



Verse 22

In the pastoral epistles, the 'laying on of hands' refers to that very unique time and place when hands were laid upon a man to set him apart for the **ministry**. (Acts 6:3-6; 13:3)

If you **hurry** a man into ordination and he is unsuited and he has sinned, you **share** in the guilt of that sin.

1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9

All of these characteristics are, in other places in the Bible, **expected** of all Christians – all of them - except the ability to teach.

The first and overarching qualifications in both 1 Timothy and Titus are standards to which all the others refer and **define**: "above reproach" and "blameless."

- The meaning of both comes down to being **unchargeable**, without accusation. The elder is one who has no defect in his life that calls his **godliness** into question.
- This is not someone who is **sinless**, but someone to whom no one can point to any public or gross sin in his life. He must have a good **reputation**.

The elder is a man whose life is a **model** for spiritual conduct – that's what shepherding, pastoring, overseeing is. The congregation doesn't just listen, they **follow**. (Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess. 3:9; Heb. 13:7; 1 Pet. 5:1-3)

As the only real skill in the qualifications, it is important to understand 1 Timothy 3:2 and Titus 1:9 together.

- First is stressed his firm **hold** on the truth. This refers to his subjective relationship to the truth. Is this person solid and unshakable in his grasp of the truth?
- Second is stressed the nature of the Word he holds. This means a good grasp of **Biblical** truth. The Bible, not other books or sources, must be the foundation of doctrinal knowledge.
- Third is stressed the positive role of teaching this healthy doctrine to others. Does he not only know, but can he **explain**, Biblical doctrine?

- Finally is stressed the negative role of **refuting** doctrinal error. Is he able to spot the encroachment of secular principles and assumption and is he able to correct opponents and straying saints?

Verses 24-25 Selection Principles

- Some men will be **obviously** unfit to be elders (v.24)
- Some under the assessment process will be **found** to be unfit. (v.24)
- Some men are obviously **fit** to be elders. (v.25)
- Some under the assessment process will be **found** to be fit. (v.25)

It is vital to be involved in the selecting process with great caution, clear qualifications, and finally with great **prayer**.

As we look at the truth that the selection of our elders matters, the starting point is asking "Who would I follow?" but also "**Why?**"

- Knowing what God has laid down as qualifications, are you thinking of them because you see these **qualifications** in their lives or believe that they may be there?

If the qualifications are there, the last question is how do we know they – the individuals – are **right?**

- Acts 20:28
- It is the **Holy Spirit** who appoints pastors, who chooses and provides elders.

The only way for you to know who God is providing as elders here at Fairway is to be **in line** with the Spirit.

Selection matters. But not by itself. It is impossible until church matters – until membership matters – until leadership matters – until authority matters...not just because they do, but because they matter in and to **you**.