

Portrait of a Christian Who is Above Reproach

➤ = next PowerPoint slide

➤ Intro:

- **Heb. 5:11-14** the responsibility of every Christian is to grow, become spiritually mature
 - those who do that are above reproach and blameless
- **2 Pet. 1:3-11** Peter explains the process of maturing in the Lord, and staying strong
 - **vs. 3-4** we are **partakers of God's divine nature**, having been granted everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge God
 - **vs. 5-7** **applying all diligence**
 - in your **faith** supply **moral excellence**
 - and in your moral excellence, **knowledge**
 - and in your knowledge, **self-control**
 - and in your self-control, **perseverance**
 - and in your perseverance, **godliness**
 - and in your godliness, **brotherly kindness**
 - and in your brotherly kindness, **love**
 - **vs. 8** if these qualities are increasing, they **render us neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge** of Jesus Christ
 - **mature Christian, above reproach and blameless**
 - **vs. 10** as long as we practice these things, you will **never stumble**
 - **vs. 11** for in this way the **entrance into the eternal kingdom** of our Lord Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied
- **series:** Portrait of a Christian Who is Above Reproach

➤ Qualifications of elders paint a picture of a Christian who's above reproach

- **1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:5-9** qualifications of elders
- 2 - **PP: summarize qualifications**
 - **qualifications are applicable to all Christians, with few exceptions**
 - **marriage and having children** are optional, personal preference
 - **hospitality may not be possible in some circumstances**, such as taking care of invalid family members
 - **not everyone is apt to teach**, but everyone can "help" teach people
 - **illus.: Paul qualified as elder and deacon, except he wasn't married and didn't have children** – not married and not have children
 - **doesn't mean he was less of a Christian**, or not as valuable as a servant of God, but that his experience and talents lie in other areas than shepherding Christians in a local congregation
 - **remainder of lesson:** take these attribute and discuss individually, which paint a picture of a mature Christian who is above reproach
 - follow 1 Timothy, and add info from Titus as it relates

- Mature Christians are **aspiring (desiring) to serve God to the best of their abilities** (1 Tim.)
 - **1 Tim. 3:1** **aspire** (ambition to do something), **desire** (strong feeling, want, wish) **to be elder**
 - mature Christians don't necessarily aspire to be elders (e.g., women), but they aspire to serve God
 - **illus.:** people have many ambitions
 - some are ambitious professionally, to have a prestigious and high paying job
 - some are ambitious socially, to be the most popular person (e.g., school)
 - but as Christians, our ambitions are first focused on serving God, then focused on earthly things
 - **Mk. 12:30** love God with all heart, soul, mind, strength
 - **Matt. 6:33** seek first God and His kingdom, worldly things added to us
- - **2 Tim. 3:12** **desire to live godly**
 - **Gal. 5:16-17** **not desire to live ungodly** by fulfilling the desires of the flesh
 - **strong feelings, wants and wishes, toward serving God, not toward sin**
 - hate sin, abhor evil, flee lusts
- - **1 Th. 4:11** **ambition to lead a quiet life, attend to own business, work with our hands**
 - **Ja. 3:14, 16** **not have self ambition**
 - **not in everybody's business** – busybody
 - content to take care of own business, and stay out of everyone else's
- - **2 Cor. 8:11** **desire to do good deeds, and must see that we follow through** – e.g., Corinthians, benevolence
 - **Tit. 2:14** **zealous** (lit. a zealot, an uncompromising partisan) **for good deeds**
 - **1 Pet. 3:13** **zealous** (lit. a zealot, an uncompromising partisan) **for what is good**
- - **2 Cor. 5:9** **ambition to please God**, whether home or absent (earth or eternity)
- - **2 Cor. 5:1-2** **so we groan, desiring to depart this life and go to heaven**
 - **Phil. 1:23, 24** **desire to depart and be with the Lord**, but happy to stay on earth for benefit of others
 - **Heb. 11:16** **desire a better country, heaven**
- **review above**
- **thought questions:**
 - What are you ambitious for most of all? – desire more than anything else?
 - What do you wake up wanting to do more than anything else in life?
 - What are you striving to obtain more than any other?

