

LESSON 3

Godly Leadership

Materials

- RBP transparencies 1, 5
- Lesson 3 case study from resource CD
- Titus 1:5 verse card from resource CD
- Copies of the part of your church constitution dealing with pastoral qualifications

Scripture Focus

Titus 1

Key Verse

“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city, as I had appointed thee” (Titus 1:5).

Overview

The epistle to Titus focuses on the theme of godliness. This lesson focuses on the qualities of a godly leader as found in Titus 1:6–9. Only godly leadership can direct the Lord’s church, as well as exhort and convince those who oppose sound doctrine.

Topic

Godly leadership

Theme

God has requirements for godly leadership.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will know and desire the qualities of godly leadership.

Outline

- I. Greetings (Titus 1:1–4)
- II. Godly Leaders (Titus 1:5–9)
 - A. Who are these leaders?
 - B. What is the work of an elder?
 - C. What are the qualifications?
- III. The Need for Godly Leaders (Titus 1:10–16)

Getting Started

You’re the Boss

Imagine that your neighborhood is forming a homeowners’ association. The neighbors have asked you to prepare a catalog of qualities they should look for in the people they will select to lead the association. List five important qualities of leadership.

Ask: Which of the ones that you have listed are character traits and which

are abilities? **Ask:** How important is character? Why do you rate its importance as you do? (Questions 1, 2)

Second Guessing the General

General H. Norman Schwarzkopf said, "Leadership is a potent combination of strategy and character. But if you must be without one, be without the strategy."

Ask: Do you agree that the character of a leader is more important than the leader's strategy? Explain the reasons for your position on this question.

Searching the Scriptures

The Lord requires godly character of leaders in His church. After opening greetings, Paul's letter immediately turned to emphasizing the godly qualities church leaders must possess. Paul also demonstrated why godly leadership was so important to the churches of Crete (Titus 1:10–16).

I. Greetings (Titus 1:1–4)

Our standard greeting for a letter would be two words: "Dear Titus." Paul's greeting fills four verses. The first three verses describe Paul.

Paul did not think of himself more highly than he ought, for he saw himself as a bondservant of God. A bondservant was a slave who had willingly surrendered his freedom to spend himself serving another.

READ: Titus 1:1. **ASK:** Why would you expect a "servant of God" to be a godly leader? (Question 3)

In the same breath Paul called himself an apostle of Jesus Christ. The apostles of Christ were a select few. They had seen the Lord (Acts 1:21, 22; 1 Cor. 15:7–9). They had been chosen by the Lord (Matt. 10:1–4; Acts 9:10–16). They had been commissioned by Him to take the gospel to the world and to give the Word to the church (John 14:25, 26; 16:12–15; Acts 1:1–8). They possessed the credentials of miracle-working power (2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3, 4). An apostle was also a person of honor and authority. Paul wrote as the humble bondservant with great authority from God.

Paul's life and message measured up to a standard—the faith shared by God's elect and the truth, which produces godly living. Paul's beliefs were orthodox and his lifestyle was godly.

Paul's life and message also had a fixed foundation, being grounded upon the hope of eternal life. Salvation has three tenses for the Christian: a past, completed deliverance from the penalty of sin (Eph. 2:8); a present, ongoing deliverance from the power of sin over behavior (2 Cor. 2:15); and a future, final deliverance from the presence of sin within and around the believer (Rom. 13:11). Paul referred to this future salvation when he wrote of the "hope of eternal life" (Titus 1:2). Any hope based on the promise of God is a sure hope.

The Old Testament provides a background for the New Testament concept of a bondservant (Exod. 21:2–6; Deut. 15:12–17).

God, Who cannot lie, promised eternal life and committed the preaching of eternal life to Paul.

READ: Titus 1:4. **ASK:** Since Titus was one of Paul's converts to Christ, how would you expect Titus to view godly living? (Question 4)

Paul addressed this letter to Titus (v. 4). He may have come from Antioch in Syria, for Paul took him from there to Jerusalem as an example that a saved Gentile was not required to be circumcised (Acts 15:2; Gal. 2:1–3).

Paul had been in prison when he wrote to Philemon and he anticipated being released. Apparently he was released, and in his travels he proclaimed the gospel on the island of Crete. However, the new converts were not yet established into organized local churches when Paul departed.

