

1Tim 24-01-07b

We are now at the beginning of 1st Timothy chapter three. We're gonna cover this with alacrity. If a man desires the position of a bishop, this is overseer, episkopos.

Epi is upon, like your epidermis. And skopos is like scope to look. So this is looking over, watching over, overseeing, literally.

If a man desires the position of a bishop or of an overseer, this first of two uses of desire is the word orego, like Oregon or oregomai. And this is to reach out for a thing. If you are reaching out for this function, now, why would you reach out for a thing? It isn't necessarily that it is a necessity.

It isn't that you must have it, that you're obsessed with it, but there is a time when a thing needs to be picked up. It needs to be taken in hand. It needs to be fulfilled.

It needs to be operated. It needs to happen. And so generally, if someone is reaching out for oversight, oversight is needed.

Now, you know this in your own experience. You've got a garden in your yard, and it's got weeds and the flowers are not doing well. Maybe they're not growing at all.

And you have a desire that that garden reach its potential. This little patch of ground could look so nice. Put a little birdbath in it, set some decorative stones, weed it, put some attractive perennials or seasonals or whatever in there, and let it reach its potential.

Let it be a pleasure to yourself and to others. And so you literally reach out to fulfill this potential. You make it happen with your hand.

That's what oregomai means, or orego. It means to reach out. So if a man reaches out to oversee, to be an overseer, he desires, this is a completely different word.

This second word is epithumia. And if he's reaching out to be an episkopos, he epithumias. And you've got epi again, which is upon, and thumos is a desire, a want, a wish.

Sometimes it goes as far as a craving or it's translated lust in some cases. But Paul uses this word when he says, I have desired to come to you. I desire to see you.

We desired to come, but Satan hindered us. And this is an inner desire in the way that we anticipate being with a loved one. We desire a good.

We desire someone who is ill to get better. We desire someone who is in a tight place to be relieved, to be delivered. It is an uncategorized desire.

It can be a bad desire if it is contextually conditioned that way. When lust has conceived, it brings forth sin. Sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.

Obviously, this is not the healthy desire for your loved ones to prosper. This is self-centered. This is self-gratification.

This is illicit and evil desire. But epithemia is just a strong, compelling type of desire. So if a man reaches out for oversight, he desires a good thing.

And this is a description of what ought to be. Those who desire good and who see that oversight is needed will reach out to fulfill it. You desire good things to happen.

You desire the benefit of the group. You desire things to be done decently and in good order. You desire that no one be left out.

You desire that the witness of the church, both individually and collectively, is a light that shines in the community. That's the idea here. If a man reaches out and it says the position of a bishop, all of this is just the single word, episkopos.

A man reaches out to be is sort of in italics, to oversee. This is a responsibility. This takes time, it takes effort, it takes diligence.

It puts you in a place of accountability. So it isn't something to be done lightly. And if you reach out to do it, it is because you desire a good thing.

You desire a good work. And this is ergos. I've mentioned before the rowing machine where you work out and you build up your muscles as an oarsman for crew is called the ergometer.

And it's got a measuring device on it. And it tells you how much work you are doing. What kind of weight do you put on it? I think the one at the boathouse at Navy, it was in stone.

And so you had to figure out 14 pounds to the stone or whatever. But then you sit on this sliding seat. You're not going anywhere.

You're working on the ergo, the ergometer. And it's work, it's effort. You break a sweat, you breathe hard.

You're efforting as they like to say now. And this is kalos. This is good work.

And so you have an inner desire for good work to be done. This is good work overseeing, supervising so that the church fulfills its potential so that everyone is included, everyone is respected. Bad practice and faulty procedures are eliminated.

And this witness that chapter two has emphasized all the way through is preserved and

enhanced. Notice it is a man who reaches out to oversee. This is the manly role going all the way back to the garden as has just been emphasized, desires a good work.

An overseer then must be first of all blameless, blameless. This is from the word lambano, which means to receive, to lay hold of, to grasp. And it's on epilambano, we have another epi word.

