

Lesson 3 – Titus 1:6
Valley Bible Church Adult Sunday School
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Review

Theme: The characteristics of a mature (ing) believer.

- I. Salutation Showing the Commitments of the Mature Believer (1:1-4)
 - A. The Writer (1:1-3) – Paul was a perfect Hebrew (Phil 3:4-6); a persecutor of the Church (Acts 7:54-8:3); was dramatically converted (Acts 9:1-6; 9:19-22); then wholeheartedly served God.
 1. Committed to God’s mastery – What are some things that you have not (or have difficulty) surrendered to God’s mastery?
 2. Committed to God’s mission – Does your life show that you are committed to making disciples?
 3. Committed to God’s character – What of God’s attributes do you know with knowledge, but not with your heart?
 4. Committed to God’s word – Do you believe the resources (the Spirit and the word) God has given you are sufficient to solve all of life’s issues?
 5. Committed to Biblical ministry – What do you do with the gospel trust?
 - B. The Reader (1:4a) – Titus was Paul’s true son in a common faith. He was a trustworthy, efficient, and valued co-worker.
 - C. The Greeting (1:4b) – Standard Pauline greeting, then getting down to business.
- II. Character of the Mature Believer (1:5-9)
 - A. Duties of Titus in Crete – Titus was left behind at Crete for the purpose of setting in order what remained to be accomplished. That included appointing elders (the most mature among us). Elders are men (1Tim 2:12-14) who aspire to the office of overseer (1 Tim 3:1) and are set apart and qualified by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28) for prayer and the ministry of the word (Acts 6:4). They must be qualified (1Tim 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9). They are the caretakers of the church (1 Tim 3:5). They rule and exercise oversight (1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Pet 5:2). They shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28) to: feed (1 Tim 3:2); lead (Heb 13:7; 1 Pet 5:2); protect and watch over (Heb 13:17); care for (1 Thess 2:7); and equip (Eph 4:11-12). They preach and teach the word (1 Tim 5:17). The body is responsible to: appreciate and esteem them very highly (1 Thess 5:12-13); obey and submit to them (Heb 13:17); and be subject to them (1 Pet 5:5).

Introduction

Elders are the most mature within the body of Christ. They are exemplified by the character detailed here in Titus 1 and in 1 Tim 3. **Let’s also look at Heb 5:14...**

This passage in Titus 1:6 begins to describe the qualifications of elders.

⁵For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, ⁶**namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.** ⁷For the overseer must be above reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, ⁸but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, ⁹holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. Tit 1:5-9

Today we will look at verse 6 and study about the elder’s public reputation, sexual purity, and family life remembering that these qualities apply to ourselves as those that desire to glorify God by progressing in sanctification.

NASB	ESV	NIV	Amplified
⁶ namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.	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.	⁶ An elder must be blameless, faithful to his wife, a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient.	⁶ [These elders should be] men who are of unquestionable integrity and are irreproachable, the husband of [but] one wife, whose children are [well trained and are] believers, not open to the accusation of being loose in morals and conduct or unruly and disorderly.

Paul gives the over-riding principle in his description of the character of elders (mature believers).

Public Reputation

⁶namely, if any man is **above reproach**... (1:6a)

NASB / ESV – above reproach

NIV – blameless

AMP – of unquestionable integrity and are irreproachable

Above reproach [anengkletos] not accused or called; signifies that which cannot be called to account, absence of even a charge or accusation against a person.

Above reproach: cannot find fault with; cannot blame; cannot rebuke

Blameless: not deserving to be blamed; having done no wrong; innocent

To live in such a way that no charge of guilt can be proved against one. Not free from accusation, but accusations that can be rightly proven (cf. 1 Tim 5:19-20).

Old Testament examples of blameless:

Job 1:1 ...was blameless, upright, fearing God, and turning away from evil

Gen 6:9 ...Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God.

Q: How do we learn what is pleasing to the Lord? (Eph 5:1-10)

¹How blessed are those whose way is blameless, Who walk in the law of the LORD. Psa 119:1

Our Application: Mature believers are above reproach (blameless). They must not give people a reason to criticize them – they have a good public reputation. They are free from even the appearance of evil and no charge of evil could be brought against them let alone sustained. They strive to be upright, have a proper God centered focus, and turn away from evil (Job 1:1). They strive to “walk” in the law of the Lord (Psa 119:1).

