What Christian Maturity Looks Like March 10, 2024

*1 Timothy 3:1-7 Series: How the Church Falls off the Rails*

"If an angry man raises the dead, God is still displeased with his anger." – Agatho

Intro: How atheists are converted

1. Christian character is a goal for all and a job description for some
2. Has God captured your dreams?

v. 1 *If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.*

Ephesians 2:10 *we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand*

Matthew 6:33 *But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.*

1. Overseer, bishop, elder, and pastor refer to the same role

Acts 20:17 *he sent to Ephesus and called the elders*

Acts 20:28 *Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.*

1. The job description begins and ends with character

v. 2 *an overseer must be above reproach*

1 Timothy 3:7 *he must be well thought of by outsiders*

1 Timothy 5:7 *Command these things as well, so that they may be without reproach.*

* Have you ever taken steps to be more useful to God? How?
* What does it mean to be “above reproach”?
* What do non-Christians see in our lives that Christians might miss?

1. Learn to control yourself before you’re given responsibility for others
2. Control yourself

James 3:1 *Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.*

v. 2 *sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable*

Titus 2:2 *Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness.*

1. Control your pleasures

v. 3 *not a drunkard*

Leviticus 10:9 *Drink no wine or strong drink, you or your sons with you, when you go into the tent of meeting, lest you die.*

Ephesians 5:18 *do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit*

1. Control your temper

v. 3 *not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome*

Titus 3:2 *[Remind them] to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy*

2 Timothy 2:24 *the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil*

1. Control your greed

v. 3 *not a lover of money*

Titus 1:7 *He must not be … greedy for gain*

Hebrews 13:5 *Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”*

* Why would teachers be judged more strictly?
* In addition to alcohol, what other pleasures should a Christian learn to control?
* Why are Christian leaders supposed to “patiently endure evil”?

1. Be faithful with little before seeking to be entrusted with more
2. Don’t rush to assume you’ve got it figured out

v. 6 *He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.*

1. Learn to lead your home first

v. 2 *the husband of one wife*

vv. 4-5 *He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?*

1. Learn to serve your neighbour first

v. 2 *hospitable*

Hebrews 13:2 *Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.*

1 Peter 4:9 *Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.*

Leviticus 19:34 *treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt*

1. We all have to work at passing it on

v. 2 *able to teach*

Hebrews 5:12 *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God.*

* What’s wrong with a new Christian serving in leadership?
* Of all of the things that could have been said about an elder’s management of his home, why do you think Paul chose *“keeping his children submissive”*? What does that take?
* Why would it be important for an elder to be hospitable? What are some of the ways you can be hospitable to outsiders?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study 1 Timothy 3:8-13.

Notes