

Series Based Bible Study



Vineyard Columbus

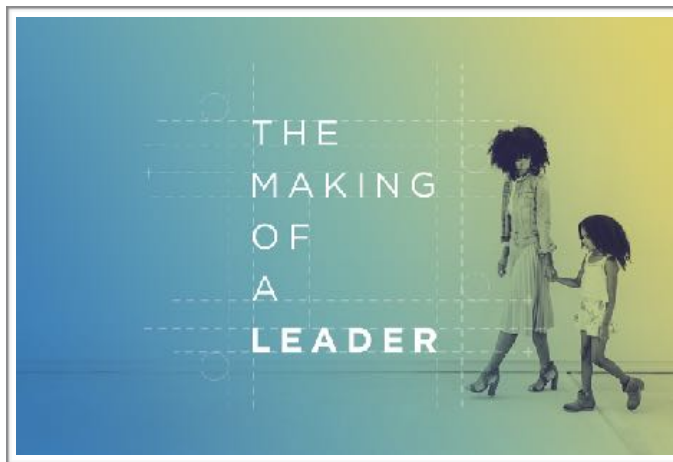
Spring 2017

The Making of a Leader

A Vineyard Columbus Small Group Study Series

Series Description

Every organization – whether non-profit, governmental, academic, medical, etc. – complains about the lack of qualified leaders. But what is a leader? What ought we look for when identifying leaders? Is leadership something that can be developed or is it just inborn? In this study of 1 Timothy, we will explore the approach that the Apostle Paul took to The Making of a Leader.



This guide offers seven weeks for your small group to work through. At Vineyard Columbus, we encourage your group to use this study as one component of your time together. We truly believe that disciples of Jesus will mature best when they engage in corporate worship, prayer ministry, practicing the prophetic, studying the Bible, serving our neighbors, community, church, and fellowshiping together. This study only covers one of those aspects, the Bible. Suggestions and ideas will be posited to aid the leader regarding the other areas. We pray this will be helpful to your group as you explore “The Making of a Leader”

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How to use this Study Series

Leaders are encouraged to briefly look over all studies before you teach or hand them out to alternative teachers within the group. ***There is a summary of Ministry Ideas from the entire series in the back.*** The ministry ideas are meant to build upon each other whenever possible and some ideas will take longer planning than others. Reading the full arch of Ministry Ideas before you start the series as a small group may provide a much richer and fuller experience.

Each lesson is broken into different parts. Often there will be a section called “***before the lesson***” which is intended only for the leader in their preparation. In addition to this there is a “***starting the lesson***” section which is intended to give hearers a bit of helpful background. Questions are provided to get things started

and throughout the lesson. **YOU NEED NOT DO ALL** questions. Pick the ones you think best for your group.

Having all studies provided at the start of a sermon series will give leaders the opportunity to give studies to potential teachers or co-leaders weeks ahead of time. Our prayer is that many more disciples of Jesus will feel comfortable sharing and leading others in discussion during small group. If you have any questions, please email us at: smallgroups@vineyardcolumbus.org

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Week 1



Fundamentals in a Leader

1 Timothy 1:12-20

NEW SECTION UPDATE:

“Before the Lesson” is a section for the leader as they prepare ahead of time. It need not be shared with the group. It gives more detailed context that may or may not come up throughout the lesson.

A brief section that provides relevant background for the group is found in the section “Starting the Lesson.”

Before the Lesson:

1 Timothy was written sometime after the events of Acts 28 at least eight years after Paul’s three-year stay in Ephesus (Acts 19:10). As the salutation indicates (1:2), Paul is writing to Timothy, a native of Lystra (in modern Turkey). Timothy’s father was Greek, while his mother was a Jewish Christian (Acts 16:1). From childhood he had been taught the Old Testament (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15). Paul called him “my true son in the faith” (1:2). At the time of his second visit Paul invited Timothy to join him on his missionary travels, circumcising him so that his Greek ancestry would not be a liability in working with the Jews (Acts 16:3).

1 Timothy 1:12-20

12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. 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. 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. 17 To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

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, 19 holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, 20 among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

Timothy helped Paul evangelize Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 17:14-15; 18:5) and was with him during much of his long preaching ministry at Ephesus (Acts 19:22). He traveled with him from Ephesus to Macedonia, to Corinth (see Ac 20:3 and note), back to Macedonia, and to Asia Minor (Acts 20:1-6). He was with Paul during the apostle's first imprisonment (Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; Philemon 1).

Paul's closeness to and admiration of Timothy are seen in Paul's naming him as the co-sender of six of his letters (2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1,2 Thessalonians and Philemon) and in his speaking highly of him to the Philippians (Php 2:19-22). At the end of Paul's life he requested Timothy to join him at Rome (2 Timothy 4:9,21). According to Hebrews 13:23, Timothy himself was imprisoned and subsequently released whether at Rome or elsewhere, we do not know.

It was during Paul's fourth missionary journey that he instructed Timothy to care for the church at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3) while he went on to Macedonia. When he realized that he might not return to Ephesus in the near future (1 Timothy 3:14-15), he wrote this first letter to Timothy to develop the charge he had given his young assistant (1 Timothy 1:3, 18), to guard/preserve the truth about Christ (1 Timothy 1:10, 18-19), to refute false teachings (1:3-7; 4:1-8; 6:3-5,20-21) and to supervise the affairs of the growing Ephesian church; and to the appointment of qualified church leaders, (1 Timothy 3:1-13); 5:17-25). Timothy is being encouraged as qualified leader to fight the heresy problems in the Ephesian church that combined Gnosticism, self-indulgent

Judaism (1 Timothy 1:3-7) and false asceticism (1 Timothy 4:1-5).

Starting the Lesson:

In this section of the first letter to Timothy, Paul recalls his own salvation and glorifies the importance of Christ in his life. In verses 12-17 He describes the story his calling out of sin into Christ's service. He presents himself as a model for Timothy, other church leaders, and all believers to follow (v. 16). He also presents himself as the opposite of the false teacher, as the stress on "faithfulness" and repetition of "faith" words in verses 12-16 indicate. As this testimony unfolds, Paul reveals several essential qualities to be found in the Christian, which the leader/teacher must exemplify. In verses 18-20 Paul, encourages Timothy to remember his calling. He assures Timothy that those whom the Lord chooses are worthy, and magnificently called to be a servant of God.

Starter Questions:

What leadership qualities do you possess, and what qualities do you admire in other leaders?

What makes you say "yes" when a leader asks you to serve or "go the extra mile" for a leader who asks you to do so?

Opening Prayer:

Thank God for the opportunity to gather, fellowship and learn. Pray for understanding of the lesson, prayer for leadership in your group and church ministries.

12 I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, 13 though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, 14 and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

Scripture:

Ask participants to close their eyes.

Read the verses 1 Timothy 1:12-20 aloud.

Have participants participate in second reading of the verses.

Have participants note what strikes them during the reading.

Discussion Questions:

Strength for Christian life and ministry comes from Christ. Paul does not credit himself with any knowledge or skills that equips him for ministry; he credits and thanks Christ for empowering him.

