

Lesson 4 – Titus 1:7
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 is committed to 1) God’s mastery, 2) God’s mission, 3) God’s character, 4) God’s word, and 5) biblical ministry.
 - B. The Reader (1:4a)
 - C. The Greeting (1:4b)
- II. Character of the Mature Believer (1:5-9)
 - A. Duties of Titus in Crete – Setting in order; appointing elders; elder’s roles; congregation’s roles.
 - B. Public Reputation (1:6) ^{6a} *namely, if any man be above reproach...*
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.
 - C. Sexual Purity (1:6) ^{6b} *..., the husband of one wife,...*
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.
 - D. Family (1:6) ^{6c} *..., having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion.*
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.

Introduction

Last week we looked at verse 6 which gave us the overarching character quality of elders (mature believers) of being above reproach which deals with the elder’s public reputation. Paul then began to expand on being above reproach starting with sexual purity and family life. Today, we will continue to look at how Paul expands on being above reproach by describing 5 negative character qualities to avoid. Remember that these qualities apply to ourselves as those that desire to glorify God by progressing in sanctification.

NASB	ESV	NIV	Amplified
⁷ For 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,	⁷ For an overseer, as God’s steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain,	⁷ Since an overseer manages God’s household, he must be blameless—not overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.	⁷ For the bishop (an overseer) as God’s steward must be blameless, not self-willed or arrogant or presumptuous; he must not be quick-tempered or given to drink or pugnacious (brawling, violent); he must not be grasping and greedy for filthy lucre (financial gain);

Again Paul states the overarching principle of the qualifications of elders/mature believers – they must be above reproach (blameless). The reason is clear: damage to the church leader’s (believer’s) reputation is damage to God’s reputation.

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

Public Reputation (again)

^{7a}For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward...

ESV – For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach

NIV – Since an overseer manages God's household, he must be blameless

AMP – For the bishop (an overseer) as God's steward must be blameless

Overseer [episkopos] is translated overseer or bishop and emphasizes the work of oversight where elder emphasizes the mature spiritual character of the man.

Steward [oikonomos] means manager of a household or estate and refers to one who manages someone else's properties for the well being of those his master cares for.

Elders are stewards of the church—and they will give an account to God for their leadership (Heb 13:17).

¹⁷Obey your leaders and submit to them, for **they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account.** ... Heb 13:17

In a generic sense we are all stewards: everything (Psalm 24:1), things, relationships, children, spouse, money/resources, spiritual gifts, gospel message, etc. If we are stewards then we are accountable to God and we need to be faithful (1Cor 4:2).

²In this case, moreover, **it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy.** 1 Cor 4:2

Our Application: Maturing believers recognize that everything in their life is God's (salvation, spiritual gifts, money and possessions, relationships, our very life, etc.). They strive to honor God's priorities and to be faithful with all that God has given them.

Negative 1 – Not self-willed

Q: Do you like to get your own way?

ESV – He must not be arrogant

NIV – not overbearing

AMP – not self-willed or arrogant or presumptuous

Not self-willed [authade] is only used twice in NT: Titus 1:7 and 2 Pet 2:10

¹⁰and especially those who indulge the flesh in *its* corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, **self-willed**, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, 2 Pet 2:10

...an unusually strong adjective that denotes an arrogant self-interest that asserts its own will with utter disregard for how others might be affected. Proud self-interest is, in one way or another, the root of all sin, because it not only disregards the interests and welfare of other people but, even more important, disregards God's will and replaces His purpose and glory with man's. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: Titus

A self-willed man wants his own way regardless of others. He is stubborn, arrogant, and inconsiderate of others' opinions, feelings, and desires. A self-willed man is headstrong, independent, self-assertive, and ungracious toward those of different opinion. A self-willed person is not a team player... Biblical Eldership by Alexander Strauch, page 272.

God does not mix words concerning pride, arrogance, and self-will.

¹³The fear of the LORD is to hate evil; **Pride and arrogance and the evil way And the perverted mouth, I hate.** Prov 8:13

⁵Everyone who is **proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD**; Assuredly, he will not be unpunished. Prov 16:5

³For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire, And the greedy man curses *and* spurns the LORD. ⁴The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek *Him*. All his thoughts are, "There is no God." Psa 10:3-4

Selfish ambition is demonic in origin.

¹³Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. ¹⁴**But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth.** ¹⁵**This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.** ¹⁶For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. James 3:13-16

Being self-willed is a distinguishing mark of false prophets.

⁹*then* the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment, ¹⁰and especially those who indulge the flesh in *its* corrupt desires and despise authority. Daring, **self-willed**, they do not tremble when they revile angelic majesties, ¹¹whereas angels who are greater in might and power do not bring a reviling judgment against them before the Lord. 2 Pet 2:9-11

In what ways could we be self-willed?

– In disregard to the Lord.

