

EXCELLENCE IN MINISTRY

Starting Strong—Doing What’s Right in the Work of Ministry

Another Look at the Checklist
1 Timothy 3:3–7



LET’S BEGIN HERE

You can’t escape it: a Christian’s conduct matters . . . greatly. Christ’s reputation is on the line, and nonbelievers are watching. This makes God’s “gamble” seem crazy—that sinful, Spirit-filled people are called to lead His church. Is it any wonder then that He decrees that His leaders be above reproach? Not at all. In lesson 7 we looked at the first two verses of 1 Timothy 3 and seven character qualities every overseer must demonstrate. In this message we’ll explore verses 3–7 and seven more character traits. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul continued to set forth in plain, uncomplicated language the non-adjustable, non-alterable essentials of God’s standard for church leadership.



LET’S DIG DEEPER

1. A Brief Word Regarding Leadership Lists

We love it when God spells out in an A-B-C-like fashion exactly what He expects of His leaders. First Timothy 3:1–7 is one of those places. But 1 Timothy isn’t the only place in the New Testament where God provided a list of leadership qualities. The others are found in Titus 1:5–9 and 1 Peter 5:1–4.

The practical implications of these leadership lists are twofold. First, God requires explicit qualities that all leaders must demonstrate in their lives before they can lead God’s people.

Second, these lists refer to character traits, not spiritual giftedness.



Quotable

When it comes to selecting leaders, God is more interested in character than giftedness.

— Charles R. Swindoll



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2. A Continuation of Leadership “Musts” (1 Timothy 3:3–7)

We might deem the character qualities in 1 Timothy 3:1–7 as “the great musts” for church leaders. Every leader in high position in God’s church—pastors and overseers—must demonstrate each of these traits consistently in every area of his life. In the previous message, we looked into the overseer’s inner life (1 Timothy 3:1–2). In this message, we’ll continue our focus on his inner life (3:3) as well as his home life (3:4–5), his church life (3:6), and his life among unbelievers (3:7).

Not Addicted to Wine

Not Pugnacious

Gentle and Peaceable

Free from the Love of Money

One Who Manages His Household Well

Not a New Convert

A Good Reputation with Those Outside the Church



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LET’S LIVE IT

It might come as a surprise to discover that some of your church’s pastors and overseers may have been elected or appointed because they look like leaders on the outside but, in fact, are not qualified on the inside. It’s easier to ask questions about a person’s business success than about his spiritual success. But God isn’t interested in an overseer’s business success, not when it comes to serving God’s people. God is concerned about an overseer’s spiritual success, and so should we. So when it comes to selecting leaders in your church, you should ask at least three questions.

Personally, does this man’s internals square with his externals?

Domestically, would this man’s family vote for him?

Publicly, will this man’s nomination come as a surprise or be affirmed in the community?

Whether or not your church is in the midst of selecting new leaders, think about these three questions in light of your current leaders and evaluate them with grace.



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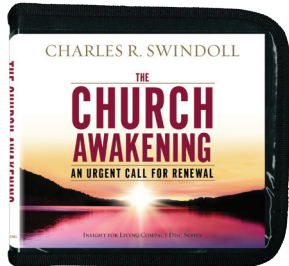
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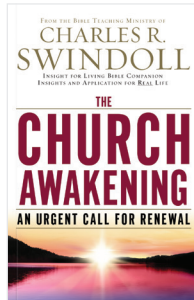
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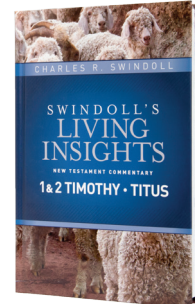
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