- How does Paul believe a leader is chosen?
 - The Lord chooses those who have been faithful and obedient, those who accept God's mercy/ grace, who love and respond to call vs 12-14, 18.
- Why was Paul called to be a leader entrusted with the gospel?
 - He was judged faithful to be appointed to his service and shown grace and mercy.
- What is grace? What is mercy?
 - Grace is the free and unmerited favor of God, as shown in the salvation of sinners and the gift of blessings through the atonement of Christ. Grace is extending kindness to the unworthy.
 - Mercy is compassion or forgiveness shown toward us by God when we deserved to be

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

punished. Mercy is deliverance from judgment.

- How does Paul describe the grace and mercy shown to him?
 - He received mercy because he acted ignorantly in unbelief. He received the grace of our Lord with the faith and love that are in Christ.
- How does Paul show the humility of a great leader through his salvation testimony?
 - He describes himself as a sinner; he does not describe false holiness or insights he has achieved. He focuses on his weaknesses and how he was made strong to demonstrate the Lord's saving grace.
- Why would Timothy and other leaders today feel an affinity to Paul as a role model of leadership?
 - Leaders feel affinity with Paul without much difficulty since he belongs to the same imperfect humanity as we do.
- What principles are taught in Paul's story that is important for leaders to remember? Why would observing those principles make leaders better able to lead?
 - To always focus on what the Lord is doing, why he is doing it and how he is doing it, to always give glory to God's grace and mercy toward us.

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, 19 holding faith and a good conscience. By rejecting this, some have made shipwreck of their faith, 20 among whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I have handed over to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.

- They will continually focus on God and others, and the Lord will bless them and others will grow. It will provide for a continuum of leadership that is not leader centric, but God centric.

- Explain the importance of knowledge and belief about God's call on your life.

- Having this knowledge will enable you to be focused and strengthened in difficult times.

- Discuss the leadership qualities Paul demonstrates in these verses (12-20)?

- He demonstrates full faith in Christ, humility, truthfulness, trust in others gifting, and discernment.

- What aspects of your pastor's leadership and sermons equip you to wage the good warfare?
- How do you feel you are equipping young leaders in your environment?
- According to Phil Stout, the President of Vineyard USA, leadership is... "Using what God has done in you and through you for the benefit of other people. Helping by influencing in a God direction". Discuss this as a group and mention how you believe you've done this recently.

Ministry Time Application:

Based on the people and overall feel of your group, select which option you feel fits best.

Option 1:

Write a brief prayer asking God to implant the principles you've learned in this lesson in your heart so that your thoughts, your words, and your actions will demonstrate your leadership abilities and or your compassion for your leader.

Option 2:

Pray for your group's leadership/hosts. Gather around your leaders as a group and pray for them to be refreshed, or if they have specific requests, pray for those.

Week 2



Leaders Worship

1 Timothy 2:1-8

Tips:

There are more questions than your group will be able to get through so feel free to pick and choose which ones you would like to use.

Remember to pause between questions. Waiting for people will help you identify quiet personalities in your group.

Prep for Ministry Time (Option 1):

Pieces of scrap paper and writing utensils. Books/magazines or hard surfaces for people to write on.

Before the Lesson:

The Apostle Paul is the author of 1 Timothy. Paul sent the letter to Timothy as instructions to care for the church of Ephesus, a city near the coast of Asia Minor, modern-day Turkey. These instructions to Timothy were given to help him in supervising the Ephesian church. Timothy helped Paul write at least six of his other letters.

Instructions on Worship

1 I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people— 2 for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. 3 This is good, and pleases God our Savior, 4 who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. 5 For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, 6 who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. 7 And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles. 8 Therefore I want the men everywhere to pray, lifting up holy hands without anger or disputing.

Starting the Lesson:

During the time when this letter was written, the Romans allowed subjected nations to worship their own gods, but they also required worship of the Roman Emperor. The Jewish people were permitted to simply offer prayers for the emperor instead of to him, and Christians followed suit with this by offering public prayers for the emperor and other authorities on a regular basis.

Starter Questions:

Can you recall a time when God answered one of your prayers in a surprising way?

Opening Prayer:

Pray for God to speak to each person, to give each person more courage and depth, and to open your hearts to receive whatever he has for you.

Scripture: Have two or three volunteers read through the Bible passage out loud. It may help to have it read twice!

Discussion Questions

- What four words does Paul use for prayer in verse 1? Describe or define each of these types of prayer.
 - Petitions (prayer for something we need)
 - Prayers (general prayers, for ever-present needs)
 - Intercession (prayer on behalf of the needs of others) and
 - Thanksgiving (prayers of gratitude)
- Who does the passage say we should pray for?

Notes

- All people, but specifies kings & authorities.
- Why does it matter if we pray for them?
 - Doing so will help us to live at peace.
- Who is it hardest for you to pray for, and why?
- What are some things that we can do to remind ourselves to pray for those who we struggle to pray for?
- Verses 4-6 are the gospel message in a nutshell. What does it mean to you that Jesus is our (or your) Mediator?
- In verse 7, Paul refers to himself as a “herald.” What is a herald and what pictures come to mind?
 - Someone who holds and rings a bell to get peoples attention, a person who cups their hands to their mouth in order to help megaphone their message to a town, someone who is openly declaring something

In verse 8, Paul says “Therefore, I want men everywhere to pray...” Whenever we see a “therefore” in a passage, it’s important to realize that the statement after it is the follow-up to the previous statements.

- What is the most important point of verses 1-7?
 - Paul emphasizes the gospel message that he was sent to preach.
- Why do you think Paul mentions lifting of “holy hands”? Why would our worship be linked to this position?

Tips:

When people partner up in pairs to pray, it will build trust and intimacy over time. This is a great way to have your group improve overall discussion. The more people you end up trusting in your group, the more open your discussion time will be.

- It indicates surrender (in the military sense), vulnerability (in the spiritual sense), and honesty (in the bodily sense - nothing hidden behind the back).

- What does a life that proclaims the gospel and full of worship look like?

- See verse 2, 3, living peaceful lives in holiness, it pleases God. A life of unity. Also, lessening fights among believers can further the gospel message by making it more attractive.

- Is worship a natural reaction for you when you hear a gospel message? If yes, why do you feel like worshipping when you hear the gospel proclaimed?

Ministry Time Application:

Option 1:

[Pass out paper & pencils.] Say: The text mentions four different types of prayers. Let's focus on two specific types: Intercession and thanksgiving. Let's take about three minutes to be quiet and write down names of someone that we can intercede for (maybe it's someone we need to share the gospel with), or write down things that we are thankful to God for, like an answered prayer. After the three minutes, we'll break up into groups of two or three. We'll share what we've written down and pray or give thanks in our groups for those things.

Option 2:

Spend some time as a group praying for our government officials. Break up into smaller groups if needed.

Week 3



Women in Leadership

1 Timothy 2:9-15

Tip: There are more questions than your group will be able to get through, so feel free to pick and choose which ones you would like to use.

