

Scriptural Examples of Proper Leadership Standards, Accountability, and Spiritual Integrity

(New Testament) Leaders Called Out for Sin

- **Pharisees:** Hypocrisy, legalism, pride (Matthew 23)
- **Judas Iscariot:** Greed, betrayal (John 12; Matthew 26)
- **Diotrephes:** Love of preeminence, excommunication of others (3 John 9–10)
- **Simon the Sorcerer:** Tried to buy the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:18–23)
- **Ananias and Sapphira:** Deception and lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1–11)
- **Peter:** Hypocrisy and fear of man (Galatians 2:11–14)
- **Hymenaeus and Alexander:** Blasphemy and rejection of faith (1 Timothy 1:19–20)
- **Jezebel (Revelation):** False prophecy and leading others into immorality (Revelation 2:20–23)

Scriptures Indicating God's DISAPPROVAL of Publicly calling out sin (when done improperly):

- **Private confrontation must be first (Matthew 18)**
 - Private correction before public exposure.
 - God desires reconciliation and discretion before escalating to public action.
- **Love seeks to cover and restore rather than to shame or stir conflict (Prov 10:12).**
 - Public exposure that stems from hate or revenge is contrary to God's heart.
- **Potential gossip or slander when a confidence is betrayed (Proverbs 11:13)**
 - Any truth must be weighed when publicized. Does it violate trust? Will it clarify truth or create unnecessary gossip? Consider the ramifications before sharing.
- **God seeks restoration more than humiliation (Galatians 6:1)**
 - Hypocritical judgment invites God's rebuke. Calling out others while ignoring your own sin is condemned.
 - Maintain a clear conscience when exposing sin, having exhausted every other avenue of restoration, first.
- **Charging others of wrongdoing to make yourself look better (Matt 6:1-4)**
 - Motives of pride, self-glory, or showmanship in correction are rebuked by God.

Public Rebuke is approved when:

- The person is a leader and the sin is public (Galatians 2:11-14; 1 Timothy 5:20).
- All private means have failed (Matthew 18).
- The issue threatens the purity of the Church or gospel message (Titus 1:10-13).
- God's standard is always truth in love and His goal is REPENTANCE, not humiliation.

Positive Examples of Spiritual Accountability

Nathan Confronts David - 2 Samuel 12:1–14

Situation: Nathan confronts King David after his sin with Bathsheba and Uriah's murder.
 Accountability: Nathan uses a parable to awaken David's conscience and calls out his sin.
 Response: David repents, saying, 'I have sinned against the Lord.'
 Consequence: The child dies, but David is restored spiritually and continues leading.

Paul Confronts Peter - Galatians 2:11–14

Situation: Peter withdraws from Gentiles out of fear of the circumcision party.
 Accountability: Paul publicly rebukes Peter for hypocrisy.
 Response: Peter is corrected; the gospel is preserved.
 Consequence: Truth is upheld, and Peter continues in ministry.

Church Discipline - Matt 18:15–17; 1 Corinthians 5:1–5; 2 Corinthians 2:6–8

Situation: Paul instructs the church to discipline a sexually immoral man.
 Accountability: Church enforces discipline following Jesus' process.
 Response: Man later repents and is restored.
 Consequence: Restoration and integrity in the church community.

Negative Examples of Lack of Accountability

Eli and His Sons - 1 Samuel 2:12–36; 3:11–14

Situation: Eli's sons abuse priestly roles; Eli fails to remove them.
 Accountability: Weak rebuke without enforcement.
 Consequence: Judgment—death of sons and Eli.

King Saul's Disobedience - 1 Samuel 15

Situation: Saul disobeys God's command regarding Amalekites.
 Accountability: Samuel confronts Saul, but Saul blames others.
 Consequence: Kingdom is taken away from Saul.

Churches Tolerating False Teachers - Revelation 2:14–15, 20

Situation: Churches tolerate heresies (e.g., Nicolaitans, Jezebel).
 Accountability: No action taken against false teaching.
 Consequence: Jesus threatens judgment and discipline.

SINS THAT DISQUALIFY LEADERS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The NT outlines specific moral, doctrinal, behavioral, and spiritual failures that disqualify leaders. *NOTE the different categories of sin CLARIFIES both WHY these are called out and HOW they should be dealt with...(not all may have the same repercussions or consequences, but all are legitimate errors).*

FOUR CATEGORIES OF DISQUALIFYING SINS:

**When calling out various leaders, which category would they fit under? Not all have moral failings, and not all have compromised core doctrines. The more specific the “charge,” the more credible the case.*

MORAL FAILURES (Character-focused relating to personal holiness and integrity): Sexual immorality, greed, drunkenness, violence.