READ: Titus 1:5. **ASK:** Paul left Titus in Crete to complete the founding of the churches and to ordain godly leaders in those churches. How successful do you think a weak spiritual leader would have been at the tasks that Paul gave to Titus? (Question 5)

This letter to Titus offered Paul's encouragement and instruction for this demanding task. Paul's theme, as mentioned, was godliness.

II. Godly Leaders (Titus 1:5–9)

"Everything rises or falls with leadership" is an often-quoted saying. The saying is generally true, so it is not surprising that Paul began by discussing leadership. If the churches of Crete would be godly, they must have godly leaders.

ASK: Why would the same be true of our churches today? (Question 6)

A. Who are these leaders?

Paul mentions "elders" (v. 5) and a "bishop" (v. 7) in his discussion of leadership. Notice that both titles are used of the same office. Titus was to ordain elders. The list of qualifications for such elders begins in verse 6 and continues in verses 7–9 with the introductory statement that "a bishop must be." The flow of thought indicates that the elder is the bishop.

B. What is the work of an elder?

Peter wrote that elders are to "feed the flock of God," and if they do well they will be rewarded by the Chief Shepherd of that flock, Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 5:1–4). The noun "shepherd" could also be translated "pastor," as it is in Ephesians 4:11. Also, the word "feed" is simply a verb form of "shepherd" or "pastor," and could properly be translated "pastor the flock of God" (1 Pet. 5:2).

So the elder or bishop is to pastor the church. This same identification was made when Paul summoned the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:17), called them

bishops, and told them to pastor (“feed,” Acts 20:28) the church of God. Pastor, elder, and bishop all refer to the same office.

The term “pastor” or “shepherd” emphasizes that the leader feeds and cares for God’s people. The term “elder” or “older” emphasizes that the leader is mature and sets an example for God’s people. And the term “bishop” or “overseer” emphasizes that the leader guides and directs God’s people.

C. What are the qualifications?

Note that the qualifications for a bishop are spiritual qualifications. Either they are *character* qualities or *behavioral* qualities that display Christian maturity. God requires, and a church needs, godly men for leadership. Obviously no man will be perfect in all these qualities, or even in any of them. But every pastor must show a recognizable level of maturity in these things, and he should be making progress continually in them.

Blameless (v. 6). The parts of this word mean “not able to be called in”; that is, not called in to answer a charge against him. The pastor must have earned such a reputation among the people of God that there are no charges of wrongdoing against him.

READ: 1 Timothy 3:10. **ASK:** Why is it important for a deacon to also exhibit blamelessness? Doesn’t a deacon deal more with the church’s money and building than he does with the spiritual well-being of church members? (Question 7)

A steward is one who manages the things of another (Titus 1:7). A pastor’s blamelessness in personal stewardship indicates the ability to function blamelessly in shepherding others.

Husband of one wife (v. 6). God said one man should marry one woman, and that relationship should continue until broken by death (Matt. 19:3–12).

READ: Ephesians 5:25; 1 Peter 3:7. **ASK:** What instruction for godly husbands is found in these verses? (Question 8)

The pastor must set the example, being a one-woman man who gives his heart completely to his wife.

Faithful children (v. 6). First Timothy 3:4 and 5, the parallel passage to Titus 1, requires that the pastor rule his own household well.

READ: 1 Timothy 3:4, 5. **ASK:** Why must a pastor be able to rule his own household well? (Question 9)

Leading a home is similar to leading a church. Both are composed of people needing love, instruction in living, correction, and orderly functioning. A man’s failure to lead his own home to faith in Christ and faithful Christian living would indicate a weakness in leadership.

Not self-willed (v. 7). This word means to please one’s self and is related

“Overseer” in Acts 20:28 is the same word translated “bishop” in Titus 1:7.

“Not accused of riot or unruly” (1 Timothy 3:4, 5) is plural and must describe the children.

to the Greek root of the English word “hedonism.” The pastor must avoid this timeless malady. He ministers for the glory of God, for the edification of saints, and for the salvation of the lost. A pastor in the center of God’s will experiences joy in serving Jesus, but his own personal pleasure is not his purpose for ministry.

Not soon angry (v. 7). Unresolved anger seething within may erupt in a steaming stream of anger, over seemingly little irritations. Such a person is “soon angry.” The godly pastor treats his flock gently (1 Tim. 3:3), not with angry outbursts.

Not given to wine (v. 7). The wording of this requirement stirs question and controversy. Literally the requirement forbids the pastor’s being “alongside wine.”

