


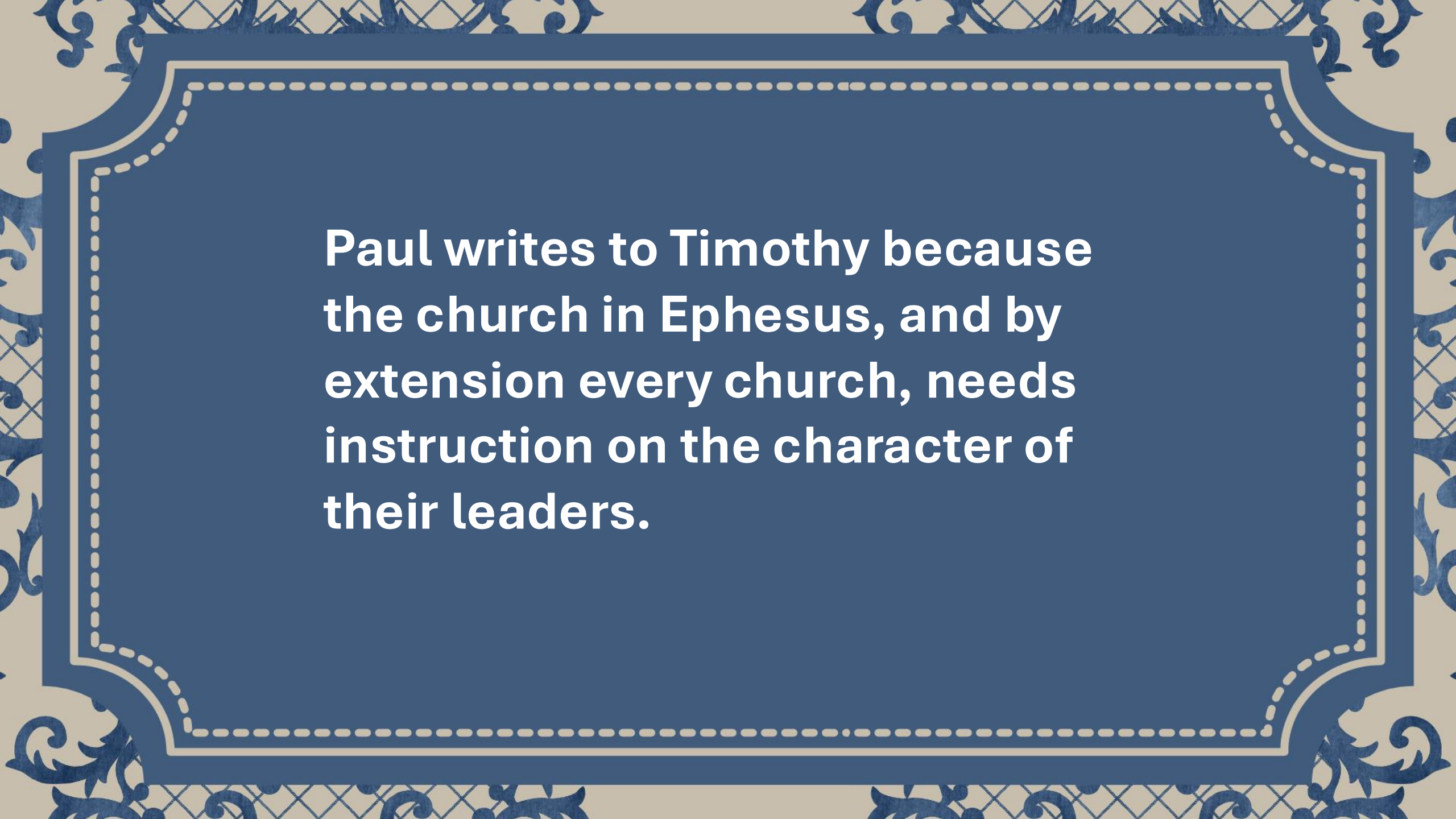


**God's plan for leadership of  
His church**

**I Timothy 3:1-7**



**Church leadership matters because leaders shape the spiritual health of the entire congregation and a fall or lack of integrity has wide repercussions.**



