thing according to the judgment, opinion, will, purpose, preference, of someone (hence, as we say technically, indirectly, hypothetically, subjectively). ...” (Thayer, , p 408)*

“*paroinos, ... (...one who sits long at his wine) given to wine, drunken... [al. give it the secondary sense, ‘quarrelsome over wine’; hence, *brawling, abusive*].” (Thayer, , p 490)*

The obvious idea behind Paul’s using *me* instead of *ou* for his negation of *paroinos* is that he is more concerned about people subjective opinion than about what is actually happening. Whether the man who desires the office sees it that way or not is not the point of this admonition. The man is not to do it to a point where others may think there is even a possibility that he might have a problem with staying too long in front of his wine. If in the judgement and opinion of others he is doing so, then that is enough to disqualify. This is a command where there is no margin for error. Therefore in order to fulfill this command the individual must stay as far away from the line as possible.

How far this is depends upon the society in which one lives. In Paul’s day one sees the line in his admonition to Timothy to use it for his stomach’s sake.

23 No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach’s sake and your frequent infirmities. (1 Tim. 5:23).

It appears that in Paul’s day if the wine were used for any other purpose than medicinal, then the subjective opinion of others would have been that Timothy was too long at his wine. At the feast at Cana of Galilee, the wine there was of such nature that Jesus could allow others to remain long at it with no fear whatsoever.

In today’s society of alcoholics, coupled with the terrible toll that alcohol has played in the lives of many, it is this author’s subjective opinion that any use of wine is too long at the wine.

29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause?

Who has redness of eyes? 30 Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things. 34 Yes, you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, or like one who lies at the top of the mast, saying: 35 "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; they have beaten me, but I did not feel it. When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?" (Prov. 23:29-35).

not violent,

4. No Striker(Not Violent)

"plektes...bruise, ready with a blow; a pugnacious, contentious, quarrelsome person.." (Thayer, 4131)

"plektes pugnacious and demanding- 'bully, violent person.'" (Greek-English Lexicon NT:4131)

"plektes ... "quick tempered carries a chip on his shoulder, is ready with his fists." (Lenski "1Tim. 3:3")

Anger and frustration seldom lead to violence for most people. But there are some whose anger quickly escalates to a desire for violence. That is the nature of this word. This quality describes someone who is *"ready with a blow,"* a *"bully"* or *"violent person"* one whose *"demanding"* and *"contentious"* nature coupled with a *"quarrelsome"* attitude creates an ever present possibility of violence.

A striker is a man with so little self-control and temperance that his anger can get the better of him and cause him to lash out in a moment. This leads to caustic words, a bitter quarrel, or an actual punch in the face. With the potential conflicts those leading the church will encounter, this is a very bad quality. When false teachers seek to uproot the faithful, or immoral and ungodly saints, the desire to punish exists, but it can't come out in anger and violence.

Although such anger can begin with righteous indignation, it must be kept in check. No one has the right to strike another or lash out at them no matter how evil, corrupt and wicked they are. Each man must learn to keep his temper in check.

Paul uses the same term for negation as he used above. He does this to emphasize that this must not be the subjective feelings of any of the brethren. It matters little what the man himself thinks in this matter, his opinion is not the issue, what matters is what the members think about him. He must keep himself so far from this emotion that no one would even desire to accuse him of it.

The term "violent" is defined:

"plektes ... [A. V. striker], bruise, ready with a blow; a pugnacious, contentious, quarrelsome person:..." (Thayer, p 516)

When one looks at the definition of the term, it is clear that the root idea behind it is that of anger and frustration with another coming out into the open in the form of words and deeds. When one becomes angry with another and then seeks to damage them either by being contentious and irritating in words, or by actually striking or fighting with them, then that individual does not have the type of self-control necessary in that part of his character to be considered for the office of the eldership. Each must keep their anger in check to a point where no one thinks it is possible for them to be made so angry that they would do such a thing.

not greedy for money,

The four words above translate a single Greek term which is defined:

"aphilarguros... (a priv. and philarguros), not loving money, not avaricious; only in the N. T., twice viz. I Tim 3:3; Heb 13:5" (Thayer, p. 89; 866)

The Greek letter "a-" works much like our "un-" when it is placed before a word. It negates whatever the term would normally mean and renders it just the opposite. The term "profitable" when "un-" is placed before it becomes "unprofitable." so also with the Greek. While one who is "PHILARGUROS" is one who loves money and who clings to it with all his being. APHILARGUROS is the exact opposite. He is one who does not love money. One who uses money as it is meant to be used.

17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy. 18 Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, 19 storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. (1 Tim. 6:17-19).

The above verse appears to be one of the best means of understanding the passage above. Those who are rich need to be ready to give and willing to share. This is greatest criteria one can use. If they fulfill this then they do not love money. If on the other hand they have difficulty parting with their money even when there are great needs, then one has to suspect why.

Another means one could use to determine this is found in Hebrews.

5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Heb. 13:5).

Is the person content with what they have. They may not be rich enough to be free with their money in times of need. But are they content with their lot in life. Are they happy with what God has given them or are they continually seeking to have more and get more?

but gentle,

5. Gentle.

"*epieikes*, from *epi*, unto, and *eikos*, likely, denotes seemly, fitting; hence, equitable, fair moderate, forbearing, not insisting on the letter of the law; it expresses that considerateness that looks "humanely and reasonably at the facts of the case"; ..." (Vine, Vol. 2, p 144-145)

"*epieikes*, -es (*eikos*, what is reasonable); 1. seemly, suitable, ... 2. equitable, fair, mild, gentle..." (Thayer, p 238)

A lot has been written about this term. It conveys far more than our English "*gentle*," and is therefore difficult to find a single word to translate. Paul spoke of it's importance to all Christians, but notice how our translations struggled with the word in Philippians 4:5.

Let your **moderation** be known unto all men (KJV) Let your **gentleness** be known to all men (NKJV)
Let your **forbearing** {spirit} be known to all men (NAS) Let your **forbearance** be known unto all men (ASV)
Let your **gentle** {spirit} be known to all men (NAU) Let your **reasonableness** be known to everyone (ESV)

The reason for this is set forth in the definitions below.

"It expresses exactly that moderation which recognizes the impossibility cleaving to all formal law, of anticipating and providing for all cases that will emerge, and present themselves to it for a decision; which, with this, recognizes the danger that ever waits upon the assertion of legal rights, lest they should be pushed into moral wrongs. ...It is thus more truly just than strict justice would have been. ...This aspect of *epieikeia*, namely that it is a going back from the letter of right for the better preserving of the spirit, must never be lost sight of. (Trench p 153-157)

"...Aristotle describes in full the action of *epieikeia*: 'to pardon human failings; to look to the law-giver, not to the law; to the intention, not to the action; to the whole, not to the part; to the character of the actor in the long run and not in the present moment; to remember good rather than evil, and the good that one has received rather than the good that one has done; to bear being injured; to wish to settle a matter by words rather than deeds'..." (Barclay, William, "Daily Study Bible Timothy Titus & Philemon," p 96)

How can a Christian recognize the impossibility of cleaving to all formal law? Just look to our Creator who has replaced formal law with grace and mercy. With repentance and confession, strict justice is removed and replaced with compassion. Aristotle captured the word, but again it must be interpreted through the lense of Scripture. Pardoning human failings is a core belief of a mature servant of God. Look to Paul as he wrote to the Corinthian church about their human failings then turned around in the Second letter and set it all aside. It is the ability to look to the long run of faithfulness and submission, and not to the single sin that has been repented of and must now be forgiven. It is also the ability to "*bear being injured and wish to settle a matter with words.*" This is the essence of turning the other cheek and loving our enemies and praying for those who spitefully use us.

The “gentle,” “forbearing,” “reasonable and “moderate” man will manifest the most gentle, merciful, and compassionate aspects of service to Jesus.

Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, Mt. 5:23-25

But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. 40 If anyone wants to sue you and take away your tunic, let him have your cloak also. 41 And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two. 42 Give to him who asks you, and from him who wants to borrow from you do not turn away. Mt. 5:39-42

But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Mt. 5:44-46

Actually, then, it is already a defeat for you, that you have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? 8 On the contrary, you yourselves wrong and defraud, and that your brethren. 1 Cor 6:7-9

In all these verses we see the workings of “*epikeia*.” We see the fulness of the definitions given above. Gentleness based on God’s gentleness, mercy based on God’s mercy and compassion based on God’s compassion. Peter thought he would manifest this trait if he forgave seven times, but Jesus said that was not enough. We are not truly gentle until we can forgive seventy times seven.

Knowing that “*with what judgment you judge you will be judged*,” the *forbearing* and *gentle* man is very cautious in applying Scripture to the lives of others. Cold hard justice can be used, but this is not what the *reasonable* and *moderate* man will do.

So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. 13 For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment. James 2:12-13

*But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, **gentle**, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without variance, without hypocrisy. James 4:17*

The man under the influence of “*epikeis* allows “*mercy to triumph over judgement*.” To be “*easily entreated*,” “*full of mercy*” and *gentle*(*epikes*). With any doubt, judgment is withheld and deferred to God. He is unwilling to judge and condemn unless absolutely forced to do so. Relying on God’s justice for Israel, he too withholds judgment even though he might know someone is guilty unless he has the strongest evidence. God would rather a guilty person be spared than an innocent one be condemned.

Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. Deut. 17:6-7

“One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established. Deut. 19:15-16

As Jesus introduced His sermon on the mount, He captured the essence of this word in five out of the eight beatitudes. The reasonable and moderate man is humble(poor in spirit) well aware of his own sins and weaknesses(mourn), He is meek and gentle with his strength well controlled by reasonable moderation. He is merciful and seeking to make peace and keep harmony at whatever sacrifice to himself.

*3 Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*4 Blessed are those who **mourn**, For they shall be comforted.*

*5 Blessed are the **meek**, For they shall inherit the earth.*

*7 Blessed are the **merciful**, For they shall obtain mercy.*

*9 Blessed are the **peacemakers**, For they shall be called sons of God. Mt. 5:3-9*

Elders will be forced to pass judgment on many different aspects and issues between brethren. They must have this quality to be able to do this well and keep peace. As Jesus left heaven, he manifested an attitude of mind that all reasonable and moderate men will imitate.

