**1 Timothy 3:1-16 – Church leadership (leading, serving, behaving)**

**Opening “welcome” question:**

* Discuss some examples of leaders you admire… what is it that sets them apart?

**Worship**

* Read Colossians 1:15-20…
* Give thanks to Jesus for all that he is and all that he has done…

**1 Timothy 3:1-16**

**Main idea**

* Godly character is essential for church leadership but, in relationship with Jesus Christ, we are all “God’s work in progress” and, through the power of the Holy Spirit we can all be transformed to be more like Him.

**Key verse**

* 1 Timothy 3:15 – “if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.”

**Potential dangers when studying this passage**

* For church leaders - pride, feelings of inadequacy
* For others – jealousy, judgmental attitude, excessive self-deprecation

**Qualities of overseers/elders (those who exercise spiritual leadership and pastoral responsibility)**

* Godly character, manages family well, experienced in the faith, good reputation with outsiders

**Qualities of deacons (those who serve the church – practical and spiritual aspects combined)**

* Godly character, know and live by God’s Word, tested by previous faithful service, manages family well

**All**

* Made in God’s image and God’s work in progress, able to attain these godly characteristics through personal relationship with Jesus Christ (the ultimate example of servant leadership) and with the Holy Spirit at work within us

**Resources for further exploration**

* Precept Ministries NISS Study Guide on 1 Timothy: [Walking in Power, Love, and Discipline -New Inductive Study Series (NISS) (precept.org.uk)](https://www.precept.org.uk/product/niss-27-walking-in-power-love-and-discipline-1-2-timothy-titus/)
* Blueletterbible.org website: [Bible Search and Study Tools - Blue Letter Bible](https://www.blueletterbible.org/)
* Calvery Chapel Philadelphia (CC Philly) smartphone app / [Teaching Library (ccphilly.org)](https://resources.ccphilly.org/teachinglibrary.asp)
* BU “Marks of Ministry” document: [The Baptist Union of Great Britain : Marks of Ministry](https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/565399/Marks_of_Ministry.aspx)
* BU “Leadership in the local church” document: [The Baptist Union of Great Britain : Baptist Basics 8: Leadership in the Local Church](https://www.baptist.org.uk/Articles/464308/Baptist_Basics_8.aspx)

**Discussion questions – you may like to use those on pp37-38 of the study guide, or some of these...**

* How do you understand v1? Is it up to suitable candidates to put themselves forward to be overseers?
* What might the phrase “above reproach” mean in v2? Is it possible to meet this first criterion?
* Look at the list of qualities in vv2-7 and compare it with those in Titus 1:5-9… Are there any that need further explanation or discussion? Which do you consider to be the most important?
* To what extent is it noteworthy that the list focusses more on character than on skills/competencies?
* Compare the list of qualities for deacons in vv8-13… What are the similarities? Or differences?
* What does v13 say about the reward for those who serve in this way?
* What is the central importance of v15, both for this chapter and for the letter as a whole?
* What is the function of v16 at the end of this chapter? Is it a strange addition, or does it serve an important purpose?
* To what extent is this passage relevant for all, not just church leaders?
* How can the church best support its leaders in seeking to live by these standards?
* How does one develop more of these characteristics? Through prayer and spiritual discipline? Through active involvement and service in God’s household?

**Prayer:**

* Pray for those in Christian leadership, either in our church fellowship or elsewhere
* Pray for Jung who is visiting her family in Korea over these next two weeks. Pray about the NMBC leadership’s proposal to employ Jung as Minister in Training for the next academic year.
* Pray for yourselves in the further development of godly character
* Pray for Andy and for the Fuller family
* Pray for the preparations for the Love All Serve All outreach initiative to the Wimbledon Queue