

MARKS OF MATURITY: A LEADERSHIP CHECKLIST

1 Timothy: Doing Church God's Way, Part 4

July 3rd, 2011

The marks of spiritual maturity in 1 Timothy 3 are things all Christians should strive for – to become a person God can trust with the lives of other believers whether in a formal or informal way

1 Timothy 3:2 (NIV) "Now the overseer must be above reproach,...

Summing up spiritual maturity – to be "above reproach" – without a glaring weakness

This leadership list is about progress not perfection

This leadership list is about the present not the past

Note What's Not On The List – Stuff we are usually impressed with but God isn't

1. Giftedness

Never confuse giftedness with spirituality
1 Corinthians 1:7 & 1 Corinthians 3:1-3

2. Spiritual power

Matthew 7:21-23

3. Theological training

We often confuse knowledge of the Bible with godliness - don't!
John 13:17

Spiritual maturity is about our character & obedience not our knowledge

4. Religious or spiritual disciplines

Watch taking certain spiritual disciplines that helped us and making them rules for everyone else or act as if the "tool" is the end instead of something to help change my character

5. Zeal

A Misunderstanding, A Blind Spot & Three Surprises

A Misunderstanding: *1 Timothy 3:2 (NIV) "Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, ..."* (literal translation – "one woman man")

Only 1 wife or a one woman man, what's the difference, the big deal?

1. If this means only one spouse, it eliminates singles, those divorced, or re-married from spiritual maturity and/or spiritual leadership

2. This contradicts Scripture

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

God deals with who you are much more than who you were

3. It focuses on marital status, not moral purity

4. Makes our past more important than the present

Blind Spot – 1 Timothy 3:3 (NIV) “...not quarrelsome, ...”

If you are fooled by this, one day they'll bite you
Proverbs 17:19

Three Surprises – What do these things have to do with spirituality?

1. One's family is under control

1 Timothy 3:4,5 (NIV) “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?)”
1 Corinthians 7 & Ezekiel 18

If someone's family is out of control, take the energy of being a spiritual leader and put it towards the family

This also protects God's reputation

2. Not a recent / new convert

1 Timothy 3:6 (NIV) “He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.”

We can be instantly spiritual but not instantly mature

Maturity takes time & trials - you can't rush maturity
James 1:2-4

A new convert who isn't mature and leads can become prideful

3. Must have a good reputation among non-Christians

1 Timothy 3:7 (NIV) “He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.”

Our job is to win over the world, not to wipe out the enemies of Christ

My Next Step Today

- I will pray for our pastors and leaders to be above reproach as they serve God and New Hope
- I am asking God to help me become spiritually mature as given in 1 Timothy 3 whether I'm in an official leadership role or not
- I will memorize the key passage of 1 Timothy – 1 Timothy 3:14,15
- I/we plan to attend to Meet the Pastor's lunch on Sun, July 17th – # of children attending _____