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each of you regard one another as more important than himself; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Phil. 2:1-8

Using his own reasonableness, moderation and forbearance, a man with this qualification had removed selfishness and pride and replaced it with humility. He sees the needs of others as more important than his own and has moved beyond his own interests to the interests of others.

The term “gentle” is defined:

“epieikes, -es (eikos, what is reasonable); 1. seemly, suitable, ... 2. equitable, fair, mild, gentle...” (Thayer, , p 238)

“epieikes, from epi, unto, and eikos, likely, denotes seemly, fitting; hence, equitable, fair, moderate, forbearing, not insisting on the letter of the law; it expresses that considerateness that looks “humanely and reasonably at the facts of the case”; ...” (Vine, W. E., Volume 2, p 144-145)

brings with it a great depth of meaning.

“It expresses exactly that moderation which recognizes the impossibility cleaving to all formal law, of anticipating and providing for all cases that will emerge, and present themselves to it for a decision; which, with this, recognizes the danger that ever waits upon the assertion of legal rights, lest they should be pushed into moral wrongs. ...It is thus more truly just than strict justice would have been. ...This aspect of EPIEIKEIA, namely that it is a going back from the letter of right for the better preserving of the spirit, must never be lost sight of. (Trench Richard Chenevix, p 153-157)

The term “gentle” catches the outward signs of this deep inward quality. The one who has will always act gentle, but he this gentleness for very comes from something very special within. He is gentle like Joseph was gentle with Mary.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. (Mt. 1:19).

Joseph was a fair, equitable and just man, and it came out very gently in the manner in which he was going to treat Mary. She was with child, which every other time in the history of men and women loving one another meant only one thing. She had been impure and unfaithful to him with another man. Usually strong feelings of anger, bitterness, jealousy and loss drive men to do terrible things in retribution to such an act. Yet this man would do none of these things. The reason he would not is that he was just and equitable. It made him a gentle man. This is the quality of gentleness that the Lord requires in an elder. It makes him a great leader. He takes things as they come up and deals with them in a fair equitable and just manner.

not quarrelsome,

The term “quarrelsome” is defined:

amachos... commonly not to be withstood, invincible; more rarely abstaining from fighting...in the N.T. twice metaph. not contentious...” (Thayer, , p 31; 269)

amachos... lit. not fighting (a, negative, mache, a fight, combat, quarrel,) primarily signifying invincible, came to mean not contentious,... (A. V., “not a brawler,” “no brawlers”). (Vine, W. E., Volume 1, p 235)

The general idea behind the term is someone who is capable of keeping their composure and coolness even when they are not getting their way. The one who always gets their way and is invincible does not become quarrelsome. There is no reason to since they are always getting their way. Those who have the ability to not be quarrelsome even when they are not getting their way are on a much higher plain. It is this quality that Paul outlines with this term. People have to learn to get along together, especially when they are not getting their way. They must learn to accept disappointment without sulking or quarreling. Those who have this quality have done so.

not covetous;

5. No Lover of Money(1Tim 3:3).

Elders who shepherd the flock have a special closeness to the sheep and the sheep trust and appreciate them. It can be a temptation to move from shepherding the flock as a service to God to shepherding the flock for themselves. Remember God's complaint to the shepherds of Israel.

"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 3 You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. Ezek. 34:1-3"

The shift from the good shepherd to the hireling is often found in this qualification.

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. Jn. 10:11-13"

Often the "love for money" is the difference between a hireling who doesn't care for the sheep and a good shepherd who does. The love for money is a grave temptation that has destroyed men.

*But there arose false prophets also among the people, as among you also there shall be false teachers... and **in covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you:** 1Pet. 2:1-3*

Hence his reputation must be free from the love of money.

not covetous; NKJV

free from the love of money. NASB

not a lover of money. ESV

no lover of money; ASV

not covetous; KJV

A lover of money(covetous) is a man whose desire for money has too strong a hold on his judgment and decisions. This is the first of two qualifications that prohibit two different signs of greed. No lover of money is a triple compound word. *a= alpha privative(negation); phil = philos a friend or love; and arguros = silver(money)*

"philarguros... not loving money, not avaricious; only in the N. T., twice viz. 1Tim. 3:3; Heb. 13:5"

"2. philarguros,... lit , money-loving, is rendered covetous in the A. V. ...

philarguros, No. 2, with negative prefix, is translated without covetousness" in Heb. 13:5, A. V. R.V.,

"free from the love of money." In 1Tim. 3:3 the A. V. has "not covetous," the R. V., "no lover of money.

*NOTE: Trench, Syn # 24 points out the main distinction between *pleonexia* and *philarguria* as being between covetousness and avarice, the former having a much wider and deeper sense, being "the genus of which *philarguria* as being the species." The covetous man is often cruel as well as grasping, while the avaricious man is simply miserly and stinting. " (Vine, Volume 1, p 253)*

A careful consideration of the definition gives us a composite of this quality. First, he does not love money, and shows no sign of being miserly or stinting in his dealings with others. It is only used twice in the New Testament, the second place is translated "*free from the love of money:*"

*Be ye **free from the love of money**, content with such things as ye have: for himself hath said, I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee. Heb. 13:5*

This and this alone is enough to disqualify. Those who are stingy are not fit to be over the financial realm in the church. These are the men who will decide the type and amount of benevolence. They will decide who to support, and how much the preacher will be paid. They will be over the contribution of God's people. God desires such men to be free and giving with their own money. Those who are miserly show too much concern for this world. God's people must not look at this world as their home, they must be putting their treasures in heaven. To be stingy and miserly with his own possessions and money is a sure sign that he is not fit for the office. When it is hard to get a man to part with money, even when the need is great, it manifests a character far from Christ's. Remember Jesus' words.

"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. Matt 6:24"

The elders are responsible for the contributions of God's people. They decide how that money will be spent. We have all heard of elders who have over hundred thousand in the bank, because they are

concerned about emergencies. Sometimes this is simply a sign of those who love silver and are loath to part with it. This is a different word than the one above “not greedy for money. It is also found in Titus 1:7, and though some do not feel it belongs here(ASV and NIV do not have it), its use in Titus gives one the right to speak on it here even if it truly does not belong. It is defined:

“*aischrokerdes*,... (*aischros* and *kerdos*; ...) *eager for base gain, [greedy of filthy lucre]*: I Tim 3:3; ... Tit 1:7...” (Thayer, , op. cit. p 146)

“1. *aischros*, base, shameful...is used of base gain, filthy(lucre) ...

2. *aischrokerdes*, greedy of base gain (No 1, and *kerdos*, gain), is used in I Tim 3:8 and Titus 1:7, “greedy of filthy lucre;” (Vine, W. E. Volume 3, p 25)

A man who is so greedy for money, that he will use base, wicked and shameful means to earn it is unfit for the eldership. What a man does for a living has a bearing on his character and on his moral standards. Those who have no scruples against earning money in base or wicked means would not be fit to make the proper decisions necessary to be a good leader in the Lord’s church.

4 one who rules his own house well,

3. Rules Well His Own House.

one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?) 1 Tim 3:4-6

The repetition of the term “rule” and its parallel to the work an elder does(*take care of the church of God*) makes this qualification of dual importance. There is very little information regarding the specific type of ruling to be done in the eldership. So the parallel between the home and the church will help us better understand what God intended. Though Peter warned elders that they were “*not to lord it over the flock*,” the writer of Hebrews described them as “*those who rule over you*” and “*watch out for your souls*.” The parallel is obvious. This qualification is therefore helpful for us to assess how a man is to rule his home and how an elder is to rule and take care of the church without lording it over others. There are many words for dominion and rule in both English and Greek. This word is only used eight times in the NT and has a very distinctive meaning.

“*proistemi*... from *pró* (4253), before, over, and *hístemi* (2476), to place, to stand. Transitivity, to cause to stand before, to set over. In the NT only in the intransitive meaning to stand before. (I) With the meaning to be over, to preside, rule (Rom 12:8; 1 Tim 5:17). (II) By implication meaning to care for something, to be diligent, ...” (Word Study Dictionary: NT 4291)

“*proistemi*... [to be at the head of, rule, care for] 1. This common word means “to put before,” “to present,” or, in the intransitive middle, “to go before,” “to preside,” and figuratively “to surpass,” “to lead,” “to direct,” “to assist,” “to protect,” “to represent,” “to care for,” “to sponsor,” “to arrange,” “to apply oneself to.” ... Only intransitive forms occur in the eight NT instances. The two senses usually involved are “to lead” and “to care for. “*proistemi*... .. means “to put oneself at the head,” “to go first,”... “to preside.” ...But other metaphorical meanings are more important: a. The most important of all is “to preside” in the sense “to lead, conduct, direct, govern”... There is also the thought of standing or going before someone or something in protection...” Kittel, TDWNT NT:4291

The basic action of this compound verb is to place or stand something(*hístemi*) before or over(*pro*) another. So we might bring a glass and set it before someone or place a blanket over them. But over time it took on the sense of the person himself being placed or standing before another. It was used of those who were placed over another to “*direct, assist, protect, represent, or care for*” them.

Since it is only used eight times, the simplest way to evaluate it is to look at each of them. Five times it means “*standing before*” while ruling in the home or the church, once it is used of general leadership in any capacity, and finally to the rule and care manifested in how Christians stand before and direct their good works.

he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows

mercy, with cheerfulness. Rom 12:6

And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and **are over you** in the Lord and admonish you, 1 Thess 5:12-13

one **who rules** his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence 5 (for if a man does not know how **to rule** his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); 1 Tim 3:4-5

Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, **ruling** their children and their own houses well. 1 Tim 3:12-13

Let the elders **who rule** well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. 1 Tim 5:17-18

This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful **to maintain** good works. These things are good and profitable to men. ... 14 And let our people also learn **to maintain** good works, to meet urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful. Titus 3:8, 14

How did God stand a husband/father before his house(wife and family)? God intended for him to “direct, assist, protect, represent, care for” all who are in his house. The Spirit merely required the man who desires the office of a bishop to have demonstrated his ability to do it.