So if you epilambano, you put your hand upon something to lay hold of it. And this has the alpha privative, an A in front of it. And it means this man, if he's blameless, he can't be laid hold of like you would a perpetrator.

He can't be handcuffed, he can't be arrested. He can't be held accountable. And the implication is held accountable for a fault.

Nobody can, it reminds me, they used to call Ronald Reagan the Teflon president because they would throw all kinds of accusations at him, but nothing would stick. There were a few things I think he could be held accountable for, but there's no traction in the criticism. There's no grounds for resistance.

There's no grounds for accusation. There's no grounds for indictment and certainly no grounds for finding someone guilty. So on epilambano are the component pieces of this word.

And so faultless in the sense of, the view of others, everyone sins, everyone has shortcomings. We have besetting sins. We sometimes have pattern sins.

But this idea of blamelessness is the community on the outside looking at the observable behavior. There shouldn't be, and so we're gonna see. The obvious thing would be if somebody is a stumbling drunk on a regular basis, you could be laid hold of for that.

That's a deal breaker. If you can't manage yourself, you lack self-control, you lack faith, love, and holiness with self-control that we just saw at the end of the preceding chapter. That is not a faithful saying and worthy of your acceptance because you don't have self-control.

You drink to excess. You lack the ability to organize yourself. How are you gonna organize anything else? Start with the beam in your own eye, so to speak.

So to be an overseer, this is a good work and you have to want it. It's like becoming a midshipman or an army cadet at one of the service academies. You have to want it.

It can't be thrust upon you. Somebody shouldn't have to come and say, look, nobody else is willing to do this. We want you to do it.

You've been elected. You missed the meeting and while you were gone, we made you chairman of the board of elders. So it's on you.

This has to come from within. You have to want to do it. And this will be something by implication that the Holy Spirit puts in our heart.

God is at work in you to will and to do for His good purpose and this is the way guys find out that they're supposed to become a pastor or to be a teacher. There is a desire that is placed within. It isn't a desire for self-promotion.

It's not a desire for self-gratification. It is work, but it's a good work. And there is a desire to fulfill it.

And this is what they often phrase as called to the ministry or called to be a missionary or called to evangelism. Well, it's not so much a voice and an onerous burden. The Holy Spirit and the word of God work together and there comes this epithumia, this desire to serve, this desire to meet the need, this desire to oversee is what is in view here.

But you first of all, have to be blameless. You can't be laid hold of for any obvious misbehavior. Now we're going to get details of this.

The next one is the husband of one wife. This has been so abused, we've talked about it before. This doesn't mean that you can't have a divorce in your past, that you can't have a previous marriage that ended with the death of a spouse.

Their men, their wife contracts breast cancer and dies suddenly. Well, okay, you can never be an Episcopal. You can never serve as an elder in a church, nonsense.

This is literally a one woman man. And this in turn means that when there is a woman in your life, as a spouse, as someone to whom you are engaged, if you're young enough that you have not yet met your significant other, you are holding yourself back and you are waiting because you are a one woman man. I have not yet met her, but I know she's out there and I am going to do my best to be prepared.

I'm going to live a sanctified life. I'm not going to be profligate. I'm not going to sow wild oats.

I'm a one woman man. Haven't met her yet, but when I do, I want to be ready. Now that I have met her, maybe I'm betrothed.

Maybe I'm engaged. I'm still a one woman man. I don't step out.

I don't date others. Once I'm married, I'm a one woman man. And not until death do us part is there the opportunity and especially young people, Paul is going to tell younger widows that they ought to remarry.

Notice he doesn't tell young widowers that they necessarily need to remarry. Why would he exhort widows to remarry, younger ones that have children? Because they need that leadership role to be fulfilled. It doesn't always happen.

There are wonderful exceptions, but as a model, as a rule, as an ideal, if the husband is killed in an accident, killed in military conflict or whatever, and you've got a mother and children, it is God's will that there be someone to provide so that the woman can spend her time nurturing and raising the children. And there is absolutely nothing wrong. In fact, it is encouraged, not mandated, but encouraged.

