



Week 44: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon

Study Guide for the week of Oct. 26 - Nov. 1

Personal reflection / journaling exercise

This week spend time with 1 Tim 3:1-13

1 and 2 Timothy and Titus are often called the pastoral letters because in them, Paul spends time instructing the church on leadership.

List those qualities of leaders Paul outlines in this passage. What strikes you about the list? Does it outline a job description or character description? Is character development limited only to leaders? (Hint: reread Titus 2:1-6).

Where do you have influence on others (a simple definition of leadership)? Assess your own character development; where do you see your character increasingly looking like the biblical description? What are your growing edges? Ask God to reveal to you the people you influence (you may be surprised!) and how he wants to mold your character into one that more closely imitates Christ.

Discussion starters

1. Share with your group the relationships you have with the children and youth in your family, your neighborhood and at church. What are you learning from them (1 Tim 4:12)?
2. What relationships do you have with people in different generations? How do you regard people older than you? Younger than you? What is Paul's teaching on what the relationship between generations is to look like (1 Tim 5:1-2)? How are your relationships measuring up? What would you like to see change in those relationships? What one step could you take this week to develop or nurture a relationship with a person from a different generation?
3. Is money the root of all evil (1 Tim 6:10)? Money itself is a neutral commodity, neither good nor evil in itself. Rather, it is how we regard and use money that gives it moral value. Do you consider yourself wealthy? Why or why not? Consider these statistics: 80% of the world lives in substandard housing; 67% of the world's people are functionally illiterate; 33% of the world's people lack access to safe water; 24% of the world's people do not have electricity; only 1% of the world's people have a college education. What is Paul's admonition for all of us who are rich (1 Tim 6:17-19)?
4. In 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus, Paul speaks specifically to leaders in several passages and also urges people to pray for their leaders (1 Tim 2:1-2). Do you include leaders of our world in your prayers? Our country? Our state and community? Our churches? Why or why not? Before you end your small group time, pray the following prayer from Richard Foster (or another one of your choosing) for our leaders.

Today, O God, I hold before you the rulers of the nations – Kings, Queens, Presidents, Prime Ministers – all who are in positions of supreme leadership.

I can be quick to criticize: help me, Lord, to first enter their dilemma. On most issues of state I have

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the luxury of withholding judgment, of not committing myself, of sitting on the fence. Even when I have an opinion, it has little influence and seldom any consequence. Not so with the rulers of the nations. To the extent that they really lead, they must make decisions, even if they are poor ones.

Help these leaders, O God, in the loneliness of their decision. Put wise counselors around them.

Take, I pray, the bits and pieces of virtue that are in each ruler and cause them to grow and mature. And take all destructive motives and cause them to vanish like smoke in the wind.

Lord, I know that many – perhaps most – rulers do not know you, nor do they seek you. But you seek them! Help them see how good right decisions are. And where decisions must be made that are not in their own interest, deepen their sense of duty. Having seen the light, give them the courage to walk in the light.

Amen

Bible verse to memorize: 2 Tim 3:16-17