Before the Lesson:

Many biblical scholars and commentators have wrestled with this text for centuries, and still are today. Do not feel like you need to be an expert and convince everyone in your group. However, what is very clear throughout all of Paul's writings is his belief in women, his dependence and complete submission to God's will and the generous grace of the Holy Spirit, and his complete disapproval of prejudice within the body of Christ. Knowing this, we must read with eyes and ears open to what the Spirit is telling us. This particular verse is difficult, but not impossible. We can look at it through both the specific cultural and time-bound context, as well as within the whole narrative of God's redemption story, and see that Paul is addressing both a particular problem in Ephesus at the time and a deep truth that is timeless – false

Bible Verses:

1 Timothy 2:9-15

9 I also want the women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, adorning themselves, not with elaborate hairstyles or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, 10 but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God.

11 A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. 12 I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

14 And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. 15 But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.

teachers are spreading heretical information through the church and deceiving many, and those who lead and teach should be well-trained, educated, and prepared and called by God before doing so. The difficulty here is that the object of the problem in focus is predominantly female, which can cause us some difficulty in navigating the non-gender neutral text.

Starting the Lesson:

1 Timothy is a letter written by the Apostle Paul to Timothy, who had been accompanying him in what is considered his “second Aegean ministry” journey throughout Asia. The dating is right around 64AD, shortly after Paul has left Timothy to oversee the church they had just planted together in Ephesus. The theme of 1 Timothy was to order the church to combat false teachers and those gaining followership but who were not wise in God’s ways, but instead were disrupting the work of God by spreading loose gossip and heretical doctrine and easily deceiving others in the church.

Starter Questions:

When you think of the word leadership what qualities, traits, or descriptors come to mind?

- Strength, charisma, lucky, connections, bravado, arrogance, courage, talent, smart, fearless, kindness, honesty

Think about those who are in positions of leadership above you – in work, school, clubs, groups, family, etc. Being as kind as you can, how do you view those leaders?

- Positive, negative, grateful, wish you had a better one, think you should be in their spot, so-so

A lot of people write and speak about leadership nowadays. It's been a best-selling topic for years. If you could pick one thing that's missing from leadership today, or one thing that matters most, what would it be?

- Humility, sacrifice, hustle, trust, the journey is more important than the destination, health

Now, that one thing you just thought about that was missing from leaders today or is most important – who would you say generally exhibits that trait more often, men or women?

Throughout the scriptures we see models of leadership that represent virtually all of the good and bad qualities that we could hope to have (or hope to avoid) as leaders and in those leading us. Let's take some time to read in 1 Timothy and see what Paul had to say about a specific topic of leadership that was (and still is today!) needing attention.

Opening Prayer:

Ask the Lord to open hearts and minds to truly hear from him. Ask for grace and tenderness from God, as some people may have wounds surrounding this topic, therefore you want to be sensitive. Pray for hope, encouragement, and even for God to be personal in his words to the group.

Scripture: Have two or three volunteers read through the Bible passage out loud. It may help to have it read twice!

Discussion Questions:**Read 1 Timothy 2:9-10**

Without a doubt, many of us have read this before, or heard or seen it used by someone aiming to make a point – possibly a parent, grandparent, teacher, or pastor. Even if you haven't read this before, you may be a bit confused or actually think you know what it means at first glance. I certainly did for quite a long time.

Before we get into what exactly Paul is saying, we must not dishonor God and take scripture out of context, or bend it to what we want it to say, or forget who God is in our reading.

Paul begins by saying, "I also...", leading us to look at his previous exhortations. Take a moment to skim the few lines or paragraphs before.

- What, and whom, has Paul just addressed?
 - How to pray / worship, men specifically

Paul is addressing the whole church here, and wants us to understand specific issues that more uniquely plague each gender. For men in this congregation, Paul directly addresses praying without anger or disputing, to live peaceful and quiet lives, to have "holy hands." This is a high charge, for much unholiness can be done with and by our hands.

- What does Paul seem to address with women?
 - Dress, adornment, accessorizing, how to present themselves

Notes

- Try your best to see this freshly, without prior judgment or motive. Why do you think this is necessary for Paul to address?
 - There must have been some current situation that he is speaking to, right?

It is quite possible that Paul is directly addressing a specific issue in this particular church body, but it's not only that. A wonderful book on Paul's view of marriage and women in ministry is "Paul, Women & Wives" by Craig Keener. I recommend anyone pick this up if you want to dive deeper into this issue.

Firstly, this particular context Paul is addressing is public prayer. Paul has just instructed men on how they ought to pray, and is doing the same with women now. Understanding the larger culture and the ancient practices, especially regarding physical beauty, was celebrated as a "virtue" of the body, and much early Jewish and Greco-Roman literature reflected a tendency against excessive adornment in general.

- Why do you think this is so? Why would it matter now?
 - It seems like someone could rely on their accessories or adornment for attention or love or worth instead of who they truly are
- Why do you think Paul speaks of this in the context of praying?
 - Excessive adornment calls attention to the wearer and not to God; the artificial augmentations to beauty were the sort that only

Notes

the rich and well-to-do could afford. In God's Kingdom and in his eyes, there is no difference.

Jesus specifically tells us in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6 both not to worry about we should wear and to not draw attention to ourselves when we pray. Paul here is addressing the exact same issue just in a different vein.

The overarching message from Paul here is this: "dress and live simply and unenticingly, but be lavish in your spirit; decorate your heart with purity and humility." (Keener "Paul, Women & Wives, pg. 106)

Read 1 Timothy 2:11-15

This is a very difficult text to many people. Our English language unfortunately does not serve us well here, and neither does our lack of knowledge and ability to understand the entirety of scripture together as one narrative (our brains are just not always that quick).

- What is your initial reaction to the "learning in quietness and full submission?"

- Don't tell me what to do! Submission seems to mean punishment or a less-than status.

Maybe your first thought was negative, which is understandable. But, think of this. When you are in a classroom, or learning from someone who knows more than you do, are being trained in a new task, or learning a new subject from an expert, do you attempt to speak the entire time? Do you not submit to that process while you are learning? Silence was and is an appropriate way

to learn, and the humility to submit to another person is required, especially in following Jesus.

An admonition to learning in silence may also mean stop talking and pay attention, not that the person must remain silent forever. Haven't you been chided by a teacher, coach, parent, or leader to be quiet and pay attention? It was not an indictment in that situation and isn't in this one, either.

Read 1 Timothy 2:2

Someone briefly read this section.

This use of "quiet" is the same as what Paul uses when he addresses the women. This is a whole church exhortation to a lifestyle of respectful attention and quiet demeanor, demonstrating that Paul is speaking of attitude and not complete muzzling.

Read 12-15 again

Now, we are not scholars (most likely no one in your group is), but even if we were there would not necessarily be full agreement on what this exactly means. There is quite a lot going on here, so let's slowly chip away.

Verse 12

Paul's use of "to have authority over" is not a typical phrase or term that he uses in other contexts – it is stronger language. This may mean more of a domineering use of authority since it is more powerful than just "having authority" as we understand it.

If we removed the gender specific language, we would agree that anyone attempting to override or domineer,

oppress, dictate, or intimidate others would not be tolerated or welcome, especially within the church.

Continuing on, Paul's desiring for any disciple (in this case, the women) to first learn in quietness in full submission suggests that he desires them to teach in the future. Anyone unlearned in the Bible could not be entrusted to pass along its teaching accurately, but once they had learned **this would no longer be an issue**, and they could join the **other women whom Paul commends in other areas of scripture**.

