

1 TIMOTHY 3 “To Lead or not to Lead that is the Question”

Here are the notes from my previous talk on 22-03-2020

I'm Mike, June you've met already this evening, we're the Pastors of the Vineyard Church in Albert Road, Southsea, Portsmouth and if you've not met us before or been along to our converted shop-church-food kitchen for the homeless we hope you will soon after the current health crisis ends!

This is the third in a series of talks looking at the much loved letters of the Apostle Paul to his friend, disciple and protégé Timothy.

I'm going to take two looks at this chapter – **firstly** a look through the chapter thinking about the three main themes I see there – **secondly** looking to see what it means to be a Christian leader is and explaining how that is so incredibly different from areas of life! I want to look at what being a Christian looks like after a few years – where do we go and what should we expect? Should we consider being leaders? Are we leaders **WHETHER WE LIKE IT OR NOT?**

Also there is a difference between being an overall leader in a church or Christian organisation and that of being a leader in your ministry area – in Vineyard we often like to use the name team leaders or coordinators or possibly best of all – facilitators – because we make the good activity possible to happen!! I Tim 3 clearly makes it clear it's not easy and you have to have learnt a lot of things and have a number of key things going well in your life.

Being a church leader is a serious task and calling (but we will examine to what extent we are all leaders in one way or another). Certainly for people sensing they might be called to church plant and/or pastor a church they should receive serious and carefully planned training, experience and support – it's not something you should be expected to jump into – say without at least three years practical leadership experience on a church staff team trying out all the different areas of a church.

Also surely you should be someone who has got to know their God through a relationship of love, acceptance, forgiveness, mercy and daughtership/sonship.

Also they should be an experienced prayer warrior and a hungry lover of the Bible as described in this verse among many:

2 Timothy 2:15 New International Version (NIV)

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”

FIRSTLY - SO THERE SEEM TO BE THREE MAIN PARTS TO THIS CHAPTER

Verses 1-7 **WATCHING** – the emphasis is on the senior leader/bishop/overseer/carer/pastor/etc. to be effective, strong and safe and that we, everyone else, should pray for them constantly for their love for Jesus to be fresh everyday, authentic and real. That they may be victors in the times of temptations and that their marriages and families to be protected too – remember the enemy does not play fair at any point in time and will attempt to seek out their “Achilles heel” and/or pick on their families and seek to bring sickness or/and division

Verses 8-13 **WORKING** – word Deacon means servant – see point 2 below comments apply

Verses 14-16 **WORSHIPPING** – BEING A “PILLAR AND BULWARK OF THE TRUTH” our faith is great – we hold the keys of the kingdom! Being part of a local church is not a simple thing to be taken lightly – you are in the local HQ of the Kingdom of Heaven – the Embassy of the Most High God!!!

SECONDLY - SO WHAT IS THE RELEVANCE IN THIS CHAPTER FOR US IF WE ARE NOT LEADERS YET OR FULLY??

1. DEVELOPING OUR CHARACTER ---- HUMILITY AND TAKING OUR CROSS UP

Luke 9:23 New International Version (NIV)

Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me."

THIS IS SO SO HARD – just when you feel a tiny bit of self-satisfaction that you are doing well here – you are down with a crash and have to pick yourselves up again.

The world's conception is that those who lead are in some way better than the people whom they lead. They gain status because they exercise power over others to achieve their goals. All of which leads to rewards, benefits and preferential treatment. This does not impress Jesus at all. He took the Scribes and Pharisees to task for such behaviour (Matthew 23:1-11), showing that behaviour reflects the nature of the heart (Luke 6:43-45).

The greatest among you ... Jesus leadership style is diametrically opposed to that of the world. He declared that in the Kingdom, greatness belongs to the servant and that distinction grows from child-like humility (Matthew 18:4). He taught that leaders were to serve others, not to be served by them.

2. SERVING OUR WAY INTO LEADERSHIP

"The way forward for us is to serve" "The person who really leads is the one who cleans the loos"

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matthew 20:25-28, NKJV

But Jesus called them to Himself and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave — just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

3. GROWING IN OUR GIFTING - LISTS 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Peter 4, FLOURISHING IN OUR FIELDS thus becoming a leader AS WE GROW IN OUR GIFTINGS (very rarely just one thing)!

4. HELPING FRIENDS BECOME DISCIPLES – ""LEADING PEOPLE TO JESUS" we talk of "Leading people to Christ" – ha see – we don't mind describing ourselves as leaders there by the words we use and clearly all Christians are to "lead people to Christ" therefore to some extent all Christians should be leaders even with a small "L"

2 Timothy 2:2 New International Version (NIV)

"And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others."

CONCLUSION – OUR COMMAND IS TO GO OUT AND MAKE DISCIPLES LEADING MANY TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

*Daniel 12:3 New International Version (NIV) **what an incredible verse?***

*"Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who **lead** many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever."*

Matthew 28:19 New International Version (NIV)

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"