

Growth Group Lesson

January 28 & 29

Titus 1:5-9

“Considering the eternal stakes involved in Christian ministry, I’m amazed to see some churches take the issue of leadership so lightly. A healthy church must have qualified leaders in order to accomplish its primary purpose, which Paul outlined in three points. I paraphrase them like this:

The purpose of the church is (1) to become the means by which the elect come to belief in Christ, (2) to nurture their understanding of the truth so that it results in godly behavior, and (3) to help them to overcome every challenge until they claim their eternal destiny (Titus 1:1-2).”

Chuck Swindoll

Spend some time praying with your group.

- Open your prayer time reading Psalm 63:1-8. Thank God for your desire to seek him.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to be present and guide your discussion.

Get to know one another:

1. Share about a past or present leader who helped you to grow emotionally, physically, or spiritually.

Introducing the lesson question:

2. What qualities does the world look for in the people chosen to be leaders in things like teams, business, and government?

Read Titus 1:5-9

The overseers of all church leadership are the elders, who are charged with teaching, protecting the church, and providing an example of what it looks like to follow Jesus well. They have increased responsibility and accountability to shepherd Jesus’ church. Paul outlines the character qualities of a qualified church elder. **Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:1-4**

3. Why did Paul leave Titus in Crete?
4. Why should elders of the church be appointed and not elected?
5. Notice the word “elders” is plural. Why is the plurality of elders important to leading the church instead of a single person?

Titus 1:6

The elder who manages God’s household must be a spiritually mature person. A person’s lifestyle and relationships provide a window into their character.

6. What lifestyle should a prospective elder exhibit before he is appointed? Notice Paul mentions this characteristic twice, once in verse six and then in verse seven.
 - a. How would you describe a “blameless” or “above reproach” lifestyle?
 - b. Why is it essential for a church leader to be above reproach?
 - c. As we follow the example of elders, why is it important that your own life is above reproach? **Matthew 5:13-16, 1 Peter 2:11-17, John 17:20-23**
 - d. What has that looked like in your life recently?

7. What does it mean to be a “husband of one wife” (ESV) or “faithful to his wife” (NLT)?
 - a. If you are married, how do you demonstrate your faithfulness to your spouse?
 - b. If you are single, how do you demonstrate your faithfulness to Jesus? How do you treat the opposite gender as a brother or sister?
 - c. Are there situations in your life where this is challenging?
 - d. How could you allow God’s word to inform how you respond in these situations?
8. Why is it essential for an elder to manage his household well? **Verse 7; 1 Timothy 3:5**
 - a. In your life, what does it look like to manage your household well?
 - b. Have you seen any examples of people who manage their household well, and what did that look like?

Titus 1:7-8

The character qualities of an elder represent God’s character to his people, giving an example to follow. Elders help the church rise to these same standards of conduct and obedience, flowing out of their love for Jesus and his church.

9. Make a list of the character standards Paul sets in these verses and define them in your own words.
 - a. Explain how a disqualifying trait could impact an elder’s leadership.
 - b. Are there any traits in this list that you would like to grow in?
 - i. What do you need to do this week to grow in that area?

Titus 1:9

Paul ends the qualifications of an elder as one who fully understands and values scripture, can teach others, and can rebuke false teachers.

10. How can you apply “hold firm to the trustworthy word” to your own life?
 - a. How does that change how you respond to difficult things in your life (conflict, suffering, trials, unknowns, unmet desires, confronting false teaching, etc.)
11. Earlier, you discussed the qualities the world looks for to lead teams, business, and government. How do those qualities compare with the characteristics God wants to see in church leaders?

Apply what you learned

12. How should Titus 1:5-9 shape your prayers for our church leaders?
13. What is one way you can encourage someone this week that God has placed them in a position of spiritual leadership?
14. What can you do to be on guard right now against false teaching?

Spend your ending time praying

- Ask God to reveal what you need to change to live your life above reproach.
- Ask God to protect and lead our elders.
- Ask God to use Good Shepherd to influence our community and world.