The qualities that follow then describe blameless: related to sexual purity, family, stewardship, negative character qualities, positive character qualities, and devotion to the word.

Sexual Purity

What is the result of our calling (salvation)? Are we meant to be saved and then live like the world? Clearly not. The Scriptures declare that our calling is toward holiness and purity.

⁹who has saved us and **called us with a holy calling**, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, 1 Tim 1:9

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹²instructing us to **deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly** in the present age, ¹³looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, ¹⁴who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to **purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.** Titus 2:11-14

Paul now looks to the character quality of sexual purity.

..., the husband of one wife,... (1:6b)

NASB / ESV / AMP – husband of one wife

NIV – faithful to his wife

The Greek literally reads “a one-woman man” or “one-woman husband”. Before we look at what this does mean, we will look at what it does not mean.

1. Polygamy since 1 Cor 7:2 applies to all believers not just elders.

²But because of immoralities, each man is to have his own wife, and each woman is to have her own husband. 1 Cor 7:2

2. A widower who has remarried, since there is no character or lack of character associated with being a widower and remarrying after the death of a spouse is encouraged.

²For the married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the law concerning the husband. Romans 7:2

³⁹A wife is bound as long as her husband lives; but if her husband is dead, she is free to be married to whom she wishes, only in the Lord. 1 Corinthians 7:39

3. An elder must be married. Nowhere is it stated that an elder must be married or have children. Scripture only provides qualifications if a man is married or has children.

⁵Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? 1 Cor 9:5

¹Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, 1 Pet 5:1-4

4. Not to divorce explicitly or Paul simply would have stated that. However, an unbiblical divorce is probably included in the thought of a one-woman man (Mal 2:16; Matt 5:32; 1 Cor 7:15).

¹⁶For I hate divorce,” says the LORD, the God of Israel, “and him who covers his garment with wrong,” says the LORD of hosts. “So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously.” Mal 2:16

³²but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for *the* reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery. Matt 5:32

¹⁵Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such cases, but God has called us to peace. 1 Cor 7:15

A one-spouse spouse is devoted to and faithful to the one person God has given as their mate. It implies inner as well as outward sexual purity.

Paul is not referring to a leader's marital status, as the absence of the definite article in the original indicates. Rather, the issue is his moral, sexual behavior. ... A one-woman man is a man devoted in his heart and mind to the woman who is his wife. He loves, desires, and thinks only of her. He maintains sexual purity in both his thought life and his conduct. MacArthur's NT Commentary: 1 Timothy

Being the husband of one wife refers to the singularity of a man's faithfulness to the woman who is his wife and implies inner as well as outward sexual purity. MacArthur's NT Commentary: Titus

Q: What is God's will for us concerning sex?

³For **this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality;**
⁴that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, ⁵not in lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; ⁶and that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter because the Lord is *the* avenger in all these things, just as we also told you before and solemnly warned you. ⁷**For God has not called us for the purpose of impurity, but in sanctification.** ⁸**So, he who rejects this is not rejecting man but the God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.** 1 Thess 4:3-8

The only kind of sexual activity that is acceptable to God is sex between a man and a woman who are married to each other. Everything else is sin.

Q: What does God think of sex outside of marriage?

⁴Marriage *is to be held* in honor among all, and the *marriage* bed *is to be* undefiled; for **fornicators and adulterers God will judge.** Heb 13:4

⁹Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; **neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,** ¹⁰nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, **will inherit the kingdom of God.** 1 Cor 6:9-10

¹⁹Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: **immorality, impurity, sensuality,** ²⁰idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, ²¹envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which **I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.** Gal 5:19-21

¹²The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the **deeds of darkness** and put on the armor of light. ¹³**Let us behave properly as in the day,** not in carousing and drunkenness, **not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality,** not in strife and jealousy. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to *its* lusts. Rom 13:12-14

Those that walk in sexual sin show that regeneration has not taken place; they do not belong to God.

Q: What is the cost of sexual sin?

²Many will follow their sensuality, and because of them **the way of the truth will be maligned;** 2 Pet 2:2

Sexual sin, like all sin for the believer, brings disgrace upon the name of God. Sexual sin has the added consequences of destroying marriages, families, ministries, churches, etc.

Q: How do you define marital unfaithfulness?

