

# ABOVE REPROACH

Sunday, April 7, 2018 -- Titus series -- Msg 9 -- Pastor Andrew Coleman

**Titus 1:4-9**

English Standard Version (ESV)

*5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— 6 if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.*

## REVIEW:

1. The Apostle Paul and Titus served the Lord together for many years proclaiming the Gospel and establishing local churches everywhere they went.
2. They constantly had to deal with false teachers, false doctrines, ungodly/worldly behavior and left-over bondage to the Mosaic law (Judaism).
3. Paul's first concern for Titus is establishing godly leadership in the churches of Crete.

## Some MODERN MISCONCEPTIONS of Pastors:

1. Pastors are not to be dictators that coerce subjects.
2. Pastors are not to be elected officials that represent their constituents.
3. Pastors are not to be judges that arbitrate disputes.
4. Pastors are not to be executives that lead a corporation.
5. Pastors are not to be entrepreneurs innovate and create a business.
6. Pastors are not to be managers that run an organization.
7. Pastors are not to be promoters/marketers that push a product.
8. Pastors are not to be entertainers that simply 'wow' or move a crowd.

## Some BIBLICAL IMAGERY seen in the NT for Pastors: 2 Timothy 2:1-24

1. Pastors are to be faithful men who carry on the ministry. (vs 2)
2. Pastors are to be teachers who carefully teach God's truth. (vs 2)
3. Pastors are to be soldiers who are on active duty. (vs 3-4)
4. Pastors are to be athletes who compete to win by the rules. (vs 5)
5. Pastors are to be hard-working farmers cultivating for a harvest. (vs 6)
6. Pastors are to be careful workmen skilled in their labor. (vs 15)
7. Pastors are to be honorable vessels carrying on honorable work. (vs 21)
8. Pastors are to be the Lord's SLAVES (doulos) patiently enduring evil. (vs 24)

## Perhaps most prevalent in the NT is the image of SHEPHERD (or PASTOR).

Beginning with Jesus himself -- John 21:15-17; John 10:11,14; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4

**6** *if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. 7 For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach.*

## WHO is qualified to be an Elder/Pastor/Overseer in the Body of Christ?

This is an enormously important issue to God and His people.

There are two overlapping lists in the NT that outline the qualifications for what kind of man can be an Elder/Pastor/Overseer in the church: Titus 1:1:5-9 and 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

## PASTORAL QUALIFICATION #1 -- 'Above reproach'

*Anenkletos* -- 'blameless', 'cannot be accused', 'not called into question'

### Observations:

- 1) It is repeated (beginning of vs 6, end of vs 7).
  - 2) It is also at the top of the Timothy list.
  - 3) It does not mean 'sinless perfection.'
  - 4) It does mean a man who has a clear reputation spiritually and morally.
- Key Test: *When people hear his name, what comes to their minds?*

The highest, over-arching qualification is that he be spiritually and morally pure.

His life must be worthy of imitation!

1 Thess. 2:7-12; 5:12; 2 Thess. 3:9

### Philippians 3:17

*"Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us."*

### 1 Peter 5:1-3

*1 So I exhort the **elders** among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: 2 **shepherd** the flock of God that is among you, exercising **oversight**, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; 3 not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.*

### 2 Timothy 2:19-21

*19 But God's firm foundation stands, bearing this seal: "The Lord knows those who are his," and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from iniquity." 20 Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for honorable use, some for dishonorable. 21 Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work.*

A Pastor's TALK (doctrine) must be right. AND his WALK must match his TALK.

The same is true for ALL BELIEVERS!

Are your BELIEFS clear and true to God's Word? How about your BEHAVIOR?