

Elder Qualifications, Responsibilities, and Characteristics

To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.
1 Peter 5:1–3

The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless – not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to much wine, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. Titus 1:5–9

The role of an Elder is to shepherd and attend to the spiritual needs of the flock including oversight of the entire ministry of Grace Chapel.

Elder Qualifications from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:

- **Above reproach** – Blameless, good report, no grounds for accusing him of improper behavior.
- **Husband of one wife** – Not a bigamist, a 'one-wife' man, loyal to her.
- **Temperate** – Self-controlled, not in bondage to the desires of the flesh.
- **Prudent** – Sensible, wise, balanced in judgment. Not given to quick and superficial decisions.
- **Respectable** – Orderly life, demonstrates good behavior.
- **Hospitable** – Willing to share his blessings with others. Home and personal life characterized by hospitality.
- **Able to teach** – Communicate God's truth in a helpful and non-argumentative way.
- **Not given to wine** – Not 'addicted' to alcohol.
- **Not pugnacious, but gentle** – Not given to physical violence, but rather a spirit of forbearance and tenderness.
- **Uncontentious** – Not given to quarreling and selfish arguing.
- **Free from love of money** – Not greedy or stingy with material blessings.
- **Manages own household well** – Has the respect of his family and recognized as the leader of his household with believing children under his control.
- **Not a new convert** – Not a babe in Christ, a mature believer who demonstrates a growing depth of spirituality.
- **Good reputation with those outside the church** – Unbelievers must also respect his character and integrity.

Elder Qualifications, Responsibilities, and Characteristics

- **Not self-willed** – Not stubborn or tries to get his own way, forcing own ideas and opinions on others.
- **Not quick-tempered** – Not one to get angry quickly but is in control of his own spirit.
- **Lover of what is good** – Not following after things evil or sinful. Desires to do the will of God.
- **Just** – Fair and impartial. Able to make objective judgments based on principle.
- **Devout** – Separated from sin, holy.
- **Holds fast the Word** – Be stable in his faith and walk in obedience to the Word. Not hypocritical, teaching one thing and living another.

Elder Board Responsibilities

- The Elder Board is responsible for the spiritual growth and health of the family at Grace Chapel.
- The Elder Board focuses upon the intended long-term impacts outside the organization, not on the administrative or programmatic means of attaining those effects. The Elder Board directs, controls, and inspires the organization through the careful establishment of the policy manual, reflecting the Elder Board's values, and perspectives.
- The Elders are responsible for governing the church consistently with the Elder Board Policy Manual.
- The Elder Board is responsible for leading the church by shepherding, overseeing, instruction, praying, and admonishing the body.
- The Elder Board will govern with an emphasis on servant leadership, overall vision, openness to express divergent viewpoints, clear distinction between Elder Board's and Senior Pastor's roles, collective decisions, and being future-focused and proactive.
- The Elder Board shall oversee spiritual discipline with regards to the pastoral staff.

Elder Personal Characteristics

- They are to rule in the spiritual and physical affairs of the congregation. (1 Timothy 3:4–5; 5:17)
- Some are to preach and teach the Word of God. (1 Timothy 5:17; Ephesians 4:11)
- They are to equip the saints for personal ministries. (Ephesians 4:11–12)
- They are to care for the needs of the congregation as a shepherd cares for his flock. (1 Peter 5:1–5)
- They are to counsel and discipline persons in the congregation in accordance with the Word of God. (1 Thessalonians 5:14; 1 Corinthians 5:1–13)
- They are to ensure that all ministerial staff is appointed according to the standards given in the Word of God. (1 Timothy 3:8–13)
- They are to seek to make all decisions according to biblical principles, according to the church's biblical purpose, and by consensus. (Philippians 1:1, 27–28; 1 Corinthians 1:10)
- They are to pray for the sick and anoint with oil if requested. (James 5:13–16)
- They are to guarantee the propriety of all financial activities including periodic audits or review of the financial records. (2 Corinthians 8:20–21)