- **Mature Christians are above reproach (blameless)** (1 Tim.; Tit.)
 - **1 Tim. 3:2a above reproach (blameless):** a person to whom a charge of sin cannot be sustained, irreproachable, unrebukable
- - **1 Tim. 6:11-14 to be above reproach (blameless)** we must
 - **vs. 11 flee sin**, pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance, gentleness
 - **vs. 12 fight the good fight, taking hold of eternal life**
 - **vs. 14 keeping the commandments of God – above reproach**
- - **illus.: widows and their family above reproach (blameless)**
 - **1 Tim. 5:3-8** commanded to prescribe these things regarding widows and their family, so they will be above reproach – blameless of sin, as children who honor their parents – vs. 7, so above reproach
 - **vs. 9-16** qualifications of widows who can be put on the list
- **Mature Christians are above reproach (blameless):**
 - **fleeing** from sin and pursuing the righteous thing of God
 - **fighting** the good fight
 - **taking hold** of eternal life
 - **keeping** the commandments of God
- **thought questions:**
 - **Are you aspiring to serve God** to the best of your ability?
 - **Are you above reproach and blameless**, fleeing sin and pursuing the things of God with all your might?
- **note:** things talked about below is a description of a person above reproach – a mature Christian

End Part I: Summary / Inv.

- **mature Christians are aspiring to serve God to the best of their ability, and above reproach**
- **inv.**

➤ **Beginning: Part II**

- **Heb. 5:12-14** responsibility to grow and mature, desiring to please God and be above reproach

- **2 - PP:** review qualifications of elders from 1 Tim. and Tit. (SR - 1 Tim. 3:1-7)
 - **all mature Christians should meet with few exceptions** – marriage, children, hospitality in extreme cases

 - **series:** Portrait of a Christian Who is Above Reproach

- **A Christian above reproach is in a lawful marriage, if he's married** (1 Tim.; Tit.)
 - **1 Tim. 3:2a** qualification of elder: husband of one wife – in a lawful marriage
 - **Christians have the option to marry, but men qualified to be elders must be married**

- - **Matt. 5:32; 19:9** married, neither individual divorced before unless divorced spouse for fornication (*porneia*)
 - **Christian above reproach who is married will be in a lawful marriage** – the husband or wife of one person

- - **1 Cor. 7:7, 25-26, 32-35, 36** people who don't marry have advantages over those who marry
 - **illus.: Paul** had advantages over other apostles, because he was free from the care and responsibility of a wife

 - **we all have different talents and abilities, sometimes because of our station in life**
 - **if we are unmarried**, we have benefits that help us serve the Lord
 - **illus.: Paul** was free from the care and responsibility of a wife that helped him in service to the Lord in some areas
 - **if we are married**, we have benefits that help us serve the Lord
 - **illus.: Peter** had a wife which helped him in service to the Lord in other areas – elder
 - **the important thing** is not being married or unmarried, but serving the Lord to the best of our ability

 - **thought question:**
 - **Are you serving the Lord to the best of your ability**, taking advantage of your station in life to the progress of the gospel?
 - **Are you a Christian who is above reproach?**

➤ A Christian above reproach is **temperate** (1 Tim.)

- **1 Tim. 3:2a** qualification of elder: **temperate**

- the Greek word here (*nephaleos*) directly relates to intoxicates

- Christians, not intoxicated and therefore sober, vigilant, watchful

- one who is intoxicated cannot be sober, vigilant, watchful

- thus, a temperate Christian is vigilant and sober, watchful over his own conduct, and on guard against every form of sin

➤ - **1 Th. 5:4-8** we are to be alert and sober, not like people who get drunk, having faith, love, hope, salvation

➤ - **2 Tim. 4:5** we are sober in all things

➤ - **1 Pet. 1:13** we prepare our minds for action, keeping sober in spirit

➤ - **1 Pet. 4:7** we are sober in spirit for the purpose of prayer, the end of all things is near

➤ - **1 Pet. 5:8** we are sober in spirit, on the alert, devil

➤ - because we are sober, we can be watchful for our souls

- **2 Jn. 1:8** we are watchful over our souls, that we don't lost our salvation

➤ - **Heb. 13:17a** elders watch over our souls, and will give an account

- Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless? – temperate, vigilant, watchful, alert

➤ A Christian above reproach is **prudent** (sober, sober-minded) (1 Tim.; Tit.)

