

Growing Leaders in the Church

Session 3

Part 1: Discussion of previous questions

1. *What are the most important duties of church leaders?*
2. *If serving and being the least is the model of leadership, does that mean that leaders cannot be assertive?*
3. *How do church leaders win the trust and support of their church? Think about how Paul, as prisoner, gained trust in Acts 27?*
4. Read through Ezekiel 34 and list the good and bad leadership qualities of the shepherds described.
5. Within the leadership of the church, we have the elders, deacons and pastor. What are the peculiar responsibilities of each?

Part II. The Biblical Names and Qualities of Church Leaders

I. The Biblical Names:

A. Elders (*presbuteros*)

1. 1 Peter 5:1 *The elders which are among you, I exhort*
2. Acts 14:23; 20:17; Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 5:17; Titus 1:5
3. their work: *overseers* (Acts 20:28 – Hebrews 13:17)

B. Bishop (*episkopos*)

1. Phil. 1:1: *Paul ... to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons* (Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:2)
2. the term *elder* and *bishop* refer to same person

C. Shepherds (*poimen*)

1. Eph. 4:11: *He gave ... pastors and teachers*

- D. Teachers (*didaskolos*)
 - 1. Eph. 4:11: *He gave ... pastor and teachers* (Acts 13:1; James 3:1)
 - 2. Their task: 'rightly divide the Word of truth' (2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Tim. 4:2)

- E. Leaders or Rulers (*proistemi*)
 - 1. Romans 12:8 ... *he that ruleth, with diligence* (1 Tim. 5:17)

- F. Stewards (*oikonomos*)
 - 1. Titus 1:7 ... *for a bishop must be blameless*
 - a. applied to preachers (1 Cor. 4:1) – elders/bishops (Titus 1:7) and believers (1 Peter 4:10)

II. The Biblical qualities for leaders in church

Intro: God mandates us to look for the best to lead a church

- A. Many problems in church life can be traced to defective leadership
 - 1. Effective leadership is not about *gifts or ability* but about *character*
 - 2. Key to a leader's usefulness is *his inner, unseen life before God and family*
 - 3. Man of God most useful to God in leadership is *the man of humility*

- B. Group Discussion on Biblical criteria for church leadership:

1 Tim. 3:1-7

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.

Titus:6-9

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.

- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.

10.

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14.

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16.

17

B. Mark each one that *is related to character with "C" and to gifts "G"*

C. Character is *faithfulness to live God's revealed will*

1. A leader's character is *not an afterthought* but the **foundation** for good leadership

III. How do we pursue character in preparation for future leadership?

A. God answers in 2 Tim. 2:20-25a

1. Vs. 20 describes every house/kitchen

2. Vs. 21: addressed to all **Christians** but especially young men

a. we need to *purge or cleanse* ourselves to aim for **special usefulness**

b. we need to aim at this before you may be called to lead

3. Vs. 22-25a :What grows *godly character?* (compare 1 Tim. 6:11)

a. **quick feet** (22a): *flee also youthful lusts*

- in **context of leadership** what are these youthful lusts?

b. **strong legs** (22b): *pursue righteousness, faith, charity, peace in fellowship with other believers*

c. **clear heads** (23): *avoid foolish and unlearned questions that don't build up in the faith but snare people (vs. 26)*

d. **gentle lips** (24-25): *abandon argumentative, quarrelsome striving*

e. **meek spirit** (vs. 25): *the meek doesn't want to win but be winsome*

Close: Exercise yourself to godliness is searching God's *pastoral epistles* with the question: *What needs cultivating in me to be a useful Biblical leader in God's Kingdom?*

For further study and discussion:

1. As you meditate on the basic Biblical qualifications listed for church leaders, list as many finer points you can think of in answering the unfinished sentence below. A few suggestions are given.

A leader should have the ability to

- *navigate differences of view*
- *handle criticism constructively*
- *delegate tasks to others with strength he may miss*
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2. Neil Summerton wrote, "*However spiritual, competent, and diligent leaders may be as individuals, it is essential that any group should function as a coherent entity and be seen by the rest of the congregation to do so.*"
 - a. Does that mean a consistory should be all likeminded on every issue?
 - b. What are the implications if you have a different view on minor matters from the rest of the consistory you are part of?
 - c. What are the advantages or benefits of a plurality of leaders in a church?