

Desiring Eldership! It's a Good & Blessed Thing!

Geoffrey R. Kirkland
Christ Fellowship Bible Church

God's Word states in 1 Timothy 3:1 that if any man aspires to the office of an overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do! It's *good* to desire eldership! How noble it is for a man to aspire to serve and shepherd the flock of God! It's not a desire to hide or be ashamed of, but rather we should speak of the good and blessed and God-given desire to serve as an overseer.

In speaking on this, I want to help us understand a number of related items to this great desire!

1. Understanding the Gift.

The Bible teaches that God has *given* those to lead the Church and that includes pastors/elders and teachers (Eph 4:11). Elders are *God-given gifts* to His church. They are to serve as God's stewards and His representatives. So, the call to be an elder comes gloriously and graciously from God for the well-being and maturation of His Church.

2. Undertaking the Call.

An elder is far more than a 'job'. The office of elder is an all-consuming and joyfully-embracing ministry of humble service and servant leadership that God places deep within the soul of a man. An elder/shepherd is more than a task-accomplisher or a charismatic personality. The office of eldership requires a man to undertake a most blessed call & a consuming responsibility to serve God with integrity, to model holiness for the saints, and to teach sound doctrine!

3. Unashamed of the Desire.

Men must never be ashamed of the desire to serve as an elder. I wonder if men of God earnestly desire to serve the local church but in humility are ashamed to verbalize their desire to lead. They don't want it to be perceived as an arrogant ambition to rule over people. But let it be humbly stated: the desire to lead is good, noble, lofty, God-given and one that should be pursued and cultivated through serving the church and communicating with your leaders!

4. Unrelenting in Passion.

In Thessalonika, the Apostle Paul said that he labored relentlessly among the believers. With the Ephesian elders, Paul testified that night and day for three years he admonished the brethren passionately. All men do well to remember: the work of an elder is just that: *work!* It is a fine *work* he desires to do! God's man to lead as an elder must have an undying commitment to God, an unswerving commitment to truth and an unrelenting passion for Christ's glory!

5. Unflinching in Courage.

The brilliant wiles of Satan and his masquerading messengers passionately hunger to infiltrate the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ from without and from within! Elders *must* be vigilant. They must watch and stand as guardsmen to sound the alarm when danger is near. Elders must be men of courage to stand face to face to oppose what is evil and to guard the church from false teachers, dangerous doctrine and sinful living! Christian men are courageous men.

6. Unswerving in Faithfulness.

The great demand for God's men requires that they be found 'faithful' and steadfast to Christ and His calling. They don't need to be popular, wealthy, or successful. A man of God strives to be faithful to God even if it means upsetting the standard, the norm, the tradition, or the popular opinion. He would rather suffer at the hands of men than sin against God. He will shepherd souls, preach truth, defend against error, live purely, pray importunately and lead with integrity. An elder is a man who will be unflinching, undeterred, & unswerving in faithfulness *to God* and to His Word.

7. Unilateral in Ambition (glory of God).

A question that men who aspire the office of eldership need to be asked is this: *why* do you aspire to the ministry? What's the goal? Why do you want this? The ultimate aim and ambition must be for the glory of God and for the good of Christ's church. Too many men have fallen (privately or publicly) to the sin of self-promotion or raw domination over people in the church. But a man of God says: I want to honor and glorify God as I serve Him and serve His people in this particular local church. Notoriety or not, he wants to please His Savior and His King!