²⁸but I say to you **that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.** Matt 5:28

Marital unfaithfulness does not just include the physical act of adultery, but also mental and emotional adultery.

Q: Does adultery just happen out of the blue?

NO! The physical act of adultery is the culmination of previous sins that have not been repented of and forsaken. Sexual sins must be avoided at all costs. Here are some practical strategies.

Strategies for Sexual Purity:

1. Stay filled with the Spirit (Rom 12:1-2; Gal 5:22-25)

¹Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, **to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice**, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. Rom 12:1-2

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴**Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.** ²⁵**If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.** Gal 5:22-25

2. Focus on Jesus Christ (Col 3:1-2)

¹Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, **keep seeking the things above**, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ²**Set your mind on the things above**, not on the things that are on earth. Col 3:1-2

3. Keep alert/busy (1 Pet 5:8)

⁸Be of sober *spirit*, **be on the alert**. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. 1 Pet 5:8

4. Be serious (Eph 5:3)

³But **immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you**, as is proper among saints; Eph 5:3

5. Be careful of your friends (1 Cor 15:33)

³³Do not be deceived: **“Bad company corrupts good morals.”** 1 Cor 15:33

6. Don't put yourself in a place to sin (Rom 13:14)

¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and **make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts**. Rom 13:14

7. Guard your mind (2 Cor 10:3-5)

³For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, ⁴for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. ⁵**We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,** 2 Cor 10:3-5

8. Guard your eyes (Job 31:1 ... I have made a covenant with my eyes ...)

¹**“I have made a covenant with my eyes; How then could I gaze at a virgin?”** Job 31:1

9. Guard your lips (Eph 4:29)

²⁹**Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth**, but only such *a word* as is good for edification according to the need *of the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Eph 4:29

10. Guard your ears (Prov 5:3-4)

³For the lips of an adulteress drip honey And smoother than oil is her speech; ⁴But in the end she is bitter as wormwood, Sharp as a two-edged sword. Prov 5:3-4

¹⁰As she spoke to Joseph day after day, he did not listen to her to lie beside her *or* be with her. Gen 39:10

11. Run! (Gen 39:12; 2 Tim 2:22)

¹²She caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me!” **And he left his garment in her hand and fled**, and went outside. Gen 39:12

²²Now **flee from youthful lusts** and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. 2 Tim 2:22

Evaluation Questions for Sexual Purity:

- Do I spend any time alone with someone of the opposite sex that is not my spouse?
- Do I look forward to time with someone of the opposite sex that is not my spouse?
- Do I try to justify time alone with someone of the opposite sex that is not my spouse?
- Do I confide in someone of the opposite sex that is not my spouse?
- Do I have emotional bonds with someone of the opposite sex that is not my spouse?
- Do I joke and flirt with someone of the opposite sex that is not my spouse?
- Do I ever touch or am I ever touched by someone of the opposite sex that is not my spouse?

Our Application: Mature believers strive to be outwardly and inwardly sexually pure. They are devoted to God and His glory and are therefore devoted to their spouse physically, emotionally, and mentally. They are a one-spouse spouse.

Family

The next qualification for elder (description of mature believers) deal with their family life. First let's look at what the specific qualification means then how we can apply it to our lives.

... , having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. (1:6c)

NAS – having children who believe not accused of dissipation or rebellion

ESV – children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination

NIV – whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient

AMP – children are [well-trained and are] believers, not open to the accusation of being loose in morals and conduct or unruly and disorderly

Q: Who are the “children”?

Children [teknon]: offspring of any age

Dissipation [asotia]: wastefulness, to indulge in extravagant pursuit of pleasure, commonly used of drunkenness and pagan festivals (Eph 5:18 NIV debauchery) (Luke 15:13 – Prodigal Son)

Rebellion [anupotaktos]: not subject to rule, insubordinate, unsubjected.

Dissipation and rebellion refers to a person who is living a riotous and immoral life, characteristics that could only be true of older offspring. Measure of a Man by Gene Getz

Conclusion: Talking about older children. Not toddlers and probably not grade school. Old enough to be living a blatantly immoral life.

Q: What does it mean to “believe”?

Believe: Passively translated faithful (He was faithful.); actively translated believe (He believes). Said of God, of Christ, of the words of God, of servants of the Lord, and of believers.