Alcoholic beverages in Bible times differed radically from those of today. Today’s beverages range up to 50 percent alcohol (100 proof). The ancients did not know of distillation or other processes since developed, which increase alcoholic content. They depended only upon natural fermentation. Natural fermentation is self-limiting. When the yeast produces enough alcohol to bring the alcoholic content to 12–14 percent, then the alcohol begins to kill the yeast. So “strong drink” in Bible times was generally weaker than the average wine today, and wine is considered a mild alcoholic drink by our culture.

Wine in Bible times was either nonalcoholic fresh juice or fermented juice. Even the fermented variety usually had an alcoholic content far below 14 percent, and it was almost always diluted with water before being consumed. In other words, even alcoholic wine, as commonly drunk, was so weak in alcoholic content that a large volume of it would need to be consumed to make one drunk—therefore, the wording “not alongside wine.” The pastor was not to sit down alongside the very weak wine long enough to consume an amount sufficient to have an effect upon his senses.

READ: Leviticus 10:8–11. **ASK:** Why did God require that the priests abstain from wine and strong drink? (Question 10)

The pastor must not have his senses dulled in the slightest by alcohol. As a believer-priest, like all Christians, he should follow the prescription of the Levitical priests.

The application of this requirement to our culture seems obvious. Our wine is so much stronger than wine in Biblical times that even small amounts of it would have much greater effects. The effects upon moral and spiritual judgment are the most critical and probably the first to occur. Therefore, the pastor of today should not be “alongside wine” at all.

No striker (v. 7). God forbids the pastor to hit others physically. Often such behavior springs from being “soon angry.”

ASK: What Old Testament person had a problem with striking? (Question 11)

Not given to filthy lucre (v. 7). This requirement parallels 1 Timothy 3:3, which uses a similar word meaning “not loving silver.” The love of money is like a root from which springs all kinds of evil (1 Tim. 6:9, 10). The pastor who desires money and schemes to gain it falls into all sorts of trouble.

READ: Hebrews 13:5. **ASK:** What does God present as the alternative to covetousness and the reason for contentment? (Question 12)

The Biblical substitute for loving money is dependence upon the presence of God. God desires pastors who focus on His presence rather than on profit margins.

Lover of hospitality (v. 8). The word “hospitality” has the idea of loving strangers, but it is also used of loving brothers in Christ (Rom. 12:13; 1 Pet. 4:8, 9). Hospitality may take place in a dining room around a meal, but it is more than mere socializing. Hospitality is meeting the spiritual, physical, and emotional needs of others.

Lover of good men (v. 8). The word “men” has been supplied by translators, and the thought could equally be “a lover of good things.” A pastor should manifest a tender affection toward people and things that are of good moral quality.

Sober (v. 8). We limit the word “sober” to nondrunkenness, but it is broader in meaning, designating one who is sensible and in his right mind. In this context of spiritual qualities, rightmindedness would include thinking as God thinks or seeing things from God’s perspective. The sober pastor looks at life with a consciousness of distinction between temporal and eternal.

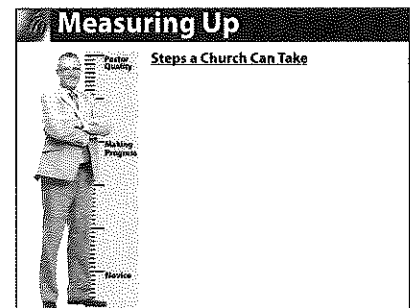
Just (v. 8). God is the standard for what is right and just. The pastor must be one with God in what he sees as right, thinking right and making right judgments as he pastors the people of God.

Holy (v. 8). Need it be said that devotion to God and everything God calls holy should be a requirement for the pastor? Yes, forgetful humans need reminders.

Temperate (v. 8). Temperance is self-control. This final aspect of the Spirit’s fruit goes against the current of our age (Gal. 5:23). Society reels along, drunken with self-indulgence, while the Spirit-filled pastor walks steadily in the way of self-control.

Holding fast the faithful Word (v. 9). The pastor must hold fast to God’s Word as a shipwrecked sailor would to his life preserver. The highest waves of false teaching or opposition cannot sink the pastor who clings to the faithful Word of God. The pastor proclaims truth and opposes falsehood, armed with God’s trustworthy Word.

TRANSPARENCY: Display transparency 5. **ASK:** What practical steps could a church take to determine the degree to which a candidate for leadership has matured in these God-required qualities? (Question 13) Record learners’ answers on the transparency.



