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SEPTEMBER 30, 2024

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FOCUSED ON THE WORD

The Bible—The Best Voters Guide



First Timothy is written specifically to the leaders of the institution of the Church. The book is not written to leaders of the institution of the State per se. However, the divine, inspired-by-God instruction that the Apostle Paul gives to his understudy Timothy, whom he has recently installed as the leader of the church at Ephesus, provides tremendous insights and principles that can be applied to the institution of the State. More specifically, who is qualified from a biblical perspective to be in leadership in God's institution of the State?

In this Bible study, I will examine three principles revealed in 1 Timothy that are transferrable to making good decisions regarding who should lead in government. This study will bring to light what happens when those principles are violated by those who run for office, those who promote them, those who fund the races, and those who vote. Violations of these biblical principles lead to fueling the present deep rift we are experiencing as a nation. It follows that if all the aforementioned parties are familiar with the three following principles, those who are elected to public service

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- Rick Perry* TX
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- Rob Wittman* VA
- Steve Womack* AR
- Rudy Yakym* IN
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WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

- Governors:** Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom
- Former Cabinet Members / White House Senior Staff:** Fridays 9am (EST), Zoom
- Senate Members:** Tuesdays 8am, rotating offices, hot breakfast served
- House Members:** Thursdays 8am, AG Hearing Rm., Longworth 1302, hot breakfast served

The views expressed in each Bible Study are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study sponsor.



PUBLIC SERVANT QUOTE

Rick Perry

Former Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy
Former Governor of Texas



“What kind of men and women do we want to lead our nation? Scripture tells us that our decision is between righteous people whose characteristics have been identified by God or spiritually dead fools. That is the somber question that faces us. This is a black and white issue, and it is a matter of life or death for our nation.

“The Bible clearly specifies the characteristics that we should look for when we select our political leaders. These characteristics are the same as those who are to lead God’s Church. As I consider this issue, I remember when I was a pilot in the U.S. Air Force, I quickly learned that checklists save your life. You start using a checklist in a pre-flight check. You use checklists all through the flight

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will be more apt to heal and help than further divide and destroy the country. Failure to familiarize yourself with and adhere to these principles only serves to worsen the problem due to an across-the-board lack of applied biblical wisdom.

Read on, beloved.

Ralph Drollinger

I. INTRODUCTION

Since 1 Timothy is specifically instructive on Church leadership, it follows that to make proper application to leadership in the State, the characteristics and qualities found in 1 Timothy would also be in the book of Proverbs. Also called the little book of wisdom, Proverbs is all about the characteristics and qualities that define biblical leadership in the institution of the State. As we will see by comparison, each of the three qualities from I Timothy are repeated in and throughout Proverbs. On the second point, I make five comparisons. In fact, the wisdom literature of the Old Testament (OT) book of Proverbs contains a total of 915 proverbs intended to best prepare Rehoboam to lead the state of Israel in OT times. The 31 chapters of the book are all meant as preparatory wisdom for the person who will soon be charged with political leadership responsibilities.

Keep in mind one important distinction as we compare 1 Timothy to Proverbs: the proverbs are principles,

meaning if they are adhered to, generally speaking, a certain result will follow. For example, Proverbs 3:5–6 states, *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.* Over the course of our lives that “if-then” principle is true. The difference between these two books of the Bible is that the 1 Timothy criteria for Church leadership are not principles; rather, they are emphatic prerequisites, i.e., necessities. For example, 1 Timothy 3:2 states, *An overseer, then, must be above reproach.* It is important to note the difference between general principles in Proverbs and emphatic commands in 1 Timothy. That is to say that what follows are three principles we should look for to determine whom we elevate to public service in the State. When it comes to Church leadership positions, Paul tells Timothy these standards are non-negotiable commands. The three principles that follow, if not violated, are more likely to yield a godly public servant than ignoring or not adhering to them would.



Herein is biblical wisdom to apply to the task of making sure the right people are elected to serve in public office.

It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance that when the wrong, biblically unqualified people are elected to office, they are the ones who increasingly divide and bring down a nation.

II. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF 1 TIMOTHY

The Apostle Paul founded the church in Ephesus during his second and third missionary journeys. This fact is revealed in the NT chronological, narrative book of Acts (cf. 18:19–21; 19:1). During his third missionary journey, Paul spent an additional three years maturing the Church to the point that he had appointed leaders (whom he terms elders) to guide the Church. The appointment of elders is revealed in Acts 20, years after Paul's second and third missionary journeys and the firm planting of the Church. Paul is sailing southward in the Aegean Sea, docks in Miletus (which is near Ephesus), and invites the elders to come to the ship to visit with him (cf. Acts 20:17–38).

In this poignant passage, with special gifting from God, the apostle imparts much information, including a prophecy that in the future *“savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock”* (20:29). His account occurred around AD 54–56. Shortly thereafter,

around AD 60 during Paul's imprisonment in Rome, he writes one of his prison epistles to the church at Ephesus. As revealed in the Ephesian epistle, what Paul prophesies in Acts 20 has not yet come to pass. However, by the time he installs Timothy to lead the Ephesian church in his 1 Timothy epistle, written circa AD 63, the savage wolves prediction has proven to be spot-on accurate. From what Paul writes in the first chapter of 1 Timothy, his prophesies have been fulfilled.

In fact, Paul's first remarks in 1 Timothy 1 are spent correcting the divisive doctrine of the savage wolves. More specifically, he corrects what is now termed the Judaizers' heretical doctrine of salvation—that to reach heaven, the people must conform to Mosaic Law. So far off are the teachings of those who have taken over the pulpit that Paul excommunicates them from the Church (cf. 1:20)! As will be seen, this context is important because unsaved people do not receive empowerment from on high—the indwelling Helper and Enabler, the Holy Spirit.

The key passage to understanding the whole of Paul's epistle is 1 Timothy 3:15. Paul, who has installed Timothy into the leadership of the church, leaves soon thereafter for Macedonia and pens this epistle (cf. 1:3), stating the reason he is writing back (cf. 3:15):

As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines (1:3).

But in case I am delayed [given his desire to return soon], *I write so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which*

VERSE OF THE WEEK



1 Kings 12:6, 8

King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was still alive. ... But he forsook the counsel of the elders which they had given him, and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him.



“Rehoboam's Insolence,” by Hans Holbein the Younger, Kunstmuseum, Basel

Don't elevate spiritual novices. Leadership requires seasoned individuals, be it spiritual leadership or any other kind of leadership, including political.



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for the various situations you encounter, and you don't stop using a checklist until one directs you what to turn off and in what order so you may safely leave the aircraft.

“The Bible offers us checklists in all aspects of life. Use His checklist and live—abundantly!

“In this Bible study, Ralph Drollinger has identified the Scriptural checklist we should follow to elect the men and women whom God has determined would be best to govern a nation—those who possess qualifications and character traits identified by Him.

“This study provides the perfect biblical perspective for how to successfully run political races that not only result in candidates being elected, but in getting those candidates elected who will make a change for the good in the nation. This study provides that biblical clarity, and it is a must read for those who would run for office, those who promote candidates, those who fund political races, and those who vote.

“What does God have to say about all this? A lot! And here it is!”

is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth (3:15).

It follows that if 3:15 is the passage by which one best understands the whole purpose of this book, everything in the book will and does pertain to it. How, in this case, is God's ordained institution of the Church best maintained, and how does it remain viable throughout the coming ages? With that question in mind, note from what follows that three of those viability aspects from 1 Timothy also apply—by way of their presence in Proverbs—to the viability of the institution of the State. In other words:

What follows are three immutable principles for sustaining any institution by making sure their leaders are characterized by these God-inspired characteristics—whether they lead in the institution of the Church, the State, marriage, family, or commerce.

To be unfamiliar with or naïve to these criteria leads to disaster in the institution. Here then are three biblical criteria, requisites of all persons who desire to be elevated to important leadership positions.

**III. IS THE CANDIDATE SAVED?
1 TIMOTHY 1**

As previously addressed, what was apparent in the context of the institution of the Church in Ephesus (and many of Paul's other church plants) was unsaved people dividing the Church and taking

charge of the institution! For sure, when leaders who are not saved are leading in the Church, disaster results! No longer is the institution an organism empowered by God, the Holy Spirit, but an organization directed by unsaved people making decisions that are right in their own eyes (cf. Judges 21:25). In the institution of the Church, it is emphatic that leaders be saved! This principle is emphatic relative to the Church in the Pastoral Epistles (in 1 Timothy combined with 2 Timothy and the book of Titus). While not as ardent, this same principle is nonetheless true to a high degree in the institution of the State.