The passages revealing how a man is to stand before his house and put himself as the head are divided into his role as a husband and his role as a father. In Ephesians, Paul used Jesus’ care and concern for His church as the basis for the husband’s care and concern for his wife. Each man must stand before his wife, giving her his love and sacrificing himself in order to bless and help her. Any man who is doing this will be ruling well his house!

Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. 24 Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, ... 28 So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. Eph 5:22-25, 28

In Colossians, Paul defined it in a negative way. No husband ruling well his house will ever be bitter toward or allow himself to treat his wife out of bitterness, but instead with love, compassion and devotion to her needs.

Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. Col 3:19

Peter spoke to the husbands comprehensively, when he demanded a husband dwell with his wife in accordance with his knowledge of all the Scriptures dealing with relationships. The wife should receive the firstfruits of all the good things he has learned from his knowledge of the gospel about how to treat others. For example, when he learns to turn the other cheek to others, he must also dwell with his wife like that. Since all godly Christians are to be forbearing, patient, forgiving, compassionate, longsuffering, etc., toward all, so they must dwell with their wives.

Husbands, likewise, dwell with them dwell with (your wives) according to knowledge, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. 1Pet. 3:7

After his wife come the children. The souls he will influence with his own life. He must be cautious how he treats his children. Although God made him the head and the ruler, he must never selfishly or sinfully abuse that rule. Never should children feel exasperated or discouraged over the manner he leads and directs them. He has been placed before them to care for them and to do all within his power to bless their lives with the teaching and admonition of the Lord.

And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. Eph 6:4

Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. Col 3:21

Husbands and fathers will only rule well over their house when they are doing all the above. They love and sacrifice themselves for their wives, are never bitter against them, and dwell with them according to knowledge. They must train up their children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord and not provoke them to wrath. Each husband and father will give an account of this responsibility to God on

the day of judgment.

With this qualification, the Holy Spirit demands that each congregation also make that assessment. A man is qualified or disqualified by whether he has done this “well.”

kalos adverb (from Homer down), *beautifully, finely, excellently, well: ... a. rightly, so that there shall be no room for blame: ... b. excellently, nobly, commendably: ... c. honorably, in honor.* (Thayer NT 2573)

To be qualified for the eldership, God expects him to have ruled his household “*beautifully*” in the context of the above passages and to have carried out those duties in a “*fine and excellent*” manner.

“*His own house,*” extends this further than our word family. At that time, not only were there wives and children, but also servants and extended family. While in his home, they too become his responsibility.

“idios... 1. pertaining to one’s self, one’s own; used a. univ. of what is one’s own as opposed to belonging to another... b. of what pertains to one’s property, family, dwelling, country, etc. ...” (Thayer, p 297)

“oikos... a. strictly, an inhabited house... univ. the place where one has fixed his residence, one’s settled abode, domicile... 2. by metonymy the inmates of a house, all the persons forming one’s family, a household... 3. stock, race, descendants of one...” (Thayer, p 441)

Joshua, Cornelius, and Crispus were all men who did such an outstanding job ruling over their households that God commended them for it.

And if it seems evil to you to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.” Josh. 24:15

a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. ... Now therefore, we are all present before God, to hear all the things commanded you by God. Acts 10:2, 33

Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized. Acts 18:8

From the above examples it is clear that it is possible for a man to have his entire household in subjection to him, to hold to his values and ideals, and to respect his decisions and judgment.

All that a man has responsibility to rule over regarding his own house is to be assessed. Consider the definitions of the terms “own house:”

“idios... 1. pertaining to one’s self, one’s own; used a. univ. of what is one’s own as opposed to belonging to another... to do one’s own business (and not intermeddle with the affairs of others),... b. of what pertains to one’s property, family, dwelling, country, etc. ... c. harmonizing with, or suitable or assigned to, one’s nature, character, aims, acts; appropriate... 2. private... “ (Thayer, p. 296-297; 2398)

“oikos... a. strictly, an inhabited house... b. any building whatever... c. any dwelling place... univ. the place where one has fixed his residence, one’s settled abode, domicile... 2. by meton. the inmates of a house, all the persons forming one’s family, a household... 3. stock, race, descendants of one...” (Thayer, , p 441)

From the above definitions it is clear that Paul speaks of all who live under one’s roof and over which they are to exert authority. The term “rule” is defined:

“proistemi... 1. in the trans. tenses to set or place before; to set over. 2. ... a. to be over to superintend, preside over... b. to be a protector or guardian; to give aid... c. to care for, give attention to... “ (Thayer, , p 539; 4291)

“proistemi... ... means “to put oneself at the head,” “to go first,” ... “to preside.” ... But other metaphorical meanings are more important: a. The most important of all is “to preside” in the sense “to lead, conduct, direct, govern”... There is also the thought of standing or going before someone or something in protection...” (Kittel, Gerhard, Vol VI p 700-703)

The term fairly well sums up the responsibility that God has given to the husband and father concerning his household. He is a steward placed over all he possesses and he is to rule over it. God has made it clear how a home is to be run. He has made it clear what he expects of each member in a family, and it is up to the husband and father to see to it that these things are being done properly.

Husbands are commanded to love their wives, not be bitter against them, and dwell with them according to knowledge.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, (Eph. 5:23).

19 Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them. (Col. 3:19).

7 Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. (1 Pet. 3:7).

When a congregation assesses its prospective elders, this is the standard by which he is to be judged. His wife must also give her testimony as to his qualifications to be an elder. She knows whether the above is true, and it would not be wrong for a congregation to ask her. Members who have observed his conduct toward his wife either at services, or while visiting in his home will also have a good idea about whether or not this is being properly done.

Yet not only is he to be judged as a husband ruling over his wife, but also as a father ruling over his children. God commands fathers to bring their children up in the training and admonition of the Lord. He also commands them not to provoke their children to wrath, and not to discourage them.

4 And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4).

21 Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged. (Col. 3:21).

Again, because God has given this duty to the father, it is his responsibility to see that it is properly carried out. If it is done well, it manifests a good quality in the individual, if it is not carried out, then it represents a blight on his character that would remove him from being qualified to serve as an elder.

The ruling of a man over his own house is qualified by the adjective “well.” This term is defined:

“kalos... Sept for ... beautiful, but much oftener for ... good; beautiful, applied by the Greeks to everything so distinguished in form, excellence, goodness, usefulness, as to be pleasing; hence (acc. to the context) i.q. beautiful, handsome, excellent, eminent, choice, surpassing, precious, useful, suitable, commendable, admirable;... a. beautiful to look at, shapely, magnificent:... b. good, excellent in its nature and characteristics, and therefore well-adapted to its ends: ... c. beautiful by reason of purity of heart and life, and hence praiseworthy; morally good, noble... d. honorable, conferring honor:...” (Thayer, p. 322).

This ruling is to have been done so well that the above adjectives can be used to describe it and its outcome. He has ruled beautifully, handsomely, excellently, eminently. His ruling is praiseworthy, morally good and noble. He has done an honorable job. This will be most obviously manifested in the way his children turn out, and in the respect and love his wife holds for him.

There are examples of such men in the Bible. Joshua was such a man.

15 “And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.” (Josh. 24:15).

having his children in submission

4. Having Children in Submission with all Gravity.

The qualification “*rule well his own house*” narrows in this second qualification to the children. They are one of the most tangible areas a congregation can use to assess his ruling ability. If he has done it *well* then it will be obvious. There is little difference in Greek or English for the word child.

“tekon...a child(akin to tikto, to beget, bear), is used in both the natural and figurative senses. ...It gives prominence to the fact of birth...” (Vine, W. E. op. cit., Volume 1 p 187)

Those seeking the office of a bishop must have children and those children must be raised in strict accordance with God’s instructions. Their compliance with those instructions will determine whether or not he has ruled well. Without children, he cannot be assessed as a ruler. How he trained and raised his children prepared him to “*take care of the church.*” If he succeeded with his own children,

God will entrust him with the care of the church. Hence ruling well his own house comes down to the “*submission*” in his children.

“hupotage... 1. the act of subjecting... 2. obedience, subjection: ...” (Thayer, p 645)

“hupotage... means “submission,” ... then “subordination,” “dependent position”...” (Kittel, Vol 8 p 46)

While the verb also carries the additional idea of one arranging themselves under the authority of another, the noun simply means submission or obedience. It is the duty of every father to impress upon his children the nature of authority and their relationship to it. He must gain their submission, their respect and their obedience. Children’s attitude toward the authority of their parents will have a great bearing on how they view other types of authority. If a father fails to gain their submission, it is unlikely that they will later give it to God civil government, or their employer.

What is the scope and measure of this subjection? How can others assess it? At the least, we can all read what God has revealed about His expectations of the children under a godly father and look to see if these children possess them. Anything God has required of children that his children are in rebellion against would reflect on his leadership.

Although both the father and the mother are actively involved in this training the responsibility is still placed at the feet of the father. It was to the fathers that Paul commanded to “*bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.*”

If we are to gain a clear perspective of God’s expectations of what a father should accomplish with his children, we must begin with the instructions in the Old Covenant.

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! 5 You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. 9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deut 6:4-9

In this passage, it all begins with the faith, commitment, and conviction of the parents. Only when they love the Lord with their heart, soul, and strength and His words are in their heart are they properly prepared to teach their children. When they hold this awe and reverence, they will naturally teach God’s word diligently to them. Talking of them while sitting in the house, walking by the way, lying down and rising up. Clearly the father was expected to pass his own submission to God and to His Law to his children. A father could fail for only one of two reasons. Either he was violating the passage itself by not loving the Lord, not having God’s word in his heart, or not teaching them diligently to his children, or his children were not in submission to him.

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you. Ex. 20:12

“If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, 19 then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of his city, to the gate of his city. Deut. 21:18-20

Many passages in Proverbs corroborate the need for fathers to be concerned about the spiritual development of their children and for children to be in submission to them.

