**Counter Culture – Titus wk 2 – To Lead or Not To Lead**

**Titus is reading a letter from a mentor, spiritual father, and friend.**

**Last week we went through the introduction. Paul dropped some serious theological foundations and apostolic credentials.**

**Titus 1:1 Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ… 4 To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. 5 This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders (Pres-boo'-ter-os) in every town as I directed you…**

**After a successful evangelistic ministry in Crete, Paul leaves Titus behind to finish the work…**

**\*\* God loves his church and wants it organized.**

**It is not supposed to be whatever goes with the flow**

**What is an elder?**

**Pres-boo'-ter-os: Masculine - men (never occurs as feminine)**

**Elders are to be men. Deacons - servant / ministry leaders / support pastors - can be either men or women.**

**Elder - Men who are appointed (not voted) overseers of a local church.**

**Elder = Spiritual overseers to govern and lead the flock**

**Elders are referred to as a type of shepherd.**

**God’s plan for a church to be organized and have godly leadership. Our Elders: Ted, Tony, Mike, Stan, Sam, David**

**What to look for: 6 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. 7 For an overseer, (episkopos) 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, 8 but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. 9 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.**

**This and 1 Tim still lay out official church structure and order.**

**Let's break this down:**

**What to look for in a pastor and church leader**

**Qualifications of an elder/shepherd (Similar to 1 Tim 3)**

**They are not just “natural leaders” – they must be qualified.**

**They are not just “gifted people” – they must be qualified.**

**They are not just “good speakers” – they must be qualified.**

**They are not just “popular” or “influential” - they must be qualified.**

**They are not people who “give a lot” - they must be qualified.**

**They are not just one’s who volunteer a lot or willing – they…**

A Leaders Private life (at home):

**These things are only seen by our family.**

**\*\* Above Accusation - (an elder must be) 6 above reproach (above allegation)**

**Lit. nothing to take hold of. Above reproach. Does not have a questionable home life – their family has a good reputation.**

**\*\* A faithful husband – 6 …the husband of one wife**

**- Does not mean - you must be married (Paul was not)**

**- Does not mean - divorce immediately disqualifies you.**

**Unfortunately, churches have divided over this and prevented great men of God from ever serving in the kingdom.**

**Pre-Jesus lives – and – Divorce is not an unforgivable sin**

* **Lit means - one woman man. The issue of faithfulness and monogamy in a polygamous culture. Sorry Joseph Smith.**

**\*\* A consistent Father - “his children are believers (having faithful children) and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination.”**

**- Does not mean – your children must be Christians – wild adults**

**That would cancel out nearly every man then and now.**

* **This refers to young children under your roof. We can’t control what our adult children do. They’ll stand before God w/out us.**
* **The word Believer is also translated as faithful. An elder is to discipline their children faithfully and honorably in their home. Not letting them run wild and self-destruct.**

**He faithfully leads – they respond faithfully w/ respect.**

**1 Tim 3:4 An elder must manage his own family well and see that his children obey, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. 5 If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?**

**Serious issue with some pastors - wild PK reputation.**

**Some might need to step out of ministry to pastor their kids.**

**Ministers should understand that family is mission #1**

**\*\*\*\* This does not mean the kids will be perfect – unfair expectations.**

**\*\*\*\* Does not mean the kids stop being kids – growing and learning.**

**It means, when issues come up – you discipline as needed – you don’t ignore them, and you are not harsh with them.**

**The home is like a little church – dad is the pastor – can you pastor your home life? If you cannot, don’t pastor another’s life.**

**Selecting elders is not about a PhD., business success, or age. The first thing Paul says is, "How is their home? What is their reputation as a father? Are they leading their family well?"**

A Leaders Public life:

**These things are seen by those around you.**

**\*\* Above Accusation - 7 An overseer (episkopos), as God's steward, must be above reproach. (Again, above allegation and good reputation)**

**\*\* Not Prideful – 7 He must not be arrogant…**

**Not elitist, unapproachable, overbearing, pushy, self-absorbed, or selfish. Stubborn. Does not have to have his own way.**

**- Pride disqualifies a leader. Unfortunately, many are…**

**\*\* Not quick to anger – 7 not… quick-tempered**

**Handles stress well – not easily angered. Doesn’t’ blow up**

**Road rage, profane / vulgar toward others) Not bitter – bit forgives.**

**\*\* Not a drunkard – 7 not… a drunkard (given to wine)**

**Does not get drunk – drink too much - no drinking problem.**

**\*\* Not aggressive – 7 not… violent**

**Not prone to or looking for a fight. Not quarrelsome. Does not hope for violence upon others. Is a gentle person.**

**Shepherd the sheep, does not punch them in the neck.**

**\*\* Not money hungry – 7 not… greedy for gain**

**Greedy about money, make money honestly, has financial integrity. They are not in it for the money. “Treasures laid up…”**

**1 Tim 3:3 – “Not a lover of money”**

**Understands the proper use and place of money.**

**1 Tim 3:7 Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.**

**#1 - A good reputation – at home.**

**#2 - A good reputation – with others**

**A Leaders Personal life:**

**These are not necessarily seen – things only you know.**

**\*\* Loves people – 8 but hospitable…**

**The word (philo-xenos) means - “loving (friend) to strangers.”**

**It means one who shares their resources and helps others freely.**

**A gracious generous person - to friends and strangers alike.**

**\*\* Loves what is good – 8 …a lover of good**

**They love what God loves – and celebrate it.**

**They don’t celebrate or defend evil or wickedness.**

**Romans 12:9 Let love be genuine. Abhor (hate) what is evil; hold fast to what is good. / 1 Thess 5:15 - pursue what is good for one another and for all people. /**