III. The Need for Godly Leaders (Titus 1:10–16)

Paul's description of the ungodly perfectly fits today's scene. People abound who do not submit themselves to God's rules, who seek to add meritorious works to God's grace, who speak forth great volumes of words but without real meaning, and who deceive multitudes away from God and into following erroneous humans. They teach what should not be taught, for it is false. Their underlying motivation is money. They must be stopped (vv. 10, 11).

ASK: What are some examples of leaders like those described in Titus 1:10 and 11? (Question 14)

God's strategy for opposing such people begins with men possessing the spiritual qualities just studied. The word "for" (v. 10) shows that godly leadership is necessary because of the work of ungodly opposition.

ASK: What often happens when you try to witness to someone who has been turned off to spiritual things by a spiritual leader who fell well short of the Biblical qualifications? (Question 15)

The second part of the Christian response is to have these godly leaders minister the Word of God. They are to rebuke the false teachers sharply (v. 13). The purpose of the rebuke is to make the false leaders become "sound in the faith." "The faith" refers to Christian truth, apostolic doctrine, or the things believed by true Christians.

Notice again the final quality of a pastor (Titus 1:9). He must hold fast the faithful Word of God so that he may take the sound doctrine of the Word and use it to convince the contradictors.

Paul's final description of these ungodly people is chilling. They professed that they knew God when they didn't (v. 16). Such false profession, believed by many, made them more effective in their evil work. However, the many who uncritically accepted their profession of faith should have known better, for their works clearly denied the Lord and thus proved their profession of faith to be false.

Making It Personal

Promoting Godliness

Ask: Knowing the qualities of godly leaders, what are some things you can do to promote godliness among the leaders of your church? (Question 14) *(Pray for the leaders' constant growth in godliness; when leadership positions are open, select leaders who have godly characteristics; follow the leaders' example of constant growth in godly characteristics yourself; work with the leaders in proclaiming and practicing sound doctrine.)*

Constitution Evaluation

Distribute the part of your church's constitution that deals with the qualifications of the pastor. Have groups of learners examine it to answer the following questions: Have the Biblical qualifications been included in our church's constitution? If not, should they be added? Are there other qualifications in addition to the Biblical ones? If so, why are they important to this church?

Allow the groups to share their answers. Make sure you direct any serious questions or concerns about the church's constitution to the church leadership.

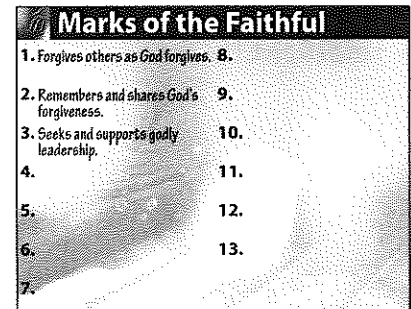
Review Transparency

Use transparency 1 to review the Mark of the Faithful for this lesson: Seeks and supports godly leadership.

Memory Verse

Distribute copies of the Titus 1:5 verse card from the resource CD. Encourage the learners to memorize the verse.

Use the case study for lesson 3 as desired.

**NEXT LESSON**

Encourage your learners to complete lesson 4 before the next class.

LESSON 4

A Godly Lifestyle

Materials

- RBP transparencies 1 and 6
- Lesson 4 case study from resource CD
- Titus 2:1 verse card from resource CD

Scripture Focus

Titus 2:1–10

Key Verse

“But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1).

Overview

The Scripture for this lesson addresses practical issues of Christian behavior. A godly lifestyle is very important as evidence of salvation and because of the results it produces. The apostle addressed five specific groups in the churches of Crete. Four were differentiated on the bases of age and gender. The fifth group consisted of servants, whose directives can be applied to employees.

Topic

Godly lifestyle

Theme

Biblical doctrine leads to a godly lifestyle in the believer.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will desire to demonstrate the genuineness of Biblical doctrine by a godly lifestyle.

Outline

- I. The Relationship of Behavior to Belief (Titus 2:1)
- II. The Regulations for Godly Behavior (Titus 2:2–10)
 - A. For aged men (2:2)
 - B. For aged women (2:3)
 - C. For young women (2:4, 5)
 - D. For young men (2:6)
 - E. For servants (2:9, 10a)
- III. The Reasons for Godly Behavior (Titus 2:5b, 8b, 10b)
 - A. Avoiding desecration
 - B. Adorning doctrine

Getting Started

Mom Gets the Best

Ask: You have just purchased the best gift in the world for your mother—