1 Timothy 3:2-7

Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Titus 1:6-9

If anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

1 Timothy 5:21-22

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of the elect angels I charge you to keep these rules without prejudging, doing nothing from partiality. Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, nor take part in the sins of others; keep yourself pure.

- These sins are grievous and could permanently disqualify any minister based on the longevity of the sin and/or their response to it.

- It is SEXUAL IMMORALITY that has been the PRIMARY SIN the Lord has called out since these exposures began.
- Moral failures indicate someone is NOT ABOVE REPROACH
 - Those who have feigned repentance but still have many charges against them are NOT above reproach. This is repeatedly condemned in Scripture for any God-fearing leader. This bar must be raised back up.

DOCTRINAL ERROR (Teaching False Doctrine): Preaching another gospel, denying Christ.

Galatians 1:6-8

I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

2 Peter 2:2-3

And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep.

1 Timothy 1:3-7

As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. Certain persons, by swerving from these, have wandered away into vain discussion, desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions.

2 Timothy 4:3-5

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

1 John 1:8

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

- Sound doctrine refers to teachings that align with the apostolic message, promote godliness, and center on Christ (Romans 1:16-17).
- Teachings that promote legalism or lawlessness are condemned.
- Twisting Scripture for personal gain is a violation of God's character and Word.
- Here are the CORE ESSENTIALS of the Gospel which are the STANDARD for every believer/leader:
 - Deity of Christ (John 1:1–14, Colossians 2:9)
 - Humanity of Christ (Hebrews 2:17, Philippians 2:6–8)
 - Substitutionary Atonement (Isaiah 53, Romans 5:8)
 - Resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:3–4, Romans 10:9)
 - Salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8–9, Galatians 2:16)
 - Repentance and new birth (Acts 2:38, John 3:3)
 - Lordship of Christ (Romans 10:9, Luke 9:23)
 - Final judgment (Acts 17:30–31, Revelation 20:11–15)

One example of doctrinal error is found in Revelation 2:6 and 2:15 – the “sin of the Nicolaitans.” Their teachings were likely a form of early Gnosticism. Promoted idolatry and sexual immorality. They twisted grace to excuse sin; appealed to Christian liberty but led people into compromise. Condemned by Jesus: “You hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.”

Note: Much of the “grace” message in the Charismatic movement could fall in this category.

- See notes at the bottom detailing how supernatural (“prophetic”) experiences and encounters have become DOCTRINES OF MAN and strayed from SOUND DOCTRINE.

SPIRITUAL DECEPTION (Leading People Astray):

Hypocrisy, false anointing, lawlessness.

Matthew 7:21-23

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”

2 Corinthians 11:13-15

For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his

servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.

1 Timothy 6:3-5

If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

Jude 1:4

For certain people have crept in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

- Operating in signs or charisma but lacking obedience.
 - Focusing on gifts and anointing more than character.
- Pretending to be righteous outwardly but corrupt inwardly.
- Claiming visions or revelations that contradict Scripture.
- Being led by sensuality, not the Spirit. Many leaders falling into this category believe they are defending the work of the Spirit when, in fact, they are following another spirit.
- Being led by favoritism, familiarity, or blind loyalty.
 - Some leaders are under deception due to ungodly soul ties and associations.
- The current dysfunctional Charismatic system has bred deception and spiritual blindness.

BEHAVIORAL CORRUPTION (Spiritual Abuse):

Manipulation, divisiveness, authoritarianism

Ezekiel 34:2-5

“Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them, even to the shepherds, Thus says the Lord God: Ah, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding yourselves! Should not shepherds feed the sheep? You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat ones, but you do not feed the sheep. The weak you have not strengthened, the sick you have not healed, the injured you have not bound up, the strayed you have not brought back, the lost you have not sought, and with force and harshness you have ruled them. So they were scattered, because there was no shepherd, and they became food for all the wild beasts.

Matthew 20:25-28

But Jesus called them to him and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Romans 16:17-18

I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.

Acts 20:29-30

I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

3 John 1:9-10

I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority. So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church.

Abusing authority. Void of servant-hearted leadership.

- Exploiting or controlling people (due to your influence or popularity).
- Causing division or discord (usually due to pride and arrogance).
- Seeking personal fame or followers.
- Failing to care for the flock. Lack of giving proper oversight to those you are raising up.

These behaviors are most evident in leadership practices and protocols. Creating unhealthy eco-systems where spiritual authority is weaponized and used to promote an individual, a teaching, or a ministry.