**Paul writes to Timothy because the church in Ephesus, and by extension every church, needs instruction on the character of their leaders.**



# History of Eldership at RFBC

**1 Timothy 3:1-7 1 The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church? He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.**

**v.1 The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.**

- **The office of elder (*presbuteros*) includes the work of an “overseer” (*epikope*) as well as that of a shepherd (*poimen*).**
- **Must be by Godly desire, not forced**
- **Leading God’s church as an elder is a noble task.**

**V 2 Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach,**

# #1. Above Reproach-*Anepileptos*

Meaning:

- Blameless. One not open to accusation, integrity built in unseen moments
- Consistent character; life without contradictions.

Today's picture

- No shady business practices, no flirtatious undertones with people outside their marriage, no secret habits or a browser trail that would embarrass Christ if exposed.

Challenge:

- What is the one area of your life that you hope no one ever examines? That is the area where Jesus wants to **bring** healing and integrity.

## #2 Husband of but one wife, *-mias gunaikos andra*

### Meaning:

- “One-Woman man.” The affections of an elder must be centered exclusively on his wife.
- Some scholars hold that a prior divorce disqualifies, but many, if not most, do not make that a definite disqualification.

### Today’s picture

- A person whose romantic, emotional, and sexual focus is on their spouse alone.

### Challenge:

- Do I guard my affection, attention, and imagination, honoring my spouse? (or future spouse)

# # 3. Sober-Minded - *Nēphalion*



## Meaning:

- Clear-thinking , “balanced”, temperate , mentally steady
- Not ruled by emotion, panic, or fads.

## Today’s picture:

- Steady, not driven by impulse or sensationalism.
- Not driven by conspiracy theories or online hysteria
- Thinking prayerfully instead of reacting emotionally

## Challenge:

- Am I ruled by emotions, panic, or the latest headlines?
- Do I take time to pray, and think biblically before reacting?

# #4 Self Controlled - *Sophron*



## Meaning:

- Disciplined, temperate, sound mind
- Able to restrain impulses and respond with wisdom.

## Today's picture

- A person who exercises control over impulses—money, eating, entertainment, sexuality, spending, hobbies, and time.

## Challenge:

- Where is God calling me to grow in discipline? What is one impulse that has too much power in my life?

# #5 Respectable - *kosmios*



## Meaning:

- Orderly, honorable, stable, decent
- A life that's put together in a way that earns respect
  - not perfect, but marked by order, reliability, and maturity.

## Today' picture

- One whose schedule is dependable. Their words match their actions
- One who follows through on commitments

## Challenge:

- Would people describe my life, my finances, my home, and my schedule as organized and trustworthy?

# #6 Hospitable - *Philoxenos*



## Meaning:

- Lover of strangers. Welcoming to those outside your circle.
- In the first century, this was a life-or-death quality, as traveling Christians relied on safe homes.

## Today's picture

- One who invites new families to lunch, enjoys hospitality and serving others
- Being the first to greet newcomers at church

## Challenge:

- When was the last time I invited someone into my space—my home, my life, my time?
- Who is God calling me to invite in?

# #7. “Able to teach” - didaktikos



## Meaning:

- Skilled and patient in explaining Scripture.
- The only qualification in this list that is NOT required for a deacon .
- Higher proficiency for a teaching pastor

## Today' picture

- Preachers, but also leading a small group or bible study.
- Explaining scripture to your kids, or mentor a young believer.

## Challenge:

- Am I growing in my ability to explain God's Word clearly?
- Am I helping others grow?

**1 Timothy 3:3 not a drunkard,  
not violent but gentle, not  
quarrelsome, not a lover of  
money.**

## #8 Not a drunkard - *me paroinon*

### Meaning:

- Not controlled by alcohol; free from addictions that impair judgment or testimony.
- Doesn't mandate total abstinence

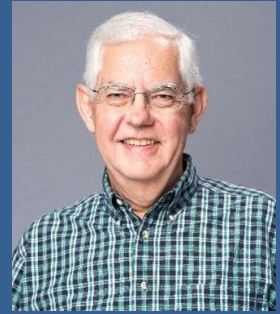
### Today' picture

- A believer who practices wisdom and moderation. One who is not controlled by any substance, but only God's Spirit.