- How are we feeling so far about what we're learning? Is it sinking in and making sense, at least more than before?
 - (Leader, be open to others' viewpoints, but be graciously honest and speak the truth in love.)

Verses 13-15

There is admittedly a lot happening in these verses, and have proved difficult for many Bible readers, both scholars and laypeople alike, for centuries.

However, we don't want to simply gloss over this.

Verses 13 and 14 directly address the issue of Adam and Eve, and their sin in the garden.

- What does Paul clearly highlight?
 - Adam was formed first, Eve sinned first
- What does this initially make you think?
 - Men are leaders, women are deceivable

We have to remember that Paul was speaking to a particular group of Christians in Ephesus, and the women particularly were not of high status nor were very well educated. He is making a connection, drawing a parallel between these men and women and the reality of Adam and Eve. Eve was not present when God gave the commandment to not eat of the tree in the garden, and was therefore dependent on Adam for the teaching. She was **inadequately educated**, like the women he is addressing here, and just as God intended Adam to pass along what he had heard and seen Paul intends for the women to learn and absorb this teaching being passed along now.

Paul **does not state that women are more easily deceived than men, no more than he states that the consequences of Adam's sin is only regulated to men.** He draws this parallel to make a familiar analogy that the hearer and reader would understand. We are too far removed to easily understand without much explanation.

Verse 15 is just as interesting and difficult for us. Once again, our English language does not serve us well. The term Paul uses for “saved” here is actually more accurately translated as “brought safely through” and would have had much more significant meaning for the Jewish people at the time, as many women were at the threat of death during childbirth. This, of course, a result of the fall and directly connected to Eve's sin.

This may be read as a promise Paul states that women will be relieved from a part of the original effects of sin because of Jesus, but not fully set free until Jesus returns.

- What does this all state? How can we boil it down?
 - Sin itself was never a part of God’s original plan, and neither were the effects that caused any gender inequality. Before the fall, Adam and Eve were together to rule all things. Creation mandates harmony, but sin negated it. Paul’s appeal to Genesis here illustrates that elements of the curse are passing away and have been forever altered because of Christ’s triumph.

This is a loaded passage, and is so ingrained one way or the other in our hearts and culture that it can be difficult to wrap our minds around.

- What is one thing that has stuck out to you most either through this passage of scripture or the points we discussed? Why?

There is one last wonderful and striking quote combination from Keener for us to reflect on. Our church and pastor often similarly reflects on this same argument:

“We ought to give the benefit of the doubt to those who claim that God called them and who evidence the fruits of that call in their lives, rather than passing judgment on them...On what basis do any of us men prove our call? We trust inner conviction and the fruit of holy lives and teaching and faithfulness to that call, and if these evidences are insufficient demonstration of divine calling in the case of our sisters, how shall we attest our own?”

Many times over, our pastor has spoken and written on this subject, and his simplified summary is this:

*God calls people to leadership based on gifting, not gender.
Equality between the genders was established in creation.
Equality between the genders was confirmed in redemption.*

Gifting is not based on personal merit, family of origin, status, wealth, good looks, or anything of our own doing, but solely on the generosity and sovereignty of God and his spirit. Who are we to place borders around God's generosity and sovereignty?

This is consistent with all of Paul's writing (as he many times makes mention of women leaders and apostles) and Jesus' teaching and disciples who followed him.

Ministry Time Application

Option 1:

Leader, invite the group into a time of reflection on their own feelings and thoughts on the subject just discussed.

Everyone close your bibles and journals. Find a peaceful and relaxing position to sit, lay, or stand, and close your eyes. Open your hands, palms up, and sit quietly in a posture of receptivity for a couple of minutes. We believe God speaks to us today, is alive and active, and cares enough to come near to us and help us understand his heart, open our ears to hear him, and open our hearts to be changed by him.

Invite God (pray) to speak to each and every person, highlighting whatever he may want to bring up and

reveal to the group. Ask God to speak direct words to some people who need to hear him.

Sit quietly for 2-4 minutes. At the end of the time, invite group members to share what they experienced, heard, thought, or felt with the whole group. Depending on size of group, either pray together as a whole or break down into smaller groups of 2 or 3 to pray for one another.

Option 2:

If you have a female leader in the group (or multiple), or a strong female core team member (or multiple), ask her or them (preferably before group begins, so it is not a surprise) to pray a blessing aloud over each member of the group. This could help solidify and empower the truth of God pouring out his spirit and calling both men and women to lead his people.

Extra Resources:

- Paul, Women & Wives, Craig S. Keener
- Why Vineyard Columbus Encourages Women to Preach, Pastor & Church Plant, Rich Nathan via RichNathan.Org
- Slaves, Women & Homosexuals, William J. Webb

Week 4



Qualifications of a Leader

1 Timothy 3

Tip: The starter questions are meant to get the group thinking and spark discussion, so don't rush through them or attempt to get a solid answer for each one. Don't be afraid to wait for a while to see who speaks; and remember, there are no wrong opinions.

Before the Lesson:

Paul's first letter to Timothy was written around 64 A.D., while he was traveling and just prior to his final imprisonment before his death. Timothy was young but mature in faith, having been influenced greatly by godly relatives (notably, his mother Eunice and grandmother Lois), and was currently leading at the church in Ephesus. Paul had visited this church many times before (see Acts 18-20) and had requested that Timothy go there to attend to some issues they were having in his absence.

Ephesus was a commercial, political, and religious center at this time, and of the five major cities in the Roman

1 Timothy 3

1 Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. 2 Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, 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?) 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. 7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

8 In the same way, deacons are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

empire, along with Rome, Corinth, Antioch, and Alexandria. You can read more about Paul's instructions to the people of the church of Ephesus in the book of Ephesians.

Starting the Lesson:

At the time Paul wrote this letter, his young protege Timothy was leading the church at Ephesus. The church there was experiencing some difficulties, including false teachers promoting untrue doctrine and questions concerning how women should participate. Paul wrote to Timothy with encouragement and advice not only as to how he should act as the church's leader, but how he should expect the other leaders in the church to act.

Keep in mind that at this time and in this culture, women were uneducated and, in this particular church, especially susceptible to false teachings (see 2 Timothy 3:1-9). For this reason, women were explicitly excluded from leadership in the church at Ephesus, although there are **mentions of female leaders and deaconesses in Paul's other writings** and throughout the New Testament. For more information on women in leadership, revisit last week's lesson and/or read about the Vineyard's viewpoint in Rich Nathan's article, "Why Vineyard Columbus Encourages Women to Preach, Pastor & Church Plant." [<http://www.richnathan.org/article/why-vineyard-columbus-encourages-women-to-preach-pastor-church-plant/>]

11 In the same way, the women are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

12 A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well. 13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.

14 Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, 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. 16 Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:

He appeared in the flesh,
 was vindicated by the Spirit,
 was seen by angels,
 was preached among the nations,
 was believed on in the world,
 was taken up in glory.

Starter Questions:

Do you hold leaders to a higher moral standard than everyone else? Why or why not?