My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother; Pr. 1:8

My son, keep your father’s command, And do not forsake the law of your mother. 21 Bind them continually upon your heart; Tie them around your neck. 22 When you roam, they will lead you; When you sleep, they will keep you; And when you awake, they will speak with you. 23 For the commandment is a lamp, And the law a light; Reproofs of instruction are the way of life, Pr. 6:20-23

He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly. Pr. 13:24

Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart on his destruction. Pr. 19:18

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

Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of correction will drive it far from him. Pr. 22:15

Do not withhold correction from a child, For if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. Pr. 23:13

Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old. 23 Buy the truth, and do not sell it, Also wisdom and instruction and understanding. 24 The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, And he who begets a wise child will delight in him. 25 Let your father and your mother be glad, And let her who bore you rejoice. Pr. 23:22-25

Whoever keeps the law is a discerning son, But a companion of gluttons shames his father. Pr. 28:7

The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. Pr. 29:15

Each of these passages gives a little clearer insight into what God wanted children to receive and how parents could help them gain it. All children need the proper blending of corrective discipline with the use of the rod, and instructive discipline through diligently teaching them God's law. Corrective discipline gained a child's physical submission, and instruction in the Law led to a spiritual submission that kept a child obedient to God even after he left the home.

Since it is the duty of all fathers to nurture his children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord, it will be a part of their judgment on the great day. If God can assess a man's ability to raise his children by the results, so can the brethren at the church where he attends. If his children grow up with a deep love for the Lord, then the man has proven he knows how to rule his own house, and therefore is prepared to rule in God's house. If he could not train up his own children in the way they should go, then how can he complete the training of others who are seeking to serve the Lord?

Even without the help of a father, Timothy's grandmother and mother were able to do this for him.

when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also. 2Tim. 1:5

It was an unfeigned faith that Timothy's family was able to give to him. This appears to be the real goal of the demand that father's nurture their children in the chastening and admonition of the Lord. All the training that the child receives is thus placed in the context of the Lord. What could any parent teach their children outside of this that would really matter to the child?

Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. How could parents not speak of these things at all times and in all places. How could a child not know the commitment and conviction of his parents? How could godly parents not want their child to serve God, and how could any child not know that? When a child passes the age of accountability and refuses to submit to Christ we have two choices. Either the father failed to make his children aware that all his efforts were directed toward this, or the children are aware of his expectations and refused to do it.

The submission and obedience children have toward their parents will be "with" all gravity.

"meta... a preposition,... and hence prop. in the midst of, amid, denoting association, union, accompaniment;...I. With the Gen. among, with..." (Thayer, p 401-404)

By using this preposition Paul stresses that all the acts of submission will be accompanied by, be in the midst of and united to "all" gravity.

"pas,... a. any, every one(sc. of the class denoted by the noun annexed to pas);... all or any of the class indicated... b. any and every, of every kind,...2. with a substantive; 1. masc. and fem. every one, any one...in every condition, or in every matter, ... in everything, in every way, on every side, in every particular or relation,..." (Thayer, p 491-493)

Under any and every situation, with all types and qualities of submission the quality of "gravity" must be evident. Yet once again, we have a Greek term that the translators struggled to convey into English. "Gravity" in the ASV/KJV is *reverence*(NKJV), *dignity*(NAS, ESV), and *respect*(NIV). Each of these captures one aspect of the word the Holy Spirit selected.

"semnotes... that characteristic of a person or a thing which entitles to reverence or respect, dignity, gravity, majesty, sanctity...in an ethical sense, gravity ...honor, probity, purity..." (Thayer p. 573; 4587)

semnótes ... Decency, dignity, seriousness. Aristotle defined semnótes as the average of a virtue that lies

between two extremes, *authádeia*(arrogance)... and *aréskeia* pleasure, ... an ignoble attempt to please everybody, the endeavoring at all costs of dignity and truth to stand well with all the world). Therefore, *semnótes* stands between caring to please nobody and endeavoring at all costs to please everybody. It is the ability not only to perform well one's duties as a citizen, but also to adhere to the highest principles and ideals of earth and heaven, and thus drawing respect and approval. See 1 Tim. 2:2; 3:4; Titus 2:7. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: NT:4587)

There is no exact English word for this. It is a reverence and a respect for authority that leads the child to have a serious dignified attitude. Children properly trained in the nurture and admonition of the Lord will have a great respect and honor for all forms of authority. They will submit to them with a serious and dignified deportment. Submission to their mother and father is offered with reverence and respect. They will respect and hold God's Word in reverence. They will respect the authority of their teachers, principles, police and others.

We should not pass over Aristotle's definition as it captures so well what every Christian wants for their children. The Greek word "*semnótes*" holds the perfect place between two terrible extremes.

The first extreme is the *arrogance*(*authádeia*) that cares for no one and no one's opinions. This *hubris* is based on a selfishness that seeks only its own pleasure with no care and concern for the authority of others. There is no submission in the heart of such a person. The foolishness that was bound up in their heart is still there.

The other extreme comes from those who take so much *pleasure*(*aréskeia*) in pleasing others that they have no backbone or conviction to stand up. Like a chameleon, they change their morals and convictions based on who they are with. While with their parents and brethren, they do all to please them. But when they are with their friends, they change and do everything to please them.

Between these two extremes is the child of dignity, gravitas, and reverence. The child who bends his will to God. All other authorities(parents, teachers, civil authorities, employer, etc.) are under God and are dealt with respectfully, decently and seriously, yet with a consciousness of absolutes that can never be changed no matter who is present. There is no arrogance and no desire to please those who are present. Only a desire to be submissive to the things that are right. In all things they should reflect the same growth as Jesus:

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and men. Luke 2:52

Paul's final words on this qualification explain again why it is so important.

for if a man know not how to rule his own house how shall he take care of the church of God?

Many occupations can only be fully learned in the doing. This qualification is job experience. The man who closely follows the Scriptures in ruling his home and diligently carries them out is gaining the necessary attitudes and qualities and experiences to do the same thing with the church. As an elder, it will be his duty to see that the word of God is being followed. He will be closely watching over the souls of the members. He must be directing, guiding, exhorting and admonishing and occasionally rebuking the members just as he did with his own children. Instilling within them the same submission and obedience he himself holds toward God and his word. If he could not learn to do this well with his own children, he will not be able to do it with the church.

Paul has more to say about the children of a man who desires to be an elder. There are few things more tangible than this qualification. The children are either all they ought to be or they are not. It cannot be hidden, it cannot be masked. If the children are unruly, if they are not obedient to the Lord, if they are not all that God asks that they be then a congregation will know. The term "submission" is defined:

"hupotage... 1. the act of subjection... 2. obedience subjection..." (Thayer, p. 645; 5292)

God expects parents to take their children and keep them in submission from the time they are infants until they leave home to begin another family, or to pursue their lives alone. At no time in the lives of these children are they to be allowed to be unruly or rebellious. They are to obey their parents, and it here falls squarely upon the father to see to it that they do so. The scriptures are extremely clear as to the extent of this subjection and its nature.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. (Eph. 6:1).

20 Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. (Col. 3:20).

These two scriptures advise children of their responsibility to their parents. It can be summed up in one term: Obedience. Children are to obey. This by no means implies that they will not have to be trained and guided up in this obedience. A child left to himself will not naturally grow up to do this.

15 The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. (Prov. 29:15).

This is the heart of the reason that this is a qualification for the eldership. It cannot happen naturally, and it takes effort and training to bring it into being. God promises that if we work hard, follow his advice and pray, it can be done.

6 Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. (Prov. 22:6).

It takes discipline and training, and a man who raises his children up to be in subjection is to be highly commended.

15 Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; the rod of correction will drive it far from him. (Prov. 22:15).

13 Do not withhold correction from a child, for if you beat him with a rod, he will not die. (Prov. 23:13).

with all reverence

Each of the three terms are of great importance. The preposition “with” is defined:

“*meta*... a preposition, akin to *mesos*... and hence prop. *in the midst of, amid*, denoting association, union, accompaniment;... I. With the GENITIVE, 1. *among, with*... 2. of association and companionship, *with*... a. after verbs of going, coming, departing, remaining, etc. with the genitive of the associate or companion... b. b... prop. of those who associate with one and accompany him wherever he goes: in which sense the disciples of Jesus are said *to be*(or to have been) *with* him... e. of divers other associations of persons or things; -- where the action or condition expressed by the verb refers to person or things besides those specified by the dat. or acc. ... f. with the genitive of mental feelings desires and emotions, of bodily movements, and of other acts which are so to speak the attendants of what is done or occurs; so hat in this way the characteristic of the action or occurrence is described... (Thayer, p. 402-404; 3326)

This term stresses that in the midst of all the acts of subjection that the child ever manifests is to be all reverence. There is to be union, accompaniment and association between these two terms in the heart of a child. The term “all” is an often used term by Paul. An abbreviated definition is:

“*pas*,... *all* or *any* of the class indicated... b. *any and every, of every kind*, ... esp. with nouns designating virtues or vices, emotions, character, condition, to indicate every mode in which such virtue, vice or emotion manifests itself, or any object whatever to which the idea expressed by the noun belongs... “ (Thayer, p. 491-493; 3956).

Any and every kind of reverence is to be manifested under all phases of their submission. Every mode of subjection in which the virtue of reverence could be manifested is fulfilled. The child must always be in submission and this submission must always manifest reverence. The term

“reverence” is defined:

“*semnotes*... that characteristic of a person or a thing which entitles to reverence or respect, *dignity, gravity, majesty, sanctity*... in an ethical sense, *gravity ... honor, probity, purity*... “ (Thayer, p. 573; 4587)

“*semnos, semnotes* ... It is then used of divine things, “august,” “sacred,” ... Used of objects *semnos* first denotes visible majesty and greatness... Of a town ... means to make it more distinguished, ... In relation to clothes ... means “splendid,” “magnificent.” ... use *semnos* for the inner majesty of things... is that which in the being and conduct of men calls forth *sebesthai* from others. ... This might be the majesty of a royal throne, the splendor of dress, the beauty of speech, or the sound of music. Yet not every sound nor all fine speech or adornment is regarded as *semnos*. A thing is *semnos* if the signs of a higher order may be detected in it. In man the orderliness perceived in his attitude and behavior is felt to be *semnotes*, with an ineffaceable trend toward seriousness and solemnity. ... In I Tim. 2:2 *semnotes* is used alongside *eusebeia*. the one is the piety expressed in respect for the orders, the other is the corresponding “serious and worthy conduct.” (Kittel, TDWNT, Vol 7, P. 191-196).