If God brings another man into the picture, marry him is the idea. But in that marriage, there is still fidelity, loyalty, the pledge, the covenant responsibility to one and only one partner. And you can say at a time, I don't so much think of it as at a time, as whatever circumstance God places us in, we prayerfully, submissively look at this situation and endeavor to please God single-mindedly.

We serve one God, we have one savior, and a husband should be a one woman man. So this again has the idea of single-minded devotion, loyalty that is uncompromised. The next word here is temperate.

This is a word that means wineless, W-I-N-E, wineless. Nephalion means not given to expectations, excess that causes you to lose your self-control. It's another facet of self-control.

Temperate means moderation, nothing wrong with wine in moderation. Let your moderation be known to all, the Lord is at hand. Be not drunk with wine, why? Because in that is excess.

So this wineless isn't literally don't drink wine, it is moderation, temperate, balanced, not tripped up, not unbalanced, not giddy, not insensible. The next word is sober-minded. And this is the word for wisdom, Sophros, Sophron, and it has the idea that you need to be knowledgeable.

This is wise in the word. There needs to be enough exposure, understanding, learning that this has converted into wisdom and experiential practice. So the idea of sober-minded is doctrinally-minded, wisdom-minded, you're known for your good judgment.

Good judgment is probably the best because good judgment is based on a combination of knowledge and experience, right? You know it's not a good idea to spin your tires wildly while somebody's standing behind your car when it's slick and muddy or snowy because you'll spray them with gravel, spray them with mud, potentially endanger their eyesight and the rest of it. You can understand this academically from physics and you also know it from experience. I have been behind a car that spun its wheels and I know what it's like to be splattered and have gravel hit me in the face.

Good judgment, based on knowledge and experience. Of good behavior. Interestingly, this word comes from cosmos, cosmos.

And remember the cosmos, we say, well, that's the world. Love not the cosmos, love not

the world or the things that are in the cosmos. And yet here, the overseer should be cosmos.

You just put an eye on it. And so is that worldly? But remember cosmos means the order of things. It can be the human order.

We can be in the world, but not of it. We also get the word cosmetics from this, which means to put ourselves in order to have a good appearance. And cosmos means in harmony with the world in the sense that you're orderly, disciplined, not raucous, not wild, not unpredictable.

You fit into the order. You drive between the lines. You stay on the field and you don't run out of bounds.

You are harmonious in the system. Obviously, if it's an evil system, you wouldn't be harmonious. When cosmos is used for the evil of the world or the lure of the world, that wouldn't be what's in view.

What is our context here? This is someone who wants to oversee the good work that goes on in the assembly of believers. And so he's going to not be disruptive. He's not going to be divisive.

Cosmos, he's going to be singularly able to preserve unity. Good behavior. The next word is hospitable.

And by the way, as we look at these, if these are qualities that are desirable in someone who oversees, why is that important? Because he is to be an example. And if he's an example, that means all of us should cultivate these qualities, right? Okay? So the idea of presiding over and overlooking is also putting someone in a position to be looked at as an example. And Paul will say this over and over again.

Follow my example. Timothy, you should set a good example. We're going to see it later in this book.

So these qualities, when we look at them, we say, well, I sure hope that the pastor or the elder is a good guy and has these qualities. The reason he is to possess these qualities is not only to do the good work, but to be an example of how these qualities enable and support everyone who is desiring to do good work. So every woman in the church should cultivate these qualities.

Every young person, every neophyte, every old person. All of these things that we see set forth, the role of a woman, the role of a man, the prayers in public, the outward testimony of the church, the qualifications, if you will, of an overseer, they are universally applicable. There is no believer who should not cultivate every one of these qualities.

Can you say, well, because I'm not an overseer, I don't have to be sober-minded. I don't have to have self-control. I don't need to desire a good work.