Are there leaders - in the church, your workplace, or other spheres you might be involved in - that you admire? Why? What sorts of qualities do they possess?

Opening Prayer:

As you open this week's discussion in prayer, thank God for the living example of leadership found in Jesus. Ask that the Lord help all those present become more like Jesus as they continue to grow in areas of leadership in their own lives.

Scripture:

Have a volunteer or two read the passage. Often it helps to read it twice!

Discussion Questions:

- Have you ever desired to become a leader in the church? (allow people to answer)
- What made you want to lead, or what has held you back? (allow people to answer)
- In verses 2-4, Paul describes the ideal character of a leader. What are some of the characteristics he lists?
 - Husband of one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, manages his family well and has respectful children

- In today's Western society, we tend to equate leaders with people who are ambitious, outspoken, bold, driven, etc. Why do you think Paul might have chosen not to include such characteristics on his list?
- Paul warns of a few situations which could cause a leader to stumble in verses 6-7. What are they?
 - Being a recent convert, which could lead to becoming conceited, and not having a good reputation with those outside the church, which could lead to disgrace.
- Why do you think Paul mentions these situations?
- Paul goes on to describe how those holding the position of deacon should behave. The word 'deacon' means 'one who serves,' and describes those who serve the congregation. What are some of the characteristics of a deacon?
 - Worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, not pursuing dishonest gain, keep the faith with a clear conscience)
- Do you often think of people who serve in the church — maybe in less glamorous or forward-facing areas such as custodians, food service providers, or technicians — as leaders? Why or why not? Why do you think Paul requires such similar characteristics from those who serve as from leaders?
 - Jesus calls us to be servant-leaders, as he was — see Mark 10:45
- In verses 9-10, Paul says that deacons must have a hold on the deep truths of the faith and should be tested

before they are allowed to lead. How do you feel about testing someone before putting them into a leadership position? Does this seem wise to you?

- Paul gives some direction for the wives of the leaders (or deaconesses, depending on the interpretation): that they must be worthy of respect, temperate and trustworthy. He clearly expects prominent females to be as responsible for their behavior as their male counterparts. What do you think of this direction? How do you think this translates to women in leadership in the modern church?
- Reread verse 13. What does Paul say that those who serve well will gain?
 - Great standing and assurance of their faith in Jesus
- What do you think of this reward? Do you find it a fair return for what is being asked of leaders in the church?
- Although most of us may not have leadership positions in the church, we are all leaders in the sense that we are called to be examples of Christ to those around us. Do you feel as if the characteristics of a leader outlined by Paul could also apply to the conduct of all Christians?
- After reviewing the lists of characteristics in this chapter, do you think you would be a good applicant for a leader? Why or why not? What characteristics might you need to nurture before stepping into a leadership position?

Ministry Time Application:

Based on the people and overall feel of your group, select which option you feel fits best.

Option 1:

As followers of Jesus, we are all called to be servant-leaders, as he was. In the discussion, we asked ourselves if, based on Paul's lists, we would be qualified to be a leader. While we all have the potential to be leaders, none of us are perfect and all have room for improvement. For tonight's ministry time, take a few minutes and write down 2-3 areas in which you could become better. Break into pairs or small groups and pray over one another for strength and improvement in these areas. Take your list home with you and continue to pray throughout the week to become a stronger leader.

Option 2:

Being a leader in the church is a 'noble task,' as Paul says in verse 1, and although it can be joyful and rewarding, it can also be complicated, difficult, and tiring. Leaders, like Timothy, often need encouragement and prayer themselves. This week, spend ministry time praying for our church leaders. Pick one or more of the following suggestions:

- Pray over your small group leaders and ask for wisdom and blessing in their lives
- Spend time praying for the pastor and worship leaders of your campus

- Ask each group member to think of a staff member or leader and commit to pray for them through the up coming week
- Pray for those in our church who have recently become leaders or who are taking leadership classes currently, that they may serve well
- Consider blessing someone currently serving in leadership in a small way, such as sending a note of thanks, a word of encouragement, or a thoughtful small gift. Brainstorm ideas with your group that you can do together.

Week 5



The Standards of a Leader

1 Timothy 5:17-25

Tip: You don't have to make sure every one of these gets answered. Your role is to be a discussion facilitator, not a professor; the idea isn't simply to give the group information, but to allow everyone to learn from the scripture and from each other. It's okay to spend more time on some questions than on others depending on how the group is responding.

Before the Lesson:

1 Timothy was written by the apostle Paul after the events chronicled in the book of Acts, at least eight years after Paul's three-year stay in Ephesus.

Starting the Lesson:

Today we'll be looking at part of a letter written by the apostle Paul to his fellow evangelist Timothy, whom Paul calls his "one true son in the faith" (1 Tim. 1:2). Timothy traveled extensively with Paul on his missionary journeys, and was tending to the church in Ephesus when this letter was written. Paul didn't know when he was going to be able to return to Ephesus, and wrote to

17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. 18 For Scripture says, "Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain,"[a] and "The worker deserves his wages." [b] 19 Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. 20 But those elders who are sinning you are to reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning. 21 I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism. 22 Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. 23 Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses. 24 The sins of some are obvious, reaching the place of judgment ahead of them; the sins of others trail behind them. 25 In the same way, good deeds are obvious, and even those that are not obvious cannot remain hidden forever.

instruct Timothy on how to deal with issues in the growing church.

Starter Questions:

What comes to your mind when you hear the word "standard"?

What standards do you have for yourself? How often do you revisit the standards you've set for yourself?

Opening Prayer: Thank God for the people in attendance and ask him to bless the teaching and your time together.

Scripture: Read 1 Timothy 5:17-25. Depending on the willingness of the members of the group to read aloud, you may want to call on one or several readers.

Discussion Questions:

- What group of people does Paul say are worthy of "double honor"?
 - Verse 17: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."
- Why do you think it was important to Paul that this group of people receive so much support and esteem?
 - Paul is establishing that much is required of church leaders, and even more of those directly instructing others.
- What does Paul say is necessary before Timothy gives attention to an accusation brought against an elder?

- Verse 19: “Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses.”
- Why would an accusation against an elder require special instruction?
 - Given that elders are held to a higher standard of conduct, an accusation against them is more serious.
- What does Paul say should be done when an elder sins?
 - Verse 20: But those elders who are sinning you are to reprove before everyone, so that the others may take warning.
- Why do you think elders who sin are corrected publicly? Why not keep it quiet?
 - In addition to the warning it gives to others, this provides for transparency when it comes to the character of the leaders of the church.
- What’s Paul’s “charge,” or important instruction, to Timothy?
 - Verse 21: I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favoritism.
- Why does Paul give such emphasis to his instruction against partiality and favoritism here?
 - Accountability among church leaders is useless if standards are applied unfairly.

- Do you think leaders of the church are deserving of special treatment, or higher standards? Why?
- What do you think it does to the message of Christ when a leader in the church is guilty of a great sin and it is “swept under the rug?” How might those who don’t follow Christ see this type of behavior?
- How should leaders in the church be treated differently from leaders elsewhere?
- Have you ever been too harsh, or too lax, in your judgement of leaders in the church?
- As Christians, we all are called to lead others to Christ. Is God calling you to specific leadership opportunities in your life?

