**God’s Design for the Church**

**Essential Qualities of Elders (1 Timothy 3:1-7) and (Titus 1:5-9)**

**Recap:**

* **Finish Chapter 1**
* **The Priority of Prayer (1 Timothy 2:1-8)**
* **God’s High Call for Women (1 Timothy 2:9-15)**
	+ **God Told us in Genesis that the roles would be different.**
	+ **Active Partnership with faithful women was essential to the church; Women were actively involved and serving in all kinds of different ways.**
	+ **Paul using the order established by creation.**
	+ **The expectation was for the men to be Shepherds-caregiving leaders.**
	+ **Overreaching Message reminding churches of God’s Divine Order and Message of respect and dignity for each one of us as members of the family of God at VCC.**
* **1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9**
* **Today has we look at the Essential Qualities of Elders, I want to remind the church, these are not just qualities for Leaders of the Church to strive, but these are qualities for each member of the body of Christ to strive for as well.**
1. **Elders must Desire and Pursue Service (1 Tim 3:1)**
	1. **He aspires to the role of being an elder, bishop, overseer, pastor, shepherd.**
	2. **This does not exclude the possibility that he is sought out and urged to be an elder.**
	3. **But no pressure should be used that would result in an unwilling, half-hearted service.**
2. **Elders must be Above Reproach (1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6-7)**
	1. **“Above Reproach” literally means “nothing to take hold upon.” It is not referring to being sinless, for nobody is sinless. It means there are no legitimate concerns about this man’s life that anyone can hold up and criticize.**
	2. **He lives in a way that gives no cause for others to think badly of the church or the faith or the Lord.**
3. **Elders must be Faithful to their Wives (1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:6)**
	1. **There have been many interpretations of this throughout the centuries. Some think it means elders must be married; however, this would disqualify Paul, Timothy and Jesus. Others believe this forbids the practice of polygamy. Others think it disqualifies a divorced and/or remarried man.**
	2. **However, most likely, it has nothing to do with one’s marital status at all. It literally can be translated “a one-woman man.” It means if he is married, he is faithful to his wife. If he is single, he does not lust over women.**
4. **Elders must be Temperate (1 Timothy 3:2-3 and Titus 1:7-8)**
	1. **He is alert, watchful, vigilant and clearheaded.**
	2. **He exercises self-control and mastery of his appetites.**
	3. **Excess in any area can affect our spiritual discernment. We must be wise and careful about eating and drinking, our sleep, our entertainment, our exercise and our relationships. We must be clearheaded to discern God’s will for our lives and others.**
	4. **He is not quick to argue, or hostile and aggressive. His tempter is under control.**
	5. **He is not giving in to quarreling or fighting. He shows a desire to end disagreements or willingness to make a person less angry. His feelings are not worn on his sleeve. He does not carry resentment. He is not hypercritical.**
	6. **He is not harsh or mean spirited. He is inclined to tenderness. He resorts to toughness only when the circumstances commend this form of love. His word is not acid or divisive but helpful and encouraging**
	7. **He is peaceable. He is lowly in his demeanor, not speaking much of himself or his achievements. He counts others better than himself and is quick to serve. He sincerely gives God the credit and honor for any accomplishments.**
	8. **Temperate believers are serious about their faith. They are spiritually mature.**
5. **Elders must be Respectable (1 Timothy 3:2)**
	1. **He is honorable and dignified.**
	2. **He conducts himself in situations so as not to step on toes unnecessarily. He is socially acceptable in conduct and speech.**
	3. **“Respectable” can also be translated “orderly” It is the opposite of chaotic. A spiritual leader must have an orderly, well-disciplined life.**
	4. **God is a God of Order not chaos**
6. **Elders must be Hospitable (1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:8)**
	1. **He loves strangers. He is given to being kind to newcomers. He makes them feel at home.**
	2. **His home is open for ministry. He does not shrink back from having guests.**
	3. **He is not a secretive person.**
	4. **Romans 12:13**
7. **Elders must be able to Teach (1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:9)**
	1. **He must have sound doctrine, be able to encourage others with it, and refute those who teach wrong doctrine.**
	2. **All Elders must be apt to teach but only some specialize in preaching and teaching.**
	3. **Others specialize in ruling-overseeing the church and caring for the flock.**
	4. **Often the teaching elders quote are called Pastors, while others are only called elders. However, Scripture does not distinguish-elders are pastors.**
8. **Elders must not be a lover of Money (1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:7)**
	1. **He puts the kingdom first in all he does. His lifestyle does not reflect a love of luxury.**
	2. **He is a generous giver. He is not anxious about his financial future.**
	3. **He is not so money-oriented that money decisions revolve around the issue.**
9. **Elders must Manage their Households Well. (1 Timothy 3:4-5 and Titus 1:6-7)**
	1. **He is a leader of a well-ordered household.**
	2. **If he has children, they are submissive (not perfect, but well-disciplined so that they do not blatantly and regularly disregard the instructions of their parents). His children look up to him.**
	3. **He is a loving and responsible spiritual leader in the home. He respects and tenderly loves his wife, if he is married. Their relationship is openly admirable.**
10. **Elders must be Mature (1 Timothy 3:6)**
	1. **He is a mature believer.**
	2. **There is evidence in his life that humility is a fixed virtue and not easily overturned.**
11. **Elders must have a Good Reputation among Outsiders.**
	1. **He meets the standards of the world for decency and respectability (as the standards of the church are higher)**
	2. **Leaders falling into the snare of Satan opens the door for the world to mock Christ and the Church.**
12. **Elders must be a lover of good (Titus 1:8)**
	1. **He loves to be involved in doing good.**
	2. **More than merely doing good, he has a bent and loves to see goodness done.**
13. **Elders must be Upright (Titus 1:8)**
	1. **He cares about whether people are treated fairly.**
	2. **He wants to see justice in the world at all levels**
14. **Elders must be Holy (Titus 1:8)**
	1. **He is a person of devotion to Christ with a life of prayer and meditation.**
	2. **He loves worship and has a deep personal relationship with the Lord.**

**Conclusion:**

* **As we consider the qualities of elders, we should be challenged to:**
1. **Cultivate our Character.**
2. **Pray for them**
3. **Pursue Ministry**