THEOCRACY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

For those who will inevitably interpret holding public servants to biblical standards as a march toward theocracy, nothing could be further from the truth. Leonard Verduin, in his classic book *The Reformers and their Stepchildren*, builds a strong case from history as to why no thinking Christian would ever desire a theocratic form of civil government today. In summary of his book, what Verduin underscores so profoundly is the New Testament understanding and teaching of an institutional separation of Church and State—but by no means an influential separation of Church and State.

Matthew 22, Romans 13, and 1 Peter 2 make it crystal clear that God intends His institutions of the Church and State to differ in



their purpose and leadership. But, as is also shown in His Word, God does expect His institution of the Church to influence His institution of the State!

Without a view toward a theocratic governmental construct but within the existing constructs of a democratic republic, the State is best served by born-again, Spirit-filled believers! While not totally achievable in our pluralistic society, the Christian believes this paradigm is best practice for government. Christians—those who know God’s precepts and pray for His guidance—are best equipped with their biblical worldview to lead in a direction that God will bless. John Adams underscores this way of thinking when he stated:

“Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious People. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

Those who object to Christian standards being used as a foundation for government as opposed to the tenets of other religions will do well to remember that Christian standards have been embraced and used the world over to define morality and as a foundation for laws.

When a public servant has bowed the knee to the Lordship of Christ and simultaneously received the Holy Spirit (cf. Romans 8:9) Who is termed the *Helper* (John 14:16), he or she is empowered from on high with a conscientiousness, an internal strength, and an

inherent proclivity toward and for the manifestation of biblical truth. Paul said it this way in Philippians 1:6:

For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

The Spirit-filled believer elected to office will bring into that institution a biblical worldview—timeless, veracious, immutable principles of God necessary for the sustainability of a nation as well as its daily governance. Such God-fearing individuals, states Proverbs in parallel form, bless a nation:

When it goes well with the righteous, the city rejoices, and when the wicked perish, there is joyful shouting. By the blessing of the upright a city is exalted, but by the mouth of the wicked it is torn down (Proverbs 11:10–11).

When the righteous increase, the people rejoice, but when a wicked man rules, people groan (Proverbs 29:2).

The *righteous* in an OT sense are those who trust in God and His coming Messiah; in a NT sense the *righteous* have bowed the knee to the Lordship of Christ. The indwelling Holy Spirit in the life of the public servant promises to continue to sanctify and lead the leader into holy living, increasing maturation, righteous convictions, and from-on-high courage. All these spiritually endowed attributes manifest themselves in these specific public servants for the betterment of the nation.

Paul’s admonitions to Timothy in 1 Timothy pertaining to the viability

of the Church as determined by the presence of God-fearing individuals in leadership are the same principles postulated in Proverbs as they relate to the viability of the State.

Unbelievers in office do not have this aid. In fact, Scripture states exactly the opposite of them. The following three passages are some of many that describe them:

Speaking to believers before they came to Christ, Paul says, *And you were dead in your trespasses and sin in which you formerly walked* (Ephesians 2:1–2). In fact, states Paul in 1 Corinthians 2:14, *a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them.* In Proverbs Solomon states the following regarding the unregenerate: *A fool does not delight in understanding, but only in revealing his own mind* (18:2).

Are *dead, foolish* people the kind of folks you want running the country? The believer is led into all truth by the indwelling Holy Spirit, which means the Christian public servant will apply and stand on biblical principles in his or her decision making. (For those who say they are believers in office but do not manifest biblical truth, refer to Matthew 7:20 and James 2:26 for biblical clarity on the matter; in other words, are they really saved?)

Of course, it is possible for an unsaved public servant to uphold biblical principles in his decision making, but to proffer such an individual for public of-



fice is to go against the odds—especially if he does not hold the following two criteria in this list of three.