³For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire, And the greedy man curses *and* spurns the LORD. ⁴**The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek *Him*. All his thoughts are, "There is no God."** Psa 10:3-4

¹³Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." ¹⁴Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. ¹⁵Instead, *you ought* to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." ¹⁶**But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.** James 4:13-16

... **Knowledge makes arrogant, but love edifies.** 1 Cor. 8:1b

– In disregard to the others.

³**Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;** ⁴do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Phil 2:3-4

The maturing believer follows Jesus' example of humility and servanthood.

²⁵... "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and *their* great men exercise authority over them. ²⁶"It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, ²⁷and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; ²⁸just as the **Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve**, and to give His life a ransom for many." Matt 20:25-28

³Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but **with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;** ⁴do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Phil 2:3-4

Our Application: Maturing believers are NOT characterized by being self-willed, arrogant, or selfish. They are striving to be humble and yielded to God and to have a sacrificial love, service, and preferential attitude toward others.

Negative 2 – Not quick-tempered

ESV – He must not be ... quick-tempered

NIV – not quick-tempered

AMP – he must not be quick-tempered

Quick-tempered [orgilos] means being prone to anger, easily angered, and quick-tempered. It does not refer to occasional outbursts, but to a propensity toward anger – someone with a short-fuse and who is easily provoked – someone who consistently and persistently loses his anger. Someone who is prone to anger. “Flies off the handle.” “Loses his cool.” And usually says and does things that hurt and offend others. Suggests a settled or abiding condition of mind, frequently with a view to taking revenge.

God says that a quick-tempered person is a fool, abounds in transgressions, and should be avoided.

¹¹**A fool always loses his temper,** But a wise man holds it back. Prov 29:11

⁹Do not be eager in your heart to be angry, For **anger resides in the bosom of fools.** Eccl 7:9

²²**An angry man stirs up strife, And a hot-tempered man abounds in transgression.** Prov 29:22

²⁴**Do not associate with a man given to anger; Or go with a hot-tempered man,** ²⁵Or you will learn his ways And find a snare for yourself. Prov 22:24-25

God says that a wise and understanding person (maturing believers) is slow to anger.

¹¹**A man’s discretion makes him slow to anger, And it is his glory to overlook a transgression.** Prov 19:11

²⁹**He who is slow to anger has great understanding,** But he who is quick-tempered exalts folly. Prov 14:29

¹⁹*This* you know, my beloved brethren. But everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak *and* slow to anger;

²⁰for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God. James 1:19-20

²⁷He who restrains his words has knowledge, And **he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.** Prov 17:27

Our Application: Maturing believers strive to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. They strive to accept people and focus on who God is making that person instead of who they want that person to be.

Negative 3 – Not addicted to wine

ESV – He must not be ... a drunkard

NIV – not given to drunkenness

AMP – he must not be ... given to drink

Literally means “to be continually alongside, or in the presence of, wine.” Intoxicating or impairing substances are not to be the mature believer’s companion.

Q: Where might one be “alongside” wine?

Q: Is it sin to drink alcohol? How much?

Drinking alcohol falls into one of those gray areas of life – it is not specifically prohibited so we may exercise freedom. Here are some principles (questions) for exercising freedom:

1. Will the conduct glorify God?

³¹Whether, then, you eat or drink or **whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.** 1 Cor 10:31

2. Can I thank God in the conduct?

¹⁶Rejoice always; ¹⁷pray without ceasing; ¹⁸**in everything give thanks;** for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 1 Thess 5:16-18

3. Will the conduct cause a hindrance to the Gospel?

¹²If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but **we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.** 1 Cor 9:12

4. Will this conduct lead me into sin?

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

5. Can I do it with a clear conscience?

²²The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. ²³But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *his eating is* not from faith; and **whatever is not from faith is sin.** Rom. 14:22-23

6. Is the conduct profitable?

²³**All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable.** All things are lawful, but not all things edify.

²⁴Let no one seek his own *good*, but that of his neighbor. 1 Cor 10:23-24

7. Will the conduct master me?

¹²All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. **All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.** 1 Cor 6:12

8. Will the conduct cause my brother or sister to stumble?

²¹**It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles.** Rom 14:21

9. Will the conduct build up or tear down?

¹Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not *just* please ourselves. ²**Each of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to his edification.** Rom 15:1-2

¹⁹So then **we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.** Rom 14:19

10. Is the conduct worth imitating?

¹**Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.** 1 Cor 11:1

11. Does the conduct fit the Phil 4:8 pattern?

⁸Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. Phil 4:8

Summary:

- drinking becomes sin when we become addicted (1 Cor 6:12)
- drinking becomes sin when we cause other believers to stumble (Rom 14:21)
- drinking becomes sin when we hurt our bodies (1 Cor 6:20)
- drinking becomes sin when we cannot do it with a clear conscience (Rom 14:23)
- drinking becomes sin when we harm our Christian testimony (Rom 14:16; 1 Cor 10:31-33)

Our Application: Maturing believers do not make alcohol their companion. They exercise wisdom when deciding to partake of alcohol in moderation.

