

What God Requires of The Mature

*Those whom God calls
He also equips.
Anon.*

The recently made very popular expression *God isn't interested in your ability, just your availability* is not true. He's interested in both. In fact, good theology tells us that it is God who *gives* us the all the abilities that we do have. We must accept that God equips His leaders for His service. No corporation in the world would rationally employ someone to be an executive in their company unless he had the skills to do the job. Similarly, no one is fairly promoted in an organisation unless they have earned their promotion by doing what they currently do, very well, and showing that they have what it takes to do a task with greater responsibility.

As we have seen, there is a constant need for proficient leaders and mature believers within the Body of Christ. These people are required by Christ to have a shepherd's heart (Jn. 10; 21:16-18; Acts 20:28; 1Cor. 9:7; 1Peter 5:2). Not everyone has the *ability* to shepherd people. The Scriptures have stringent requirements for those who feel they *are* eligible. We will examine the Biblical standards which serve as requirements for those aspiring to leadership.

What requirements for an elder are stated in 1Timothy 3:2-7 ~

What requirements are made for deacons in 1 Timothy 3:8-13?

How does this differ from the requirements of an elder?

We can not separate maturity from service. There are three aspects to entering into the kind maturity that God has for us. We might sum these up by noting what God expects of mature Christians ~

A right heart:

- To become mature in the way the Bible paints it, believers must undergo heart surgery. Right _____ are paramount to developing maturity.

Called:

- The mature believer _____ themselves to the area of service to which they are called. This area of service may be not be glamorous, but the believer's maturity causes them to serve faithfully in it because they know it is important to the Lord.

Submitted:

- The mature believer has learned to trust like a child in those that the Lord has placed over them. Submission is necessary if the believer wishes to enjoy the authority of the Lord in their life.

Preparation

A lot of Christians never appreciate how God prepares them for the future. A lot of the testing and trials that we endure are allowed by God to prepare us for what the future holds. God operates in our lives on three levels-

1. The Heart

- God has dealt with on-going _ _ _
- Attitudes have been sanctified (Phil 2:5)
- Relationship issues have been resolved (Matt. 5:23-24)
- We are open enough to God to accept His correction (Heb. 12:1-4)
- We are open to experience God (Acts 1:8).

2. The Mind

- The modern leader will be an avid _ _ _ _ _ . (Dt. 17:19; Neh. 8:8; 1Tim. 4:13)

(2 Tim 2:15 KJV) Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

W This may include: *the Scriptures, Books, Magazines, and News articles*

- The modern leader will have acquired some grasp of Bible/ Theology/ Ministry/ General knowledge
- The modern leader will know how to find answers, rather than know all the answers

3. Experience

- God will use secular work experience. Has it been fruitful?
- Business ventures will add to God's preparation of the leader.
- Sporting endeavours also develop character
- Travel experiences

- Social experiences: *an ability to mix with people*

Faithfulness

Note what God says of Moses in Numbers 12:7-

God foretells of His Messiah in 1Samuel 2:35. How is He described-

- Jesus is looking for *faithful* leaders (Mtt. 24:44-45; 25:21; Lk. 16:11-12)
 - The early church expected faithfulness (1Corinthians 4:2; 2Tim. 2:2)
 - Faithfulness precedes Christian ministry, rather than develops it (1Tim 1:12)
 - Faithfulness is being diligent to the task that the LORD has given.
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