They're emblematic. They are emphasized in someone who is visible so that we who are less visible can see and emulate. I've said before, one of the things is standard boilerplate in commendation citations in the military is so-and-so has set an example worthy of emulation.

If you're an officer, you get a Navy commendation medal, you set an example worthy. This means this behavior, this dedication, this selfless service, this going the extra mile, this 110% effort, everybody ought to be this way. That's exactly what's going on here.

So every one of these qualities, we can ask ourself, do I have this? Am I described by these qualities? Am I blameless? Or there are people that can say, you know, you're out of compliance with city code because you never mow your lawn. Your home is a junkyard. Your appearance, you know, someone could say, you call yourself a Christian and you live this way.

You claim to represent Christ and this is how you talk. This is how you live. This is how you behave.

This is how you treat other people. This is the kind of trash you post online. This is the kind of lewd and illicit material you expose yourself to.

This is the way you talk to your kids. This is the way you talk to your wife. This is the way you talk to your husband.

This is the way you do your job at work. These qualities ought to be characteristic of every believer. And so we examine ourselves to see if we are in the faith.

So am I blameless? Am I loyal to my commitments? Husband of one wife, one woman, man, this is a commitment. And I'm loyal to that commitment. I don't step outside it.

I don't trample on it. I don't treat it lightly and confer the benefits and the efforts that are a part of that commitment on others. I'm committed to this and this alone.

And I don't waste my energy. I don't squander my attention. I don't divide my loyalty.

Am I temperate? Am I self-controlled? Am I sober-minded? Am I of good behavior? Am I cosmos? I work quietly with my hands. I don't give any cause. I do not let my good be spoken of as evil.

Everything that we saw in chapter two. Hospitable. This is phyloxeon, xenos.

Xenophobia is a dislike of that which is strange, that which is imported from the outside. Phyllos is the word for brotherly love. Phylloxenia, the strangers.

Anybody can love their loved ones, but can you express love? Can you look out for the interests of those who are not already close at hand? This is the Lord Jesus' word to love your enemies. Do good to those who hate you. Pray for those who spitefully use you.

Love your enemies. Phylo is the word used here. Phyloxenon, to be willing to be hospitable even when it's kind of strange.

Or this is a stranger. A stranger comes in. They have come because they are seeking and you take them in even though you don't know them well.

This is not indiscriminate acceptance. This is not indiscriminate love, but we don't withhold love on the basis of someone being strange or unfamiliar. Well, and this is where racism is right out.

You're going to not be phylos because someone is of a different race. The church in the historical past in America that discriminated and wouldn't let certain people into the congregation fell afoul of this because they didn't understand what this means. You can't hold the simple fact of unfamiliarity against someone.

There are plenty of things that you can discriminate on the basis of. If someone goes out from us and they are not one of us, if someone does not accept that Jesus Christ is Lord, if someone is an enemy of the cross, if someone is guilty of any number of things, yes, you can absolutely discriminate. You can kick them out.

I will turn him over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. That's not phyloxenon, is it? But the simple fact of unfamiliarity is not the basis to withdraw hospitality and brotherly love. Notice brotherly love.

This is in the context of the assembly. Someone comes, maybe they're poor and you're not, and very few poor people in the church. Well, are you going to withhold and draw back on that basis? Well, I don't know how to deal with poor.

Maybe they've got a physical disability of some kind. They're deaf or they're blind or they're crippled or they're coming back from a horrific accident of some kind. Well, that gives me the creeps.

No, you are forward-looking in your brotherly love and you do not withhold it on the basis of strangeness alone. Able to teach. Now, this is where we understand the context that if someone is going to be an overseer, he has got to have the ability to communicate divine truth, the ability to teach.

If you're going to oversee, you have to be able to explain the oversight, explain the policy, give the foundation for why, I'm sorry, Edith, but you can't be an elder in our group. Let me explain why. I'm sorry, Naomi, but you can't stand up and pray and disrupt the service with your head uncovered.

Here's why. Able to teach. It doesn't necessarily mean that every overseer in the church, every elder in the church has to be able to give a good Bible class, but has to be able to teach.