**1 Thess 5:21 - Hold fast to what is good. / 1 Cor 13:6 – (Love) does not rejoice at wrong doing, but rejoices with the truth. / Amos 5:15 - Hate evil and love good; establish justice in the gate.**

**What the world celebrates is often not what we celebrate:**

**Sinful activity, perversion, death, violence, selfishness, godlessness… loves what is good – what God says is good.**

**\*\* Thinks clearly – 8 …self-controlled**

**The word means – sober minded / sensible / sound thoughts.**

**A sound mind – led by the Spirit – keeps calm under pressure.**

**Not led by emotions or reactionary. Self-control over emotions.**

**\*\* Innocent – 8 … upright (just)**

**Innocent in the eyes of God – no unconfessed sin or pattern of**

**un-convicted sin. Habit of repentance.**

**Ps 139:22-23 - “Search my heart oh God…”**

**\*\* Righteous – 8 … holy**

**Seeks to live a godly life as one set apart for God’s purpose.**

**Is not living in a life of sin and in denial of God’s word.**

**Faithfully seeks sanctification. “God what in me needs to change”**

**\*\* Self-disciplined – 8 … disciplined.**

**Similar to Sound mind – but a different word. No controlling habits.**

**Self-control over your actions.**

**Paul is saying – look at their character, look at their home - and then – look at their theology. No mistake his intro doctrine-heavy (last week).**

A Leaders Church Life:

**These things are seen by the church – leadership experience.**

**\*\* Knows the Gospel – 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word…**

**Holds firm the truth of JC and is not swayed by strange teaching.**

**Reads it, knows it, believes it, holds it tight. Doesn’t compromise.**

**You know they believe the gospel – no speculation.**

**\*\* Teachable – 9 He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught**

**Teachable – growing – learning. A love for the Word of God.**

**\*\* Exhorter – 9 …so that he may be able to give instruction…**

**This does not mean they are a preacher - word leans to exhort.**

**They may be a teacher, evangelist, or preacher but not necessarily. But they must be able to know and explain the truth.**

**1 Tim 3:2 – be able to teach (instruct)**

**2 Tim 2:15 - rightly (properly) handling the word of truth.**

**This should disqualify some popular preachers.**

**\*\* Discerns doctrine - 9 …able to give instruction in sound doctrine**

**Knows the teachings of Jesus and the apostles.**

**Can discern good doctrine from false doctrine.**

**This echoes growing and being teachable.**

**You need to know it in order to identify it (counterfeit bills)**

**\*\* Comfortable with confrontation - 9 also to rebuke those who contradict it.**

**Cares enough and is bold enough to address false teaching.**

**“Let’s just get along – God will figure it all out.” That is not the heart of a shepherd or elder. That is immaturity. Preachers who say that should not be teaching, leading, or pastoring.**

**This is not about arguing on non-essentials but holding tight to what is essential. Confronting unhealthy teaching (gently).**

**An elder is not just a good guy – but someone who knows and protects the flock from the lies of spiritual wolves. Next wk – the wolves.**

**They are to both encourage and correct the sheep.**

**Overall, an elder – is one who patiently, gently, guides and leads the family of God in the truth and mission of God – by example.**

**That is what to expect and look for from church leadership.**

**\*\*\* They are not perfect – but they are practicing**

**Like a doctor – we practice what we know…**

A Couple Final Thoughts

1. **Never take church leadership lightly**

* **The desire to be a church leader– is a heavy burden**

**1 Peter 5:1 To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow elder and a witness of Christ’s sufferings who also will share in the glory to be revealed: 2 Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them - not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; (no one should be in a position out of obligation) not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; (heart of a servant) 3 not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.**

* **Leadership is not just doing stuff, but speaking into your life**

**Hebrews 13:7 Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. / 17 Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.**

**The value of submission to healthy church leadership**

* **Be careful and mindful of who you pick as a leader.**

**1 Tim 3:1 Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. (Paul then gives Tim a similar list that he gave Titus - then) 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil.**

**There are expectations. They are suggestions, but requirements to ensure that church abuse, misuse, and deception are avoided.**

**We are to be held accountable to our families and our personal life. How can you do that unless you know me? Some leaders are too distant from their people to be held accountable for anything.**

* **Those that are in church leadership should be valued.**

**Eph 5:11-12 – God gives leadership as a gift to the church**

**1 Corinthians 16:15 You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the Lord’s people. I urge you, brothers and sisters, 16 to submit to such people and to everyone who joins in the work and labors at it. 18 For they refreshed my spirit and yours also. Such men deserve recognition.**

**Valued and respected for their time, sacrifices, and calling – Very few pastors feel appreciated – many hang on by a thread.**

**1 Thes 5:12** **Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. 13 Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.**

1. **Leadership guidelines are everyone's goals**

**These qualifications: Good reputation, faithful to spouse, consistent with kids, servant heart, put others before self, humble, patient, self-control, generous, gracious, disciplined, knows and hold faithfully the gospel and knows how to share it.**

**Sounds Like maturity: These are not standards we expect only for them – these are areas of maturity we are all to pursue.**

**1 Cor 11:1 Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.**