

Paul to Timothy: “Be the leader God has called you to be....”

The Leader’s Character – 1 Timothy 1:12-20

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Who is following you?

B. What does it take to be a leader? How is the leader to do his or her work?

WEEK ONE: 1 Tim 1:12-20 – “The Leader’s Character”

WEEK TWO: 1 Timothy 2:1-15 – “The Leader’s Charge”

WEEK THREE: 1 Timothy 6:11-21 – “The Leader’s Goal”

WEEK FOUR: 2 Timothy 1:1-14 – “The Leader’s Heart”

WEEK FIVE: 2 Timothy 2:1-15 – “The Leader’s Commitment”

II. WHO WAS TIMOTHY?

A. First Letter to Timothy – about AD 63

B. Thirteen years earlier (AD 50):

¹ Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. A disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. ² He was well spoken of by the brothers at Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted Timothy to accompany him, and he took him and circumcised him because of the Jews who were in those places, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴ As they went on their way through the cities, they delivered to them for observance the decisions that had been reached by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem. ⁵ So the churches were strengthened in the faith, and they increased in numbers daily. (Acts 16)

¹⁸ ... Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare.... (1 Tim 1)

C. Two years before that in Lystra (AD 48):

¹⁹ But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium [to Lystra], and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing that he was dead. ²⁰ But when

the disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day he went on with Barnabas to Derbe. (Acts 14)

D. Nearly a mature man in a society dominated by “the old men”

¹² Let no one despise you for your youth ... (1Tim 4)

III. WHAT WAS HIS ROLE?

³ As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, ⁴ nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. (1Tim 1)

A. A very big assignment! Ephesus:

- i. Third largest city in the world
- ii. Vitally important center of Christianity
- iii. Highly Influential

B. Timothy not a bishop in same sense as today:

Elders already existed in Ephesus in AD 57:

¹⁶ For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he might not have to spend time in Asia, for he was hastening to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost. ¹⁷ Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him. ¹⁸ And when they came to him, he said to them: "You yourselves know how I lived among you the whole time from the first day that I set foot in Asia.... (Acts 20)

Today: (1) People elect a bishop from among the “elders”
(= Greek: “presbyters” = Old English: “priests”)
(2) College of Bishops confirm Apostolic Succession

IV. WHAT WAS WRONG IN EPHEBUS?

A. Self-made teachers of the Jewish Law:

³ who forbid marriage and require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. (1 Tim 4)

B. The Jewish Law is but the beginning of the Good News:

⁸ Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, ⁹ understanding this, that the

law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers,¹⁰ the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine,¹¹ in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted. (1 Tim 1)

C. These teachers had to add “silly myths” to sweeten up their dead religion

D. Timothy’s mission stop the false teaching by direction people rightly:

⁵ The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. (1 Tim 1)

IV. THE LEADER'S CHARACTER

What is required to be a leader? Paul instructs by example:

A. Humility

i. vv. 12-15 - Leaders know themselves to be sinners, forgiven only by grace

¹⁵ The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. (1 Tim 1)

¹² Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. (Matthew 23)

ii. v. 16 - Leaders understand the responsibility of leadership: people are watching and imitating them

¹⁶ But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. (1 Tim 1)

¹Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? ...⁴ Do we not have the right to eat and drink? ¹² ... Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ. (1 Corinthians 9)

iii. v. 17 - Leaders want God to receive the glory

¹⁷ To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (1 Tim 1)

B. Trustworthiness - Leaders understand their work as a trust to be guarded

¹¹ ... in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted. (1 Tim 1)

²⁰ O Timothy, guard the deposit entrusted to you. (1 Tim 6)

¹⁴ By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard the good deposit entrusted to you. (2 Tim 1)

¹⁸ This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare ... (1 Tim 1)

C. Good Conscience - Leaders strive for a clean/clear conscience

¹⁹ holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith" (1 Tim 1)

¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, ² through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared (1Tim 4)

V. APPLICATION: Is your conscience clean?

- What is it that God is speaking about to you?
- Is there a "yes" He wants you say that you are resisting?
- Is there a "no!" He has command that you are trying to negotiate with Him?