

Selecting Spiritual Overseers
Part 4: Looking at their spiritual maturity
1 Timothy 3:6,7

Introduction:

- All believers should desire to grow spiritually
 1. Spiritual growth is simply spiritual p_____
 2. Every spiritual overseer MUST BE spiritually m_____
- Two t_____ must be applied to determine spiritual maturity
 1. Anyone desiring to step in a leadership position in the church and everyone in leadership position m_____ pass these tests.
 - a. The test of q_____
 - b. The test of q_____
 2. As we look at this passage, analyze your own spiritual progress.

How l_____ have you been living the Christian life? (6)

- A wrong question to ask: *How long have you been a Christian?*
 1. Some people think that certain acts make them a Christian and that they do not need to c_____.
 - a. I prayed the sinner's prayer.
 - b. I went forward in a church service.
 - c. I was baptized.
 2. The above people would answer this question differently:
how long have been living the Christian life?
- A spiritual overseer must not be a new c_____ (KJV – *novice*). Why?
 1. He might become c_____
 2. And fall into the judgment of the d_____.
- Three interpretations
 1. NAS, KJV, ESV – fall into the same condemnation that the devil received.
 - a. This presents a picture of a person's salvation as being f_____
 - b. The larger context of the Bible presents a person's salvation as s_____.

- 1) Eternal life is eternal. You cannot have it
t_____
 - 2) Jesus said in Jn 10:28 that He will never allow any
believer to p_____ and no one will be able to
snatch a believer from His hands.
2. NIV – fall into the same judgment as the devil.
 - a. The Greek language distinguishes between *judgment* (krima) and *condemnation* (kata+krima) by putting a prefix before the word judgment (see I Cor 11:32 where judgment refers to God’s d_____ to keep a person from being condemned).
 - b. This interpretation sees God’s discipline as removing the conceited leader from l_____, just as He removed the devil from his high position as an angel.
 - c. The larger context of the Bible has God leaving it up to the church body to qualify and disqualify leaders.
 3. NLT – the devil causes the conceited leader to fall
 - a. Although this is the better understanding, it falls short of the point.
 - b. The point
 - 1) A leader’s conceit would cause him to f_____
 - 2) A conceited leader would fall into, literally, *the judgment of the devil*.
 - a) Not in the sense that the devil judges the leader.
 - b) But in the sense that the leader makes judgments that the devil would make – devil____ judgments (look at the devil’s judgments in Gen 3).
 - c. Wester’s paraphrase – *not a new convert, lest in becoming puffed-up with pride, he fall into devilish judgment*.
- Time testifies of the g_____ of a person’s faith
1. When you first accept Christ, the only evidence of faith is your w_____.
 2. As time goes by, spiritual p_____ can be seen
 - a. Progress in overcoming your s_____ past.
 - b. What has helped you grow spiritually? (not knowing God’s word but l_____ it; not praying words, but d_____ on God; not attending church, but spiritual f_____).

How well _____ have you been living the Christian life? (7)

- The best test of a good reputation is:
 1. Not what your c_____ says about you.
 2. But what is said of you by those o_____ the church (unbelievers).
- The reason why a spiritual leader's reputation among unbelievers is so important – so that he does not *fall into the devil's trap*.
 1. The devil knows that his time on earth is s_____ (Rev 12:7).
 - a. The devil's strategy is to d_____ the coming of Christ (see Matt 24:14; 28:18,19; Rev 5:9,10)
 - b. The devil's method is to destroy a believer's witness so that they do not h_____ on the day of Christ's coming (2 Pet 4:11,12)
 2. A church leader with a bad reputation among unbelievers will be ineffective in leading a church to i_____ the unbelievers around them.
- What would your non-Christian co-workers, employers, and neighbors say about you?
 1. Hy_____
 2. Messing up a lot, but s_____ to live right.
 3. A s_____ person without knowing that you are a believer.
 4. A solid person because you are living the Christian life well.

Conclusion:

- The effectiveness of a church:
 1. Starts with l_____ - qualify them using 1 Tim 3:1-7.
 2. Continues with t_____ - teach not just by word but by example.
 3. Trickle to all who actively s_____ in the church (whether officially, like a treasurer, or unofficially, like a prayer warrior, giver, encourager, etc).
- So answer the questions:
 1. How long have you been living the Christian life?
 2. How well have you been living the Christian life?