This is from Didaskalos, Didaskalia, Didasko, to teach. And this is Didastikon. And in order to teach, you also have to be teachable.

Nobody teaches that didn't first learn, right? Heaven preserve us from people who want to teach and they haven't learned anything. We've got some Congress women and this is what they want to do. They haven't learned anything and they want to dictate economic policy, social policy, and everything else.

They've never learned and now they want to teach. Doubly condemned. Able to teach.

If you're able to teach, you are first able to learn and you're able to share what you have learned and have it make sense to others, whether formally or informally. Then you come to verse three, not given to wine. This is a different word than wineless, the Nephalion we saw in the previous verse.

This is paraoinon, paroinon. Just kind of ram it together. Para is alongside of, and then you have the word for wine.

So it literally means you're beside the wine all the time. You're never seen without a drink in your hand. It's just sort of part of your personality.

There are some people that are known for wearing a beret or known for wearing a bow tie or known for favoring plaid jackets or known for wearing loafers or known for some particular thing. Well, to be known for always being next to the wine is not a good thing. It connotes dependence.

It connotes lack of self-control. It connotes distraction. Nothing wrong with drinking wine, especially with a meal, a little wine for your stomach's sake, but given to wine is a pretty good translation.

It's just beside you all the time. You're seldom seen without it. Is it a crutch? Is it a weakness? Is it a lack of self-control? Whatever it is, why are you always next to the wine? Not given to wine.

Not violent is the next description here. And this literally means to be a smacker, to be a striker, to be pugnacious, to be contentious, to, I'd rather fight than switch. I am quarrelsome.

And this gets back to my point in the first session about political action and political activity in the sense of going out there and wanting to quarrel and debate and contend and strive and beat down the other side. Insult them, belittle them. Nothing wrong with

talking about issues.

Here's why I am on this side of this issue. Here's what I believe the scripture teaches. Voting, supporting a candidate because you think they've got good values, but pugnacious, quarrelsome, contentious, scrapping, looking for a fight.

Let me find somebody that doesn't like my candidate. I'm gonna beat him into the ground. I can't believe you would vote for that guy.

People who say, how can you be a Christian and vote this way? How can you call yourself a believer and vote that way? We are not to be contentious, whether in the social realm or personally and individually. Not greedy for money. And this is eager to make a profit.

And whether this is your social capital, whether this is your money, whether this is your influence, eager for gain, greedy for money and that which money gets you. And greed is a good word here. Nothing wrong with providing, nothing wrong with setting aside, nothing wrong with planning for retirement and having an ample amount to cover your obligations and your needs and your opportunities and even your pleasures.

Nothing wrong with that. But when it becomes a priority, I'm gonna do this because this makes me the most money. I'm going to hide the flaws in this when I sell it because I can get more money.

I'm going, I'll be deceptive. I'll shade the truth. I will cut corners.

I will take this job because it pays the most, not because it's what I'm really suited for or where I could serve and function the best, have more time for my family. I'll cut the family time and get this job because it makes more money. And this is money as a priority, money and that which money buys.

But on the other hand, now we get the positives, gentle. And once again, we have an epi word, epi, A-K, and this is fitting and equitable, given to what is proper, looking for that which is peaceable and right. It's akin to cosmios, where you are seeking harmony.

Gentle has the idea of harmony with others. Once again, not quarrelsome. How many times do we see this? If you're in conflict, if you're crossing swords in your conversations, if you can't let something go, I'm right and I'm not going to be content until you admit that I am right.

We saw this when we did the letters of Peter to disinvest. And if someone has a different view, if someone believes a different thing, if someone sees it a different way, even if it is at a cost to me, let it go. God will judge.

Remember David, Saul hounding him because he thought David was trying to take his throne away from him. God is in the process of taking Saul's throne away, but Saul

blames David. And David says, I will not raise my hand against the king.