In summary of this first point, it makes sense that those who desire to run, those who proffer, fund, and vote for public servants first determine whether candidates are genuine followers of Christ. In fact,

Today in America, the great ideological divide pivots on this specific issue: those in office who hold Christian worldview and look to the Bible as their guiding authority stand in stark contrast to those who hold a secular worldview and look to the ever-changing and unstable “Dr. Wellithink” as their final authority.

Whereas the latter is tainted by sin, the former is not. Herein is the underlying basis for the grand clash, the worsening divide in America today.

It follows that to heal the land, genuine, real believers need to be elected to office! Keep in mind also that many in office name the name of Jesus, but they adhere to the “Social Gospel,” which is nothing more than heretical theological liberalism that doesn’t save (see my Bible studies: “Theological Liberalism in America,” and “Liberal Theology’s Struggle with Modern Archaeology” at capmin.org). It follows that you cannot expect someone who, in essence, rejects the salvific Jesus of Scripture to uphold the precepts of His Book when in office; theirs is a religion of another kind,

one of their own making—as they themselves have proudly admitted!¹

Having just expanded the scope of the principle found in 1 Timothy 1 to include its being a criterion for leadership in the State by way of parallel passages found in the book of Proverbs, let us now move to a second aspect relative to the Bible’s being the best voter’s guide. We have seen that Paul is emphatically opposed to unbelievers leading the Church. In parallel fashion, Solomon states that it will not go well for a nation when the wicked are in charge. We’ve concluded that its always better to promote a Christ follower into State leadership than someone who is not. But there are other factors to consider as well.

IV. DOES THE CANDIDATE HAVE BIBLICAL CHARACTER QUALITIES? 1 TIMOTHY 3

The second biblical criterion to weigh regarding whom to promote to elected office is personal character qualities. In 1 Timothy 3 Paul delineates to new Pastor Timothy the character qualities to look for in those who would be church leaders.²

In chapter 3 Paul addresses a most pertinent subject relative to this Bible study: if it is emphatic that a leader in God’s institution of the Church possess certain character qualities, does it not follow that a leader in God’s institution of the State also have certain character qualities? The answer is yes! Such is borne out by this:

The same character qualities that are listed in 1 Timothy 3 are

expounded upon in the book of Proverbs.¹

The same qualifications for leadership in the Church are in plain view in Proverbs. A comparison of such is in order. In 1 Timothy 3, relative to an overseer and a deacon (two different specific roles of leadership in the Church spoken of by Paul, cf. 3:1–7 and 3:8–13, respectively), certain specific character qualities must be present (cf. 3:2, 4, 7, 8, 11). In fact, Paul lists for the first office of overseer seven positive character qualities followed by requiring the absence of four negative character qualities and then followed by three expounded-upon character qualities—a litmus test of fourteen different important considerations in total! Note then in the passage:

A. THE SEVEN POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS

It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of an overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach (1 Timothy 3:1–2).

B. THE FOUR NEGATIVE CHARACTERISTICS

Not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money (1 Timothy 3: 3).

C. THE THREE EXPOUNDED CHARACTERISTICS

He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a



man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?) and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil (1 Timothy 3:4–7).

These 14 character qualities are similarly present in the book of Proverbs minus one: being male is not a requirement for leadership in the State whereas it is in the institution of the Church. Being a male is required for those who would be an elder/overseer/shepherd—versus a

deacon; female deacons are listed. Male-only leadership in the Church is specifically mentioned in verse 1 (*if any man aspires to the office of overseer*) and implied in verse 2 (*the husband of one wife*) and in verse 4 (*He must be one who manages his own household well*)—when this book was penned, only men ran households). Much space could be spent in this study comparing all 14 characteristics between 1 Timothy and Proverbs. Below is a comparison of five qualities (of random selection) to underscore this point. Below, Paul instructs Timothy regarding Church leadership criteria in ways similar to how Solomon instructed Rehoboam relative to State leadership.

