**1 Timothy 3 – Church Leadership Qualifications**

*Leadership is not magnetic personalit; that can just as well be a glib [slick, persuasive] tongue. It is not making friends and influencing people; that is flattery. Leadership is lifting a person’s vision to higher sights, the raising of a person’s performance to higher standards, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations. A leader is one who has followers. An effective leader is not someone who is loved or admired. He is someone whose followers do the right thing. Popularity is not leadership, results are. Leaders are highly visible. They, therefore, set examples. Leadership is not rank or privileges, titles or money. Leadership is responsibility.*

* Peter Drucker, perhaps the most noted authority on leadership in the 20th century.

***Who is someone that has exemplified leadership in your life? How did they do so?***

**Read 1 Timothy 3**

**Discussion Questions:**

This bible study has quite a few questions, but many of the answers are straight forward. You will want to help your group to move quickly through the study (especially through the more straight forward questions, spending more time on the questions that require it).

1. Thinking back on the last two Bible studies, why do you think Paul chooses to speak now about qualifications of overseers and deacons at this point in his letter? Why might this be important for the church to know?

* Overseers and Deacons are leaders in the church and leaders often set the tone for the rest of the group. In Ephesus, we know that many of the problems were coming from the leaders ignorantly teaching wrong things.
* This is not written only so the church will know what to expect of their leaders (although this is important). The church also has a responsibility to pray for and support its leaders knowing the great level of responsibility placed in their leaders’ hands.
* So they know how to select leaders (hopefully preventing much of the mess going on in Ephesus at the time)
* So they know what to expect from their leaders and how to pray for and encourage their leaders to live the lives God requires
* So they know what to aspire to – while many fall short, all should aspire to conduct themselves (not legalistically) in such a way for the sake of the Church and for the sake of the Gospel.

“All these qualities are to be expected in any serious Christian person but especially so in Christian leaders, for anyone whose moral and spiritual qualities do not commend them to their contemporaries are not going to have much influence as Christian ministers, and if they do, it is likely to be destructive.” (Wenham, Motyer, Carson, France, 1298)

1. What is an overseer? What qualifications does Paul outline for overseers? In what ways do you think each of these characteristics is important?

* “1a) a man charged with the duty of seeing that things to be done by others are done rightly, any curator, guardian or superintendent 1b) the superintendent, elder, or overseer of a Christian church” (bible.org); for us this would be Pastor YOUNG ☺
* “above reproach” (v.2) – This term could raise some questions in your small group meeting. So here are what a couple commentaries have to say:

“This is a far-reaching overall virtue that covers the whole list in a general way… It means irreproachable in observable conduct.” (Zehr, 78)

“[An overseer/elder] should posses no observable flaw in his character or conduct. That is, there should be no cause for justifiable criticism… that anyone could use to discredit him and bring reproach on the name of Christ and the church. The Greek word means ‘not to be laid hold of.’ This is the main quality that the following ones make clearer or unpack. No one is perfect, but an elder should be a person that no one can legitimately criticize for the way he lives.” (bible.org)

* Faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. (vv. 2-3)
* Must manage their households well (we will address this in a later question)
* v. 6 is a warning against pride and hunger for power and dominion.
* a leader should not be a hindrance to the advancement of the church and of the Gospel because of disgraceful behavior (v.7)

1. What is a deacon? What are the qualifications given for deacons (and their wives)? In what ways do you think each of these characteristics is important?

* “1) one who executes the commands of another, esp. of a master; a servant, attendant, minister 1a) the servant of a king 1b) a deacon, one who, by virtue of the office assigned to him by the church, cares for the poor and has charge of and distributes the money collected for their use 1c) a waiter, one who serves food and drink.” (bible.org) Also ref. Acts 6:1-7.
* “In the same way” connects the expectations of the deacons to those of the overseers, i.e. the characters of both overseers and deacons are important.
* Worthy of respect, sincere, not indulgent in drinking, not greedy for dishonest gain, faithful with a clear conscience to the truths of the Christian faith. (v.8-9)
* Similar to the overseers (who should not be new converts), deacons must be tested beforehand and then welcomed as deacons. (v. 10)
* A deacon’s home-life must also be in order (addressed in the next question)
* The “women” (NIV), most likely referring to deacon’s wives, also have standards to live up to – worthy of respect, not malicious in their speech, temperate and trustworthy in everything. (v.11)

1. Why might the managing of one’s household be mentioned in this chapter (vv. 4-5, 12)? How does this relate to church leadership?

* Because the church is like a family and we should relate to one another as a family. Our leaders are those who manage our household and we should not only yield to them as such but should care for (affectionately and actively) as such – ultimately remembering that God is our ultimate father and cares for us and the church as his own children and his own household. (v. 15)

1. What purpose does Paul give in this chapter for writing these things and to what truth is he referring (see v. 16)? Why is it important to remember this point?

* To teach people how to behave in God’s house because it is the church of the living God, the *pillar* and *foundation* (or *support*) of the truth.
* Ultimately the church is the support of the truth that Jesus revealed to this world. It is important for God’s house to be in order so that the truth is not compromised and so that the Gospel can continue to go forth to those who need to hear without scandal or confusion or any other kind of contamination.

1. How can you apply this in your own life? In what ways must you strive to be a better leader or church member? In what ways can you support the church leadership?