VBC Position paper – The Greek word for faithful is '*PISTOS*.' This word is most frequently translated 'faithful.' It appears to parallel the qualification in 1 Timothy 3:4 which requires that an elder manage his household well keeping his children under control with all dignity. The children of an elder therefore must be faithful to the leadership and authority of their father. This would be manifested by children who are not being accused of dissipation or rebellion. A parallel qualification in 1 Timothy 3:4 supports this referring to children living at home. Older children living away from and independent from their parents are not likely in view in this passage.

Specific meaning to elders: 1) must raise children in such a way that they are faithful to the leadership and authority of their father; or 2) must raise their children in such a way that they are lead to the Lord and live a life consistent with their profession.

Q: What is the one thing that will turn people off from God more than anything else?

Hypocrite: A person who professes Jesus with their lips but their life does not show it. A person who claims to be a child of God but lives like the world. A person who says that people should live a certain way but live oppositely themselves.

Our Application: A mature believer lives a life that is consistent with their profession and is able to do their part in bringing others (including their children) to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Maturing believers strive to work out righteousness in their familial relationships.

Husband

- Husbands are to lead through sacrificial service and be the nourisher and protector of his wife (Eph 5:23, 25-29).

²³For **the husband is the head of the wife**, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. Eph 5:23

²⁵**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,** ²⁶**so that He might sanctify her**, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. ²⁸**So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies.** He who loves his own wife loves himself; ²⁹for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church, Eph 5:25-29
- Husbands are to live with their wives in an understanding way and not deal harshly with them (1 Pet 3:7; Col 3:19).

⁷You **husbands in the same way, live with your wives in an understanding way**, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered. 1 Pet 3:7

¹⁹**Husbands, love your wives and do not be embittered against them.** Col 3:19

Wife

- Wives are to be subject (submissive) to and respect their husbands in the same way they are to Christ (Col 3:18; Eph 5:33; 1 Pet 3:1-6).

¹⁸**Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.** Col 3:18

³³Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the **wife must see to it that she respects her husband.** Eph 5:33

¹In the same way, you **wives, be submissive to your own husbands** so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, ²as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. ³Your adornment must not be *merely* external—braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; ⁴but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. ⁵For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; ⁶just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear. 1 Pet 3:1-6

Parent

- Parents are to view their children as a gift from the Lord to be molded and shaped to honor Him (Psa 127:3-5).
 - ³Behold, **children are a gift of the LORD**, The fruit of the womb is a reward. ⁴**Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one's youth.** ⁵How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them; They will not be ashamed When they speak with their enemies in the gate. Psa 127:3-5
 - ⁶These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. ⁷**You shall teach them diligently to your sons** and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. ⁸You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. ⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. Deut 6:6-9
- Parents are to bring consistently loving discipline to their children (Prov 13:24; 22:15; 29:15, 17; Eph 6:4; Col 3:21).
 - ²⁴**He who withholds his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him diligently.** Prov 13:24
 - ¹⁵**Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.** Prov 22:15
 - ¹⁵**The rod and reproof give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.** Prov 29:15
 - ¹⁷**Correct your son, and he will give you comfort; He will also delight your soul.** Prov 29:17
 - ⁴**Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.** Eph 6:4
 - ²¹**Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.** Col 3:21

Child

- Children are to obedient to their parents (Eph 6:1-4; Col 3:20).
 - ¹**Children, obey your parents in the Lord**, for this is right. ²HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), ³SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. Eph 6:1-3
 - ²⁰**Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.** Col 3:20

Summary

Public Reputation (1:6) – Mature believers are above reproach (blameless). They have a good public reputation. They must not give people a reason to criticize them. They are free from even the appearance of evil and no charge of evil could be brought against them let alone sustained. They strive to be upright, have a proper God centered focus, and turn away from evil. They strive to “walk” in the law of the Lord.

Sexual Purity (1:6) – Mature believers strive to be outwardly and inwardly sexually pure. They are devoted to God and His glory and are therefore devoted to their spouse physically, emotionally, and mentally. They are a one-spouse spouse.

Family (1:6) – Mature believers live a life that is consistent with their profession of faith in Jesus and are able to do their part by sharing the gospel in bringing others (including their children) to a saving knowledge of Christ. They strive to work out righteousness in their family relationships.

Homework

1. Read Titus all the way through more than once.
2. List out the positive and negative elder qualifications?