PARALLELS BETWEEN 1 TIMOTHY AND PROVERBS	
1 Timothy 3	Proverbs
<i>Above Reproach (3:2, 7)</i>	<i>A good name is to be more desired than great wealth (22:1)</i>
<i>Husband of one wife (3:2)</i>	<i>That they may keep you from an adulteress (7:5)</i>
<i>Gentle (3:3)</i>	<i>Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in the right circumstances (25:11)</i>
<i>Not pugnacious (3:3)</i>	<i>There is one who speaks rashly (12:18)</i>
<i>Keeping his children under control (3:4)</i>	<i>A child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother (29:15)</i>
<i>How will he take care of the church of God? (3:5)</i>	<i>Know well the condition of your flocks (27:23)</i>

PUBLIC SERVANT QUOTE

Kevin Cramer

U.S. Senator, North Dakota



“The United States of America was founded on Christian values. Today, in large part, America’s deep divide is not caused by policy makers who are too stubborn to work together; it is caused by a disagreement on whose values our policies and laws should be based upon—eternal biblical values that our nation was built upon or the trendy and unstable secular beliefs of men that change with the wind.

“This Bible study shows us how to fix that. Anchored in Scripture, this study reveals the characteristics that God proclaims should be possessed by the men and women who govern. It serves as a clarion call to all Christians who promote candidates, lead their campaigns, fund their races, and vote. We need more Christians in public office. God has provided the blueprint. All we need to do is follow Him.”

— SEN. KEVIN CRAMER



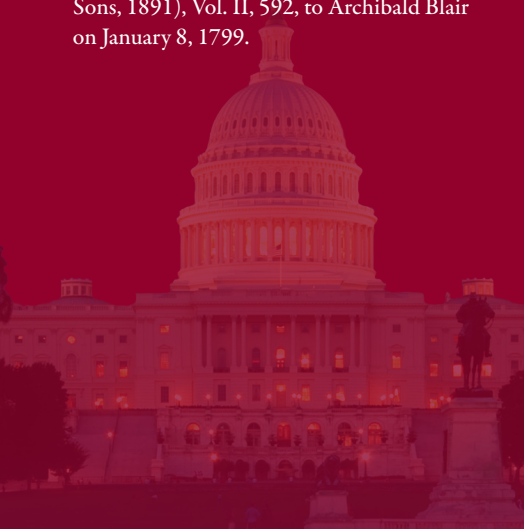
Patrick Henry



“The great pillars of all government and of social life [are] virtue, morality, and religion. This is the armor, my friend, and this alone, that renders us invincible.”

— Patrick Henry, U.S. Revolutionary War general, legislator, “The Voice of Liberty,” ratifier of the U.S. Constitution, governor of Virginia.

Patrick Henry, *Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence and Speeches*, William Wirt Henry, editor (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1891), Vol. II, 592, to Archibald Blair on January 8, 1799.



Perhaps the better part of this point in this study outline is to ask an even bigger, inherent question of comparison. In 1 Timothy 3 Paul calls the Church leaders by two specific words in the Greek: *episcopos* and *diakonia*. *Episcopos* is translated as **overseer** (in v. 2) and *diakonia* is translated as **deacon** and **female deacon** (in vv. 8, 11). But elsewhere in other passages of the NT, the leader in the Church has simultaneous titles descriptive of yet other characteristics. In both 1 Peter 5 and in Acts 20, those who are called *episcopos* are also called *presbuteros* and *poimen* (cf. 1 Peter 5:1–4 and Acts 20:17–28). This insight adds to the comparison being made as follows:

Episcopos

Translated **overseer** or **bishop**, this word choice refers to the managerial and executive skill of the Church leader. *Episcopos* is descriptive of what the leader does in his job.

Presbuteros

Translated **elder**, this word choice refers to the wisdom and ethos of the Church leader. *Presbuteros* is descriptive of who the leader is as a person.

Poimen

Translated **shepherd**, this word choice refers to the friendliness and interpersonal concerns of the Church leader. *Poimen* is descriptive of the leader’s attitude relative to what he does.

A fourth characteristic is also found in 1 Timothy 3:2, relative to what Paul says is a qualifier for leadership in the Church: **able to teach**. The Greek word used is *didaskalos*, literally “called to be didactic.” This word is also used in conjunction with and descriptive of the same person in Ephesians 4:11–12, where the Word of God says that (relative to leadership in the Church) God **gave some as poimen kai didaskalos**. The structure here means that the pastor is a teacher, and the teacher is a pastor; they are one in the same.