Generally the number of synonyms used to describe a term gives some idea of its complexity and depth. Thayer

tells us it is a characteristic of a person. Thus it takes on the form of an adjective describing conduct and lifestyle. In this case he tells us the type of conduct entitles one to respect by others. Consider again the definition Kittel gives:

“A thing is *semnos* if the signs of a higher order may be detected in it. In man the orderliness perceived in his attitude and behavior is felt to be *semnotes*, with an inefaceable trend toward seriousness and solemnity.”

This is the essence of what God wants to see in the children of a man who desires the office of a bishop. One can detect the signs of a higher order in their conduct. One can see by their attitude and behavior that they have a tendency toward seriousness and solemnity. These are the very heart of what God desires to see in children who are trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Children who are so raised will be recognized by their teachers at school, by the brethren, and by their family as being serious and reverent.

5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house,

There are some things that cannot be learned with the head. They have to be learned by doing. This is one of those things. A man is given the opportunity for many years to practice all that the Lord has commanded of him concerning the ruling of others in his own house. He has the time and chance to learn to guide and lead his wife in such a way that she grows to love, respect and honor him increasingly for his wisdom and fairness in his dealings with her. He also gains the right to train up his children by his own methods using the wisdom of God as his guide. They come from the womb hungry for examples to follow and things to learn. Again, if he is wise, fair and puts forth great efforts to train them and to nurture them, then at the right time they will turn to the Lord. His ability to lead can be clearly discerned as well as his priorities in life by the manner in which his children and wife turn out.

The term “rule” is defined:

“*proistemi*... 1. in the trans. tenses *to set or place before; to set over*. 2. ... a. *to be over to superintend, preside over*... b. *to be a protector or guardian; to give aid*... c. *to care for, give attention to*...” (Thayer, , p 539; 4291)

God has set this man over his own house. He is to be its protector and guardian, to care for and give attention to those under his care as commanded by God. If he has not listened to God and done things God’s way, then he will not know how to rule his own house. He will not have learned how to deal with the weak, the rebellious, the curious. A child is all of these things and precious opportunities are given to men to learn a great deal in the training of their children. If they fail to learn these with their wives and children, then Paul has a legitimate question to ask:

how will he take care of the church of God?);

The term “take care of” is defined:

“*epimeleomai*... *to take care of* a person or thing (EPI denoting direction of the mind toward the object cared for...)” (Thayer, p. 240; 1959)

Though the Christian might like to believe that he could turn the direction of his mind toward the caring for the members of the local church, his inability to so care for those under his own care in his house paints a poor picture of his chances to do well elsewhere. Paul stresses that it is impossible for a man who could not keep his own house hold in submission to himself to in any way keep a congregation doing so. You cannot fail at an easier thing and then hope to succeed at something along the same lines but much more difficult.

6 not a novice,

not a novice, lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil. 1Tim. 3:6

Some things can only be gained by experience. College students who have spent most of their life in school have heads full of facts, but in their mid twenties, with no on the job training, they are still a novice. They can understand the basics of many things, but cannot always practically apply them to circumstances in life. Wisdom takes more than a head full of knowledge, it also requires experience. As they years pass, mistakes are made and learned from, entire days are spent, but not wasted, trying

to figure out a problem with no obvious solution. Day by day, inexperience is replaced with wisdom. The only way to become experienced and see how knowledge is applied to different circumstances, is to live and learn.

God was concerned enough about this principle in the spiritual realm to give this qualification. Shepherds and overseers in the church must have passed through the stages of inexperience where foolish mistakes are made. It is not enough to know the Bible, they must have the wisdom to know how to use it to solve problems and help people grow. Those who grow quickly and appear to have the qualifications must still pass the test of time. The Greek term passed into English in the term "neophyte-" "neo - new" and "phuo - "planting," hence, "not newly planted."

"neophutos, an adjective, lit., newly-planted (from neos, new, and phuo, to bring forth, produce), denotes a new convert, neophyte, novice, 1Tim. 3:6, of one who by inexperience is unfitted to act as a bishop or overseer in a church" (Vine, Volume 2 p. 119)

If we imagine a seedling just coming forth from the ground, we get the idea of a novice. A new plant is not deeply rooted and is much more prone to drought. It is small and in danger of being stepped on and crushed. It is a tender stem, that cannot withstand the wind. In short the most vulnerable time in the life of a plant is that time when it is newly planted and a seedling. There is an identical issue with newly planted Christians. Their faith which comes by hearing, needs to be strengthened and their conviction and commitment hardened through adversity and trials. To place one into the position of a shepherd before these things have occurred is dangerous to the church and the man.

There are important things that must happen before anyone can lead another. Remember, Jesus warned of "the blind leading the blind..." The very purpose of the gifts Jesus gave His church is to move us as quickly as possible from newly planted to established and strengthened.

*And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for **the equipping of the saints** for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should **no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine**, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, Eph 4:11-14*

By passing through the "new birth," we are, for a time, like children again. Children must grow up and become adults. One stops being a child when he is no longer tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine. This is what knowledge and experience produce.

*For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For **everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.** 14 But **solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.** Heb 5:12-14*

This passage stresses the necessity of growth. Time alone does not lead a novice to become full grown. A newly planted tree is weak and unstable until its roots go down deep enough to support its weight and its trunk grows strong enough that it will not bend or break in the wind. Until that day comes it is still a new plant, unable to stand on its own. Time is a factor, but not the only one. If a tree is not properly watered and fed it may never leave the newly planted stage, though it be in the ground a long time. So it is with men and the gospel. Some will leave the newly planted stage more quickly than others. No one is full grown until he is no longer tossed in the wind. Until, like a tree, he can stand strong on his own without wavering. Until he has, by reason of use, had his senses exercised to discern good and evil, has a full understanding of first principles, and eats the meat of the word of God he is a new plant. But there is more even than this:

And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. 2 I fed you with milk and not with solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; 3 for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? 1 Cor 3:1-3

Spiritual growth is also seen as the carnal(flesh) gives way to the spiritual. One ceases to be a novice

when he can control the base and sinful emotions of the flesh. In the book of Galatians, Paul spoke of how he had done this and that all who belong to Christ have also done it.

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. Gal 2:20

And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another. Gal 5:24-26

Until these lusts have been crucified, a man is still a novice. Only those who have purged themselves are meet for the Master's use and prepared for every good work.

But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. 21 Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work. 22 Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart. 2 Tim 2:20-23

Those who know God's word and by reason of time and experience have become both doctrinally and morally pure and wise fit this qualification. This does not mean sinless perfection, but it does mean substantial growth in the direction of self-control. To place a man into the office before this time places him in grave peril. Such a man is in danger of becoming "puffed up" and falling into the condemnation of the devil.

tuphoomai **be puffed up, conceited; become foolish** ...(passive of *tuphoo* "becloud") occurs in the NT only in the Pastoral Epistles. A new convert who was appointed bishop could become *puffed up with conceit* (1Tim. 3:6). A teacher who does not offer the sound words of tradition but instead teaches strange things "is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing" (6:4). (Exegetical Dictionary of the NT)

"*tuphoo*, ...(*tuphos*, smoke; pride); prop. *to raise a smoke, to wrap in a mist*; used only metaph. 1. *to make proud, puff up with pride, render insolent*; pass. *to be puffed up with haughtiness or pride*, 1Tim. 3:6..." (Thayer, p 633)

Being appointed as an elder while still growing out of childhood is too much for any man. It can lead to a pride and insolence that will result in a fall. Appointing such a man presents a grave danger not only to the congregation, but to his soul. Everyone needs enough time to grow up in Christ before adding the burden of leadership.

The final clause is interesting but difficult. A point of grammar must be understood whenever two nouns are separated by "of."

the noun in the genitive indicates the thing to which the action is referred, either as subject or object... The Subjective Genitive ... when the noun in the genitive *produces* the action being therefore related as *subject* to the verbal idea of the noun modified... The Objective Genitive ... When the noun in the genitive *receives* the action being thus related as *object* to the verbal idea contained in the noun modified. (Dana & Mantey, Grammar of the Greek NT, P. 78-79).

In this case "the devil" is the genitive, and condemnation is either the subject or the object. So if it is a subjective genitive, then the devil is the subject doing the condemning. If it is an objective genitive the devil is the object of the condemnation. If the devil is the subject then the man will fall into his condemnation. If the devil is the object then that man would be receiving the same condemnation that the devil received when he fell. If that is its meaning it stands alone in the Scripture. No where else does it reveal why he is to be condemned

The more natural understanding is that the devil is the one doing the condemning. So when a novice is placed into the office of the bishop will face strong condemnation from the devil. Obviously, this is a strong warning against placing a man into the office before he is spiritually mature.

"*neophutos*,... *newly-planted*... trop. *a new convert, neophyte*, [A. V. *novice*, i.e.] (one who has recently become a Christian):" (Thayer, p. 424; 3504)

“*neophutos*, an adjective, lit., newly-planted (from *neos*, new, and *phuo*, to bring forth, produce), denotes a new convert, neophyte, novice, I Tim 3:6, of one who by inexperience is unfitted to act as a bishop or overseer in a church” (Vine, W. E. p. Volume 2 p. 119)

A novice is a newly planted Christian, and thus a young convert to the faith. What a novice is is evident to all, when a novice ceases to be a such and becomes a mature member is one of the more relative qualifications in the eldership. Does it involve time, maturity, or both? If a man is a Christian for 5 years is he still a young plant in the faith? Does it happen in 10 years, 15 years, 20 years or more? Looking at it from another way, Does it follow that just because a man has been a Christian for 20 or 30 years that he is not a novice? What is the criteria for a novice? Is it simply the passing of time, or is it the passing from childhood to maturity? This is a difficult question and the context of this qualification does not give a full answer. Paul’s concern is that he will be puffed up with pride. This could come with the passing of not enough time, but is more likely to occur because the person is still immature regardless of the amount of time that has passed.

12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (Heb. 5:12-14).

This passage seems to be the best passage for assessing this character. There is definitely a certain period of time that ought to pass before the person ceases to be a new plant, but when that period passes, there is not guarantee that the person is thereby qualified. Once that time has passed, then his character, knowledge and abilities must be assessed.