Even when he's encouraged to do so, believes that people believe he has every right to do it. He's already been anointed by Samuel to be the king, but he says, I will not lift my hand against the Lord's anointed. All of Saul's abuse, all of his hostility, all of his pursuit, David says, I am not going to respond in kind.

He felt bad just cutting a corner off his robe. He said, I shouldn't have even done that. So not quarrelsome, not covetous goes back to not greedy for money.

Greedy for money is what I can earn on my own. Covetousness is looking at what others have. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's ox, nor his wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor anything that your neighbor has.

You've got it, I want it. And this is slightly different than greedy for money. Money, I will go buy what I want.

Covetousness, I want to take it from you. I don't want another one just like it, I want yours. You see the difference? That's why coveting is in the 10 commandments.

It doesn't say thou shalt not covet an ox or a wife or a manservant, it's your neighbors. I want that one right there. And I'm not going to be happy until I take it away from you and have it for myself.

Not covetous, one who rules his own house well. Having his children in submission with all reverence. Once again, orderly individual, orderly in that way.

Which has been assigned as a stewardship. I discipline myself, I control myself. I discipline and control that which has been placed under my charge.

If you're a woman, it's your children. If you're a husband, it's your wife and your children. If you're an overseer in a group of believers, it is that group during the time that group is assembled.

During the time that that group is functioning as a group. It is not the pastor's job to go visit the house and look around and say, you need to wash those dishes and sweep that rug and spank that child and wash that car or whatever it may be. The function of an overseer is to function in the group during the time that the group is functioning.

If the group goes on a mission trip, well, the overseer ought to handle it from beginning to end and make sure that it's done decently and in good order. And teenagers don't shack up with each other in a hotel room while you're in Belize or whatever. Going to ski at Vail or, you know, there's all kinds of nefarious things that happen in youth groups because the overseer from the church that is in charge of that group doesn't do his job.

In fact, sometimes they're the worst offenders. Camp counselors go off and make hay

with each other instead of looking out for those that have come to the camp. It's a Bible camp and you're busy in self-gratification.

Ruling while his own house, having his children in submission with all reverence. Not just submission by bludgeoning and brute force and running a dictatorship in a brutal fashion, reverence, submission with reverence. This prevents husbands from abusing their wives.

This prevents husbands and fathers from abusing their children, whether it's verbally or worse. You can't do these nefarious things with reverence, with eyes on the Lord, with a desire to please him. Knowing that the kind of oversight that you exercise is the kind of oversight that will be exercised on you.

The judgment with which you judge others will be meted out to you. So be fair, be reverent, be self-controlled, be obedient, and have the spirit of the Lord in carrying out these functions. That's the idea.

Well, these apply to every single one of us. There's no escape clause. I'm not an overseer, I can ignore this.

These are qualities that are to be exemplified in someone who is looked at and looked up to, but they are qualities that should be cultivated in every single one of us all the time. Only the sphere changes, only the direction changes, but the quality itself is timeless. We can only do it in the power of the spirit with that wisdom and understanding that comes from God's word that cuts to our heart, exposes the thoughts and intents, that encourages us in doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness.

We cultivate these, we develop these, we exercise these, and we manifest these qualities, every single one of us, in the power of the spirit, in the light of the word, and in no other way. You can't just want to, you can't hope to, you can't wish to. We have to go to the source of power, and it is the spirit and the word, no other way.

So all of us have to look at these qualities, measure ourselves, see where we are falling short, and go to the word, go to the spirit to be strengthened, to be enabled to grow and develop in these areas. Well, much more to say about this as we move forward in chapter three, and we'll see it next time. Let's close here in a word of prayer.

Father, thank you for the truth of your word, that every word that proceeds from your mouth is essential for each of us to live. No exceptions, no exclusions, no get out from under clause. You have provided these truths as manna for our souls.

In the hands of your Holy Spirit, they can transform us, renew our minds, and help us to understand your good and acceptable and perfect will. We pray that that will be the case as we reflect on this portion of your word, and we pray that it will live and breathe your power into our lives in the days ahead. We ask it in Jesus' name, amen.