The above insight adds to the litmus test: these leaders **must** have not only the 14 characteristics previously mentioned, but also skill, wisdom, and the ability to shepherd hearts, as well as the ability to teach others God’s truths. What a tall order! The question that must at this point be answered relates to those four qualities. Are those qualities also ones that someone should look for in a candidate running for State office? I believe the answer remains yes! Allow me to defend that proposition.

One of many examples is found in Proverbs 10:12. In this Scripture, Solomon lists a shepherding quality that is desirable in a good State leader. He knows that **Hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all transgressions**. He also states (in a passage previously mentioned) that Rehoboam ought to **know well the condition of your** [his] **flocks** (27:23), which must be taken as a shepherding metaphor since Proverbs is intended to prepare one for higher office in public service—not life on the farm. In other words, a state leader needs to possess shepherding skills in his leadership of people in the nation. Many more parallels could be cited between 1 Timothy 3 and Proverbs to make the point that a



good State leader has a shepherd's heart. We will see in the next point a ghastly example of a State leader who did not possess a shepherd's heart! More obviously, he needs to be skilled at leadership (*overseer*), possess a good reputation (*elder*), and be able to teach to be an effective State leader.

In a more general sense, all the 14 characteristics of leadership—plus these four additional ones listed in 1 Timothy 3, I Peter 5, Acts 20, and Ephesians 4—should be strived for by every believer. But they are mandatory for a Church leader and should be desired in a State leader—by the candidate himself, as well as by those who decide to promote and fund him and those who would decide to vote for him. Let us now move on to the third very important characteristic in need of consideration.

V. IS THE CANDIDATE A “NEW PLANT”? 1 TIMOTHY 3:6

This specific verse is one needing special emphasis in the verses in 1 Timothy 3 already expounded upon. It relates to a mandatory requirement in selecting someone who would lead in the institution of Church, but there is direct applicability to the State: *and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil.*

The Greek words translated *and not a new convert* literally mean *not a new plant*. Such literalness leads to its conceptual transferability. Paul is saying to Pastor Timothy, “Don’t elevate spiritual novices.” Leadership requires seasoned individuals, be it spiritual leadership or any other kind of leadership, including political.

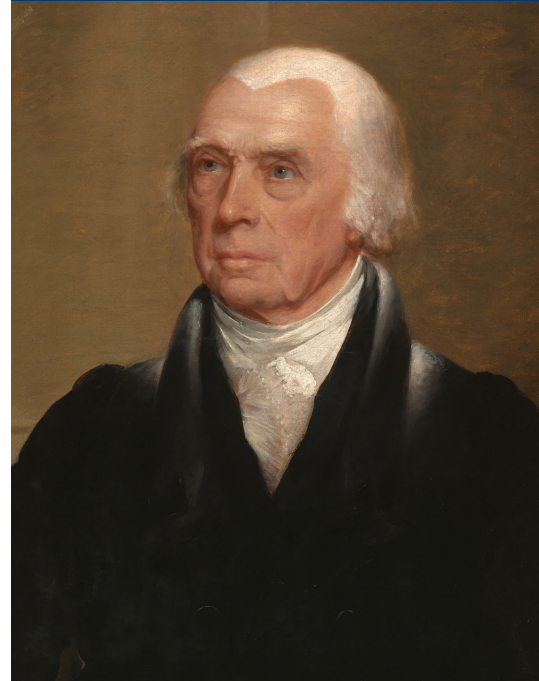
Bear with me as I share some additional background related to what Paul is saying in this verse. He is speaking in an antidotal tone. What follows is insight into what had happened because of the previous violation of this principle in the Ephesian church.

Acts 17:1 and 2 state: *Now when they had traveled through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. And according to Paul’s custom, he went to them, and for three Sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures.* This passage is in keeping with Paul’s original calling in Acts 9:15, after Jesus personally blinded him and told him through His messenger, Ananias, to take the gospel to the Jews. Furthermore, as it specifically relates to the start of the church in Ephesus, note what Acts 18:19 states:

They came to Ephesus, and he [Paul] left them there. Now he himself entered the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews.