The best summary would be as follows. When a man has fulfilled all the other qualifications found in the scriptures for becoming an elder, then this one standing on its own stresses that he must have been a convert long enough to not be a new convert. This must be decided by the members of the local church, but in their deciding they must weigh out two critical points. First, their own need for qualified men to take the position of elders. Second, the danger to the soul of one who is still a new plant.

lest being puffed up with pride

“being puffed up with pride” is a single Greek word with the following definition:

“tuphoo... (tuphos, smoke; pride) prop. to raise a smoke, to wrap in a mist; ... used only metaph. 1. to make proud, puff up with pride, render insolent; pass. to be puffed up with haughtiness or pride, ... 2. to blind with pride or conceit, to render foolish or stupid...” (Thayer, p. 633; 5187)

It is a strong word for someone who has allowed the smokiness of pride to wrap them in a mist of blindness until they can no longer see themselves clearly. They become puffed up with it to a point where they are not longer themselves.

This is the danger that a new convert places themselves in if they seek for the eldership too soon. It is also the danger a congregation places a new convert in if they appoint him too soon.

he fall into the same condemnation as the devil.

Though the NKJV words it strongly here, the original Greek gives one of two possible interpretations.

1. The condemnation of the devil.(original Greek).
- A. The condemnation the devil fell into.(subjective)
- B. The condemnation which the devil gives. (objective)

The condemnation of the devil is much more likely to be objective here(B) and fall under the category of the condemnation the devil gives, and not subjective(A) referring to the devil’s condemnation. It could be the latter, but if it is it is the only place in the Bible where it is referred to, and we do not have enough information to even make an educated guess on what Paul means by it. On the other hand, the former simply means that by falling into pride, he falls into condemnation by(of) the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good

“Must” is defined:

“dei... It is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper; ... a. necessity lying in the nature of the case:... necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us... c. necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end... d. a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity... i. e. necessity established by the counsel and decree of God...” (Thayer, , p. 126: 1163).

It is very necessary and there is a great need for the prospective elder to have this last quality. It is both right and proper that he have a good testimony. The term “good testimony” is defined:

“marturia... 1. a testifying: the office committed to the prophets of testifying concerning future event... 2. what one testifies, testimony... in a legal sense, of testimony before a judge... in an historical sense, of the testimony of an historian... in an ethical sense, of testimony concerning one’s character...” (Thayer, p. 391; 3141)

Moreover he must have good testimony of them that are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. 1Tim. 3:7

This is the broadest of the qualifications on reputation. Generally, the church knows only the reputation of a man as he conducts himself at the assemblies and within the social contacts we with him have through evangelism, edification and benevolence. Even hospitality generally only includes other brethren.

This qualification broadens it to his reputation among co-workers, neighbors, and acquaintances. Those people he sees while away from the members of the church. What kind of reputation has he built based on his conduct among them? This is a difficult qualification to assess. Few people other than himself has contact with them. But as much as possible these things should be investigated. What he does when he is angry, how does he conduct business, what are his habits and weaknesses. These are the types of things that those who are without can attest to. A foul mouth, dishonesty, how he pays his bills, his patience and compassion are all seen by the world. All the qualifications on character are seen by those outside.

No greater harm can befall a church than to have members within its fellowship who live one way around members and another way among co-workers and friends in the world(hypocrisy). No one can hide what they are for long. Co-workers and neighbors often see more, especially while under stresses and strains of being in the world, than the brethren. Often they have a clearer perspective of their moral standards. Even if the details cannot be gleaned their overall attitude should be sought and assessed. Almost anyone can live and act correctly while at services. Almost anyone can keep a mask on for 4-5 hours a week when they know others are watching. One of the best possible barometers of true character is to take into consideration what those who see them more often think of them.

Again honesty on the part of the man seeking the office is important. Most men know what others think of them. We know if those in the community have lost respect for us. If these can’t be cleared up with an apology and repentance, then this qualification has not been fulfilled.

Younger men who aspire to the office must be careful. One temper tirade may place a badge on your chest which you will wear for years. A badge that you are a Christian who cannot control his temper and who may be a hypocrite. One temptation, given in to publicly, may ruin your reputation among those who are without, and for many years, if not forever, bar you from the eldership. This manifests the strong need for confession. All men sin, but those who confess it are forgiven and it is forgotten. Most people will continue to respect someone if they show remorse and repentance, and then forget it ever happened.

Yet there is also a need for caution. Some in the community will never respect a member of the church of Christ. Persecution for righteousness sake is part of being a Christian. A congregation must have the wisdom to seek the difference between lack of respect for righteousness sake (persecution) and a lack of respect due to his lack of purity and righteousness. The Holy Spirit addressed this:

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; 16 having a good conscience, that when

they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. 17 For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. 1 Peter 3:15-18

Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified. 15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters. 16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter. 1 Peter 4:11-16

Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. 2 Tim 3:12-13

It would be unfair and unrealistic for a congregation to expect its elders to have a perfect standing. There will be those who will reproach Christians for the name of Christ and fabricate and attribute evil to them. It is not these that God is concerned with in this qualification. It is those who have lost their standing for dishonorable reasons.

The danger here is that he fall into "reproach."

"oneidismos...(oneidizo),...a reproach:" (Thayer, p 446-447)

"oneidizo...to reproach, upbraid, revile;...of deserved reproach,..of unjust reproach, to revile ..to upbraid, cast (favors received) in one's teeth..."(Thayer, p 446)

When the leaders of a congregation have a deserved unsavory reputation in the world it will bring both them and the entire church into reproach. No church can grow when people look upon its rulers as hypocrites. The entire congregation will be affected. The "*snare of the devil*" is another danger.

"pagis,... that which holds fast... a snare, trap, noose; a. prop. of snares in which birds are entangled and caught,... as a snare, i.e. unexpectedly, suddenly, because birds and beasts are caught unawares,...b. trop. a snare, i. e. whatever brings peril, loss, destruction: of a sudden and unexpected deadly peril... of the allurements and seductions of sin...the allurements to sin by which the devil holds one bound..." (Thayer, p 472)

Satan can take an entire congregation and entrap it by means of an eldership with a bad reputation among unbelievers. This illustrates the principle that the greater good a thing can bring if done properly, the greater the damage done if it is done improperly. Having a strong qualified eldership will do much to strengthen and bring to maturity a congregation. Having an unqualified eldership with a bad reputation can do more damage than any other thing. Let each congregation beware the great issues involved in the selection and appointment of elders. A wrong selection may be just the tool Satan can use to ensnare the entire local congregation and smother its influence in the community.

Those who testify about the character of the prospective elder must give good testimony. This is the same term as is used in verse one a good work and in verse 3 ruling his house well. Those who attest to his character must note it as morally good, noble and praiseworthy.

among those who are outside,

Those who are outside refer to the nonmembers he associates with. His co-workers, neighbors, friends.

lest he fall into reproach

"Fall" is defined:

"oneidismos...(oneidizo),...a reproach:" (Thayer, , op. cit. p 446-447; 3680)

"oneidizo,... to reproach, upbraid, revile;... of deserved reproach,.. of unjust reproach, to revile:... to upbraid, cast (favors received) in one's teeth..." (Thayer, , op. cit. p 446; 3679)

"pagis,... prop. that which holds fast... a snare, trap, noose; a. prop. of snares in which birds are entangled and caught,... as a snare, i.e. unexpectedly, suddenly, because birds and beasts are caught unawares,...b. trop. a snare, i. e. whatever brings peril, loss, destruction: of a sudden and unexpected deadly peril... of the allurements and seductions of sin...the allurements to sin by which the devil holds one bound..." (Thayer, , op. cit. p 472;)

and the snare of the devil.

This is the second time Paul has spoken directly to Timothy about his reasons and plans. He started the letter reminding Timothy of the charge that had been given to him. Although it may have only been a reminder, Timothy could also use it if anyone sought to stop him in his work. This second passage also strengthens Timothy in his work. First, it revealed Paul planned to soon return to Ephesus where he would add his authority to what Timothy had been preaching. Second, these words were designed to reveal how Timothy and others should conduct themselves in the house of God which is the church of the living God.

14 These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly;

There is nothing in the meaning of the word translated “these things” that points to what was before and what comes after. It seems best to simply see the entire letter in this light. The contents of this letter are the subject. Although he is even then writing this letter, it is not an indication of a change in plans. He still hopes (*desire and expectation*) to come soon.

“*tachion... more swiftly, more quickly* in comparison...” (Thayer, p. 616; 5032)

Although Paul has the desire and an expectation, to come swiftly, things could still arise to hinder these plans. He is writing this letter because he cares about Timothy and wants to be certain that if any delay does arise, Timothy will have the necessary tools to carry on. But the reception of the letter is not an indication of any change in plan on his part. He still hopes to come shortly or swiftly.

15 but if I am delayed,

Though Paul’s desire and plan are clear, circumstances beyond his control may keep these plans from coming into being. Paul therefore wants Timothy to be fully prepared for either outcome. If he is delayed, he has the letter, and if Paul comes he has both. The Greeks had words for “if.” The first is like our “since” and the second emphasizes an inability to know what is about to happen.

“*ean... I. a conditional particle (derived from *ei an*), which makes reference to time and to experience, introducing something future, but not determining, before the event, whether it is certainly to take place; if, in case, ...* (Thayer, p. 162-163; 1437)

Even inspiration does not allow Paul to know the future. He hopes he will be there soon, but he is unsure of whether it will occur or not. Hence, if the possibility should arise that he is “delayed,” Timothy has this letter.

“*braduno... to delay, be slow* 1. rarely trans *to render slow, retard... intrans. to be long, to tarry loiter,...* unusually, with gen. of the thing which one delays to effect, II Pet. 3:9 ... [A. V. *is not slack concerning his promise*] I. e. to fulfill his promise...” (Thayer, p. 105; 1019)

I write so that you may know

The verse has two possible ways to translate. The NKJ has Timothy as the one who knows how he is to conduct himself. The other translations have Timothy using this letter to show others how they are to conduct themselves.

***you* may know how *you* ought to conduct *yourself* NKJV**
***thou* mayest know how *men* ought to behave *themselves* ASV**
***you* will know how *one* ought to conduct *himself* NASU**
***you* may know how *one* ought to behave ESV**
***you* will know how *people* ought to conduct *themselves* NIV**

The Expositor’s Greek Testament states: “It is a matter of indifference whether we render *how men ought to behave themselves* (R. V.) or *how thou oughtest to behave thyself* (A. V.; R. V. m). ...” (Vol 4; p. 117). No matter which way you see it, it all comes out to the same thing.

