
**The Biblical Maturity Traits Required of Potential Pastors
(& Expectations for All Men Who Follow Christ)**

¹ This [is] a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; ³ not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; ⁴ 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?); ⁶ not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the [same] condemnation as the devil. ⁷ Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

These are God's requirements for overseers (pastors, elders). They are also presented in such a way that indicates that these are *expected* behaviors for ALL men. These traits give evidence of *active spiritual maturity* (though not spiritual perfection). These 14 traits are what God wants us as men to be, and what God wants us to raise our boys to be. **God desires & expects men to become:**

1. **Morally Pure** ("one woman man")
 - a. Proper conduct with the opposite gender *anytime* (1 Tim 5:2)
 - b. Built upon a proper view of marriage as designed by God (Gen 2)
 - c. A commitment to covenant marriage for LIFE. (Mal 2:14)
 - d. Personal purity (1 Cor 6:18; Eph 5:3; Col 3:5; 1 Thes 4:3)
 - i. Before marriage
 - ii. During marriage ("do not commit adultery")
 - iii. Purity of mind as well as actions
2. **Mentally Alert** ("temperate" or "sober")
 - a. Aware of the times
 - b. In control of one's mind (Eph 2:3; 4:17; 2 Tim 1:7; 1 Pet 1:13)
 - c. Not clouded by "prattle" (Phil 3:19; Col 3:2)
 - d. Filled with truth (Ps 1:1-3; Rom 12:2)
3. **Wisely Thoughtful** ("sober-minded" or "sensible")
 - a. "Wise-minded"
 - b. OT = Discernment – thinking things through before deciding
4. **Properly Disciplined** ("of good behavior")
 - a. *kosmios* – "orderly" – in accordance with order
 - b. Effectively organized and structured life
 - c. Appropriate planning, organizing, operating
5. **Kindly Mannered** ("hospitable" or "stranger-lover")
 - a. Kind toward others (Eph 4:32), including those you do not know
 - b. Caring beyond oneself (Phil 2:1-4; 1 Pet 4:9)
 - c. Not self-absorbed – seeing the presence & needs of others

6. **Actively Teaching** ("apt to teach")
 - a. Informal teaching is expected of everyone. (Col 3:16; Heb 5:12-6:2)
 - b. Fathers are commanded to teach their children (Eph 6:4; Deut 6)
7. **Self-Controlled** ("not given to wine")
 - a. Rejecting anything that gives up control (drugs, alcohol, addictive past times, etc.)
 - b. Restricting influences (Eph 5:18)
 - c. Saying "no" and "yes" (Titus 2:12; 1 John 2:15-17)
8. **Gently Worded** ("not violent" or "not a striker" but "gentle")
 - a. We are to be known by our gentleness, not our harshness.
 - b. Both physical (blows) and figurative (words) could be involved.
9. **Calmly Responsive** ("not quarrelsome")
 - a. "not a fighter" – Doesn't make everything a fight.
 - b. Right responses produce results (Prov 15:1)
 - c. Fight when necessary, but pick your fights. Not everything requires battle. Fighting is a last resort, not our first response.
10. **Financially Sound** ("not covetous")
 - a. Money management is an essential skill to LIFE.
 - b. Greed / covetousness leads to debt and financially slavery, as well as spiritual fruitlessness (Heb 13:5; Luke 8:14)
 - c. Includes learning to give as God commands, placing God first in finances (Prov 3:9-10), and giving to others in need (1 John 3:16ff).
 - d. Involves the practice of contentment (1 Tim 6:6-10)
11. **Domestically Responsible** ("one who rules his own house well")
 - a. From the Garden of Eden onward, God has assigned men to lead their homes (Gen 2:15-17; 18:17-19; Josh 24:15).
12. **Parentally Engaged** ("having children in submission...")
 - a. Fathers are to be actively teaching their children (see #6) and setting the example. (Phil 3:17; 2 Thes 3:9; 1 Tim 4:12)
 - b. Parenting involves active instruction and correction. (Eph 6:4)
 - c. Parenting is preparing children for godly adulthood. (Ps 78:1-8)
 - d. Parenting is training our children to be ... parents!
13. **Humbly Realistic** ("puffed up with pride")
 - a. Having a proper view of self. (Creature vs. Creator – Rom 1:20-25)
 - b. Understanding holiness, sin, and our ongoing need of God!
 - c. Understanding the danger of pride. (James 4:6; 1 John 2:16)
14. **Outwardly Righteous** ("a good testimony...")
 - a. The need for a good testimony.
 - b. Salt, light, good works (Matt 5:13)