Ministry Time Application

Please thoughtfully choose one of the two options below based on what would be most effective and helpful for your group. The second option requires writing utensils and paper.

Option 1:

Step 1: Explain that the group will be praying silently for three minutes. Instruct the members of the group to pray about opportunities for leadership that God may be calling them to, or any struggles they may already be having as leaders in their lives. Have someone set a timer for three minutes, and start the timer after you open in brief prayer asking the Holy Spirit to come. Example: “Holy Spirit, come now and fill the hearts and minds of people in this room with the truth you want to speak to us.”

Step 2: Wait for three minutes. If you want, you can softly play worship music in the background.

Step 3: Ask if anyone in the group has a calling or a struggle they would like to share with the group, and then have the group pray over them. (Note: Make it clear that leadership struggles should focus on ways that a group member would like to personally improve, and not complaints they have about someone else.)

Option 2:

Step 1: Pass out writing materials to the group. Explain that the group will sit in silence for three minutes, and you'd like everyone to prayerfully consider and write down the name of a leader who needs their support. Have someone set a timer for three minutes, and start the timer after you open in brief prayer asking the Holy Spirit to come. Example: "Holy Spirit, come now and fill the hearts and minds of people in this room with the truth you want to speak to us."

Step 2: Have the group break up into groups of two or three, guys with guys and girls with girls, and have everyone pray specifically about the people on their cards and the support they need. Ask the group to pray daily for the leader they wrote down over the next week.

Week 6



Unhealthy Leaders

1 Timothy 6

Tip: These questions are meant to get the group thinking and spark discussion, so don't rush through them or attempt to get a solid answer for each one. Don't be afraid to wait for a while to see who speaks, and remember, there are no wrong opinions.

Before the Lesson:

One of the discussions for this lesson has to do with personal wealth that may not have to do with our finances. Take some time to reflect on some of the gifts and abilities of the people in your small group. What words of encouragement could you say about their gifts?

Starting the Lesson:

The passage we will be reading and discussing comes from the apostle Paul's letter to a young man named Timothy. Timothy is a dear friend to Paul and a fellow disciple. Paul has mentored Timothy, and writing this letter to continue in his instructions. The general theme of the letter is good and Godly leadership, and our

1 Timothy 6:2B-21

2These are the things you are to teach and insist on. 3If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, 4they are conceited and understand nothing. They have an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions 5and constant friction between people of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and who think that godliness is a means to financial gain. 6But godliness with contentment is great gain. 7For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. 8But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. 9Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. 11But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

passage examines the characteristics and consequences of bad leadership.

Starter Questions:

When do people usually go to the hospital?

What happens when we don't pay attention to red flags and warnings in our lives?

Who has someone in their life that they trust to tell them when you are about to do something unhealthy or your behavior exudes unhealth? Do you usually listen to their warnings or typically avoid taking their advice?

Opening Prayer:

Lord God I praise you for you love me, you have kept me as your own to do your work.

Lord I ask you to show me kindness when I have not loved as you shown me to love. I place all that you have given me into your loving hands to serve your kingdom purposes. May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight Lord.

Scripture:

Read 1 Timothy 6:2b-21

Discussion Questions:

In verses 4-5, Paul describes some of the characteristics of ungodly leadership. What does Paul list?

- They are conceited, misunderstand Jesus and his teachings, have unhealthy interest in controversies (resulting in envy, strife,

12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. 13 In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you 14 to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 which God will bring about in his own time— God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, 16 who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no one has seen or can see. To him be honor and might forever. Amen.

17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. 20 Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to your care. Turn away from godless chatter and the opposing ideas of what is falsely called knowledge,

etc.), and interpret “godliness” as a means of financial gain.

- Among these attributes of unhealthy leadership, Paul mentions being prone to quarrels and controversies. How could this tendency be problematic for a leader?
 - A leader who often quarrels with others is likely to say things that damage relationships with other people. Perhaps they are more concerned with winning and argument than considering how their words might affect the other person.
 - Those who are drawn to controversy may find themselves involved in slanderous and unmerciful gossip. They may perpetuate harmful myths or lies, which contribute to prejudices or cruelties.
- How could someone who is mindful about what they choose to argue or speculate about positively influence those they lead?
 - Perhaps they can model thoughtful speech, wise discernment about when and how to respond to situations. They can lead others not to recklessly ruin relationships or make enemies. They can model respect for others by avoiding gossip and slander. They can model that being wise or clever and not things we are to boast about as Christ followers.
- Verses 9-10 discuss the consequences of individuals who lead out of a desire to be rich.

21 which some have
professed and in so doing
have departed from the faith.

Week 6

Grace be with you all.

What does this passage tell us about profit-driven leadership?

- Those who are primarily motivated by financial gain are particularly vulnerable to the temptation and trap that plunge them into disaster and ruin. For foolish and harmful desires, which may very well lead people into ruin. Paul calls the love of money “a root of all kinds of evil” and says that people eager for money risk wandering from the faith.
- Paul is quite plain about the many temptations and consequences surrounding leadership driven by acquisition. Do you share his concerns? Have you seen financial or material pursuits affect the character of a leader?
 - Allow for anecdotal answers, but it’s safe to assume that we have all seen leaders driven by wealth make sinful decisions that have hurt others and negatively affected their reputation and trustworthiness as a leader. You might consider together the damage done to the reputation of the Church and Christians when a Christian leader is scandalously motivated by profit.
- Paul has provided warnings about the traps and temptations that typically accompany financial gains. On the topic of possessions, in verse 7 he gives a sobering reminder of what we humans have brought into the world, and what we will be taking out of it, which is what?

- Absolutely nothing.

- When you read in verse 6, “godliness with contentment is great gain,” how did this make you feel?
 - Possible responses will vary. Some may have not thought about this before and unsure how they feel about it. Others may be convicted but unclear about how to achieve this. Others may confess that this is true for them.
- If we were to define “contentment” as a state of satisfaction, peaceful happiness, can you think of a leader that models this; what does that look like?
 - Responses will vary, but use a personal example if you can. Another example might be Pope Francis, who makes modest clothing choices atypical of his predecessors, such as with his shoes, and passed up living in the luxurious papal residence to instead live in a simple Vatican guesthouse.
- Paul instructs that essentially food and clothing should be enough for a Christian in terms of their possessions; he is saying we should seek no more than our basic needs. Where might you struggle to draw the line with delineating basic needs from embellishments or excessive possessions?

17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. 18 Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

- Keep in mind that many Christians have observed that our modern context is highly vulnerable to materialism and pursuits of wealth. And we know that bad behavior can be financially profitable. If we want to be certain that our motives are pure and healthy, we have to be intentional about assessing the reasons behind our actions. It may help you to ask a trusted fellow Christian what they see to be your motivations.

How would you feel if it appeared to you that a Christian mentor, leader, or pastor of yours was living beyond contentment?

- Try to avoid slander or personalized attacks here, but it is worth highlighting the stakes of badly motivated leadership.