The young Ephesian church likely contained Jewish converts because of Paul’s missionary strategy. Those young believers were perhaps the “Judaizers” recorded in 1 Timothy 1 who, years later, were now leading the Church astray in terms of the doctrine of salvation. Note 1 Timothy 1:7 in this regard where Paul says: *wanting to be teachers of the Law [OT law], even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.* The point for stating all this is that these heretics were new plants! It follows that Paul would warn Timothy relative to the viability and longevity of the Church, not to elevate new plants to leadership positions!

James Madison



“Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm.”

— James Madison, signer of the Constitution, author of *The Federalist Papers*, framer of the Bill of Rights, secretary of state, fourth president of the United States.

James Madison, *Federalist No. 10*, November 23, 1787.





John Quincy Adams



“Why is it, friends and fellow citizens, that you are here assembled? [for 4th of July celebrations] ... Is it not that, in the chain of human events, the birthday of the nation is indissolubly linked with the birthday of the Savior? That it forms a leading event in the progress of the gospel dispensation? Is it not that the Declaration of Independence first organized the social compact on the foundation of the Redeemer’s mission upon earth? That it laid the corner stone of human government upon the first precepts of Christianity, and gave to the world the first irrevocable pledge of the fulfillment of the prophecies, announced directly from Heaven at the birth of the Savior and predicted by the greatest of the Hebrew prophets six hundred years before?”

— John Quincy Adams, sixth president of the United States, diplomat, secretary of state, U.S. senator, U.S. representative, “Old Man Eloquent,” “Hellhound of Abolition.”

John Quincy Adams, *An Oration Delivered before the Inhabitants of the Town of Newburyport on the Sixty-First Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1837* (Newburyport, MA: Mores & Brewster, 1837), 5–6.

They can lead the institution in the wrong direction! Leaders take greater risks than necessary when elevating new plants.

The question then becomes the following: is this a transferable principle relative to elevating someone to leadership in the State? Oh, yes, it is!

In 1 Kings 11:43 to 12:14, the narrative passage records what happened when a non-believing (point III), void of character (point IV) *new plant* (point V) takes power in the institution of the State: he destroys the nation.

And Solomon slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of his father David, and his son Rehoboam reigned in his place. Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. Now when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it, he was living in Egypt (for he was yet in Egypt, where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon). Then they sent and called him, and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and spoke to Rehoboam, saying, “Your father made our yoke hard; now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us, and we will serve you.” Then he said to them, “Depart for three days, then return to me.” So the people departed. King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who had served his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, “How do you counsel me to answer this people?” Then they spoke to him, saying, “If you will be a servant to this people today, and will serve them and grant them their petition, and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.” But he forsook the counsel of the elders which

they had given him, and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him. So he said to them, “What counsel do you give that we may answer this people who have spoken to me, saying, ‘Lighten the yoke which your father put on us?’” The young men who grew up with him spoke to him, saying, “Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you, saying: ‘Your father made our yoke heavy, now you make it lighter for us!’ But you shall speak to them: ‘My little finger is thicker than my father’s loins! Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’”

Remember, the book of Proverbs was meant by Solomon to prepare his son Rehoboam for State leadership. Obviously from this passage, Rehoboam didn’t take his father’s teaching to heart—to say the least! Rehoboam rejected all the godly criteria of Proverbs! The *new plant* had fallen off the turnip truck! Among the proverbs that are most specifically violated are the following:

An inheritance gained hurriedly in the beginning will not be blessed in the end (20:21).

Rehoboam elevated a bunch of *new plants* to State leadership positions—in addition to himself.

Like an archer who wounds everyone, so is he who hires a fool or who hires those who pass by (26:10).

Rehoboam himself, not being a God-fearing individual nor having displayed any personal character (the first of the three points in this outline), was a



new plant who hired a bunch of other *new plants* who ended up *wounding everyone* around them! Instead of listening to the *elders*, Rehoboam listened to the inexperienced, unseasoned, and uninformed *new plants*!

This passage serves to make the following point:

Promoting new plants to positions of leadership in the State is to take undue risk.

Rehoboam foolishly discarded the *elders* of his father’s cabinet and instead *hired* a bunch of unproven *fools*. What resulted was the downfall of the nation. This too is a transferable characteristic as it pertains to biblical principles related to voting wisely.