The term “know” is a word for knowledge stressing what was seen and perceived (our video).

“*eido... lat. video... The tenses coming from EIDO and retained by usage form two families, of which one signifies to see, the other to know... I. ... to see* 1. *to perceive (with the eyes)...* 2. like the Lat. *video, to perceive by any of the senses...* 3. *univ to perceive, notice, discern, discover...* 4. *to see, i.e. to turn the eyes, the mind, the attention to anything; a. to pay attention, observe... b. ... to see about something i.e.*

to ascertain what must be done about it... c. *to inspect, examine*... d. *to look at, behold*... 5. *to experience, any state of condition*... 6. *to see i.e. have an interview with, to visit*..." (Thayer, p. 172-174; 1492)

This letter has been written for Timothy and all evangelists to have a clear picture of God's expectations for "how" members of the church are to conduct themselves.

how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God

The Greek word order helps see this more clearly: "***how it is necessary in the house of God to behave.***" The term "necessary" is defined:

"dei... It is necessary, there is need of, it behooves, is right and proper; ... a. necessity lying in the nature of the case:... necessity brought on by circumstances or by the conduct of others toward us... c. necessity in reference to what is required to attain some end... d. a necessity of law and command, of duty, equity... l. e. necessity established by the counsel and decree of God..." (Thayer, p. 126: 1163).

This letter will explain the necessary, right and proper manner in which men ought to behave themselves. The root meaning of this term stresses necessity and duty, either in order to attain some special end, to fulfill law and command, or to remain in harmony with the counsel and decree of God. This is a powerful point to be made. This letter sets forth what is necessary by the decree and counsel of God. Here then in this letter is Timothy's authority. There is no other way to act than the way set forth in this letter.

The term "conduct" is defined as turning hither and thither, to turn upside down and turn about. This fits well with the Greek idea of walking. While we say we live, they said we walked. Wherever they walk was their life. So this term also came to be associated with conduct and living. As Christians turn hither and thither in the house of God, this letter gives the how.

"anastrepho... 1. to turn upside down, overturn... 2. to turn back... 3. to turn hither and thither pass. reflexively, to turn one's self about, sojourn, dwell... b. like the Hebr. ... to walk, of the manner of life and moral character, to conduct one's self, behave one's self, live... simply to conduct or behave one's self, "walk" ... " (Thayer, p. 42; 394)

This letter contains inspired instructions by which Christians are to function in the house of God. No other doctrines are to be tolerated (chapter one) men and women have specific roles (chapter two), churches are to be organized with scripturally qualified elders and deacons. It is necessary for people to conduct themselves in exactly this manner. If this is not the "manner of life and behavior" of those in the church, then it is not the house of God at all.

in the house of God,

The term "house" is the common Greek word for a home or place where one dwells.

"oikos... a. strictly, an inhabited house [differing thus fr. DOMOS the building]... b. any building whatever... c. any dwelling place... univ. the place where one has fixed his residence, one's settled abode, domicile... 2. by meton. the inmates of a house, all the persons forming one's family, a household... 3. stock, race, descendants of one... [syn. oikos, oikia in Attic (and esp. legal) usage, oikos denotes one's household establishment, one's entire property, oikia the dwelling itself... In the sense of family oikos and oikia are alike employed; ...]" (Thayer, p 441; 3642)

There is room within this definition for two different ways to understand "house" of God. The first is that this is the house (building) where God dwells. If this is the meaning then the church of the living God is God's temple. The second meaning is that the church is the household (family) of God. Scripture revealed both are true.

The church is God's temple:

Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 2:4-5

Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are. 1 Cor. 3:16-17

having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit. Eph. 4:20-22

The church is also God's family:

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. (Rom. 8:14-17).

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (Gal. 4:4-6).

Since the definition and the Scriptures reveal that both are true, which is the best way to understand it here? here? Is Paul revealing how men ought to behave as God's temple or as God family? Is it the church as God's family that is the pillar and ground of the truth or is it the church as God's temple that is the pillar and ground of the truth. Although there is no way to prove either, the conclusion that this church is the pillar and ground of the truth seems to lend itself more to a foundation for the stones than it does for a family.

which is the church of the living God,

The term "*which is*" is an interesting word that has a very specific meaning. While it has the same general sense as "which," it has the added component of "*regard*" is held to the "class to which" it "*belongs,*" "*and thus it indicates quality.*"

"hostis... prop. any one who; l. e. 1. whoever, every one who... whosoever(all those who)... 2. it refers to a single person or thing, but so that regard is had to a general notion or class to which this individual person or thing belongs, and thus it indicates quality: one who, such as one as, of such a nature that... 3. Akin to the last usage is that whereby it serves to give a reason, such as equiv. to seeing that he, inasmuch as he... 4. Acc to a later Greek usage it is put for the interrogative tis in direct questions..." (Thayer, p. 457; 3748)

The house of God is the "*single thing*" which has the *quality* of being the church. The class to which the house of God belongs is that of the church. The church is the temple of the living God, it is His dwelling place. It is also the family of the Living God. Men need to know how to conduct themselves in this great institution. The term "church" was first used by Jesus when he told Peter he would build His church. Jesus chose this term because it basically described people who are called out.

"ekklesia... (fr ekkletos called out or forth ...) prop. a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place; an assembly; ... 1. among the Greeks... an assembly of people convened at the public place of council for the purpose of deliberating... 2. in the Sept. ... the assembly of the Israelites... 3. any gathering or throng of men assembled by chance or tumultuously... 4. in the Christian sense... a. an assembly of Christians gathered for worship.... b. a company of Christians ..." (Thayer, p. 195-196; 1577)

God crafted the gospel to call people from this world of darkness. Those who heed that call are the called out(ekklesia - church).

to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. II Th. 2:14

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. I Pet. 2:9-10

These called out people are now His chosen generation, royal priesthood, holy nation and His own special people. This is what the term church conveyed to those in that day. They had been called out of the world and now had a great responsibility to behave themselves in exact accord with these

writings.

The church is called “My church” by Jesus, “the church” in Acts, church of God, churches of Christ, church of the living God, and church of the firstborn. All descriptions of who owns it and who is a member of it.

the pillar and ground of the truth.

Not only is the church the house(temple or family) of God, but it is also the pillar and the ground of the truth. These terms both stress support and stability. The term “pillar” being defined:

“*stulos... a pillar, column...*” (Thayer, p. 591; 4769)

“*stulos a column supporting the weight of a building, ...*” (Vine Vol 3 p 184).

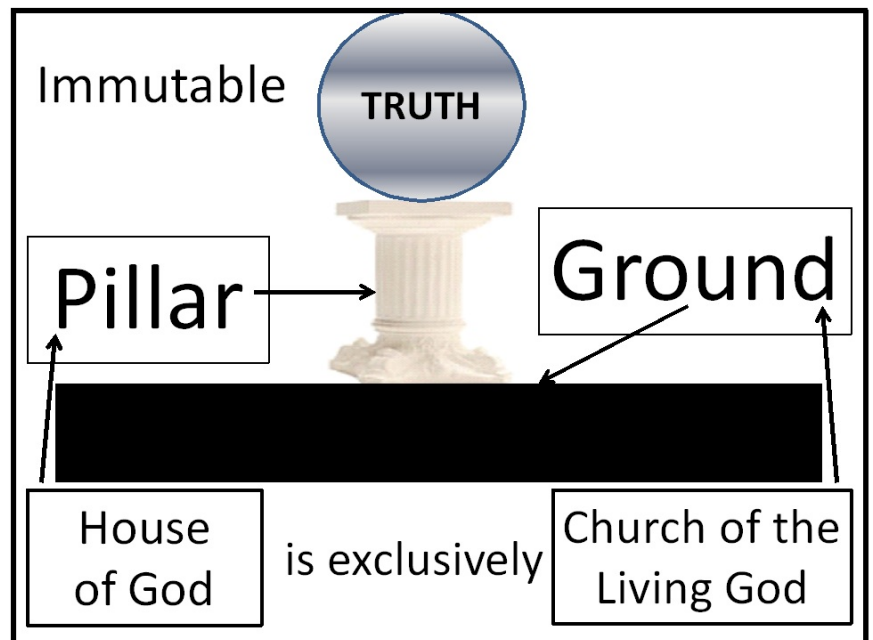
In any great building that spans large distances, there must be some type of pillar or column to support the weight. These are placed wherever they are needed to uphold and strengthen. The term “ground” is defined:

“*hedraïoma... (hedraïoo to make stable, settle firmly), a stay, prop, support...*” (Thayer, p. 168; 1477)

“*hedraios, hedraïoma, hedraios first means in secular Grk. “sitting,” “seated,” “settled,” of men or trades ... “steadfast” or “immovable.” ... “firm and steadfast by nature.” ... That which is steadfast is what endures in every change and contradiction. ...*” (Kittel, TDWNT Vol 2 P. 362-364)

hedraïoma 1477, “a support, bulwark, stay” (from *hedraios*, “steadfast, firm”; from *hedra*, “a seat”), is translated “ground” in 1 Tim. 3:15 Vine’s Vol 2 p. 181)

The “ground” is actually whatever makes something stable or firmly settled. It can be a support or a bulwark, but the end result is that it makes something steadfast, firm, and immovable. This is what God created and planned for the church to do for the truth. God’s Word is truth(Jn 17:17). The true church of Jesus Christ is the pillar and ground of truth. It’s members are steadfast and immovable when it comes to the truth. Men have to know how to behave in the house of God if the church is to be what God designed and planned for it. God wants a people who will not add to or take from(Rev. 22:18-19), who will not change(Gal. 1:6-9), who will not go onward(2Jn. 9) and who will do His will(Mt. 7:21-23) by refusing to listen to the commands of men(Mt. 15:8-9). When the local church is doing all these things then it is the pillar and the ground of the truth and it is in fact the house of God.



The church is the central pillar, and the immovable foundation of the truth. Some people have difficulty in comprehending the idea behind this statement, but actually it is very clear. The Word of God, the sacred Scriptures which were God breathed are the only safe container in which to hold truth.

Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jn. 8:31-32

Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. Jn. 17:17-18

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good

work. 2Tim. 3:16-17

The Word of God is the medium that possesses all truth. But it is the church that upholds these truths to a lost and dying world. The church does not make truth, it is not the author of truth, it is not the material from which truth is made. The church only upholds the truth, the church takes the truth as God has revealed it and makes it stable and firm. Only death will keep dedicated members of the church from upholding and establishing the truth.

16 And without controversy

The term “without controversy” is defined:

“*homologoumenos*... by consent of all, confessedly, without controversy...” (Thayer, p. 446; 3672)

“*homologoumenos*... confessedly, by common consent, akin to *homologeō*, to confess (*homos*, same, *legō*, to speak), is rendered in 1Tim. 3:16 “without controversy;” some translate it “confessedly:” (Vine Vol 1, p. 238)

There is no one who has looked into the way of godliness who has not been willing to confess that it is a great mystery. Some confess this to the glory of God, and others prior to rejecting it as something too difficult to understand. Yet it is much more likely that Paul now refers only to those who are a part of the great pillar and ground of the truth. It is their duty to uphold the great truths of God’s revelation, and without any argument or disagreement all would agree that godliness is a great mystery.

great is the mystery of godliness:

The term “great” is defined:

“*megas*... *great*; ... 1. predicated a. of external form or sensible appearance of things (or persons); in particular, of space and its dimensions-- as respects... bb compass and extent; *large*, *spacious*... gg. measure and height... *long*... b. of number and quantity, *numerous*, *large*... *abundant*... used of intensity and degree... of natural events powerfully affecting the senses, i.q. *violent*, *mighty*, *strong*... 2 predicated of rank, as belonging to a. persons, eminent for ability, virtue, authority, power; ... univ. *eminent*, *distinguished*... *something higher*, *more exalted*, *more majestic*... b. things to be esteemed highly for their importance, *of great moment*, *of great weight*, *important*... 3. *splendid*, *prepared on a grand scale*...” (Thayer, p. 394-395; 3173).

This is an eminent, distinguished, exalted and majestic mystery. It is something of great moment, weight and importance. It has been prepared on a grand scale and is splendid. Paul often uses the term mystery instead of gospel when he wants to emphasize the sublime nature of what God had planned and kept hidden through times eternal until the fulness of the times when he revealed it to His holy apostles and prophets in the spirit. By calling it a mystery, he stresses the intricate and sublime wisdom of what God had planned.

“*musterion*,... In class. Grk. *a hidden thing, secret, mystery*:... in the Scriptures 1. *a hidden or secret thing, not obvious to the understanding*... 2. *a hidden purpose of counsel; secret will*: of men... of God... the secret counsel which governs God in dealing with the righteous, which are hidden from ungodly and wicked men but plain to the godly, ... In the N.T. God’s plan of providing salvation for men through Christ, which was once hidden but now is revealed:...” (Thayer, p. 420; 3466)

The mysteries spoken of in the Bible generally fall under the second part of the definition. They were hidden purposes of counsels and secret will that God has now revealed to man.

*Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, **according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began** 26 but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith — 27 to God, alone wise, be glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen. Rom. 16:25-27*

***how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery** (as I have briefly written already, 4 by which, **when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ**), 5 which **in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed** by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: Eph. 3:3-5*

and to make all see what is **the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ**; 10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph. 3:9-11

of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God, 26 **the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints**. 27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: Col 1:25-27

Yet even after it was revealed, it is still a great mystery. God has revealed what we can understand, but it is evident from the gospel that it is far deeper and more amazing that we can possibly comprehend. Yet Paul is not speaking of every facet of the mystery or every aspect of godliness. He narrows it down to the six points revealed in this verse.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| (1) God(He) was manifested in the flesh | (4) Preached among the Gentiles |
| (2) Justified in the Spirit | (5) Believed on in the world |
| (3) Seen by angels | (6) Received up in glory |

This is the mystery of godliness in the context of this passage. What is this godliness that has been revealed as such a great mystery?

“eusebeia... from eu, well, and seboimai, to be devout, denotes the piety which, characterized by a Godward attitude, does that which is well-pleasing to Him...” (Vine, W. E. Vol 2 p. 162).

“eusebeia... reverence, respect; in the Bible everywhere piety towards God, godliness...” (Thayer, p. 262; 2150)

Godliness is a “*Godward attitude*” which “*does that which is well pleasing to Him,*” and Jesus made it possible. From those who had never given God much thought on the one side to those who wanted to please God but could not be as good as they wanted on the other, everyone has been given a new opportunity through Jesus to be godly.

It was Jesus who, meek and lowly, gives rest for our soul(Mt 11:28-30). Through the mystery of godliness, each of us draws nearer and nearer to God. The Holy Spirit lists the wonderful things God did in order for sinful man to become godly. It is a great marvelous and splendid revelation to man that reveals godliness to him. The revelation of the means whereby God brought about the redemption of mankind in order that they might be godly is “*eminent and distinguished, it is something higher, more exalted, and more majestic than anything we can imagine.* In six short phrases Paul will give the highlights of this great and majestic godliness.

God(KJV NKJV) He who (ASV NASB, NIV) was manifested in the flesh,

There is a textual problem in this first phrase. Some manuscripts have “God” and others have “He.” Aland rates this with a {b} for some doubt. Since God is in some but not in others and the newer translations not using the Textus Receptus have accepted “He,” we will follow that conclusion. But since there is no question that is speaking of Jesus and there is no question that Jesus was God before becoming flesh, it becomes only a problem of textual significance but it has no doctrinal significance since both are taught elsewhere.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. . . . 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:1-3,14

Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Phil. 2:3-8 NASU

The term “manifested” is defined:

“phaneroo,... to make manifest or visible or known what has been hidden or unknown, to manifest, whether by words, or deeds, or in any other way... to make known by teaching... b. with an acc of the person, to expose to view, make manifest, show one ... Pass. to become known, to be plainly recognized, thoroughly understood...” (Thayer, p. 648; 5319)

Throughout the Scriptures it is made clear that Jesus was still God while He sojourned in the flesh. He was manifested and made known in the flesh, but He was still divine. This is one of the greatest facts of the mystery of godliness, one of the most difficult to understand, yet exceeding important to our salvation.

By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, 3 and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the spirit of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world. 1 Jn 4:2-3

It is evident from some of these phrases that this is a direct attack on gnosticism. The gnostic did not believe that He was manifested in the flesh.

justified in the Spirit,

The term “justified” is defined:

“dikaioo... 1. prop to make dikaios; to render righteous or such as he ought to be... 2. to show, exhibit, evince, one to be righteous, such as he is and wishes himself to be considered... 3. tina, to declare, pronounce, one to be just, righteous, or such as he ought to be,... a. with the negative idea predominant, to declare guiltless one accused or who may be accused, acquit of a charge or reproach, ...b. with the positive idea predominant, to judge, declare, pronounce, righteous and therefore acceptable,...” (Thayer, p. 150; 1344)

The root idea behind this justification is that though man had condemned Jesus as a sinner. God proclaimed that He was such as He ought to be. They rejected Him, but God made Him the chief cornerstone.

Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone,” 1 Pet 2:7

After the Jewish high court had condemned Him as a sinner and a blasphemer and put Him to death, God overturned their verdict and pronounced Him righteous.

and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Rom.1:4

whom God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. Acts 2:24

He was justified in the Spirit at the resurrection. God proclaimed that he was not guilty of what the Jews had condemned him for. He was the innocent lamb who died to take away the sins of the world as John the Baptist had said.

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! John 1:29

seen by angels,

This phrase can either refer to all the angelic beings who took part in the life of Jesus Christ from the announcement of His birth to right after His ascension, or it could refer to all the angels who have ever had any part with Him throughout eternity. The former seems the most probable. An angel was sent to Mary, one warned Joseph and Mary to flee to Egypt. Some were with him after his fast and temptation by the devil. One was with him in the garden and at the tomb after the resurrection. Yet Peter spoke of the intense interest the angels had.

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have

been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven — **things which angels desire to look into.** 1Pet. 1:10-12

One can only dimly imagine the angels after His death that led him to Abraham's bosom, and the glorious reception back into heaven and His coronation when He sat down at the right hand of God.

Paul also spoke of these beings and their interest in God's eternal purpose.

to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, 11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph. 3:10-11

preached among the Gentiles,

This was Paul's powerful point in the Third chapter of Ephesians. The mystery that the Gentiles were fellow heirs, etc.

how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), 5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: 6 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, Eph 3:3-6

Jesus had been preached among the Gentiles. This too was a part of the mystery of godliness. Paul also spoke of the amazing way God sought to use the Gentiles to save His people (Rom 11).

The wonder that this gospel would proceed forth from the Jewish nation and be able to be preached in the whole world as it was being done is a marvelous and wonderful thing. Jesus has been preached to all the nations.

believed on in the world,

As Paul pointed out in the first letter to the Corinthians, God had chosen some things that led the Gentiles to say foolishness and the Jew to stumble.

For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. 1 Cor 1:21-25

After Jesus' death who could have predicted that Jesus would be believed on in the world. Yet today it is even more amazing as this gospel has gone into all nations and had such a great impact on Western Civilization. Who could have believed as they condemned Jesus to death that He would be believed on all over the world? Who could have believed then that so many today would still call Him Savior and Lord? Yet the wonderful mystery is that they do!

received up in glory.

Again, consider the wonder of what that must have been like. Jesus spoke of God returning his glory to Him.

"And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. Jn. 16:5

Paul states that it became a reality.

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Phil 2:9-11

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working

by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself. Phil 3:20-21

who being the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Heb 1:3

I saw in the night-visions, and, behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Dan 7:13-14

saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might and honor, and glory, and blessing. 13 And every created thing which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, (be) the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever. Rev 5:12-13

Before leaving this section we need to consider why is this here? Why did the Holy Spirit select these six and overlook the many others that made the mystery of godliness great? There is no mention of His suffering that brought remission and reconciliation. No mention of the points Paul made when he spoke of the gospel he preached.

Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, 2 by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you — unless you believed in vain. 3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that He was seen... 1Cor. 15:1-5

The only answer is that these are the things Timothy needed in his battle at Ephesus. The false doctrines threatening the church could be countered with them.