### Challenge:

- Do I use anything—alcohol, food, entertainment, stimulants—to escape, or numb pain instead of turning to Christ?

## #9 Not violent - *me Plekten*



### Meaning:

- Not pugnacious or combative
- Not someone who lashes out physically or verbally. Not harsh, intimidating, or domineering.

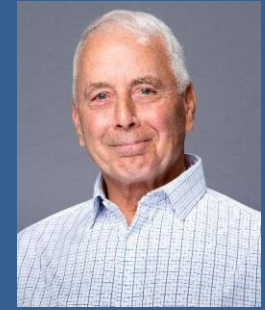
### Today's picture – a believer who refuses to :

- Raise their voice to intimidate, bully others
- One who doesn't use sarcasm or threats of physical aggression as a weapon

### Challenge:

- Do people feel safer or more anxious when I get upset?

# #10 Gentle - epeike



## Meaning:

- Gracious, kind, patient and understanding.
- Someone whose default posture is mercy rather than strictness.

## Today's picture –

- One who offers grace when someone fails
- A person who is reasonable, approachable and safe

## Challenge:

- Would people describe me as approachable?
- Do I treat others with the same patience God shows me?

# #11 Not quarrelsome - *amachon*



## Meaning:

- Not argumentative, contentious
- Not a fighter. Not someone who thrives on controversy.
- Peacemaking instead of provoking.

## Today's picture –

- A person who refuses to be drawn into needless conflicts
- Avoiding unnecessary arguments, especially online
- This is the person who can "agree to disagree"

## Challenge:

- Do I tend to escalate conflict or calm it? Is my first instinct to listen... or to argue?

# #12 Not a lover of money -*aphilargyron*



## Meaning:

- Not greedy
- Not driven by a hunger for wealth, possessions, or status.

## Today's picture:

- Makes ethical financial decisions shaped by scripture rather than culture
- Practices consistent, joyful generosity
- Treats possessions as God's, not theirs

## Challenge:

- Does my spending, giving, saving, and worrying reveal trust in God—or love of money?

1 Timothy 3:4-5 He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God's church?

# # 13 – Manages home well



## Meaning:

- Home is functioning under control with a pleasant environment and minor children under control

## Today's picture:

- A good husband and father, leading his family well
- Does not mean that all adult children have to be following Christ, or that young children won't do something wrong or silly.

## Challenge:

- Would my family agree that I am a servant leader?
- Men, lead your homes with grace and truth.

1 Timothy 3:6 (ESV) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil.

## # 14 – Not a recent convert



### Meaning:

- Someone who obtains an office or position in the church can begin to “think of himself more highly than he ought”
- Spiritual maturity is essential. Pride destroys leaders and churches. Spiritual maturity reminds us that Jesus is the star.

### Today’s picture:

- One who has had time to grow and mature spiritually. It doesn’t happen overnight.

### Challenge:

- Am I growing in spiritual maturity?

1 Timothy 3:7 Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

# # 15 – Well thought of by outsiders



## Meaning:

- One who has had a good reputation with those outside the church

## Today's picture:

- One whose life is helpful to the broader community

## Challenge:

- Do I have a good reputation in the community?
- Does your life make the gospel attractive? Do you live with integrity at work and in your neighborhood.

## Summary

- 1) As believers, we are all to have these character qualities in increasing amount. Pursue them.
- 2) God's blueprint for leadership is about character, humility, and service.
- 3) If God is calling you to leadership, prepare by growing in Christlike character.

## **Action points**

- 1. Take a personal inventory. Assess how you are doing in these 15 areas. Ask yourself, Where is Christ calling me to grow? What habits would need to change to reflect him more clearly?**
- 2. Ask your spouse or a trusted friend whether you have made an accurate assessment.**

## **Action points**

**3. Find a group, small group, D group, who will walk with you in the journey of spiritual growth. Growth flourishes best in community.**