- We have discussed the warnings Paul gives us on the topic of wealth-driven Christian leaders, as well as what he has said about being content. What does he have to say about the individuals who are already wealthy? Let's look at verses 17-19; will someone please read these out loud?

In the time of this letter being written, the wealthy typically were landowners (who may have had tenants or crops providing them income) or well-to-do merchants such as ship owners. Paul is not saying that wealth and property are sinful in themselves so long as one is not seeking them purely with the selfish ambition of their

accumulation. Paul is saying that Christians must use their wealth for good (see verse 18).

- Although a common association with wealth is money, we may be “wealthy” by having an abundance of time, patience, compassion, knowledge, or other gifts/ training/ trade experience. What is something that you are personally wealthy in? What do you have an abundance of?

- Answers will vary, but this is a chance for you as a leader to encourage the strengths and gifts you see in your small group members, such as their hospitality, creativity, or ability to teach or coach others.

- If Paul were here with us today, what would be some contemporary examples he could encourage us with in terms of how we, leaders in our community/ work place/ small group/ family, etc. could demonstrate being “rich in good deeds” and being “generous and willing to share”?

- Possible responses: tithe, giving beyond your tithe to the church or other organizations, volunteer at a community center, consistent (weekly/monthly) volunteering commitments, paying someone else’s bill at a drive-thru/ restaurant/ grocery store, etc. Examples may reflect our wealth beyond the limits of

our finances (reflect back on answers provided for the previous question).

- Our passage gave us examples of what unhealthy and healthy leadership can look like. Why do you think Paul took the time and made the effort to delineate these two things? As members of the body of Christ, how can we respond to Paul's teaching?
 - We can spot unhealthy leadership, and depending on the appropriate course of action, avoid the individual and their teachings or provide accountability for them, and hopefully avoid these tendencies wherever and however we lead others.
 - We have discussed what a healthy relationship with wealth is, and how we are called to use it for good versus being selfishly possessive over it. We received warning about the temptations that come along with wealth. We understand the negative attributes of wealth, and the pursuit of it, may have on the hearts of people, particularly how it can lead people astray from the faith and therefore its impact on leaders within the faith.

Ministry Time Application

Please thoughtfully choose one of the two options below based on what would be most effective and helpful for your group.

Option 1:

This passage in 1 Timothy reminds us of how important good and Christ-centered leadership is. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to your group—to bring to mind those who lead them, including their pastors, small group leaders, government leaders, bosses, coaches, etc. Pray a blessing of God’s help, favor, and conviction for those leaders as you think of them. Pray that they would not be “led into temptation” and that they would be “delivered from evil”.

Option 2:

Two of the primary concerns of this passage are being quarrelsome and greedy. These can be easy traps to fall into. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any places in your life where He would like to heal you and help you of these common tendencies. Ask God to give you a greater sense of peace and contentment with the gifts He has given you, and that God would grow you in your generosity of whatever you have to give.

Week 7



Leading by Example

1 Timothy 4:11-16

Tips: These questions are meant to get the group thinking and spark discussion, so don't rush through them or attempt to get a solid answer for each one. Don't be afraid to wait for a while to see who speaks, and remember, there are no wrong opinions.

Before the Lesson:

Timothy helped Paul evangelize Macedonia and Achaia (Acts 17:14-15; 18:5) and was with him during much of his long preaching ministry at Ephesus (Acts 19:22). He traveled with him from Ephesus to Macedonia, to Corinth (see Ac 20:3 and note), back to Macedonia, and to Asia Minor (Acts 20:1-6). He was with Paul during the apostle's first imprisonment (Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; Philemon 1).

Paul's closeness to and admiration of Timothy are seen in Paul's naming him as the co-sender of six of his letters (2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, 1,2 Thessalonians and Philemon) and in his speaking highly of him to the

1 Timothy 4:11-16

11 Command and teach these things. 12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. 14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. 16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Philippians (Php 2:19-22). At the end of Paul's life he requested Timothy to join him at Rome (2 Timothy 4:9,21). According to Hebrews 13:23, Timothy himself was imprisoned and subsequently released whether at Rome or elsewhere, we do not know.

It was during Paul's fourth missionary journey that he instructed Timothy to care for the church at Ephesus (1 Timothy 1:3) while he went on to Macedonia. When he realized that he might not return to Ephesus in the near future (1 Timothy 3:14-15), he wrote this first letter to Timothy to develop the charge he had given his young assistant (1 Timothy 1:3, 18), to guard/preserve the truth about Christ (1 Timothy 1:10, 18-19), to refute false teachings (1:3-7; 4:1-8; 6:3-5,20-21) and to supervise the affairs of the growing Ephesian church; and to the appointment of qualified church leaders, (1 Timothy 3:1-13); 5:17-25). Timothy is being encouraged as qualified leader to fight the heresy problems in the Ephesian church that combined Gnosticism, self-indulgent Judaism (1 Timothy 1:3-7) and false asceticism (1 Timothy 4:1-5).

Starting the Lesson:

Paul encourages Timothy to in his task, but cautions that silent example or mild suggestion will not do in every case. There are many occasions when it will be necessary for you to speak out, with the authority. The soundness of a church depends on ministers and leaders who are sound in their faith and practice.

Starter Questions:

Discuss some of the fundamental traits that result in highly effective long-term leaders.

How can you further enhance these fundamental Christian leadership traits in your life?

Opening Prayer:

Try praying a prayer that asks God to instill the same leadership principles in this passage to prevail in all areas of our lives, (religious, corporate and political).

Scripture:

Read the verses 1 Timothy 1:12-20 aloud.

It often helps to read them twice!

Discussion Questions:

- What is Paul adamant towards Timothy about?
 - That Timothy enters into his leadership with authority and full knowledge of God's word. That Timothy would devote himself to it.
- How can youth often be seen as a "hinderance" to some people?
 - The actual lack experience in life situations and the perceived lack of experience and knowledge.
- How does Paul tell Timothy to demonstrate his maturity and that he is fit for leadership?
 - To set an example for the believers of self-discipline, personal growth, and character development

11 Command and teach these things. 12 Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 13 Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. 14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. 15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. 16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

- When was the last time you were “diligent” at doing something? What did others observe in you or observe as you were diligent?
- What does Paul request Timothy do to grow toward God and toward the church? How have you noticed the reading/meditating of scripture affect/effect you (emotionally, actually)?
 - To devote himself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.
- Discuss what this statement means to you “Those who teach God's' gospel, must teach by their life”.
 - To develop interpersonal leadership skills such as grace, a shepherd's heart, and a servant attitude,.
- Discuss leadership shepherding from a both an authoritative-self assertion and a faultless-character perspective.

Here the Paul reminds Timothy, his representative to the Ephesian congregation of his special gift of teaching and exhortation. That he, Timothy has spiritual leadership gifts such as spirituality and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

- From whom did Timothy receive his gift?
 - God's choice of Timothy was announced or verified through prophecy and then publicly recognized as the elders laid hands on him.