- **1 Tim. 3:2b** prudent (sober, sober-minded)

- Greek (*sophron*): person of sound mind, controlling his desires and impulses and thus prudent, sensible, sober-minded

- person not under the control of his passions, but rather in control of his thoughts and feelings

➤ - **Tit. 1:8** qualification of elder, *sophron* translated “sensible” (NASB), “sober” (KJV), “sober-minded” (NKJV) qualification of elder

- **Tit. 2:2** older men “sensible” (*sophron*)

- **Tit. 2:5** older men “sensible” (*sophron*)

- all Christians must be in control of their passions

➤ - all Christians must be sensible, sober – in control of their passions – how to. . . .

- **1 Cor. 15:31** die daily

➤ - **Col. 3:5** considering the members of his mortal body as dead to immorality

- **Col. 3:1a** baptized: raised up with Christ (**Col. 2:12**)

- **Col. 3:1b** seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God

- **Col. 3:2** mind set on the things above, not on the things that are on earth

- **Col. 3:3** because died (baptized), life is hidden with Christ in God

- **Col. 3:4** reward: when Christ is revealed, we'll also will be revealed with Him in glory

- Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless? – prudent, sober, sober-minded, sensible

- in control of your passions – thoughts and feelings

- **A Christian above reproach is respectable** (1 Tim.)
 - **1 Tim. 3:b** respectable (of good behavior)
 - Greek (*kosmios*): seemly, good conduct, modest
 - **person who acts and presents himself respectably** – behavior, dress, grooming
 - - **all Christians are to be respectable**
 - **1 Tim. 2:9** *kosmios* translated “proper” (NASB), “modest” (KJV, NKJV)
 - **respectably attire** that doesn’t bring reproach upon self or Christ
 - **illus.: not dressed and adorned like a wild, rebellious pop culture icon** – wrong message
 - - **1 Cor. 13:5a** **not act unbecomingly** (unseemly)
 - **behavior that is proper and graceful**, always above reproach
 - **illus.: behavior such that people will assume you’re a good and decent person, and possibly a Christian**
 - - **Col. 4:5-6** **wise conduct toward unbelievers, gracious speech, seasoned with salt**
 - **2 Cor. 8:21** **have regard for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men**
 - **conduct and speech that’s respectable (good) in the sight of all men, even unbelievers**
- **Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless?** – respectable (good behavior), in the sight of all men, even unbelievers

End Part II: Summary / Inv.

- **mature Christians are aspiring to serve God to the best of their ability, and above reproach**
- **Christian above reproach:**
 - **in a lawful marriage**, if he’s are married
 - **temperate** – vigilant, watchful, alert
 - **prudent** – sober, sober-minded, sensible
 - **respectable (good behavior)** – in the sight of all men, even unbelievers
- **inv.**

mature Christian aspiring to serve God, above reproach: lawful marriage if married, temperate, prudent, respectable

SR=Tit. 1:5-9

➤ **Beginning: Part III**

- **Heb. 5:12-14** responsibility to grow and mature, desiring to please God and be above reproach

- **series:** Portrait of a Christian Who is Above Reproach

- **review: mature Christian aspiring to serve God, above reproach:**

- **in a lawful marriage**, if he's are married

- **temperate** – vigilant, watchful, alert

- **prudent** – sober, sober-minded, sensible

- **respectable (good behavior)** – in the sight of all men, even unbelievers

➤2 - **PP:** review qualifications of elders

- point out qualifications from previous lesson

- **all mature Christians should meet with few exceptions** – marriage, children, hospitality in extreme cases

➤ A Christian above reproach is **hospitable** (1 Tim.; Tit.)

- 1 Tim. 3:2 **hospitable**

- friendly reception and treatment of guests, or strangers, in a warm and generous way (Random House Dictionary)

➤ - 1 Pet. 4:9 **commanded** to be hospitable, **without complaint**

- **commanded**: not optional, not just what some do, something all do unless prevented by circumstances such as taking care of invalid relative

- **without complaint**: attitude - willing, desiring

➤ - **illus.: Gaius**

- 3 Jn. 1:5-7 acting faithfully, hospitable to brethren, even when strangers, provided needs

➤ - **Why do some Christians “not” want to be hospitable?** – complain

- **takes extra work**:

- **have to clean house**, keep it reasonably clean, to receive guests

- **have to clean up after people**, when they leave

➤ - **don’t want to be “inconvenienced”**

- **have people in house**, possible living for a few days – **illus.: gospel meeting**

- **have to share stuff** – bed, toys, cars

➤ - **pride**:

- **not think have good enough house** compared to others

- **not want people to come in and mess up** what you have

- accidents happen, thing will be broken and harmed – furniture, floors, walls

- **not want neighbors to see the poor members** of the congregation, their cars and dress

➤ - **greed / selfishness**:

- **want to dedicate time and resources toward self**, personal wants, not toward others

- have to give up other things to be hospitable

➤ - **unwilling to change (repent)**:

- **to be a Christian, we have to change** and not live like the world (Lk. 13:3)

- **some Christians are unwilling to repent, and be hospitable** to the saints – lifestyle change

➤ - **Rom. 12:13 practice hospitality**

- **practice** (*dioko*) (Rom. 12:13): *to seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavor to acquire*

➤ - **illus.: R - Rom. 14:19 “pursue”** (*to seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavor to acquire*) things make for peace – “pursue” hospitality

➤ - **illus.: R - Phil. 3:12, 14 “press on”** (*to seek after eagerly, earnestly endeavor to acquire*), eternal life, prize – athletic metaphor, running race – “press on” to hospitality

➤ - **note: dioko** (dee-o’-ko) is also used in a bad way of those who pursue Christians to harm them, translated “persecute”

- **Christians pursue** righteousness with God, and pursue one another for good (hospitality), **while the world pursues** them for bad (persecute them)

- 2 Tim 3:12 “Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be **persecuted** (*dioko*).”

- **practicing hospitality to the saints is a mark of being a Christian, and sets us apart from the world**

- **Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless?** - practicing hospitality, without complaining

➤ **A Christian above reproach is not addicted to wine** (1 Tim.; Tit.)

- **1 Tim. 3:3a not addicted to wine**

- wine referenced in this Greek word (*oinos*) is not strong wine (*gleukos*) and typically has a 2-3% alcohol content with a max of 5% alcohol

- it was typically mixed with water, diluting it so that there was almost no alcohol in the drink

-**paroinos (par'-oy-nos):** denotes one who sits long at his wine (*oinos*), thus is addicted

- **NASB:** “addicted to wine”

- **NKJ:** “given to wine” (given himself over to it, and the behaviors associated with one who is addicted)

- **ASV:** “brawler” (one who sits long at his wine is a brawler, noisy fighter or quarreler)

- **one would have to drink a long time to become drunk with this wine (*oinos*), which was 2-3% alcohol when not mixed with water**

➤ - **Christians above reproach aren't addicted to wine:**

- **1 Pet. 4:3 not drunk, not carousing** (wild drinking parties), **not drinking parties** (mild drinking parties)

- not going to parties where there is drinking, even if they don't drink

- **1 Tim. 3:2 temperate:** not intoxicated to any degree (**buzz**)

- thus are vigilant, sober, watchful, alert, on guard against every form of sin

- **2 Cor. 6:14; Eph. 5:11 Christians expose darkness, not party with darkness**

➤ - **illus.: Timothy, who was above reproach**

- **1 Tim. 5:23** Timothy apparently didn't drink wine, but because of stomach problems Paul told him to, “use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments”

- **Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless?** - temperate, never intoxicated, and certainly not addicted to any intoxicant

- **General character traits of a Christian above reproach** – 1 Tim. 3 and Tit. not exactly the same, but both describe the character of a man qualified to be an elder (above reproach)
 - **all Christians should have these characteristics, not just men qualified to be elders**
 - shows maturity and character
 - **not pugnacious** (striker), one who is ready to fight and quarrel at all times (1 Tim.3:3; Tit. 1:7)
 - not going around angry all the time, picking fights and being argumentative
 - **illus.: not living a “soap opera” life** – on TV and radio and in movies “macho” characters often act this way
- - **not self-willed** (Tit. 1:7)
 - **mostly interested in pleasing Himself, not God, and thus not his neighbor**
 - wants things his way, and none other
 - would lord himself and his will over others
 - **2 Pet. 2:10** false teachers are self-willed, not elders of the Lord’s church
- - **not quick-tempered** (Tit. 1:7)
 - **in control of his emotions**, and thus in control of his temper
 - **anger is controlled**, thus he is able to lead God’s people
 - **Eph. 4:26** not let sun go down on his anger
- - **loves what is good** (Tit.)
 - affections toward good, not evil
 - **1 Cor. 13:6** love, doesn’t rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth
 - **illus.: Lot, oppressed by conduct of the wicked** – cf. us today? – music, TV, movies, friends, co-workers
- - **just** (Tit. 1:8)
 - **living by the laws of God, and making judgments in accord with those laws**
 - puts God’s word 1st in everything
 - **honest about himself and properly analyzing himself with God’s word**
 - thus can apply God’s word in other areas when judgments must be made
- - **devout** (holy) (Tit. 1:8)
 - **having set self apart for service to God**
 - **1 Pet. 1:13-15** prepared mind for action, as obedient child, holy in all behavior
- - **self-controlled** (temperate) (Tit. 1:8)
 - **exercising strong control over self, passions** – curbing and restraining self
 - **1 Cor. 9:25** exercising self-control in all things
 - **Heb. 5:14** trained senses to discern between good and evil, and living as faithful child of God
- - **gentle** (1 Tim. 3:3)
 - **fair, mild, and gentle manner** – not rough, violent, harsh. severe
 - approachable, others aren’t afraid to talk to, even when they’ve done something wrong
 - **Phil. 4:5** our gentleness is to be known by all men