SCRIPTURES THAT DEFINE SPIRITUAL ABUSE

Spiritual abuse involves control, manipulation, exploitation, or using religious authority for self-gain.

- **Abusive authority and manipulation:**
 - Ezekiel 34 – Self-serving shepherds who neglect the sheep.
 - 3 John 9-10 – Diotrefes, a self-exalting leader controlling others and rejecting correction.
 - Matthew 20:25-28 – Rulers of the Gentiles “lord” over the people. Don’t serve.
- **Hypocrisy and Legalism**
 - Matthew 23 – Religious leaders impose rules, seek recognition, and neglect justice, mercy, and humility.
 - Luke 11:46 – Leaders “load people with burdens” – enforce religious control without compassion.
- **False Shepherds and Deceit**
 - Jeremiah 23:1-2 – They scatter the sheep and damage the flock.
 - 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 – False apostles and deceitful leaders may appear spiritual but are serving self or Satan.
- **Exploitation and Greed**
 - 2 Peter 2:1-3 – False teachers exploit with lies/false words (using flattery or fear)
 - Micah 3:11 – Leaders using God’s name to justify corrupt control. Using people for money or power.
- **Control, Fear, and Coercion**
 - Galatians 2:4 – False leaders seek to enslave rather than free.
 - 2 Timothy 3:5-6 – Leaders with spiritual appearances but corrupt motives, preying on the vulnerable.
- **Withholding Access to God or Truth**
 - Matthew 23:13 – Spiritual abuse includes making access to God seem impossible or dependent on the leader (keeping people from intimacy with God).

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

Scriptural Examples of Leaders Who Enabled or Covered Sin

- Eli: Did not restrain his corrupt sons (1 Samuel 3:13)
- Saul: Feared man more than God, failed to fully obey (1 Samuel 15:24)
- Aaron: Created the golden calf to appease the people (Exodus 32:21-24)
- Jehoshaphat: Allied with wicked kings (2 Chronicles 19:2)
- Church in Corinth: Tolerated sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 5:1-5)

Scriptural Examples of Favoritism and Bias (rampant in current dysfunctional system)

The Bible warns against showing favoritism or bias, particularly in leadership and within the church. God is impartial, and His people are called to reflect that character.

James' Rebuke of Favoritism (James 2:1–9)

- Situation: Rich people given special honor, poor dishonored in church.
- Principle: Favoritism is a sin and violates the law of love.

Paul Rebukes Peter (Galatians 2:11–14)

- Situation: Peter withdrew from Gentiles to please Jewish believers.
- Principle: Hypocrisy and ethnic bias undermine the gospel.

Paul to Timothy on Leadership Impartiality (1 Timothy 5:21)

- Command: "Do nothing from partiality."
- Principle: Church discipline and leadership must be unbiased.

Samuel's Error in Choosing a King (1 Samuel 16:6–7)

- Situation: Samuel favored Eliab based on appearance.
- Principle: God looks at the heart, not external traits.

Jesus' Example (Matthew 22:16)

- Observation: Jesus shows no partiality in truth or treatment.
- Principle: Christ is the model of impartial justice and love.

Romans 2:11 – "God shows no partiality." This foundational truth should shape leadership, judgment, and relationships in the church.

Further Scriptural Evidence of Unhealthy Loyalties and Commitments

The Bible gives multiple examples of unhealthy loyalties, favoritism, or misplaced commitments that lead to sin, broken relationships, and even national consequences.

1. Jacob and His Sons Joseph and Benjamin (Genesis 37:3–4; 42:38)

- Favored Joseph and Benjamin above his other sons.
- Caused division, jealousy, and betrayal among siblings.

2. Isaac and Rebekah (Genesis 25:28)

- Isaac favored Esau; Rebekah favored Jacob.
- Created a divided home, manipulation, and deceit.

3. **Eli's Sons (1 Samuel 2:22–25; 3:13)**

- Failed to restrain his wicked sons.
- God judged his household for honoring them over obedience to Him.

4. **Saul's Rash Oath and Jonathan (1 Samuel 14:24–45)**

- Saul made a foolish vow and almost executed his son.
- Showed erratic leadership influenced by pressure.

5. **David and Absalom (2 Samuel 13–14)**

- David's leniency and delayed justice allowed rebellion to grow.
- Nearly cost him the kingdom.

6. **Pilate and the Crowd (Matthew 27:24)**

- Sought approval of the crowd rather than upholding justice.
- Sentenced Jesus to death despite recognizing His innocence.

Biblical Principle:

Romans 2:11 – “God shows no partiality.”

Deuteronomy 1:17 – “You shall not be partial in judgment.”

Spiritual and relational health requires loyalty to truth and God above all else.