

The Measure of a Man

#1 “Above Reproach”

Introduction

2 Timothy 3:16 All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

2 Timothy 3:17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

I want to draw your attention to one remarkable phrase in these verses. It is “man of God.” “Man of God” is *not* the title of a minister or a missionary; it refers to any and all believers. Every believer is completely equipped for the work he or she has been called to perform in these Last Days. Your supply is in the Word, energized by the Spirit; it is a fountain that can never run dry.

We are men and want to be men of God. It sounds almost boastful – especially when we factor in our many faults and failings. Still we must not have a false sense of humility. We are supposed to be men of God.

How do we recognize a man of God? What does he look like?

Timothy was left by Paul in Ephesus to establish the church. Titus was left on Crete to do the same. Both of them were charged with the responsibility of recognizing men who could be leaders in their churches. These men had to have certain characteristics, certain qualities. They had to be measured by a certain standard.

Two paragraphs in Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus give you the measure of a man. They are First Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-10.

1 Timothy 3:1 This *is* a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.

1 Timothy 3:2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

1 Timothy 3:3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous;

1 Timothy 3:4 one who rules his own house well, having *his* children in submission with all reverence

1 Timothy 3:5 (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?);

1 Timothy 3:6 not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the *same* condemnation as the devil.

1 Timothy 3:7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Titus 1:5 For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you -

Titus 1:6 if a man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination.

Titus 1:7 For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money,

Titus 1:8 but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled,

Titus 1:9 holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

Titus 1:10 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

When you first read the lists of spiritual qualifications you see that they are for men who desire positions of leadership in the church. That's true; but whether a man desires to serve as a leader or not, these are qualities of maturity **all** men should aspire to. They are the measure of a man, the description of a man of God.

Some men will possess these qualities and desire to be leaders. *All* men should possess these qualities. They are goals for every Christian man.

There are at least twenty measurements. We begin by looking at being "above reproach." Paul listed this quality first in both his letter to Timothy and in the letter he wrote to Titus. It is an overarching characteristic, a summary quality – the result of living-out all of the other qualities mentioned in the two lists.

Being above reproach is *not* perfection. It is an attainable goal we should strive for. The Greek word is sometimes translated *blameless*. It is derived from a word meaning *not arrested*. It means that even though there may be accusations against you, they are unfounded because there is no evidence against you. Gene Getz defines it as having a good reputation.

Having a good reputation is one of the first qualities you encounter regarding spiritual maturity among men in the Bible. In Acts chapter six the church was facing a problem in the serving of widows. The

apostles recommended that “seven men of good reputation” be selected to solve the problem of fair food distribution.

Timothy himself is described in Acts 16:2 as “well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium” He was above reproach; he had a good reputation.

We see three additional things in this verse about Timothy:

1. People were talking positively about Timothy.
2. People who themselves were mature were talking positively about Timothy.
3. People in at least two separate locations were talking about Timothy.

All of us should strive to be above reproach and, therefore, have a good reputation. This entire series is designed to encourage us to *know* and then *grow* in the qualities and characteristics which, when added together, are the measure of a man above reproach.

A compiled list from the two lists in Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus would have at least the following twenty characteristics:

1. Blameless – having a good reputation.
2. Husband of one wife – maintaining moral purity.
3. Temperate – maintaining evenness in words and deeds.
4. Prudent – applying biblical wisdom with humility.
5. Respectable – serving as a good role model.
6. Hospitable – demonstrating unselfishness and generosity.
7. Able to teach – communicating God’s truth without threatening or being defensive.
8. Not given to wine – not addicted to substances.
9. Not self-willed – not self-centered, controlling, manipulative.
10. Not quick-tempered – void of anger that smolders.
11. Not pugnacious – not abusive.
12. Uncontentious – not argumentative or divisive.
13. Gentle – sensitive to others.
14. Free from the love of money – not materialistic.
15. One who manages his own household well – a good husband and father.

16. A good reputation with those outside the church – a good testimony.
17. Love what is good – pursuing godly activities.
18. Just – discerning, fair, not prejudiced or partial.
19. Devout – seeking the Lord personally.
20. Not a new convert – not a new Christian.