Negative 4 – Not pugnacious

ESV – He must not be ... violent

NIV – not violent

AMP – he must not be ... pugnacious (brawling, violent)

Q: Have you ever been in a conflict? Were you the person on the receiving end or the giving?

Not pugnacious [pleektees] means a “bruiser”, one who is “ready with a blow”; a contentious, quarrelsome person. Pugnacious literally means 'a striker.' This character quality interestingly follows “not addicted to wine” in both lists (1 Tim 3 and Titus 1). In both cases one loses control and becomes controlled by the wine or anger. This is someone who does not strike out at people either with his fists or with harsh, angry words, but remains calm and gentle even in difficult situations.

Pugnaciousness... is really anger out of control – not just verbally, but physically. The Measure of a Man by Gene Getz, page 153.

By extension, pugnacious can refer to verbal as well as physical fighting and quarreling. It is possible to hurt a person more deeply and permanently with cruel words than with a fist or club. An elder should have no part in meanness, abusiveness, or retaliation, no matter how cruelly provoked. When conflicts arise, he must make sure that they are settled peacefully, reasonably, and without animosity. MacArthur's New Testament Commentary: Titus

Several Proverbs speak to sinful anger and anger out of control.

²⁴**Do not associate with a man given to anger; Or go with a hot-tempered man,** ²⁵Or you will learn his ways And find a snare for yourself. Prov 22:24-25

⁸Mockers stir up a city, but wise men turn away anger. ¹¹**A fool gives full vent to his anger,** but a wise man keeps himself under control. Prov 29:8, 11 (NIV)

The Scriptures call us to respond to people with kindness, patience, and gentleness.

²⁴The **Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome**, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, ²⁵**with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition**, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, 2 Tim 2:24-25

Our Application: Maturing believers do not respond to provocation with harsh words or fists.

Negative 5 – Not fond of sordid gain

ESV – He must not be ... greedy for gain

NIV – not pursuing dishonest gain

AMP – he must not be grasping and greedy for filthy lucre (financial gain)

“Not fond of sordid gain” [aischrokerde] means filthy, shameful, greedy, profit. This is a person who, without honesty or integrity, seeks wealth and financial prosperity at any cost.

Q: Who here is rich?

Q: How does most of the world measure wealth?

Q: What does God promise concerning our provision? (Matt 6:25-34; 1 Tim 6:7)

³¹Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’ ³²For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Matt 6:31-33

⁷For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. 1 Tim 6:7

Q: Why is it important to be free from the love of money?

⁹But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. ¹⁰For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 1 Tim 6:9-10

²⁸**He who trusts in his riches will fall**, But the righteous will flourish like the *green* leaf. Prov 11:28

¹⁶Better is a little with the fear of the LORD Than great treasure and turmoil with it. Prov 15:16

Maturing believers have their priorities straight.

²⁴“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. **You cannot serve God and wealth.** Matt 6:24

Maturing believers understand that they own nothing – they are stewards.

¹**The earth is the LORD’S, and all it contains**, The world, and those who dwell in it. Psa 24:1

Maturing believers are content with what they have.

⁵**Make sure that your character is free from the love of money, being content with what you have**; for He Himself has said, “I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU,” ⁶so that we confidently say, “THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT WILL MAN DO TO ME?” Heb 13:5-6

⁶**But godliness actually is a means of great gain when accompanied by contentment.** ⁷For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either. ⁸If we have food and covering, with these we shall be content. 1 Tim 6:6-8

¹¹Not that I speak from want, for **I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am.** ¹²I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ¹³**I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.** Phil 4:11-13

Maturing believers are generous and ready to share.

¹⁷Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. ¹⁸**Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share,** ¹⁹storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is life indeed. 1 Tim 6:17-19

Maturing believers impact their children by striving for integrity over wealth.

⁶**Better is the poor who walks in his integrity Than he who is crooked though he be rich.** Prov 28:6

⁷**A righteous man who walks in his integrity—How blessed are his sons after him.** Prov 20:7

Our Application: Maturing believers have a proper steward-attitude concerning money.

Summary

Above reproach as God's steward – Maturing believers recognize that everything in their life is God's (salvation, spiritual gifts, money and possessions, relationships, our very life, etc.) They strive to honor God's priorities and to be faithful with all that God has given them.

Not self-willed – Maturing believers are NOT characterized by being self-willed, arrogant, or selfish. They are striving to be humble and yielded to God and to have a sacrificial love, service, and preferential attitude toward others.

Not quick-tempered – Maturing believers strive to be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. They strive to accept people and focus on who God is making that person instead of who they want that person to be.

Not addicted to wine – Maturing believers do not make alcohol their companion. They exercise wisdom when deciding to partake of alcohol in moderation.

Not pugnacious – Maturing believers do not respond to provocation with harsh words or fists.

Not fond of sordid gain – Maturing believers have a proper steward-attitude concerning money.

Homework

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