- - **peaceable** (not a brawler, not contentious) (1 Tim. 3:3)
 - **not given to contention or quarreling** – not one who likes to argue all the time
 - **2 Tim. 2:24** Lord's bond-servant must **not be quarrelsome**, but be **kind to all**, able to teach, **patient when wronged**

- - **free from the love of money** (not covetous) (1 Tim. 3:3)
 - **affections are not directed toward money, but the things of the Lord**
 - though we need love, our affections are not on financial matters
 - **involved with work of church and work in kingdom**
 - not so busy chasing financial gain, as to neglect work in kingdom – *illus.: elder*
 - **Heb. 13:5** make sure that your **character is free from the love of money, being content** with what you have

- - **not fond of sordid gain** (filthy lucre) (Tit. 1:7; 1 Tim. 3:3 KJ)
 - not desire financial gain through sinful means
 - doesn't love money, and would not be party to sin in order to get it

- **Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless?** - do you have the basic character of a Christian who is above reproach
 - **review PP**

 - **do you need to change anything in your life**, so you can be above reproach

End Part III: Summary / Inv.

- **mature Christians are aspiring to serve God to the best of their ability, and above reproach**

- **Christian above reproach:**
 - **in a lawful marriage**, if he's are married
 - **temperate** – vigilant, watchful, alert
 - **prudent** – sober, sober-minded, sensible
 - **respectable (good behavior)** – in the sight of all men, even unbelievers
 - **hospitable** – friendly reception and treatment of guests, or strangers
 - **not addicted to wine (intoxicants)**
 - **behavior befitting a Christian**

- **inv.**

SR=1 Tim. 3:1-7

➤ **Beginning: Part IV**

- **Heb. 5:12-14 responsibility to grow and mature, desiring to please God and be above reproach**

- **series:** Portrait of a Christian Who is Above Reproach

- **review: mature Christian aspiring to serve God, above reproach:**

- **in a lawful marriage**, if he's are married
- **temperate** – vigilant, watchful, alert
- **prudent** – sober, sober-minded, sensible
- **respectable (good behavior)** – in the sight of all men, even unbelievers
- **living a moral life as God directs in His word**

➤2 - **PP:** review qualifications of elders

- **point out qualifications from previous lesson**
- **all mature Christians should meet with few exceptions** – marriage, children, hospitality in extreme cases

➤ **A Christian above reproach manages (rules) his household well, having children who believe**

- **Christians have the option** to have children, but men qualified to be elders must have children

- **1 Tim. 3:4-5; Tit. 1:6 experience managing household well, so that children are faithful Christians**, prerequisite for shepherding house of God

- **father's behavior:** dignity (gravity) – **not yelling, screaming, provoking to wrath, etc.**
- **children's behavior:** not accused of dissipation (riot) or rebellion
- **# of children:** 4 major positions in the church, interpreting qualification, word "children"
 - must have at least 1 child, and all children must be Christians
 - must have at least 1 child, and only one has to be a Christian
 - must have 2 or more children, and all children must be Christians
 - must have 2 or more children, and all children must be Christians
- **position of elders at SL:**
 - must have at least 1 child, and all children must be Christians

- **man needs experience as a spiritual shepherd in his home, prepares him to be a shepherd of the Lord's church**

- it shows that he's qualified and able as a spiritual leader, by the way he's raised his family