Of course, if a candidate is strong in Christ, has displayed Christian character for years, and yet is new in terms of running for office, this being his first sortie into that arena, the risk of his being a *new plant* is lessened. Whereas if the person is not a believer, has no Christian character, and is gunning for office for the first time—well, that is a very risky proposition in terms of his or her elevation to public service.

It follows that to reject this teaching and argue, “We are voting for a President—not a pastor,” perhaps to assuage your conscience and/or minimize the candidate’s flaws, does not square with what we have just learned from Scripture.

If you are among those who believe this, my prayer is that this Bible study will provide you with a biblical perspective on political leadership that you may not have considered.

VI. SUMMARY

The three insights from Scripture we’ve examined serve to inform us as to whom we should promote and/or vote for—whom we should elevate into the leadership of the State—as that choice will largely determine the direction and viability of the nation.

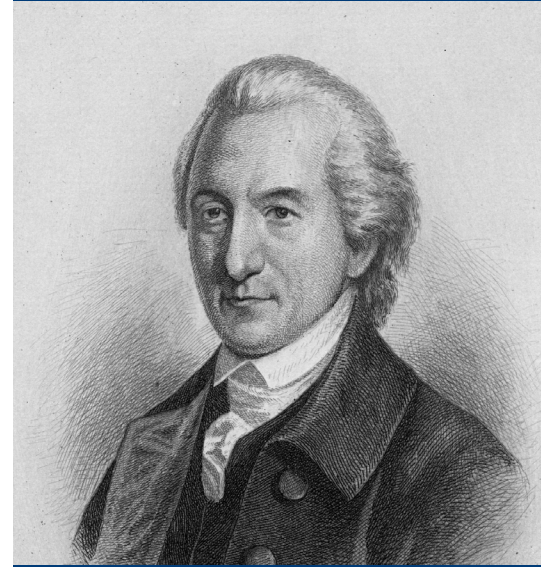
When you and I take into consideration these three scriptural insights, we limit our risks relative to elevating a person who will hurt rather than heal our nation.

Today’s deep divide in America is largely due to the ignorance or disregard of biblical wisdom pertaining to this matter. We now possess that wisdom from God’s Word.

There is hope! If today we begin to promote for civil leadership those who speak clearly about having bowed the knee to the Lordship of Christ, those who have manifested godly character over a long period of time, and those who are not novices (rather than those who attempt to parachute into the highest offices in the land with no related experience), then we can achieve a “better batting average,” sustain our nation, and heal the divide by having the right people in office to do exactly that.

May God give us such wisdom from the pages of His Holy Writ.

John Dickinson



“[Governments] could not give the rights essential to happiness. ... We claim them from a higher source: from the King of kings, and Lord of all the earth.”

— John Dickinson, signer of the Declaration of Independence, governor of Pennsylvania, governor of Delaware, general in the American Revolution.

From his last will and testament, attested on September 21, 1840.





1. Kirsopp Lake, *The Religion of Yesterday and Tomorrow*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925), 61–62. Prior to the invasion and onslaught of liberal Protestantism, American Protestantism was commonly and synonymously referred to as American Fundamentalism. That was the only brand, the singular brand of Protestantism; there was no competing form of Protestantism. With that in mind, notice the following quote from leading liberal theologian Kirsopp Lake during the time of the introduction of his brand. It is quite revealing and damaging to his theological revisionist cause: “It is a mistake, often made by educated persons who happen to have but little knowledge of historical theology, to suppose that Fundamentalism is a new and strange form of thought. It is nothing of the kind; it is the . . . survival of a theology which was once universally held by all Christians . . . The Fundamentalist may be wrong; I think that he is. But it is we who have departed from the tradition, not he, and I am sorry for the fate of anyone who tries to argue with a Fundamentalist on the basis of authority. The Bible and the *corpus theologicum* of the Church is on the Fundamentalist side.”
2. This listing of qualities for leadership follows chapter 2 wherein Paul is taking a subgroup approach to answering questions posed in 1 Timothy 3:15 **regarding how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God**. In brief, chapter 2 addresses three subgroups: (1) The surrounding health of the State by praying for those in authority (2:1–7); (2) the role of men in the Church (2:8); and (3) the role of women in the Church (2:9–15). But those matters do not relate so much to the issue being examined.



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