- Discuss why Paul mentions the elders to Timothy.
 - To demonstrate the trust the elders had in his leadership.
 - To help him know leadership was confirmed through the prophecy of many.
 - He can trust that God will do great things through him.
- What are ways to learn to use your gifts?
 - By learning to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.
 - By praying without ceasing.
- Discuss times when you have set goals, what criteria did you use to determine if you had given your all.
- Discuss how you feel when both you and others notice your progress toward life-changing goal? How can you use this as an example to others?
- As a Christian nation can you identify examples of where are lives and our doctrine are not in synch?
 - Allow group members to express their ideas, but caution them that your group maintains the doctrine of love for one another
- What is a priority for all leaders to engage in?

- Be diligent and attentive to their personal spiritual priorities and sound Christian doctrine.

Ministry Time Application:

Hand out a note card to each person in the group that has, “Be an example in...” Have each person read this passage, reflect, and pray over an area they hope to be an example for others (maybe kids, spouse, co-workers, friends, family, etc.) in. Pair up and pray that God would do what they have written.



Ministry Time

Series: The Making of a Leader

Read through all of the Ministry Time ideas for each week before you begin teaching through the series. This will help you plan and pray for stronger impact! Blessings!

Have writing utensils and note cards/paper available for your group.

Based on the people and overall feel of your group, select which option you feel fits best.

Week 1:

Option 1:

Write a brief prayer asking God to implant the principles you've learned in this lesson in your heart so that your thoughts, your words, and your actions will demonstrate your leadership abilities and or your compassion for your leader.

Option 2:

Pray for your group's leadership/hosts. Gather around your leaders as a group and pray for them to be refreshed, or if they have specific requests, pray for those.

Week 2:

Option 1:

[Pass out paper & pencils.] Say: The text mentions four different types of prayers. Let's focus on two specific types: Intercession and thanksgiving. Let's take about three minutes to be quiet and write down names of someone that we can intercede for (maybe it's someone we need to share the gospel with), or write down things that we are thankful to God for, like an answered prayer. After the three minutes, we'll break up into groups of two or three. We'll share what we've written down and pray or give thanks in our groups for those things.

Option 2:

Spend some time as a group praying for our government officials. Break up into smaller groups if needed.

Week 3:

Option 1:

Leader, invite the group into a time of reflection on their own feelings and thoughts on the subject just discussed.

Everyone close your bibles and journals. Find a peaceful and relaxing position to sit, lay, or stand, and close your eyes. Open your hands, palms up, and sit quietly in a posture of receptivity for a couple of minutes. We believe God speaks to us today, is alive and active, and cares enough to come near to us and help us understand his heart, open our ears to hear him, and open our hearts to be changed by him.

Invite God (pray) to speak to each and every person, highlighting whatever he may want to bring up and reveal to the group. Ask God to speak direct words to some people who need to hear him.

Sit quietly for 2-4 minutes. At the end of the time, invite group members to share what they experienced, heard, thought, or felt with the whole group. Depending on size of group, either pray together as a whole or break down into smaller groups of 2 or 3 to pray for one another.

Option 2:

If you have a female leader in the group (or multiple), or a strong female core team member (or multiple), ask her or them (preferably before group begins, so it is not a surprise) to pray a blessing aloud over each member of the group. This could help solidify and empower the truth of God pouring out his spirit and calling both men and women to lead his people.

Week 4:

Option 1:

As followers of Jesus, we are all called to be servant-leaders, as he was. In the discussion, we asked ourselves if, based on Paul's lists, we would be qualified to be a leader. While we all have the potential to be leaders, none of us are perfect and all have room for improvement. For tonight's ministry time, take a few minutes and write down 2-3 areas in which you could become better. Break into pairs or small groups and pray over one another for strength and improvement in these

areas. Take your list home with you and continue to pray throughout the week to become a stronger leader.

Option 2:

Being a leader in the church is a 'noble task,' as Paul says in verse 1, and although it can be joyful and rewarding, it can also be complicated, difficult, and tiring. Leaders, like Timothy, often need encouragement and prayer themselves. This week, spend ministry time praying for our church leaders. Pick one or more of the following suggestions:

- Pray over your small group leaders and ask for wisdom and blessing in their lives
- Spend time praying for the pastor and worship leaders of your campus
- Ask each group member to think of a staff member or leader and commit to pray for them through the upcoming week
- Pray for those in our church who have recently become leaders or who are taking leadership classes currently, that they may serve well
- Consider blessing someone currently serving in leadership in a small way, such as sending a note of thanks, a word of encouragement, or a thoughtful small gift. Brainstorm ideas with your group that you can do together.

Week 5:

Option 1:

Step 1: Explain that we believe at the Vineyard that God speaks to us through the Holy Spirit, and that the group will be sitting in silence for three minutes to wait on the Lord. Have someone set a timer for three minutes, and start the timer after you open in brief prayer asking the Holy Spirit to come. Example: “Holy Spirit, come now and fill the hearts and minds of people in this room with the truth you want to speak to us.”

Step 2: Wait for three minutes. If you want, you can softly play worship music in the background.

Step 3: Ask if anyone feels they have a word or image from the Lord to share. Stress that this is a safe place to share, that sometimes we receive words or pictures that seem to mean nothing to us but are intended for others in the group. Have the group break up into groups of two or three, guys with guys and girls with girls, and have everyone pray about each other’s needs. If someone in the group feels that a word or image from someone else applies to them specifically, have those people pray together.

Option 2:

Step 1: Pass out writing materials to the group. Explain that the group will sit in silence for three minutes, and you’d like everyone to write down four things: 1) A way in which they feel especially loved by God, 2) A way in which God’s love has seemed distant, 3) A way in which they’ve loved others well, and 4) A way they could do a better job of loving others. Have someone set a timer

for three minutes, and start the timer after you open in brief prayer asking the Holy Spirit to come.

Step 2: Wait for three minutes. If you want, you can softly play worship music in the background.

Step 3: Explain that the group will sit in silence for another three minutes, and this time you'd like everyone to pray to God and wait on his Spirit regarding the items written on the cards.

Step 4: Wait for three minutes. If you want, you can softly play worship music in the background.

Step 5: Ask if anyone would like to share what they've written on their cards, or what God has spoken to them during this ministry time. This is strictly voluntary, and an opportunity for the group to lift each other up both in weakness and blessing. Open this up for discussion only if you feel your group would be comfortable with it.

Step 6: Have the group break up into groups of two or three, guys with guys and girls with girls, and have everyone pray specifically about the items on each other's lists.

Week 6:

Option 1:

This passage in 1 Timothy reminds us of how important good and Christ-centered leadership is. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak to your group—to bring to mind those who lead them, including their pastors, small group leaders, government leaders, bosses, coaches, etc. Pray a blessing of God's help, favor, and conviction for those

leaders as you think of them. Pray that they would not be “led into temptation” and that they would be “delivered from evil”.

Option 2:

Two of the primary concerns of this passage are being quarrelsome and greedy. These can be easy traps to fall into. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you any places in your life where He would like to heal you and help you of these common tendencies. Ask God to give you a greater sense of peace and contentment with the gifts He has given you, and that God would grow you in your generosity of whatever you have to give.

Week 7:

Hand out a note card to each person in the group that has, “Be an example in...” Have each person read this passage, reflect, and pray over an area they hope to be an example for others (maybe kids, spouse, co-workers, friends, family, etc.) in. Pair up and pray that God would do what they have written.