- **this qualification gives us insight into best way to manage our households** (wife, children) – as elders shepherd a congregation

- **1 Pet. 5:4** Jesus is the Chief Shepherd
- **if Jesus, as Lord, shepherds us**, we should shepherd others under our authority

- **Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless?** – raising children in the Lord

- some kids don't respect parents, and nothing can be done - OT stoned - but most trainable

➤ A Christian above reproach is **holding fast the faithful word**

- **Tit. 1:9a holding fast the faithful word**

- “**holding fast**” means to *hold oneself face to face with, to cling to* (Robertson) – for dear life (eternal)
 - **illus.: rodeo, riding a bucking horse, holding on for dear life** – paint picture
- **Lk. 8:15 parable of the sower, good soil holds fast to the seed (word), bears fruit** with perseverance

➤ - **Phil. 2:16; Col. 2:19a hold fast to word of life, and Jesus (head)** – let go of word, lose soul – cf. rodeo

- **1 Th. 5:21 examine** everything carefully; **hold fast to that which is good**
- **1 Tim. 6:3** the doctrine **conforming to godliness** – actions, behavior, above reproach
- **Heb. 4:14 hold fast our confession** – Jesus Son of God
- **Rev. 2:13 hold fast to Jesus’ name, and did not deny His faith**
- **Rev. 2:25 hold fast until Jesus comes**
- **Rev. 3:11 hold fast** what you have, **so that no one will take your crown** - hold fast or give up salvation

➤ - **illus.: Esau** – not hold fast, not saved, tears

- **Heb. 12:15-17 Esau didn’t hold fast** to his birthright, gave it up for a single meal (stew)
- **Heb. 12:18-21 “For”, we have not come to. . . .**
- **Heb. 12:22-24 “But you have come to Mount Zion. . . .**
- **Heb. 12:28-29 hold fast**, reverence and awe, if not **punished by God (consuming fire)**

➤ - **Heb. 2:1-3a we must pay closer attention, not drift away, not escape if neglect salvation**

➤ - **Tit. 1:9-14 the work all mature Christians should do**, equipped with God’s word

- **exhort** in sound doctrine
- **refute** those who contradict
- **silencing false teachers** by convicting them with the truth
- **reproving** severely false teachers

- **Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless?**

- holding fast to word, Jesus, confession, birthright as child of God, teaching and exhorting, refuting false doctrine

➤ A Christian above reproach has a **good reputation with those outside the church** – unbelievers

- **1 Tim. 3:7a good reputation with everyone, including unbelievers**

- **if we’re not above reproach, we’ll fall into the reproach and the snare of the devil**
- **when we exhort, refute, and reprove properly**, we have a good reputation among people who don’t believe

- **how? by doing all the things talked about in this series**

- **all Christians above reproach** have a good reputation with unbelievers – makes us **evangelistic**

- **Are you a Christian who is above reproach and blameless?**

- good reputation with everyone, including unbelievers

➤ **Men qualified to be elders are also able to teach, and not new converts**

- **1 Tim. 3:2b, 6a able to teach, not a new convert**

- **Christians:** all able to teach in some fashion
- **elders:** must formally teach and publically exhort, refute, reprove – **can't be new converts**

➤ - **Heb. 5:11-14 the responsibility of every Christian is to grow, become spiritually mature**

- **those who do that are above reproach and blameless**

- **2 Pet. 1:3-11 Peter explains the process of maturing** in the Lord, and staying strong

- **vs. 3-4** we are **partakers of God's divine nature**, having been granted everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge God

- **vs. 5-7 applying all diligence**

- in your **faith** supply **moral excellence**
- and in your moral excellence, **knowledge**
- and in your knowledge, **self-control**
- and in your self-control, **perseverance**
- and in your perseverance, **godliness**
- and in your godliness, **brotherly kindness**
- and in your brotherly kindness, **love**

- **vs. 8** if these qualities are increasing, they **render us neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge** of Jesus Christ

- **mature Christian, above reproach and blameless**

- **vs. 10** as long as we practice these things, you will **never stumble**

- **vs. 11** for in this way the **entrance into the eternal kingdom** of our Lord Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied

- **series: Portrait of a Christian Who is Above Reproach**

- **Are you a Christian above reproach?**

- if not, what changes should you make today
- if you are, you are showing Christ to the world, and have a home awaiting you in heaven

Inv.

- **inv.:** begin today by becoming a Christian